REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING FRANCO: THE EVOLUTION OF HISTORICAL MEMORY IN SPAIN

A PUBLIC HISTORY PODCAST

By

Carmen Mercedes Pilar Hanson

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Supervisor: Matteo Puttilli

Second Reader: Carla Baptista

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Abstract

Podcasting, an extremely popular medium with great educational potential, is largely underused in academia, especially in the field of Iberian Studies. This project experiments with 'audio academia,' using the medium of podcasting as an entertaining, yet informative method of disseminating historical research to the public. It investigates four distinct periods of 'memory formation' in Spanish modern history from 1936 to the present: the Spanish Civil War, the authoritarian regime of Francisco Franco, the transition to democracy, and the 'memory boom.' It attempts to discover and explain how national historical narratives and collective memories have been created, sustained, challenged, and changed over time. With the integration of familial oral testimonies into the podcast episodes, the interplay of memory and history is not just a theme of the project but functions as a practice.

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Introduction

In October 2022, Spain's legislature passed the Democratic Memory Law, also known as the "Ley de Nietos," or "Grandchild Law," which offers a path to citizenship for "those born outside of Spain and with a father, mother, grandfather or grandmother who was originally Spanish and who lost or renounced Spanish nationality as a result of having suffered exile for political, ideological or belief reasons or sexual orientation and identity."[1] The new law aligns with Spain's jus sanguinis legal view of nationality, which grants citizenship status to individuals based on ancestry or bloodline, rather than place of birth. Citizenship applicants will have to prove parentage as well as the persecution of their ancestors.[2] Stephen Burgen, reporter for The Guardian, states that an estimated 700,000 people, mostly from the Americas, could be eligible for citizenship.[3] The law is an expansion of the 2007 Historical Memory Law, which previously only allowed some children of exiles to acquire citizenship, and is just the latest attempt by the Spanish government "to settle Spanish democracy's debt to its past."[4]

In the last five years since Socialist Pedro Sánchez became Spain's new Prime Minister on June 2nd, 2018, the government has proactively used the previously established Historical Memory Law and new Democratic Memory Law to confront and publicly condemn the violence and repression that occurred at the hands of Francisco Franco, Spain's military dictator who

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[1] Federico Rivas Molina, "New Law Opens Fresh Path to Spanish Citizenship for Grandchildren of Exiles in the Americas," EL PAÍS English, December 6, 2022, https://english.elpais.com/spain/2022-12-06/new-law-opens-fresh-path-to-spanish-citizenship-for-grandchildren-of-exiles-in-the-americas.html.

[2] The law widely defines victims of persecution under Franco as "anyone who suffered physical, moral or psychological damage, economic damage or the loss of fundamental rights."

[3] "Spain's New Citizenship Law for Franco Exiles Offers Hope in Latin America," The Guardian, October 27, 2022, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/27/spains-new-citizenship-law-for-franco-exiles-offers-hope-in-latin-america.

[4] Ibid.;
The Democratic Memory Law considers all Spaniards who left the country between July 18, 1936 and December 31, 1955, to be exiles.

imposed his fascist government onto the country for nearly forty years until his death in 1975. Within days of taking office, Sanchez, who symbolically took the oath to protect the constitution without a bible or crucifix (a first in Spain's modern history), announced his plans to exhume the body of Franco from the grand basilica and monument of Valle de los Caídos, or Valley of the Fallen.[5] The monument had been built at Franco's command to honor the Nationalist soldiers who "fell for God and Spain" in his 1939 victory in the Spanish Civil War. However, buried in mass graves at the monument site are the bodies of thousands of Republican soldiers who fought against him, many of whom were never identified. The monument itself was constructed by Franco's political prisoners, many of whom died while being used as slave laborers. On November 17th, 2021, Spain's ruling coalition government led by Sanchez and composed of left-wing parties PSOE and Podemos, announced that the infamous Valle de los Caídos, would recover its original pre-Franco name, Valle de Cuelgamuros and would be redefined as a national cemetery to honor soldiers on both sides of the war.[6] Earlier in the year, it was also decided that the body of Primo de Rivera, Spain's first conservative dictator (1921-29) and founder of the right-wing Falangist movement, would be exhumed from the basilica at the site.[7] Additionally, in February 2021, the last honorary statue of Franco existing in Spain was removed from Melilla, one of the two autonomous cities that Spain claims the territory of in Northern Africa.[8] This

[5] "Pedro Sánchez is sworn in as Spain's new prime minister," *BBC News*, June 2, 2018. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44340879.

[6] Valle de los Caídos translates to Valley of the Fallen.
Marisa Cruz and Álvaro Carvajal, "PSOE Y Unidas Podemos Pactan Sortear La Ley de Amnistía Para Juzgar Crímenes Del Franquismo," *El mundo*, November 17, 2021,.

[7] Marta Borraz, "El Gobierno Cuenta Con Exhumar a Primo de Rivera Del Valle de Los Caídos Con El Acuerdo de Su Familia," *ElDiario.es*, July 20, 2021, https://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/gobierno-cuenta-exhumar-primo-rivera-valle-Caídos-acuerdo-familia_1_8154198.html.

[8] Óscar Estaire, "La Última Estatua de Franco Que Quedaba En España Es Retirada de Las Calles de Melilla," El País, February 23, 2021, https://elpais.com/espana/2021-02-23/la-ultima-estatua-de-franco-es-retirada-de-las-calles-de-melilla.html.

action punctuated the trend of the last twenty years in which autonomous communities chose to remove statues, monuments, and street signs that commemorated Franco, his government, and the Civil War. Under Sanchez, the government also approved funding for unmarked mass grave exhumations and the establishment of an official victims registry and DNA database that would assist in body identifications.[9] Lastly, the new Democratic Memory law ensures that secondary school-aged children will learn about the Spanish Civil War and Franco's dictatorship in the classroom — topics that had previously been excluded from the curriculum.

However, these proactive changes did not come without fierce resistance, both from the political right as well as from Franco sympathizers, or "Franquistas." While the 2007 Historical Memory Law was instituted by José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero of the Socialist Party (PSOE), a change in power in 2011 to Mariano Rajoy of right-leaning Partido Popular, who vehemently opposed the law's passing, ensured that it became functionally obsolete by repealing funding during his seven-year term as Prime Minister, thus only creating silenced discontentment from the left.[10] Perhaps not surprisingly, the conservative Right has generally "opposed exhumations, refused to acknowledge new historical data about the past, and initiated a revisionist historiography that underlines the fatal flaws of the Left during the Second Republic and the

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[9] AFP/The Local, "New Law Aims to Boost Hunt for Spain's Franco-Era Mass Graves," The Local Spain, July 21, 2021, https://www.thelocal.es/20210721/new-law-aims-to-boost-hunt-for-spains-mass-graves-of-franco-era; El País Natalia Junquera, "Spain to Release Funds for Mass Grave Exhumations," EL PAÍS English, July 30, 2020, https://english.elpais.com/historical_memory/2020-07-30/spain-to-release-funds-for-mass-grave-exhumations.html;
El País states that around 750,000 euros were budgeted for the opening of mass graves, the exhumation of execution victims, symposiums and exhibitions on historical memory issues, and for projects that study and disseminate the documentary heritage of the Spanish Civil War and dictatorship.

[10] "Rajoy: 'Abrir Heridas Del Pasado No Conduce a Nada,'" El País, September 2, 2008, https://elpais.com/elpais/2008/09/02/actualidad/1220343425_850215.html.

Civil War and in fact blames the Left for its defeat and the violence unleashed."[11] In 2011, under Prime Minister Rajoy, Real Academia de la Historia (The Royal Academy of History) published its first edition of the Diccionario Biográfico Español (Spanish Biographical Dictionary). Written by Luis Suárez, a historian affiliated with the Francisco Franco Foundation, the official text "omits any mention of Franco's violent repression of dissidents, praises his wisdom in keeping Spain out of the Vietnam War, and describes him not as a dictator but as the 'head of state' of an 'authoritarian but not totalitarian' regime."[12] For the seven years Rajoy was in power, little was effectively done to confront Spain's violent past. Public historical reckoning only later ignited when a vote of no confidence ousted Rajoy's government and new Prime Minister Sanchez announced his plan to exhume Franco from Valle de los Caídos. Deputy Prime Minister Carmen Calvo, also a member of the Socialist party, explained that the initiative to remove Franco was intended as an act of respect toward his victims: "There is neither respect, nor honor, nor justice, nor peace, nor concord as long as the remains of Franco are kept in the same place as those of his victims."[13] After Sánchez's proposal, the exhumation plan was then approved by Parliament in September of 2018, inciting major uproar and dissent from Franco sympathizers. Estela Tapias, a mother who attended mass at the Valle de los Caídos basilica, was interviewed by the *New York Times* saying, "Franco was a dictator, but a good one. I really don't understand why these Communists want to take him out."[14] Tapias was just one of many Franquistas who paid homage

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[11] Ignacio Fernández de Mata, "The Rupture of the World and the Conflicts of Memory," *Unearthing Franco's Legacy: Mass Graves and the Recovery of Historical Memory in Spain,* (Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame, 2010): 279-303.

[12] The Francisco Franco National Foundation (FNFF) is an organization which seeks to keep the dictator's memory alive.
Rubin, "How Francisco Franco Governs."

[13] Jonah S. Rubin, "In Spain's Silence, Francisco Franco's Memory Echoes," *Sapiens*, October 11, 2018. https://www.sapiens.org/culture/francisco-franco-memory-silence/.

[14] Raphael Minder, "Plan to Exhume Franco Renews Spain's Wrestle With History," *The New York Times*, July 7, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/07/world/europe/spain-franco.html.

to the Dictator at his previous resting place. His tomb had become a pilgrimage site where supporters demonstrated their respect with flower bouquets or fascist salutes. Right-wing parties and supporters criticized Sánchez for what they saw as a purely political move. Several attempts were made by Franco's descendants to stop the plan but in the end, Franco's body was relocated from the basilica to a family cemetery in El Pardo, Madrid on October 24th, 2019.[15] A similar, albeit less reported, response came when the exhumation of Primo de Rivera was carried out. In April 2023, the BBC reported that "There were several arrests during the clashes between Primo de Rivera's supporters and police," at Valle de los Caídos.[16] While the political opposition on the right criticized the action, accusing Sanchez of using it to mobilize voters before the May elections, Félix Bolaños, of the prime minister's office, said "Monday's exhumation went 'one step further' in converting the monument into a site that did not glorify the dictatorship."[17] The recent emergence and growth of Spain's far-right party, Vox, also suggests strong defiance and criticism of PSOE's view of Spanish historical memory and legislative actions. In the 2019 national election, Vox picked up seats for the first time, winning about 10% of the seats in parliament.[18] Vox has vowed to "make Spain great again," referring to its fascist and authoritarian past, and echoing the rhetoric of other far-right democracy-threatening leaders such as Donald Trump from the United States.[19]

It is clear that even with the implemented legislation of the Democratic Memory Law and the Historical Memory Law, the debate surrounding the civil war, Franco's regime, and how they

[15] "Franco's Remains Are Exhumed and Reburied after Bitter Battle," *The New York Times*, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/24/world/europe/franco-exhumed.html.
[16] Guy Hedgecoe, "Primo de Rivera: Spain Exhumes Fascist Falange Leader," BBC News, April 24, 2023, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-65370223.
[17] Ibid.,
[18] Ibid.,
[19]Yascha Mounk, "Spain's Past Is Lost," *The Atlantic,* April 30, 2019. https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/04/pedro-sanchez-won-spain-election-but-right-remains/588298/.

should be remembered will not be resolved soon. In fact, the controversies I have mentioned are just the latest instigation of the debate around Franco and his legacy in Spain, a heated topic of discussion that began in earnest in the early 2000s. Despite recent historiography that has uncovered and disclosed the severe repression that characterized Franco's regime, many Spaniards still remember the forty-year 'reign' of "El Caudillo" fondly. In a 2006 poll, 30 percent of Spaniards said that Franco's 1936 military coup was justified.[20] And four years later, 35 percent said that under Franco there was more "order and peace."[21] Others seek official and open denunciation of the dictatorship.

This debate exposes several fundamental questions concerning the interplay of memory and historical fact. Why do Spaniards remember the Franco era so differently? How has memory been manipulated throughout Spain's modern history? Through analysis of public discourse, personal testimony, and official policy, this podcast project investigates possible explanations for this enduring and fiery debate and the resulting consequences for contemporary democratic Spain. It examines four particular cultural moments that have shaped the construction of memory and history: Franco's rise to power, the post-civil war dictatorship, the democratic transition, and the post-transition 'memory boom' of the early 2000s. The podcast project explains that three types of memory; individual, social, and historical, have all been instrumental in the crafting of Spanish national history and identity. At its core, it is an exploration of the processes of forming, sustaining, and contesting national narratives and collective memories of history, while highlighting the validity of individual memory as well. It dissects the deliberate actions Franco undertook in forming and imposing his ideal Spanish national identity and then traces how the

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[20] Sebastiaan Faber and Bécquer Seguín, "Spaniards Confront the Legacy of Civil War and Dictatorship," *The Nation*, July 18, 2016. https://www.thenation.com/article/spaniards-confront-the-legacy-of-civil-war-and-dictatorship/.
[21] Ibid.,

national narrative of Spain's 20th-century history has been sustained or changed in the decades following Franco's death, both by government (in)action and by grassroots citizen organizations and scholars. Threads woven throughout the podcast episodes, and the main sources of personal testimony and memory are the experiences and reflections of my own family members, who are the inspiration for this project.

Podcasting as Public History

Since their emergence in the early 2000s, podcasts as a medium for information dissemination as well as entertainment, have become incredibly popular. The term 'podcast' comes from 2004 when *Guardian* writer Ben Hammersly, who "in search of a catchy moniker for the increasingly popular medium, landed on the term *podcast*—a tongue-in-cheek amalgamation of Apple's newly popular iPod and the word *broadcast*."[22] In a 2018 poll conducted by Edison Research, "seventy-three million Americans ages twelve and older, or 26% of the population, listen to podcasts on at least a monthly basis, and this percentage has almost tripled since 2008, when the annual survey began."[23] This data does not take into account growth occurring in countries other than the United States and therefore is not representative of podcasting on a global scale. Still, one can assume that there is similar popularity internationally. However, the automobile-centric culture of the United States does seem to influence the prevalence of podcasts in the country since "a driver cannot peruse a learning management system or an online video while on a commute, but in the case of a podcast, she can."[24] Driving the sixteen-and-a-half-hour journey from San Diego, California to Portland, Oregon in 2018 was the event that first introduced me to podcasts, and I have listened to various programs—whether they are news, true crime, history, gossip, book reviews, or popular culture—on my daily commutes ever since. Because there is such a large scope in what a podcast 'could be,' and an unending amount of topics to feature in the medium, there is a likely chance that a podcast exists that speaks to every

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[22] Daniel J Story, The Still-Emerging World of History Podcasting, *The American Historical Review*, Volume 127, Issue 1, March 2022, Pages 411–412, https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhac142.
[23] Foster Chamberlain, "Podcasting Historias: Public Outreach through Digital Storytelling in Iberian History," Association for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies, February 27, 2020, https://asphs.net/article/podcasting-historias-public-outreach-through-digital-storytelling-in-iberian-history/.
[24] Richard A. Reiman, "Podcasting for Teaching and Research in History: A Case Study," April 2021, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED626601.pdf.

individual's personal interests. Ultimately, because podcasts are "free to download, broadly accessible, and at baseline they cost very little to produce and distribute," the medium has cemented its place in our culture, and "whether or not one is a podcast devotee, it is difficult to sidestep the reality that not thousands but millions of Americans are engaging with this medium on a regular basis."[25] But what role can podcasting play in academia and specifically, public history?

The National Council on Public History, an American membership association dedicated to the field of public history, states that although the medium of podcasting is now two decades old, "this digital form of storytelling still seems full of untapped potential for public history practitioners."[26] There are several scholars in the field of public history, but also the greater humanities, that are advocating for greater use and academic recognition of the medium. These scholars recognize the importance of communicating research and information to greater audiences outside the academic 'bubble' that so many written texts unfortunately often remain in. While scholarly databases oftentimes require either payment or log-in credentials from partnering institutions—which are only given to enrolled students or faculty—to access academic articles and journals, podcasts can reach the wider public as there is a much smaller barrier to entry. As discussed previously, podcasts are broadly accessible, but the medium is not completely infallible in terms of accessibility, with the main constraint on access being technology. Podcast listening requires the use of either a computer, tablet, or smartphone. While innovations in technology and manufacturing have made these items easier and cheaper to acquire, one should not assume that every member of the public owns a device or can easily visit

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[25] https://www.oah.org/tah/august-4/podcasting-history/; Daniel J Story, The Still-Emerging World of History Podcasting, *The American Historical Review*, Volume 127, Issue 1, March 2022, Pages 411–412, https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhac142.

[26] https://ncph.org/history-at-work/podcasts-and-public-history/

libraries or schools to use one. Additionally, streaming or downloading podcasts requires the use of cellular data or Wifi, which again, are not always available. Geographic isolation that creates data service 'blind spots' or the inability to afford or freely access WiFi can both create barriers to potential listeners. Thus, even with its praise as being the 'more accessible' medium in comparison with written texts, podcasting still has its unique challenges that complicate its effort to reach the public. It's possible that the information discussed in podcast programs may be still confined to an 'elite bubble' of audience members who are of a particular class, income level, or geographic location and thus have the resources to easily access it. However, even with these potential barriers, the idea that podcasting can be an invaluable and effective method of disseminating history to the public is an irrefutable one. Through the medium, scholars can create "interactive, alternative academic content that is both informative and entertaining."[27]

Many individuals and organizations have already recognized the potential of podcasting to be used in the practice of public history and have produced several educational programs through the medium. For example, the UK Historical Association publishes "over 400 high-quality podcast talks by history experts across a wide range of historical periods, regions and themes" on its website.[28] Similarly, the *History is Now* magazine publishes podcast episodes on its website that cover topics such as the Cold War, the American Revolution, and the Spanish Civil War.[29] Dan Carlin's "Hardcore History," which tackles a variety of topics spanning from ancient to modern history, has been one of the top listened-to and rated podcasts for several years. These are just some examples of many, which show the increasing prevalence of history podcasts.

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[27] Foster Chamberlain, "Podcasting Historias."
[28] "Podcasts / Historical Association," Historical Association, https://www.history.org.uk/podcasts.
[29] "History Podcasts Directory - *History Is Now* Magazine, Podcasts, Blog and Books: Modern International and American History," https://www.historyisnowmagazine.com/history-podcasts.

Literature Review

The Spanish Civil War and Franco's regime are the most popular and researched topics in current Spanish historiography. However, they were largely ignored—or more likely unable to be studied—by Spanish scholars until the 1980s. But even then, most of the scholarly research was done by outsiders, namely British and American historians such as Paul Preston, Stanley G. Payne, and Willard C. Frank. Their studies of the war mainly focus on military strategy, explaining different tactics used by Franco to capture Spanish cities one by one and the experimental bombings perpetrated by the Nazi Luftwaffe.[30] They also deeply explain politics, explaining the ideological differences between the Republicans and the Nationalists.[31] These sources are rigidly historical, excluding personal testimonies and individual stories of the actors involved. They are incredibly useful in understanding the grand cause-and-effect dynamics of the war and provide a solid foundation to which more testimony-driven projects like mine, can refer. The 2000s 'memory boom' in Spain sparked another revival of interest in the topic, this time focusing on memory and writing for the purposes of justice and truth-telling. My work closely aligns with this trend. Sources highlight the recovery of Republican memories as illuminating the truth about Franco's repression. While I agree with this, I also place the recovery of individual repressed memories as just one form of historical memory creation in Spain and argue that active forgetting was just as important in shaping national narratives. Additionally, most scholars have chosen to study the war, the regime, the transition, or contemporary Spain separately. Doing this allows one to study every intricacy and event in great depth. However, as my goal is to understand how Spain's historical memory has changed over time, it is necessary to look at the

[30] Willard C. Frank, "The Spanish Civil War and the Coming of the Second World War" *The International History Review* 9, no. 3 (1987): 368-409.
[31] Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

interrelatedness of these periods. Additionally, because the intended audience of the project is the greater public who may be looking for an overview of these topics, rather than in-depth intricacy, multiple periods are discussed.

Regarding podcasts about the topics, many do already exist. As discussed previously, the *History is Now* magazine website offers five podcast episodes about the Spanish Civil War. These episodes chronologically track the progress of the war, explaining decisive stages and battles. Another program that focuses on the same thing is "The Iberian Knot - A History of the Spanish Civil War" by Seth Reeves. While this type of podcast would indeed be invaluable to someone wishing to understand the events of the war in depth, my project is instead more focused on how Franco *used* the war to legitimize his dictatorship and how the war is *remembered.* Another podcast, "Real Dictators" by production company Noiser, discusses the personality cult of Franco and explains his life from birth until death. While it does provide wider historical information about Spain, the main aim is to highlight Franco as an individual, in somewhat of a biographical way. It's undeniable that Franco is the main figure in this topic, but my project looks at what he *did* more so than *who* he was. There are also podcast episodes that detail the democratic transition. "The Spanish Miracle: Successful Democratic Transition and International Engagement" by Daniel F. Runde for the Center for Strategic and International Studies, discusses the involvement of Former Spanish Ambassador to the United States, Javier Rupérez, in the democratic transition. The episode concentrates on the successes of the transition but does not include criticisms of the 'pact of forgetting,' which most scholars do. The University of Oxford also published a series of lectures in podcast format, "Spain: 1959 - 1992." The podcast description states that "Each lecture in this series focuses on one question, one primary source, and one novel…" This podcast series is incredibly produced and is an invaluable

resource for understanding the transition in depth. Lastly, one of my favorite podcasts regarding Iberian history is “Historias,” hosted and produced by Foster Chamberlain. While the podcast explores topics from multiple periods in Spanish history, it also includes some episodes regarding the Spanish Civil War and Franco. Chamberlain uses an interview-style structure for the episodes, inviting scholars to talk about their research. This is a method I do not use for my recorded episodes but would like to use in the future, as it creates a conversational, entertaining, yet informative podcast.

Methodology

The podcast project uses a combination of academic, journalistic, and oral testimonial sources. Academic secondary sources, used to provide historical context and create a clear chronology, are supported and illuminated by personal testimony from members of my family. In order to retrieve these testimonies, I conducted recorded or over-the-phone interviews. The interview methodology I employed was largely influenced by the Qualitative Methods course offered by the Sociology department at the University of San Diego and the interview protocol used by the Spanish Civil War Memory Project at the University of California, San Diego.[32] This methodology utilizes open-ended questioning and active listening. I asked questions in a manner that invited long-form dialog instead of "yes" or "no" answers. With follow-up questions like "Can you tell me more about…?" and "Is there anything you would like to add?," interviewees were invited to lead the conversation and provide additional information that may not have fit into the interviewer's original questions. Before the start of the interview, interviewees were asked to consent to use their responses in the project. They were also notified that all or none of their responses could be used, and that they were free to choose to answer all, some, or none of the questions.

Questions included but were not limited to:

1. Can you state your name and age?

2. When and where were you born?

3. Tell me about the place you lived as a child. What was life like? What was your town like? Tell me about your family, friends, or neighbors.

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[32] Spanish Civil War Memory Project, https://library.ucsd.edu/speccoll/scwmemory/.

4. Tell me about when the war started. How did life change? What are some significant stories you want to tell me about the war? What were your perceptions and feelings about the war?

5. Tell me about the end of the war. How did life change after the Nationalists won?

6. Tell me about your life during the dictatorship. What was the culture and society like? Tell me any stories that stand out to you.

7. Tell me about when Franco died. What did you think and how did you feel?

8. What was it like to see Spain transition from a dictatorship to a democracy? How did your life change? Are there any stories you'd like to tell me about this period?

9. What was your education like?

10. Today, Spanish society is much more critical when remembering Franco and the dictatorship. But, some people still view the period in which he had power as a good one. How do you feel? How do you think Spain's view of its history has changed over time?

11. In what ways do you think the public cares or doesn't care about Spain's effort to confront its past?

12. Would you like to add anything else?

The interview with my aunt, Rosario Ruiz, who lived in Andalucía, Spain during the Spanish Civil War, was conducted over a phone call. Because Rosario does not speak English, and thus I could not use her recorded voice in the podcast, my mother wrote down our conversation in Spanish and assisted me in translating it to English. Any quotes of hers used in the project are narrated in my voice.

The interview with my mother, Maria Cecilia Ruiz, who lived in Madrid, Spain right before Franco's death and during the democratic transition, was conducted and recorded in person. Any quotes used from this interview are presented in her own voice.

I also received the testimony of my cousin Jorge Ruiz, who lived in the cities of Ceuta, Spain, and Madrid, Spain during the democratic transition in the 1980s and the 'memory boom' period of the 2000s. For this interview, I wrote out questions in WhatsApp and asked him to send me a recorded voice note with his responses. Unfortunately, I found it difficult to integrate his responses directly into the episodes, so they are not included in the audio tracks. However, I would like to conduct an in-person interview with him for a future episode.

A quick interview with my sister, Marisa Hanson, was conducted in order for her to provide the 'audience member,' perspective, as she is someone who is interested in the topics discussed but doesn't have first-hand testimony.

Each episode uses singular narration, with the host interweaving the quotes with the rest of the content. The exception is the episode "Refugee (The Story of my Grandfather)," which uses a host and guest format.

Ideally, I would have included interviews or commentary from the Association of Recuperation of Historical Memory and the Spanish Civil War Memory Project, especially in the "Memory Boom" episode, but unfortunately, my requests for information sent by email and through the organizations' Facebook pages were left unanswered. This exposes one of the challenges of using interviews as sources. However, current episodes could be edited and republished, or future episodes could be added, to include additional information if and when a response does come.

Structure and Content

The list of episodes is as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Valle de los Caídos
3. The War and the Regime
4. Refugee (The Story of My Grandfather)
5. The Democratic Transition
6. The Memory Boom

Each episode of the podcast roughly follows the following format:

1. An individual anecdote or news report that characterizes the topic
2. Posing of main questions and introduction to the topic
3. Body (individual reporting of information or interview)
4. Conclusion
5. Preview for next episode

The "Introduction" episode begins with my personal story, tracing the origins of my interest in the research topic, and stating my purpose for the project. It also investigates the interplay of memory and history and establishes the working definitions of "memory," "social memory," "historical memory." and "history."[33]

Links:

Spotify:

https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/carmenmhanson/episodes/1--Introduction-e2e13sf

RSS:

[33] This episode script was partly adapted from an unpublished paper "Politics of Memory in Spain: Valle de los Caídos," written by the author for the "Politics of Memory" course taught by Constantin Iordachi at Central European University.

https://anchor.fm/s/f01b50d0/podcast/play/80825679/https%3A%2F%2Fd3ctxlq1ktw2nl.cloudfront.net%2Fstaging%2F2024-0-5%2F362237568-44100-2-3de41d7a1b02.m4a

Transcription:

Not all academic pursuits or research rabbit holes emerge from deeply personal interests, but this one certainly does. Like many Americans, my family's history in the United States begins with an immigrant story. Growing up, I often heard the basics of that story and memorized its plot line; "Your grandfather was a refugee in the Spanish Civil War. He left Spain, traveled to Mexico City where he met your grandmother, and eventually they both ended up starting their family in San Diego, California. We've been here ever since." It was simple enough, and while I was young, there wasn't much more for me to understand. Just as the extent to which I understood my grandfather's story was limited, so was my understanding of my own identity as a Spanish-American. Because of seamless assimilation into American culture by the two generations before me, I grew up with physical, linguistic, and cultural distance from Spain. Aunts, uncles, and several cousins still lived there but our interactions were limited to calls on the rotary phone that sat in my mother's bedroom. Everyone was busy and flights were expensive.

Unfortunately, it wasn't until my grandfather passed away in 2014 that I was inspired to look deeper into his story and connect with my Spanish heritage. My first visit to Spain occurred the following year, and I visited the town in which my grandfather grew up, a small pueblo called Villabascones, in the province of Burgos. I was struck by its humble stone houses, Visigoth graves, and empty church. The town was quiet, and I would've thought it abandoned if not for the presence of my grandfather's childhood friend who still lived there. Unfortunately, in line with the fleeting nature of memory, I have forgotten her name, and so have the rest of my family members, or else I would recognize her here and now. The impermanence of memory and loss of memories through the generations will be a central theme of this project, so it somehow seems fitting anyway, but more on that later.

A few years later, in 2017, I spent the fall semester of my junior year of college in Madrid, Spain, and started to translate my interest in my own family's history into an

academic research endeavor. I started to obsessively familiarize myself with the Spain of the 20th century; a period defined by political turbulence, war, dictatorship, and then a transition into the democracy we know today. Simultaneously, I was seeing and experiencing the lasting impacts of this recent history in my contemporary everyday life. I read news stories about the changing of street names, I gazed upon flags hung up on balconies that were red, yellow, and purple, instead of just the red and yellow flags I knew and expected, and sometimes, while riding the bus northward of the city, I could see a large cross atop a mountain in the distance…a site known as Valle de los Caídos, which I would later come to understand as the physical symbol of the fierce debate about how to remember Spain's modern history.

This monument and the debate surrounding it brings me to finally introduce what this podcast is all about. This is Remembering and Forgetting Franco, a podcast and public history project created by me, Carmen Hanson, in conjunction with the Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters Degree program History in the Public Sphere, where I will be investigating and discussing several fundamental questions concerning the interplay of memory and history in the case study of 20th and 21st century Spain. At its core, this project is an exploration of the processes of forming, sustaining, and contesting national narratives and collective memories of history. It confronts the figure of Francisco Franco, the victor of the Spanish Civil War who subsequently led Spain as a military dictator for 40 years until 1975. It dissects the deliberate actions he undertook in forming and imposing his ideal Spanish national identity. It then will trace how the national narrative of Spain's 20th-century history has changed in the decades following Franco's death, both by government action and by grassroots citizen organizations. I will examine multiple time periods; the civil war and Franco's rise to power, Francos's authoritarian regime, Spain's transition into democracy, and the 'memory boom' of the new millennium to explain why Spain's 20th-century history is still so contested today. Threads woven throughout the episodes, and the main sources of personal testimony and memory are the experiences and reflections of my own family members, who are the inspiration for this project.

Ultimately, I hope this podcast project is a catalyst for discussion and further global interest in this topic. It aims to disseminate knowledge and research in an

approachable and tangible way to the public, especially to those who haven't been exposed to this topic before. Most of the media on the topic is naturally in Spanish but this podcast will be deliberately narrated in English to reach a wider audience that may not be familiar with this history. I hope the project inspires others to find a personal connection to history by being curious about their own family stories and the world around them.

I know all of this may sound vague, confusing, and disconnected right now, and you might be thinking "Get to the point already Carmen, I thought that this was a history podcast, just tell me the history already!" And trust me, I hear you, but we first need to discuss the definitions of "memory" and "history," and how each plays a role in this topic. The very subtitle of the podcast is called "The Evolution of Historical Memory in Spain" for a reason, so let's delve into that. In the following episodes, I'll argue that three types of memory; individual, social, and historical, have all been instrumental (although prioritized at different times) in the crafting of Spanish national history and identity. However, as a historian, memory can be a difficult thing to study. On one hand, memories are absolutely crucial to historical research. Sources like interviews and memoirs often provide essential information that other primary sources cannot. A lot of times when we think about history, we think about oral accounts and personal testimonies. On the other hand, many historians hold a rigid view of their discipline, stating that history should be objective and unwavering, based on clear, indisputable evidence. Because of these conflicting ideas, I have to address this debate before addressing Spanish history at all. Are memories valid evidence in historical research? How does memory shape official and unofficial historical narratives?

The very nature of memory is flexible and prone to manipulation. Because of this, history and memory can either be complementary or in competition with one another. Historian Julian T. Jackson reflected on this very conundrum, writing, "This period is now undeniably the 'past' but it is close enough for our perspective on it to be constantly shifting. As we move away from the events, different parts of the landscape come into sharper relief; as we try to answer questions, the very questions themselves seem to change. This is true of all history writing, but especially of a period which still inhabits a

twilight zone between history and memory."[34] In other words, how can historians operate when recollections are still surfacing and when these memories are part of contemporary historical, social, and political debates? This is the primary challenge in the Spanish context, where memory has been both officially and unofficially shaped and a consensus of national history has proven to be beyond reach. And yet, despite its potential flaws, the work of the historian often relies on memory as evidence. Therefore, an examination of the meanings of "memory," "social memory," "historical memory," and "history" and their relationships to one another is in order.

Political historian Carolyn P. Boyd defines memories as "the products of active creation, not passive inheritance; through selective remembering and forgetting."[35] She says that technically speaking, real remembering is a psychological process that "takes place only in the individual mind and involves only those events that the individual has experienced directly."[36] Although memory is unique to the individual, philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs argues that it is socially structured by the groups, class, religion, and area to which an individual belongs.[37] I argue that this social aspect of memory is paramount to understanding why Spain's historical memory has changed over time and why there is no consensus on one national narrative today. Cultural practices, monuments, commemorations, and the law can create a social memory, or set of narratives about the past, "that are typically not based on direct experience but that provide a matrix for individual identities and shape and sustain collective identities."[38] These methods of social memory creation were used, albeit in different ways, throughout distinct periods of Spain's modern history, which we will discuss later in the podcast.

Historical memory is a form of social memory "in which a group constructs a selective representation of its own imagined past."[39] Historical memory typically serves a social or political purpose, such as to consolidate power, teach a lesson, or validate a

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[34] Michael Richards, *After the Civil War: Making Memory and Re-Making Spain since 1936*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
[35] Carolyn P. Boyd, "The Politics of History and Memory in Democratic Spain," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 617, no. 1 (2008).
[36] Ibid.,
[37] Suzanne Vromen, *American Journal of Sociology* 99, no. 2 (1993): 510-12, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2781705.
[38] Boyd, "The Politics of History and Memory."
[39] Ibid.,

claim. I will discuss how Franco crafted a historical memory that would serve these very purposes and can partly account for the existence of Franco sympathizers today. Lastly, while history can be defined in many ways, the working definition I will use for this project is that history is the practice of critical inquiry into the past, using the skills of evidence analysis and argumentation. While there is some 'truth' seeking to this practice, every historian knows that there are always limits to one's information, thus making history susceptible to change over time.[40]

Now that we've established some definitions, I think it's time to actually delve into some history. In the next episode, we will be discussing the monument of Valle de los Caídos and how it's a symbol of Spain's modern history, as well as the debate around historical memory in Spain.

The second episode, "Valle de los Caídos," sets up the central questions of the project by framing the monument site and its surrounding controversy as the symbol of the greater debate around Spanish national history narratives.[41] It begins with a story from my sister, Marisa, describing the first time she visited the monument and the basilica. She gives her first impressions as someone not too familiar with the historical context of the site and explains how she felt while she was there. It then continues to discuss the construction, aesthetics, and use of the monument, while explaining why there is so much public debate about it.

Links:

Spotify:

https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/carmenmhanson/episodes/2--Valle-de-los-Cados-e2e146f

RSS:

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[40] Ibid.,

[41] This episode script was adapted from an unpublished paper "Politics of Memory in Spain: Valle de los Caídos," written for the "Politics of Memory" course taught by Constantin Iordachi at Central European University.

https://anchor.fm/s/f01b50d0/podcast/play/80825999/https%3A%2F%2Fd3ctxlq1ktw2nl.cloudfront.net%2Fstaging%2F2024-0-5%2F362238525-44100-2-177745a21523d.m4a

Transcription:

Speaker 1 (Marisa Hanson):

When I walked up to the entrance of Valle de los Caídos, I was very impressed and also taken aback by the absolute scale of the thing. There was a huge mouth of a cave that just appeared in front of me topped by an enormous cross, which I didn't know was the biggest cross in the world at the time. And as you walk in, as I walked in, there is very little light. It is an extremely dark room, a room that goes many, many feet in front of you and gets darker and darker as you enter. And above me were these very ominous kind of guardian figures that perhaps were supposed to be menacing or supposed to be protecting, but I couldn't tell. To me, they were very scary. And you keep going, it gets darker and darker as you're descending into this cave, which seemed to be built out of a mountain. And finally, you reach the tomb of Francisco Franco, which is understated compared to the grandness of the rest of the place, but still was surrounded, flanked by guards watching 24/7, people standing around, but it was just a simple placard on the floor with his name.

Speaker 2 (Al Jazeera):

60 kilometers outside Madrid lies Spain's largest mass grave. Cut into the mountainside, the Valley of the Fallen is where dictator Francisco Franco lies buried. Around him are tens of thousands of bodies of unnamed people, killed on both sides of Spain's civil war, many of them murdered on Franco's orders.[42]

Speaker 3:

On November 17th, 2021, Spain's ruling coalition government, composed of left-wing parties PSOE and Podemos, announced that the infamous Valle de los Caídos would recover its original pre-Franco name, Valle de Cuelgamuros.[43] Earlier in the year, it

[42] Spain to Exhume Bodies from 'Valley of the Fallen' | al Jazeera English," YouTube, April 24, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTsglp2haXk&ab_channel=AlJazeeraEnglish.
[43] Valle de los Caídos translates to Valley of the Fallen.

was also decided that the body of Primo de Rivera, Spain's first conservative dictator (1921-29), would be exhumed from the basilica at the site.[44] These decisions are just the latest instances of Spain's attempt to officially close the chapter on its falangist past.[45] Previously, in 2018, immediately after his inauguration as Prime Minister, Socialist party member Pedro Sánchez announced his plans to exhume and relocate the body of Francisco Franco, Spain's military dictator who imposed his authoritarian government onto the country for forty years until his death in 1975.[46] At the time, his body also rested in the grand basilica in Valle de los Caídos. Sánchez's announcement instigated fierce debate amongst the political parties and the public. Right-wing parties and supporters criticized Sánchez for what they saw as a purely political move. Several attempts were made by Franco's descendants to stop the plan but in the end, Franco's body was relocated from the basilica to a family cemetery in El Pardo, Madrid on October 24th, 2019.[47]

For those unfamiliar with Spain's tumultuous 20th-century history, they may wonder why the renaming and exhumations are such politically charged issues. This paper will answer that question by arguing that Valle de los Caídos is the physical embodiment of the greater debate around Francisco Franco and how he should be remembered in Spain. It will explain the history and style of the site itself, how the site functions to shape social memory and perpetuate Franco's victory narrative, and the contemporary controversies surrounding it. This episode will answer that question, arguing that Valle de los Caídos is the physical embodiment of the greater debate around Francisco Franco and how he should be remembered in Spain. The episode will explain the history and style of the site itself, how the site functions to shape social

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Marisa Cruz and Álvaro Carvajal, "PSOE Y Unidas Podemos Pactan Sortear La Ley de Amnistía Para Juzgar Crímenes Del Franquismo," *El mundo*, November 17, 2021,.

[44] Marta Borraz, "El Gobierno Cuenta Con Exhumar a Primo de Rivera Del Valle de Los Caídos Con El Acuerdo de Su Familia," *ElDiario.es*, July 20, 2021, https://www.eldiario.es/sociedad/gobierno-cuenta-exhumar-primo-rivera-valle-Caídos-acuerdo-familia_1_8154198.html.

[45] Raphael Minder, "Plan to Exhume Franco Renews Spain's Wrestle With History," *The New York Times*, July 7, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/07/world/europe/spain-franco.html.

[46] Ibid.,

[47] "Franco's Remains Are Exhumed and Reburied after Bitter Battle (Published 2019)," *The New York Times*, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/24/world/europe/franco-exhumed.html.

memory and perpetuate Franco's victory narrative, and the contemporary controversies surrounding it.

Speaker 4: (Filmoteca Española):

En el vigésimo aniversario de la victoria nacional, se inaugura la gran Basílica de Santa Cruz del Valle de los Caídos. Como recoge el decreto fundamental, tiene la grandeza de los monumentos antiguos que pueden desafiar el tiempo y olvidar, y constituye un lugar de meditación, estudio y descanso, en el que las generaciones futuras rendirán homenaje de admiración a quienes han liderado una España mejor.[48]

Speaker 3:

Immediately after the Nationalist victory in the Spanish Civil War in 1939, General Francisco Franco sought to build a monument to memorialize it. Construction of the monument, which mainly consists of a 150-meter cross and a basilica, began in 1940 in Valle de Cuelgamuros, just north of Madrid. The location was a very deliberate choice for one important reason. First, the valley lies just six kilometers from El Escorial, the palace built by King Felipe II during Spain's 16th century golden age. Not only did the palace serve as the seat of power until the War of Spanish Secession, but the five most important Spanish Habsburg kings are buried there. Historian Helen Graham states that during Habsburg rule, "hierarchy and cultural homogeneity, guaranteed by integralist Catholicism, had generated imperial greatness."[49] Franco sought to recapture and recreate Spain's historic identity as a pure, Catholic empire. By placing his victory monument so close to El Escorial, he attempted to create a direct hereditary line between himself and the old empire in order to legitimize his power.

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[48] English Translation: On the twentieth anniversary of the national victory, the great Basilica of Santa Cruz of the Valley of the Fall is inaugurated. As stated in the fundamental decree, it has the greatness of the ancient monuments that can defy time and forget, and it constitutes a place of meditation, study and rest, in which future generations give tribute of admiration to those who have led a better Spain;
"No Do Del 06 de Abril de 1959 No 848A Inaguracion Valle de Los Caídos," YouTube, June 26, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A60LjBxKPA&ab_channel=sertecounico.

[49] "Helen Graham - The Spanish Republic at War (1936-1939).Pdf," Scribd, 2011, https://www.scribd.com/document/420509012/Helen-Graham-The-Spanish-Republic-at-War-1936-1939-pdf.

Another way Franco created a connection between his authority and the Habsburg monarchs was with the overbearing Catholic aesthetics of the monument. One of its main components, the 150-meter Christian cross, is the tallest in the world, sits upon a hill of granite, and can be seen looming over the entire valley from miles away.[50] The basilica, built directly into the granite rock underneath the cross, is bigger than St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.[51] Religious imagery, with dark and intimidating overtones, adorns both the outside and inside of the basilica. This imagery, which equates religion with strength and violence, harkens back to Spain's medieval and imperial ages, again connecting Franco to Spain's historical identity.

Now we should address the actual process of construction and the use of the monument as a burial site. The monument itself was constructed by thousands of political prisoners from the losing Republican side. Many died while being used as slave laborers, being buried in unmarked graves right on site.[52] Right before the monument's inauguration in 1959, the bodies of thousands of soldiers, from both Nationalist and Republican sides, were dug up from different regions of the country to be buried in unmarked mass graves underneath the basilica.[53] Many of these bodies were never identified before their relocation. The only other figure buried in a marked grave, other than Franco later would be, was the founder of the Falangist movement, Primo de Rivera. This symbolically silenced the voices and erased the identities of the thousands of soldiers and workers. Historian Andrew Rigby states that through this, Franco was able to reaffirm "the fundamental division between the victors and the vanquished" and forge a hegemonic Spanish identity according to the moral spirit of the Nationalist war effort.[54] The monument physically embodies the creation of a new Spain, birthed from war, that fits securely into Franco's idea of what Spanish national identity should be. Any

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[50] Pieter Brower, "Franco's Phantoms: Why Spain Can't Bury Its Authoritarian Past - Brown Political Review," Brown Political Review, May 29, 2018, https://brownpoliticalreview.org/2018/05/francos-phantoms-spain-cant-bury-authoritarian-past/.
[51] Ibid.,
[52] "Site of Memory and Dismemory: The Valley of the Fallen in Spain," Journal of Genocide Research, 2014, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14623528.2014.975948
[53] Ibid.,
[54] Andrew Rigby, "Amnesty and Amnesia in Spain," *Peace Review* 12, no. 1 (2000): 73-79.

individual memories or opinions that opposed this ideal vision were to be officially buried, literally and figuratively.

Because the legitimacy of Franco's regime rested on his civil war victory, it was absolutely necessary to quickly create and promote a favorable narrative that would become part of the collective memory amongst Spaniards. Therefore, he proposed that the monument at Valle de los Caídos would be a place of national reconciliation.[55] Even today, the official website for the monument states it as such.[56] However, because of the construction and aesthetics discussed earlier, and the presence of mass graves, the monument is anything but reconciliatory. Even the name, Valle de los Caídos, or Valley of the Fallen, refers only to those who "fell for God and Spain." This is an honor only given to soldiers on Franco's side in the war, who supported nationalism and catholicism, and not the soldiers who fought on the Republican side, which included anarchists, anti-clericalists, and communists. After Franco died in 1975, and was buried behind the main altar in the grand basilica, the monument became even less reconciliatory. His tomb became a pilgrimage site where supporters demonstrated their respect with flower bouquets or fascist salutes. Instead of honoring soldiers, the site became a place to honor Franco, and his victory, alone.

As we discussed in the introduction, the creation and meaning ascribed to monuments can create social memories and a set of narratives about the past. The monument of Valle de los Caídos would cement a strong and prevalent historical narrative that would remain unchallenged until the contemporary controversy regarding Franco's removal. Let's talk about that contemporary controversy now. For many Spaniards, the site embodies immense loss and unspeakable suffering and the reverent manner in which Franco was buried there was insulting. For others, like the far-right supporters who would flock to the site as pilgrims to pay their respects, it was a fitting tribute to Spain's 'best' leader. In 2011 and 2013, leaders on the left suggested exhuming Franco's body, and in the legislature, there were intense discussions about actually doing so. However, Franco's daughter objected, and the Franco Foundation she heads vowed to take legal action to prevent it. Ultimately, she was successful in her campaign, receiving

[55] Belén Moreno Garrido, "EL VALLE DE LOS CAÍDOS: UNA NUEVA APROXIMACIÓN," *Revista De Historia Actual*, vol. 8, no. 8, 25 June 2012, 31–44.
[56] "Valle de Los Caídos – Benedictinos," ValledelosCaídos.es, November 28, 2021,.

support from the right-wing party 'Partido Popular' that was in power at the time. However, as discussed previously, the controversy arose again when newly elected Socialist Prime Minister, Pedro Sánchez announced his plan to finally follow through with the exhumation in 2018. Deputy Prime Minister Carmen Calvo explained that the initiative to remove Franco was intended as an act of respect toward his victims. However, this incited major uproar and dissent from Franco sympathizers.[57] Estela Tapias, a mother who often attended mass at the Valle de los Caídos basilica, was interviewed by the *New York Times*, "Franco was a dictator, but a good one. I really don't understand why these Communists want to take him out."[58] The debate of the exhumation is just a symbol of the larger debate around how Spaniards think Franco should be remembered and what the Spanish national identity should be. Parliament did ultimately approve the exhumation plan and Franco was relocated in October 2019. Some Spaniards still think this action isn't enough to change the meaning of the monument and that the whole site should be demolished. However, if one goal was to stop the public glorification of Franco, it may have worked. Visits to the site decreased by 50% in 2020.[59] It's possible that the site will be turned into a remembrance center or museum in the future and actually become a place of reconciliation, but only time will tell. One thing is certain though, Valle de los Caídos, no matter what changes are made to it, will always represent Spain's struggle to come to terms with its Franco past.

As I mentioned before, Valle de los Caíidos is symbolic of the greater debate around how to remember Spanish history. The actions taken by Franco to create and sustain certain narratives will be a central theme in the next episode, where we will discuss his rise to power, the war, his regime, and what steps he took to legitimize his power.

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[57] Minder, "Plan to Exhume Franco."
[58] Ibid.,
[59] Antonio Salvador, "El Valle de Los Caídos Arranca 2020 Con La Mitad de Visitantes Que Hace Un Año," El Independiente, February 3, 2020, https://www.elindependiente.com/politica/2020/02/04/el-valle-de-los-Caídos-arranca-2020-con-la-mitad-de-visitantes-que-hace-un-ano/.

The third episode, "The War and the Regime," discusses the violence of the Spanish Civil War and includes testimony from my aunt, Rosario Ruiz. It examines Francisco Franco's authoritarian regime and the methods Franco employed to establish a 'victors versus vanquished' narrative about the war in order to legitimize his power.[60]

Links:

Spotify:

https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/carmenmhanson/episodes/3--The-War-and-the-Regime-e2e1b73

RSS:

https://anchor.fm/s/f01b50d0/podcast/play/80833187/https%3A%2F%2Fd3ctxlq1ktw2nl.cloudfront.net%2Fstaging%2F2024-0-5%2F362260629-44100-2-3b587544c99d8.m4a

Transcription:

Speaker 1 (British Pathé):

First pictures from the Basque Republic of the holy city of Guernica. Scene of the most terrible air raid in modern history. Hundreds were killed here, men, women and children. 4000 bombs were dropped out of a blue sky into a hell that raged unchecked for five murderous hours. This was a city and these were homes like yours.[61]

Speaker 2:

Spanish artist Pablo Picasso's most famous painting is Guernica (1937).[62] The painting depicts the 1937 bombing of the Basque town. The attack was perpetrated by Nationalist forces led by Franco and is probably the most famous case of extreme

[60] This episode script was adapted from an unpublished paper "*The Silence of Others,* Memory Recovery and Grave Exhumation as Healing in Spain," written by the author for the History in The Public Sphere Introduction course at Central European University.
[61] "Ruins of Guernica after Air Raid (1937)," YouTube, November 12, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHwNRXV5_wk&ab_channel=BritishPath%C3%A9.
[62] Pablo Picasso, *Guernica*, 1937, oil on canvas, 349.3 x 776.6 cm., Madrid, Museo Reina Sofia.

violence in the war. However, it's just one example of the horrifying violence that characterized the fighting during the Spanish Civil War. Although it's true that Franco and the Nationalists initially instigated the conflict, violence and fighting was seen on both sides. My great aunt Rosario Ruiz, who grew up in the small Andalusian town of Ibros, recalls violence committed by Republicans in her town.[63] Ibros, like many communities in the region of Andalucia, was very poor and rural. The residents generally sided with Republicans. Those that did not fight the Nationalists in battles, fought a sort of proxy war against who they believed to be sympathetic towards Franco's forces. Although my aunt was only four years old in 1937, she remembers when Republicans forced a young wealthy woman to strip naked and paraded her throughout the town. After humiliating her, they killed her.[64] My aunt is unable to remember if the woman was in fact a Nationalist or not. But, she explains that anyone with a modest amount of wealth would have been accused of being one, especially at a time when many people in rural towns were desperate for resources.

Violence against civilians in the form of bombings was used by the Nationalists to incite civilian fear and submission. In a video interview with the Spanish Civil War Memory Project at the University of California, San Diego, Maria del Carmen Heras Mesa recounts that Madrid was air-raided by the Nationalists while she was in her mother's womb. She recalls being extremely frightened of loud noises throughout her childhood, but not being able to pinpoint exactly why. She shares how the violence had enduring effects on her psychological health throughout her adulthood.[65] My grandfather, who I shared the story of in a previous episode, recounts how when he was in Bilbao, there were constant bombings.[66] This violence on both sides only created more hate and division.

We can also understand the breadth and intensity of the violence during the civil war through numerical data. Historian Hugh Thomas stated that 2000 Republicans were shot in the first few weeks in the city of Córdoba, about 3000 Republicans in Sevilla,

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[63] Rosario Ruiz, telephone interview with author.
[64] Ibid.,
[65] María del Carmen “Carmina” Heras Mesa, Interview with Scott Boehm and Guillermo Izquierdo, February 2, 2009.
[66] Ramon Ruiz Gómez, interview with Maria Cecilia Ruiz, San Diego.

5000 Republicans in Zaragoza and its surroundings, 2000 in Navarra, and 2000 in the Canary Islands. He says that the numbers for all of Spain must have been in the tens of thousands, possibly 50,000 for the first six months of the war.[67] However, these high figures represent just those killed in battle. Approximately 575,000 people are estimated to have lost their lives in battle, air raids, murders, executions, or from hunger or disease.[68]

Despite their efforts to defeat the Nationalists, the Republican army was on the brink of defeat by 1938. In January 1939, Barcelona was successfully conquered by the Nationalists, making their conclusive victory seem inevitable.[69] In March of 1939, Nationalist troops occupied Madrid and therefore came the end of the civil war and the beginning of Franco's domination in Spain.[70] Galeazzo Ciano, the Italian minister of foreign affairs under Mussolini, wrote in his diary, "Madrid has fallen, and with the capital, all other cities of Red Spain. It is a new, formidable victory for fascism, perhaps the greatest one so far."[71] And while the fall of Madrid technically ended the conflict militarily, the scars of the civil war would be felt for decades to come. As this podcast points out, while the physical battle between Spaniards was over, the ideological war continued.

Let's now talk about the post-civil war dictatorship, Franco's regime, and how he was able to create certain national historical narratives that would justify his place in power. The legitimacy of Franco's regime rested on his civil war victory. So he needed to create and promote a favorable narrative that would become a part of the historical memory among Spaniards. Historian Andrew Rigby says that Franco was able to implement a "fundamental division between the victors and the vanquished."[72] This division was cemented through annual commemorations. 1939 became the "Year of

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[67] Hugh Thomas, The Spanish Civil War, (New York: The Modern Library, 2001).
[68] Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth Century Spain*, (London: Harper Press, 2012).
[69] Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution and Revenge*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2006.
[70] Antony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939*, (New York: Penguin, 2006).
[71] Ibid.,
[72] Andrew Rigby, "Amnesty and Amnesia in Spain," *Peace Review* 12, no. 1 (2000): 73-79.

Victory."[73] The day the war ended, April 1, was commemorated as "Victory Day." Most national holidays celebrated the winners in the war. July 18 was the "Day of Uprising." October 1 was the "Day of El Caudillo," and October 29 was the "Day of the Fallen," which of course only refers to those who fell for the Nationalist side.[74] These annual commemorations solidified the legitimacy of the regime, serving as a regular reminder of the defeat of everything "anti-Spain" that the Republicans represented.

Once this narrative of the victors and the vanquished was created, it needed to be systematically integrated into the country's official history, institutions, and social memory. Franco used official means in the form of legislation to expel any and all perspectives that were unaligned with his particular national historical vision. The introduction of the Law of Political Responsibilities in 1939 ensured the overall exclusion of individuals who opposed the Nationalist side of the war from taking part in the political, cultural, and even social landscape of Spain.[75] All those found guilty or guilty by association of opposing the Nationalists could lose their rights and property.[76] The law allowed Franco to replace any unaligned persons in the sphere of government with loyalists to him.

Maybe most importantly, through this law, Franco was able to gain control of the nation's education systems and media outlets and therefore, the overall historical narrative of Spain. Schools became effective "vehicles of ideological transfer" of Nationalist ideals upon Spain's youth.[77] This was made evident through the textbooks that were used in schools during the Franco regime. Nearly all textbooks focused on themes of Catholicism, Nationalism, and Franco's personality cult. One book, España nuestra: el libro de las juventudes españolas (Our Spain: The Book of Spanish Youth), written by Ernesto Jimenez Caballero in 1943 describes the Spanish Civil War as follows: "France and other European powers had managed to corrode our youth, remove their enthusiasm

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[73] Ibid.,
[74] Ibid.,
[75] Beevor, *The Battle for Spain, 397.*
[76] Carlos Jerez-Farran and Samuel Amago, *Unearthing Franco's Legacy: Mass Graves and the Recovery of Historical Memory in Spain*, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).
[77] Irene Palacio Lis and Cándido Ruiz Rodrigo, "Educational Historiography of the Franco Regime: Analysis and Critical Review," *Paedagogica Historica* 29, no. 3 (2003): 340-60.

for tradition, for the army, for the Faith, for the Homeland."[78] This part of the book essentially identifies Spain's key cultural values as innately conservative, centralist and religious.

Franco's control of the media was also extremely useful in the creation and promotion of Franco's ideal historical memory. Spanish television channels and radio stations in the 1950s were both owned and run by the government. Radio was dominated by the state company Radio Nacional de España (RNE), while television, which started to broadcast in 1956, was in the hands of the government-owned Televisión Española (TVE).[79] Having control of the media like this allowed Franco to reshape the opinions and memories of Spaniards in his own image.

The adoption of Franco's contrived narrative of victors and vanquished was not just successful due to the work of Franco and the regime itself. It also thrived on the political apathy of most people. Even if a person considered resisting the repression of the regime, concern for personal survival took priority. My aunt Rosario remembers life in the early years of Franco as "very difficult."[80] She elaborates by explaining that you could not even buy bread with the salary of one person. Therefore, everyone, even her at just five years old, had to work. She says everyone had to "fight to exist" and therefore no one had time to criticize the government.[81] Instead, they reluctantly conformed in order to focus on everyday survival. Through this, Spanish people began the rational process of forgetting.[82]

The regime's repression was especially strong in the first decades following the war. However, the dictatorship slowly loosened up, with most credit going towards Franco's declining health and the U.S. forced liberalization of the Spanish economy with

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[78] Ernesto Giménez Caballero, *España nuestra: el libro de las juventudes españolas,* (Madrid: Vicesecretaría De Educación Popular, 1943).
[79] Christopher Ross, Bill Richardson, and Begoña Sangrador-Vegas, *Contemporary Spain*. (Rev. ed. Routledge, 2013).
[80] Rosario Ruiz, interview.
[81] Ibid.,
[82] Michael Richards, "Grand Narratives, Collective Memory, and Social History: Public Uses of the Past in Postwar Spain," In Jerez-Farran and Amago, *Unearthing Franco's Legacy: Mass Graves and the Recovery of Historical Memory in Spain*, 121-45, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).

the 1953 Pact of Madrid.[83] Angel Viñas explains that because of this, "material conditions approved and the fruits of economic growth trickled down to the middle and working classes."[84] While the prosperity experienced during this time can largely be attributed to external global influences, many people falsely attributed it to Franco's regime. Therefore, the generation that came of age during this period and was able to benefit from its economy, remembers it fondly.

To conclude, years of repression under the regime between 1939 and 1975 ensured that a one sided version of the Spanish Civil War was forged into Spanish historical memory. Franco's authoritarian methods ensured that the majority of Spaniards would adopt the contrived historical narrative of 'victors and vanquished,' and that his rule was legitimate and right, as truth. This narrative permeated all aspects of Spanish social life.

In a future episode, we'll look at the period after Franco died, called the Democratic Transition. We'll investigate how Spain tried to come to terms with its history through a method of forgetting, which supposed that the best way to move forward would be to just not confront the past at all.

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[83] In order to end Spanish economic isolation, U.S. President Truman offered millions of US dollars in aid. In 1953 Franco signed a Concordat with the Vatican and an alliance with the United States. During the first ten years of the Pact of Madrid, the United States gave Spain $1.5 billion USD in aid. With U.S. backing, the UN approved Spain's membership in 1955.

[84] Ángel Viñas, "The Endurance of Francoist Myths in Democratic Spain," *International Journal of Iberian Studies* 25, no. 3 (2012).

The function of the fourth episode, “Refugee (The Story of My Grandfather),” is to experiment with a host-guest podcast format, where the host leads the conversation and invites questions and commentary from the guest in real-time. This format differs from the other episodes, where interviews are recorded and quotes are later woven into the larger narrative. It compares two separate accounts of my grandfather’s experience fleeing violence during the Spanish Civil War. It investigates the flexible nature of memory and its role in the historical record.[85]

Links:

Spotify:

https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/carmenmhanson/episodes/4--Refugee-The-Story-of-my-Grandfather-e2e1bae

RSS:

https://anchor.fm/s/f01b50d0/podcast/play/80833294/https%3A%2F%2Fd3ctxlq1ktw2nl.cloudfront.net%2Fstaging%2F2024-0-5%2F362261160-44100-2-2f5400a8e6367.m4a

Transcription:

Host:

Hello everyone and welcome back to “Remembering and Forgetting Franco,” a history podcast by your host Carmen Hanson. Today is a very special episode for me because I will be retelling the story of my grandfather's escape from Spain at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. This comes from interviews that my mother did with him while he was still alive, and I will be retelling it to my sister because she's never even heard these stories before. And I think it will be really interesting for us to talk about. And one interesting aspect of this is that my grandfather told these stories to my mother at different times and at these

[85] Ramon Ruiz Gómez, interview with Maria Cecilia Ruiz, San Diego.

separate times, the story sometimes shifted so it can say a lot about history and memory. So, let's get into it.

Hi! So, I have Marisa here, my sister, and today we're going to be talking about the relationship between memory and history as it relates to my grandfather's story of the Civil War. And what I think is fascinating is that I have interviews my mother did with my grandfather before he passed, and she interviewed him a couple of times. And about the same information or the same story but the accounts kind of differ. Each time he tells the story. So, we are going to be going over that and talking about how. You know, memory can be fickle, but oral accounts are extremely important sources for history. It will be interesting to go over both accounts of his and see how they are continuous and how they differ. So, Marisa, you are here with me. Say hello to the listeners.

Guest:

Hi everyone!

Host:

And I don't know if you have read these interviews. I don't think you have.

Guest:

No, I haven't read or heard about any of them from Mom, so this is going to be the first time for me, so I'm very intrigued. I can't wait to hear them.

Host:

So yeah, as we've said before, as much as this is a history project and academic endeavor with lots of research, it's also an investigation into our own family history and hopefully inspires other people to look into their own history and, you know, kind of be interested. So I think we should go over the first account just all the way through and then we'll go through the second one and then we can talk about, you know, the differences or similarities that we noticed. Does that sound good?

Guest:

That sounds perfect just for background, when were each of these accounts recorded? Do you know?

Host:

Mom did not date these. She typed them out and sent them to me. But I'm not sure she dated them, but my guess is that it must have been any time between 2009 and 2013. I wish that I had the dates, but unfortunately, she didn't write them down, so I'm not sure if we have, you know, like "she interviewed him on this date and then it was this many years later and she interviewed them again." But there was a period of time between them. You know, it wasn't like one day, and then the day after, if that makes sense.

Guest:

Yeah, it makes sense.

Host:

All right, so let's get started then. Ok, so this is the first account and our mother labeled it "The Escape." Ok, "July 18th, 1936 was the day and the year the Spanish Civil War started. We had heard rumors about it, but not any confirmation, no signs of it until one day we were out thrusting wheat. And we saw a big cloud of dust on the road from Espinosa to Quisicedo. Excuse my pronunciation. That cloud of dust was caused by a truck of Franco soldiers, all dressed in uniforms and armed with rifles. They stopped at the Guardia Civil headquarters, which is the military police headquarters. Their mission was to enlist or conscript young men for Franco's army. They were not successful that day, and they took three young men against their will."

"From that day on, there were..." It's just because the interview is quite... like Mom was obviously writing it quickly as Grandpa was talking. And so there's like, certain things left out. Or things that are kind of confusing, which is interesting, which makes this, you know, this is a primary source and yet we still don't have the full information, which is, I mean, that's the nature of using these types of primary sources.

OK, "our job was to pass the word that the soldiers were on their way so that everyone that wanted to, could hide. But after a few unsuccessful raids, they changed their tactics. They no longer came in trucks but came on foot trying to surprise everybody. This tactic had the effect of making the people mad. This was

no longer a game of hide and seek, so the young people and those of age to fight had two choices. One was to join Franco's forces and the other was to go a few miles north of the mountains and join the Republican forces. My uncles all went to the Republican. They reasoned that the government was a properly elected government, and it was the duty of every citizen to support it. So, after all this happened, Sotoscueva became a no man's land rated by both sides."

And Sotoscueva is the town that our Grandpa is from.

"My father was already on the Republican side. For when the war started, he was working in Bilbao and Bilbao is a city on the north of Spain in Pais Vasco and Basque Country on the coast. My uncle made a few visits at home after he left. During one of those visits, he took my stepmother, my sister and my two stepbrothers to the Republican side to join my father. It must have been during one of those visits that they arranged with my uncles to take the livestock to a certain place on a certain day. One day, my grandmother, I took the livestock. On our way back, we were coming down the crest of the canyon when we heard the hissing of bullets. We ran down to the canyon and we made it home safely. We carried the stakes on our shoulders and they must have reflected in the sun, making them look like rifles. There must have been soldiers at Quisicedo and they mistook us as Republican soldiers. Two days later, the Guardia Civil came to the house and asked for my uncles. My grandmother told them that she did not know where they were and they told her that she had only one night until the morning to produce them, or that my grandparents would be executed. My grandmother told them that they were of majority age and she did not have control over them."

I love that part.

Guest:

That is very Spanish, very our family.

Host:

Very. "They told my grandmother to go to the police station at 8:00. We had just finished the harvest of wheat. So the next day, my grandfather and I were planning the day when my grandmother came to the balcony and she told us not to plan anything because we were leaving. My grandfather was not very happy

about it, but after a few seconds he was convinced that was the only option. He couldn't bring himself to believe that the Guardia Civil would carry out the threat because after all that time, nothing significant had happened. My grandmother prepared something to eat for our trip and in 5 minutes we were on our way. We left through the back door. We traveled in the forest for about 1 mile and after that it was open mountain. We were afraid that they might see us from Quisicedo and shoot at us. About two miles into the mountains, the fog sat in, and it was cold. My grandmother asked me to go back home and get my sweater. I did, but once I was at home, I remembered the jar with guindas and aguardiente.[86] I took a good gulp and took my route back to my grandparents. They were very worried that I might have been apprehended. After a small reprimand, we resumed our trip without any interruption, and we arrived at the Estacas de Trueba. They were at El Mirador, a station that controlled the road to Espinoza and the railroad. This position changed hands sometimes. About two or three times a day. My uncles finally came and they put us on a truck to Santander. We spent the night there and the next day we took the train to Bilbao. Today I ask myself, would my grandparents have been executed if they had not escaped? The answer is yes."

And then, he says, "was one side better than the other? No, they all did their dirty things."

That's the first part. So, he's echoing a lot of the sentiments that we've heard from other people, you know, just kind of like both sides were bad. You know, they both did their violent things. So, any thoughts about what I just read to you?

Guest:

Yeah, I mean. That last line is crazy because that's exactly what we were discussing when we were talking about Valle de los Caídos and the 'pact of forgetting' where everyone was like everyone did their bad things on each side. So, I'm kind of shocked and I wonder whether that is Grandpa, remembering as someone who lived through that "pact of forgetting," though he wasn't in Spain when it happened, and embodying that and looking back on it with that opinion.

[86] translate

Host:

Right.

Guest:

Or it was his thought at the time.

Host:

Right.

Guest:

It's kind of confounding.

Host:

Yeah, it is. I mean, I think this is a common sentiment and it's interesting that you say if he was embodying this "pact of forgetting," because you're right, he was already in the United States at this time, and so he wasn't there, really seeing that, but you know of his brothers were still there. So maybe it was kind of through conversation that he agreed, I mean. It's true, they both did bad things, and it's just interesting that even whenever this was, late 2000s or whatever 2011 or so, that he still thinks this. I mean it's not false. He's right 100%. That's the nature of war.

OK, I'm going to now read a second version of the escape, and we'll see how similar it is or how different it is.

Guest:

OK.

Host:

"Sotoscueva became a no man's land raided by both sides. My father was already in Bilbao, and Bilbao was controlled by the Republican side. My uncles were visiting sometimes, but not very often. During one of those visits, they took my stepmother, my sister, and my two stepbrothers up to the mountains to the Republican side and to my father. And it must have been during one of these visits that they arranged for us to take our livestock to a certain place on a certain day. So, one day my grandmother took me and took the livestock to the..."

No idea what that is. I know so much is lost, so much information is lost there.

“My grandmother and I carried stakes on our shoulders. They must have sparkled because somebody must have seen us and they fired on us. We heard the hissing of bullets. We ran to the Canyon and back home. By this time, people had chosen their sides. Conscription was almost impossible to make, so the Franco forces, in conjunction with the Guardia Civil changed their tactics. Now they resorted to threats and extortion. By this time, Fidelón and his family had gone.”

I'm guessing this is either family friends or just people in the town.

“Silvino and Ricardo and others had left. Some took their families. To those who left their families, a lot of pressure was applied. Some of the threats were carried out, others not. My grandparents were told that if they did not present their sons, they were going to be executed. They argued with the Guardia Civil that their sons were of majority age and they had no control over them.”

Guest:

That is one thing that's the same, OK?

Host:

“Nevertheless, the Guardia Civil told them that if they do not produce them overnight to go to the headquarters in the morning at 8:00 o'clock, they would be executed. My grandparents could not believe that because up to that day, nobody had. The next morning, we got up as usual. My grandfather and I were planning the day's work when my grandmother called from the balcony. We went to the house and my grandmother said, ‘Don't plan anything. We are leaving.’ She prepared something to eat on the way and we were on our way in 5 minutes. My grandfather hesitated for a while and he said, ‘Leave and abandon everything?’ My grandmother, very cool and collected, said, ‘Yes and we will not waste any time.’ It has been said and rumored that my grandmother threatened my grandfather to chop his head off if he had not followed that.”

Guest:

That doesn't surprise me at all.

Host:

“None of that took place, of course. I was present all the time. Sure, my grandfather could not believe the threats and he was leaving all his life's work

behind, but my grandmother was cool and analytical much more than my grandfather, which prevailed in later developments. And everything later proved her right. People disappeared overnight, never to be seen again, and Villabascones..."

Which is another name for the town, the town that our grandfather is from is Villabascones. As is Sotoscueva, well, it's just another shortened name.

"One woman was killed only because her husband went to the Republican side. Her name was Ofelia. She left behind four children, and one of them is now almost crazy. We were about two miles into the mountains when thick fog settled in. It was cold and my grandmother told me to go back and pick my sweater. I did, but while I was home, it occurred to me that there were some guindas and aguardiente in the hutch. So I went and got my ration. Guindas are like cherries, but instead of sweet, they're sour. This is why they put them in aguardiente. It's a drink for cold winter mornings. Your body reacts very well to it."

Good to know.

Guest:

Ohh, it's like cold syrup.

Host:

OK, I thought it was more like a hot drink?

Guest:

Oh well, maybe not then.

Host:

Well, how would it be heated up if it's in a hutch?

"Now that everything is said and done, I come to appreciate my grandmother's analytical ability. She must have been all night awake thinking about the whole thing. Through her mind, she must have been going through the scare of my stepmother, the livestock that we took to the Republican side. It was clear that we had made our commitment, and nobody would believe our claim of innocence. So, the only thing to do was to escape while there was still time."

OK, so what do you think about the second account of the escape? I think there are more similarities than differences. It's incredible that recounting it the

second time it matches. I felt it was almost the same except he brings up new details.

Guest:

No, they were. They were almost entirely the same.

Host:

He gives more names this time. It's almost like he's giving more details.

Guest:

Gives more names, yes, giving more details. This account, he also mentioned that they fired directly at them when they were out in the field, whereas before no. So that's interesting. I don't really know why that detail would have come up the second time if not for maybe just remembering more accurately.

Host:

And he doesn't mention this time, how he actually leaves. You know he's talking about right up until the moment of his journey. He doesn't really talk about the journey so much like the train ride. It's just a mention, but we know that Grandpa does end up in Bilbao, which is a city controlled by the Republicans at this time in the early war.

And so, he talks a bit about Bilbao, which I will tell you now.

“We left the train at a depot called Basurto. I had been a couple of times to Bilbao in the past, so I knew the city a little bit. I took my parents to a kind of relative of theirs called Paco. They were very surprised to see us there, for my grandparents had never been any place further than the twenty miles around their house. The city was something they had never seen before. The cars and all the noise. I could see that they were feeling uncomfortable and strange. After a very long talk, we spent the night at Paco’s. The next day I took my grandparents to the pension...”

Which is like a little hotel.

“...where my uncle Manolo was staying. There, Ms. Negrete of the Negrete family told us that her husband was killed the day before and that my uncle Manolo was bound at the hospital. We went to the hospital and it was

nothing serious. He called a friend and that friend made arrangements for us to go have our meals at the center called Asistencia Social."

Social assistance or social services.

"This is something that my grandparents could not understand. They never needed anything from anybody, and they now had to accept charity. We shared an apartment with some friends Julio and Julia. When my uncle Manolo was released from the hospital. He found an apartment for us. It was very nice and comfortable. Things got much better. At least now we were a family. We could cook and sit at the table. The irony was that the apartment in which we lived belonged to a person that went through the same thing that my grandparents went through. That helped them better to understand what happened to them, and that they were not the only ones."

"Although life improved emotionally and physically, we were at war and air raids took place daily and almost at any hour. One day we were eating, and the siren sounded. We went to the refuge two times. We returned to resume lunch and the siren sounded again. My uncle said, 'Let's keep eating,' but my grandmother said, 'No, everybody to the refuge.' On that occasion, it happened that one bomb fell in front of the house and another in the back. There was a breaking of poles on the balcony when we returned. All the doors were off their hinges and the armoires and hutches were all on the floor. One day I was making a toy for my brother Victor. I told him to move a little and without noticing, he moved precisely where the pole was missing. He fell and I heard a flop. I looked and there was my little brother sitting on the ground. Luckily, he was a fat little boy and fell on his rear end. A good cushion. Good thing that nothing bad happened to him."

Host:

Oh my God. I love this.

Guest:

The detail he's giving. I feel like he's remembering the tiniest things.

Host:

I know. I'm absolutely blown away by the detail. You know, it's incredible how much memory actually sticks with you so many years later.

“There were no schools. So, when I was not in line to get groceries, I was with a gang getting into mischief. I never walked in Bilbao. I always rode on the bumpers of the street cars every day. I just went to Castrejana, to Miss Thomasa’s dairy to get the milk. But this day, something happened that we had to wait to get the milk. We went to the top of Castrejana, which is a very curvy and steep road to ride the goity. The goity is a handmade car with three ball bearing wheels and guided with your feet. We got to the top and three of us got in. I was the one in the back riding, at about 40 miles an hour. There was an incoming car. The driver panicked and over maneuvered, and the goity came to a dead stop against the bank on the right side of the road. I was the one standing up, so I was the one that suffered the most. I got multiple bruises. Now the problem was, what explanation was I going to give for the condition I was in? So, I threw the milk away and told my parents that there was a raid alarm and that we were running to the refuge. The milk spilled and fell. The lie passed with them.”

Guest:

Oh my God. This is so interesting. I mean, just like this weird wartime tale is so...like the fake normal, you know. This is crazy detail.

Host:

It's funny because if I were to lie to my parents, you know, I wouldn't be able to use that. But Grandpa was like, well, there's a war. So let me just say that there was a bombing.

“My riding on the bumpers of the streetcars was finally discovered by my mother. She asked me to go and mail a letter for her. So as usual, I decided to wait for the tram to come and went and sat on the bumper. My mother was coming down the street and saw me there. She went to the next stop of the tram and all of a sudden somebody was pulling me by my arm. Soon to my surprise, I noticed that it was my mother raining punches at me. But that did not deter me from my habit.”

“One day at the fish market I saw a thing I will never forget. There was a raid alarm, so everybody ran to the refuge on the way out. There was a woman that came out from the church and muttered, ‘I hope you kill them all.’ That was a very wrong thing to say to a crowd of fish selling women as they are mean and rough. They took after her, but she managed to get into the office of the market. It was a very long building. Somebody called the police. A truck full of police came, but when they tried to rescue the lady, the crowd ran to the other side of the building, preventing the rescue. This went on for two hours. After that, somebody gave the order to abandon the lady to her fate. It was to abandon the lady or fire against the crowd. Very soon the mob took the lady and killed her with machetes and knives. Thinking that she was dead, they threw her to the river, but I saw that she still made an effort to swim. Part of her dress got tangled on a pole of the fence and remained there for weeks to come to remind the people of the tragedies of war.”

This is a lot. There are lots of people around seeing this, and yeah, he's a child as well.

Guest:

Well, it's also this pent-up anxiety everyone has like, yeah, she said something crazy, but these fishmongers go after her with machetes. It's obvious that this anxiety is getting to everyone in this town and they're living in a war.

Host:

Right. It's a lot. There was a lot of violence. I mean, as we can obviously tell from the accounts.

He continues, “Franco's forces were closing in on Bilbao. The Basque government made an arrangement with Franco to send as many children as possible to France for refuge voluntarily. My parents decided that we should go. My grandparents, my sister, and two brothers, also a cousin of mine and his mother. The date to depart was set and that day we took trams to Santurce, where we were supposed to embark on the ship Habana.”

This ship is very, very famous and it's very studied. This act of Franco, to let a lot of the children and certain families leave the country safely is very

famous. There were a lot of ships also going to the UK and even to Russia and so a lot of people were leaving at this time.

"During that trip, we had three air raids and every time we had to leave the tram and lay on the ground until the raid was lifted."

Guest:

Got it. OK.

Host:

All right, so what do you think about the time in Bilbao?

Guest:

I think the detail he puts into his life as a child is so fascinating. It feels like there's more detail about that than the detail and the memory he has about the war itself. In some regards, he's like, oh, I remember, I was on the back of this tram and I dropped the milk and it goes into a lot of detail about those little stories and then the accounts that he has about the tram to Santurce and the air raids are a little more general.

Host:

He doesn't want to go into detail about it.

Guest:

It's maybe traumatic or maybe because of that trauma, he doesn't have as many details at his disposal.

Host:

Right. It's harder for him to remember that.

Guest:

Yeah, it's very interesting.

Host:

All right, so then he continues about living life in France as a refugee. So, I'm going to tell you about that now.

"Finally, we departed from Santurce. The ship was overloaded, people were sleeping all over the place, on the floor. Wherever there was an empty space, there was somebody laying down. As the ship departed, people were starting to get sea sick and to throw up. It was pathetic. The old as well as the young were

crying because they were leaving behind everything that they had cherished, not knowing when they would be reunited again with their loved ones."

I think by pathetic he doesn't mean it's pathetic that they're throwing up, but the whole scene was just sad to see.

"Outside the Spanish territorial waters, we were joined by two English warships who escorted us until we reached the French territorial waters. We disembarked at La Rochelle and they hoarded us into a big, empty warehouse that had about a foot of sawdust on the floor. It was used to train horses for the pending World War. That gave us a very bad impression. But to cheer us up a little, there was plenty of food and bread and the assurance that there won't be any air raids. The next day, our group, my grandparents, my brothers and my cousin departed for Tours. After a few hours of riding, we arrived and a group of people were waiting for us. They took us to a place called La Riche. They installed us in an empty school which had been restored and furnished and stored with food. That was going to be our house for the time being. The people there were excellent and very helpful. The next day, some of them came early in the morning to take us to school. It was not a one room school like the one I was used to, but a modern school. We were very much welcome and we made a great number of friends. Among them was Jeanine, who I remember with great admiration. Next to our house was a small grocery store. Helene was the daughter of the owners. She was a young lady, about eighteen years old. She came every night and brought us some candy, especially for my brother Victor. He usually was asleep by that time and she was putting the candy in his mouth until we told her not to do it because he might choke. It was with Helen that we all learned how to ride a bike. She also bought us all fishing gear and took us to fish in the Loire. The Loire is a big river and I saw it frozen solid from one side to the other in wintertime. Tours is a very big city. At one time it was the capital of France. It has a lot of museums and palaces, and a lot of history. It is very cold in winter. The soil froze to about one foot, so it's very important to insulate your feet from the soil. Jane's father, Mr. Madelmont took us to the city and bought us some boots with about one inch of wooden soles so we could walk to school. Her parents

were very nice people and they owned a horticultural farm. My grandfather was thrilled when he was hired to work on the farm. At least my grandfather had found someone that he could relate to. He would have worked for free just as long as he could do something. My grandfather had worked since he was a boy and could not stand to be idle. Everything was going well for everybody. I learned French in no time and the whole family was happy to have a lot of friends. We got news that my stepmother Amparo was in a colony in the south of France and we put in a request for her to join us and very soon she was with us also. By that time, we were almost a complete family. I never found out who was paying the bill. It appears that the French government was paying because one day an agent from the Basque government came to the house and told us that we have to relocate to a Spanish colony of refugees called Val'Dors in Paris. They did all possible to keep us in Tours to no avail."

Guest:

This seems like it was like a good time for Grandpa, you know, despite everything, making friends, learning a new language...

Host:

You're almost able to forget about everything going down back at home, you know, just being able to be a child and just able to live.

Guest:

Right. I wonder if he had any awareness of what was happening back in Villabascones and in greater Spain while he was finally able to be a child and not worry about this anymore.

Host:

I mean, I for sure think probably the adults knew because there was a lot of news that was being circulated. But as far as Grandpa knew, I mean, probably not. He's probably sheltered from some of it and maybe heard later, but it sounds like he was very happy and well adjusted. He actually has another version of the account in France. And so we're going to see if it's similar or different and how the details change.

Guest:

Great. Let's go.

Host:

"We left Bilbao a couple of weeks before the forces of Franco took the city. We took the tram to Santurce, where we were to board the liner Habana with the destination to France. The trip to Santurce was a nightmare. Three times we were forced to run to the fields and lay down until the planes left the area. Finally, we arrived to Santurce, and by sundown, we were aboard the ship. We left at night, and by the next morning we arrived at..."

There's a question mark there, so I'm not sure about the name.

"We disembarked and we spent the first day in France in a big warehouse with about 10 inches of sawdust where they were training horses. The smell was not pleasant, but at least we did not have to worry about food lines. The next day in the morning, my family and I were transported to a small town near Tours called La Riche. The people were very nice and helpful. Up to this day, I do not have anything to complain about. We were the only refugees around, so the people were very understanding. It was a family called Madelmont who was especially friendly. They were farmers and every day they took their produce to the market. There was another family with a grocery store. They had a daughter, Helene, who used to come visit us at night. She bought us candy and let us ride her bike. She also took us to fish in the river Loire. In other words, I learned to love France and the French people. From there, we were transferred to Paris, this time under the auspices of the Spanish Government in exile. Once again, our family remained together, but this time there was a program where French families were adopting children temporarily and sending them to school. While we were living with a French family, my sister, my brother Jose Mari and I participated in that program. We all had a great experience during our stay in France, except for a little episode that occurred the day we were taken to the city hall Clamart, on the outskirts of Paris. That was the place where we were to meet our sponsors. My brother Jose Mari was with me, and there were two ladies fighting about which one was going to take my brother, who was a lot younger than me. Finally, Madam Seyres agreed to take me while Madame Gidrol was

taking my brother. I was very upset because it gave me the impression that we were merchandise for sale to the highest bidder. It took a few days for me to understand the process. A few days later when they took me to see my brother, I was shocked. My brother was feeling at home. He was addressing the lady as "mother." Everybody was a family to him, and he was so loved by everyone."

"When I arrived at the house I was staying at, the first thing that she offered me was a cup of tea. And to make things worse, she put milk or cream in it. So, there I was, sitting with that cup of tea in front of me. Not wanted like the young one. I was too old. I knew that a person can only have one mother. My little brother was too innocent. Anyway, I benefited in other ways. The lady I was with was a teacher, and the husband was a college preparatory teacher at the same school that I attended. He was driving me to work and every night I had to tell him what my homework was and every morning he was testing me to make sure I did my work. They were very disciplinary but also very nice. I always remember them with great respect and admiration. I remember at school reading history books and seeing the pictures of the Americans disembarking during World War I. The French were very grateful for the Americans' help.

"The summer of 1938, the family Seyres and I went to a camp at Rambouillet. This is a place with a great forest and a big lake. We camped in front of the lake for a couple weeks, then we moved to Archachon"

Not sure how to pronounce this, I apologize.

"After our return, they told me that for Christmas they would have to return me to the refugee camp because Madam Seyres was about to have another baby. The refugee camp was in Châtenay-Malabry. It was the house of the French writer Chateaubriand. It was almost a palace. There was a lot of land in front of the house and about three hundred people there. My stepmother became the head cook and I started school. Every day we had to walk about two miles to go to school and two miles back."

OK. So that's the second account. There's also so much more detail in the second account, especially going a lot further in the timeline. What did you think about that?

Guest:

It's interesting to see that Grandpa, in almost every instance where we have two accounts, has remembered more the second time. I wonder if it's because Mom took this account twice. Therefore, he tells it once the first time, and then because he's already relived it through retelling it, he's remembering as he's telling it again. And maybe that's the experience for a lot of people who lived through something like this. Which is why, you know, generations like our mom and us, are more interested in this. And the more we press about it, the more it comes up.

Host:

I think that a lot of times we think of memory getting worse throughout the years. But I think you made a great point where both times the second time has been more detailed and he's remembering more, even as he gets older. And even as the events become further away. Yeah, I'm curious. What do you think about the nature of this oral history or interview that we have from our grandfather and what do you think it says about history? Like, do you think this is a valuable source? What do you think?

Guest:

Yeah, I mean. I think it's a valuable source and that it shows the everyday life of someone living through this experience. It's not all like dates and numbers and events. It's seeing through the eyes of someone who was there to see exactly what it was like, like there were days that were normal. He had a good childhood despite everything, and that's the reality of something like this. You learn to live with the war and that's something we all forget. You know, like the everyday lives of people.

Host:

I agree, I think it's valuable. Of course, it's not representative of everything that was going on, but I think that an individual account is just as important. You know it shows different sides and I think that in history, as much as it is important to recognize these grand cause-and-effect types of dynamics, it's also really interesting to get a personal account of what one person was going through during

this time. That's why we love so many books like this, like Anne Frank's Diary, for example.

It's really interesting that we have this and it was interesting to go through it with you.

Guest:

I can't believe I've never heard this. Because Mom, of course, just gives us an overgeneralization of what happened with him. But I've never heard all the details, so I'm happy that I got to hear it and talk about it with you.

Host:

I think it's interesting...recognizing where the interview and where the account of memory stops, right? Because as we know, eventually France entered World War Two and France could no longer support these refugees, and a lot of them were sent back to Spain. And so it's kind of like this refuge away from the war has just suddenly ended because there's other huge events going on in the world and they're kind of just sent back to this world that they left. So I think it's interesting that he didn't continue on with the rest of the story. As we know he ended up going to New York City, and Mexico City before ending up in California. And yet we don't know any details about this.

Guest:

Of that part? No, not at all.

Host:

And we don't know any details of that middle part where he had to go back to Spain before deciding that he didn't want to live in Franco's Spain.

Guest:

Yeah, I mean, all we know is that he was a stowaway on a ship. That's like the one detail we have.

Host:

But, you know, I think it says something where...while the account is not necessarily complete when it comes to our grandfather, I think that this little snapshot can say a lot as well.

Guest:

Yeah, definitely, I agree.

Host:

All right. Well, that's all. Thank you to my guest, to Marisa, my sister.

Guest:

Thanks to everyone who's listening. I hope you enjoyed this first-person account that's very personal to us.

The fifth episode "The Democratic Transition," utilizes oral testimony by my mother, Maria Cecilia Ruiz to examine what life was like in Spain after Franco died. It discusses the 'pact of forgetting' and the Amnesty Law of 1977, which, at the time, were seen as effective methods of 'moving on' from the dictatorship and would not create renewed division amongst Spanish society.[87]

Links:

Spotify:
https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/carmenmhanson/episodes/5--The-Democratic-Transition-e2e1bh0

RSS:
https://anchor.fm/s/f01b50d0/podcast/play/80833504/https%3A%2F%2Fd3ctxlq1ktw2nl.cloudfront.net%2Fstaging%2F2024-0-5%2Fdef0d121-170c-d18f-ae4f-088ea781c86d.m4a

Transcription:

Speaker 1 (Maria Cecilia Ruiz):

I was in a classroom, I think we were studying. It was on the weekend. And all of a sudden one of the girls in the boarding school came running and screaming. Screaming "Oh! They assassinated Carrero Blanco! They assassinated Carrero Blanco!" She was trembling. She was so scared. She took us to the chapel to kneel down and pray. And why did she want us to pray? Because she was so

[87] This episode script was adapted from an unpublished paper "Politics of Memory in Spain: Valle de los Caídos," written by the author for the "Politics of Memory" course taught by Constantin Iordachi at Central European University.

afraid that we would have another civil war. So the assassination of Carrero Blanco, what it meant for her was that society again was unstable and that again the factions would become pronounced and there would be fighting again. And Spain was very afraid of that. For a long long time. I don't think they are afraid of it anymore. I don't know how exactly long that fear lasted.

Speaker 2:

So we're gonna continue on from the last couple of episodes and kind of go in a chronological fashion. We're gonna talk about the democratic transition from Franco's regime to the democracy that we know in Spain today. And to me, this is a really important period. I think that when we talked about the regime in the last episode, it was very clear the steps that were taken in order to form this national identity and historical memory. Then I think with the democratic transition, we're going to see how this was sustained for several more decades. This historical memory was really sustained mostly through governmental legislation. And so we're gonna talk about that. Upon Franco's death in 1975, the political transition from dictatorship to democracy fluctuated between the attempts to recuperate historical memory and the official politics of amnesia.

Some scholars claim that Spanish people immediately chose to ignore the war and the regime altogether as if it never occurred. But this is kind of oversimplifying the situation. In fact, Spanish economist and historian Angél Viñas, claims that there was never so much written about the Republic and the Civil War as in the early transition years. Briefly, Spaniards made their opinions clear by either rebelling against the conservative life they had resented or expressing nostalgia for the late leader's regime. Again, I talked to my mother, who although was not in Spain during Franco's death, the day that he died, she lived in the Madrid suburb of Pozuelo, from 1969 until 1974, and then again beginning in 1976. She had a two-year break in San Diego, California, where she was born. I was talking with her, I was interviewing with her, and she recalled the discourse and the feelings among the Spanish during the months after Franco died.

Speaker 1:

I guess I can summarize it like some people were happy and some people were sad. Some people were scared. Some people liked Franco because everything was predictable. It was predictable what was expected of you. Franco for a lot of people represented order. And, interestingly enough, he also represented Spain. Some people were already saying that life under Franco was better. So that was the discourse. Even just a year after his death. They said that now there was only lawlessness for example.

Speaker 2:

Who were the type of people that were saying that?

Speaker 1:

Older people. The ones who grew up under Franco. They sympathized with Franco. Like Tia Amparo. My father's sister. She was a Republican but she said “la vida fue mejor baja Franco.”[88]

Speaker 2:

Before the transition to democracy even occurred, rising political and social instability in the 70s exposed a real and universal fear that war could break out again. Left-leaning labor movements gained popularity and organized nearly 1600 strikes in 1970. Deadly terror attacks were committed by the Basque Nationalist group ETA and threatened any sense of security. My mother said that in the 70s she had more fear of ETA than Franco's regime. The regime's sense of order and authority was indeed crumbling. For many, it seemed as though another violent conflict between conservatives, liberals, and regional separatists could be on the brink, and it was a very real fear. As Franco's health slowly declined, the future of the regime and Spain's political future was quite uncertain. By 1973 Franco was in such bad shape that Juan Carlos I was being primed to restore the Bourbon monarchy. He was the grandson of King Alfonso XIII, so in line with the previous monarchy. Ruling alongside him as prime minister would be the right-hand man and longtime confidant Correo Blanco. However, it was unclear whether the new leaders would continue Franco's repression or expand rights and freedoms once they came to power. The opening of a potential power vacuum

[88] Translation into English: “life was better under Franco.”

upon his death was still very possible with even these people proposed to take over. The fear of Spain possibly reentering another civil war came at a peak when Correo Blanco was assassinated by ETA in 1973. So this fear was very real and very in the face of many. Once Franco was dead and it was decided that democracy should emerge, it was very shaky ground. No one really knew which direction would be the best, no one knew what was going to happen. It was scary. And so instead of recognizing any of the atrocities or oppression that was committed during and after the war, the new leaders of Spain thought that the best way to transition from the dictatorship to democracy would be to implement a political agreement between the political parties known as the pact of forgetting. As historian Paloma Aguilar Fernandez explains, Spanish people generally approved of this and they approved of the thesis that the war was a "collective madness."[89] It was everyone's fault so let's just move on, let's keep looking forward. And again, my mother recalls the sentiment amongst Spanish people and why they would accept this thesis.

Speaker 1:

My experience was that most people were so wounded and still were hurting so bad. Because so many of their family members had died in the war and the atrocities committed in the war were just…. (pause) horrible. You can't imagine. You know Spaniards killing Spaniards. And in the 70s, that wound was still unhealed. You could feel the wounds in people's homes, in people's hearts. They talked about their stories, but they talked about their stories at home. About the things they witnessed as children. About the people they knew who died. So I think there was still a divided Spain. Republicans were still Republicans and Nationalists were still Nationalists in their hearts. Ignoring everything just made it easier. And then there was the generation that grew up under Franco. They were probably, well it depends. People stopped talking about it. A lot of people talked about it in their homes and a lot of people did not. So a lot of the children that

[89] Omar G. Encarnación, *Democracy Without Justice in Spain: The Politics of Forgetting,* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

grew up under Franco didn't even hear the stories from the war. Because their parents just didn't talk about it, they were so traumatized.

Speaker 2:

This 'pact of forgetting' was codified legally as the Amnesty Law of 1977, which forgave all acts of political violence committed during the war and the forty-year dictatorship that followed. It guaranteed the release of all political prisoners and explicitly prohibited any prosecutions of perpetrators of human rights violations. This would even allow Nationalists to evade retribution for any of the abuse that had been perpetrated during the regime. Through active forgetting of these traumatic memories, Spanish people set out to create a new national historical narrative, much like Franco had done in the post-war period. As the journalist John Hooper observed, “No one in Spain was ever judged, no one was ever deemed guilty. And since no one was ever deemed guilty, forgiveness never entered into it. It was just a matter of forgetting, but in the process of forgetting, a new past had to be created”[90] This time, the past would be founded upon a new collective memory that could nurture, promote, and deepen the new democracy. Of course, once again, education was used to disseminate this history. A rewriting and reinterpretation of the Spanish past occurred in textbooks, reflecting the commitment to selective forgetting in favor of consensus between political parties. Most of them presented the civil war as a fratricidal tragedy in which both sides were at fault. This prioritized political values of stability and reconciliation. Historian Carolyn Boyd states, “The textbooks thus reinforced the policy of wiping the slate clean, that made possible the negotiated transition to liberal democracy.”[91]

So once again, we have a change of this grand narrative and a change in the historical and social memory of Spain. But as we'll see in the next period that we're examining, this will be challenged again, and the pact of forgetting and the legal codification of it will be seen as anachronistic to the goals of Spain's democracy and the way that Spain should remember its history.

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[90] Rigby, "Amnesty and Amnesia in Spain," 73-79.

[91] Boyd, "The Politics of History and Memory.”

The sixth episode, "Memory Boom," discusses how grave exhumations, legislature, and media challenged the historical narratives that were created and sustained by Franco and the democratic transition.[92]

Links:

Spotify:
https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/carmenmhanson/episodes/6--The-Memory-Boom-e2e1c3r

RSS:
https://anchor.fm/s/f01b50d0/podcast/play/80834107/https%3A%2F%2Fd3ctxlq1ktw2nl.cloudfront.net%2Fstaging%2F2024-0-5%2F362263840-44100-2-032bdb749c663.m4a

Transcription:

Speaker 1 (Al Jazeera English):

In the hills above the village of El Soleras, a team of archaeologists has already exhumed more than a hundred bodies from this site, both men and women. A DNA bank has been created to collect samples from relatives of the missing, to try and reunite the victims with their still grieving families.[93]

Speaker 2:

In the last episode, we discussed the pact of forgetting and the legal codification of it, the Amnesty Law of 1977, during the democratic transition. This 'national forgetting' as a method to transition from dictatorship to democracy was initially praised and viewed by historians as a model transition because of its "consensual, non-violent character, and positive outcome."[94]

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[92] This episode script was adapted from an unpublished paper "*The Silence of Others,* Memory Recovery and Grave Exhumation as Healing in Spain," written by the author for the History in The Public Sphere Introduction course at Central European University.

[93] "Catalonia Mass Graves: Victims of Civil War Exhumed | Al Jazeera English," YouTube, March 31, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lt5TjriDj8c&ab_channel=AlJazeeraEnglish.

[94] Boyd, "The Politics of History and Memory," 133-48.

However, a shift in thought occurred in the late 1990s due to the emergence of a new model of transitional justice using other young democracies, such as in Eastern Europe, South Africa, and Latin America. This model was not based on amnesty, like Spain's, but on the public acknowledgment of suffering and demand for justice. Historian Jonah S. Rubin explains, "As truth commissions, war crime tribunals, and forensic exhumations captured international attention, the Spanish model, with its emphasis on impunity for and public amnesia of past crimes, appeared increasingly anachronistic."[95] Soon enough, the revision of official memory to include the individual memories of those previously silenced was understood to be a necessary step toward reconciliation and democratic transition. What followed was the 'memory boom' of the 2000s which sought to uncover previously silenced truths. There were calls to uncover mass graves, rename street signs, officially condemn the dictatorship, and publicly recognize its victims.

The Spanish government employed official methods to recover repressed memories, namely through legislation. The socialist government of Prime Minister José Luis Rodriguez Zapatero established an official committee to study the experiences of victims of repression during Franco. Two years of study and heated parliamentary debate between the left and right wings, culminated in the passage of the Law of Historical Memory in October 2007.[96] It provided for various initiatives such as mass grave exhumations, recognition of refugees, and citizenship rights for the exiled. It also officially recognized the suffering of the persecuted under Franco.

The method of memory recovery through grave exhumations was initiated by the journalist Emilio Silva Berrera, who in 2000 uncovered the unmarked grave of his grandfather, a victim of Nationalist violence in 1936.[97] He then went

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[95] Jonah S. Rubin, "How Francisco Franco Governs From Beyond the Grave: An Infrastructural Approach to Memory Politics in Contemporary Spain," American Ethnologist 45, no. 2 (2018): 214-27.

[96] Robert Bahar and Almudena Carracedo, "Spain is Finally Ready to Break the Pact of Silence Over Its Fascist Past," *Newsweek,* November 28, 2018. https://www.newsweek.com/spain-finally-ready-break-its-pact-silence-over-fascist-past-1235238

[97] Boyd, "The Politics of History and Memory," 133-48.

on to found the Association for the Recuperation of Historical Memory (ARMH), with the mission of excavating mass graves in order to expose Spain's violent past, give proper burials to those who did not get them, and therefore bring justice to victims and families. Since 2000, the association has discovered a total of "158 unmarked graves and, from those graves has unearthed over 1300 victims who were executed by the Nationalist forces between 1936 and 1975" but the association also estimates that there are over 400 mass graves throughout Spain that have yet to be found. The opening of these mass graves has brought the experience of the vanquished into the open, challenging the hegemonic contrived history of Franco and the victors.

Cultural expression has also been a method for national remembering. Narratives of the past have dominated the spheres of literature and cinema with documentary films and testimonial novels, recovering lost memories of the Civil War and Franco era.[98] Bestselling novels such Soldados de Salamina by Javier Cercas, La lengua de las mariposas by Manuel Rivas, or Las trece rosas by Jesús Ferrero have all provided literary narratives that have allowed Spaniards to engage with their pasts.[99] These novels place individual memory as superior to social memory, allowing complexity to enter the historical narrative and challenging the historical memory created by Franco and the designers of the transition.

One of the most recent and profound documentary films, "The Silence of Others," tells stories of children torn from their mothers at birth, innocent people executed in buried and mass graves, torture, and successive generations fighting for justice and recognition.[100] It explores how Spain is still divided, four decades into democracy. The film's directors, Robert Bahar and Almudena Caracedo, wrote about what the Madrid cinema looked like during the documentary premiere, "A group of Spanish teenagers sat as they listened to stories of their

[98] Richards, *After the Civil War.*
[99] José Colmeiro, "A Nation of Ghosts?: Haunting, Historical Memory and Forgetting in Post-Franco Spain," *452ºF: revista de teoría de la literatura y literatura comparada* 4, (2011): 17-34.
[100] Ibid.,

country they had never heard before."[101] This observation shows the generational divide among Spaniards regarding awareness of Franco's atrocities. Because the 1977 Amnesty Law provided for the official ignoring of Franco-era violence and repression and education, not only was Spain's young generation not hearing stories from their families, but from their schools as well. Media, with the purpose of recovering memory, has been the first exposure to the topic of Spain's fascist past for many young people.

While the 'memory boom' has served to recover lost memories, it has also reignited debate and division. Historian Paul Preston argues that there are now "two sets of historical memory. The homogeneous Francoist one imposed on the country during four decades of dictatorship and the diverse Republican ones repressed until recent years."[102]

[101] Robert Bahar and Almudena Carracedo, "Spain is Finally Ready to Break the Pact of Silence Over Its Fascist Past."
[102] Preston, *The Spanish Civil War.*

Production

Scholar Foster Chamberlain states that "a podcast with professional production quality will garner more listeners and will earn…legitimacy." This is absolutely true, and my lack of experience and access to professional audio recording and editing equipment were the main challenges I attempted to overcome with this project. Even with these challenges, I was able to use resources and technology that was easily operative and available to me in order to produce finished, although amateur, audio programs. Therefore, each episode could be considered 'drafts' and are able to be restructured, rerecorded, and republished in the future to improve the listenability and professionalism of the final products.

I recorded each podcast episode using the Voice Memos application for iPhone. When available, I was able to utilize a small external microphone that plugs into the phone. Unfortunately, because I didn't always have an external microphone with me, I sometimes used the built-in microphone. Some interviewees, who sent me voice messages through WhatsApp or iMessage, also used the built-in microphones on their phones. Because of this, the audio was at times inconsistent and needed to be re-recorded. Not all audio was able to be redone so there are potentially noticeable differences in sound quality throughout the episodes. Recorded vocal errors such as the "popping p" sound and loud breathing were difficult to avoid without a proper microphone filter and even more difficult to remove in post-production software.

After compiling all audio recordings, I uploaded them into Apple's GarageBand audio editing software. GarageBand is a user-friendly software capable of producing simple spoken or musical audio tracks. Although not as complex or professional as Adobe Audition or Logic Pro, GarageBand is a viable option for beginners with little to no audio production experience, as the interface is intuitive and relatively simple to learn how to use. Although it took me a substantial

amount of time and effort to learn how to use the software and its tools, in the end, I was able to arrange several audio recordings into one continuous track.

The opening, transitional, and closing music was selected and downloaded through the copyright-free audio database Pixabay, and is named "Taranta." It was composed by Paco Peña and played on guitar by Ahmad MousaviPour.[103]

[103] Taranta compose by Paco Peña Guitar : Ahmadmousavipour - Pixabay, https://pixabay.com/music/solo-guitar-taranta-compose-by-paco-pena-guitar-ahmadmousavipour-109199/.

Cover Image Design and Publishing

I created the podcast cover art using the Canva application for iPhone. According to the company's website, "Canva is an online design and visual communication platform with a mission to empower everyone in the world to design anything and publish anywhere."[104] The application interface is easy to use, with the ability to design starting from scratch or with a template. It allows the designer to adjust text, colors, design elements, and photos quickly and simply in order to create unique and personal graphics. Utilizing free technological services such as Canva is strategic and invaluable, especially if the designer does not have extensive graphic design experience. A visually captivating podcast cover is essential to the success of the podcast as it is "the first thing your listeners will see when they search for it on their phones. It's a visual first impression of your podcast and what you are trying to say."[105] The cover for "Remembering and Forgetting Franco" includes the text of the title as well as a black and white photo taken of my grandfather's house in Villabascones, Burgos, Spain before he became a refugee. The photo subtly implies the historical genre of the podcast as well as ties into the personal and familial nature of it. I intentionally chose the colors black, white, and red, to create contrast that allows the listener to easily read the text.

The podcast was published to both Apple Podcasts and Spotify through RSS Feed.[106] The online platform Spotify for Podcasters, previously Anchor, is a simple and accessible interface that allows the user to upload or record audio, upload the podcast cover, and write a description

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[104] About Canva, https://www.canva.com/about/.

[105] Anne Carton et al., "How to Design a Podcast Cover : A Complete Guide," Designhill, April 7, 2023, https://www.designhill.com/design-blog/how-to-design-a-podcast-cover-a-complete-guide/.

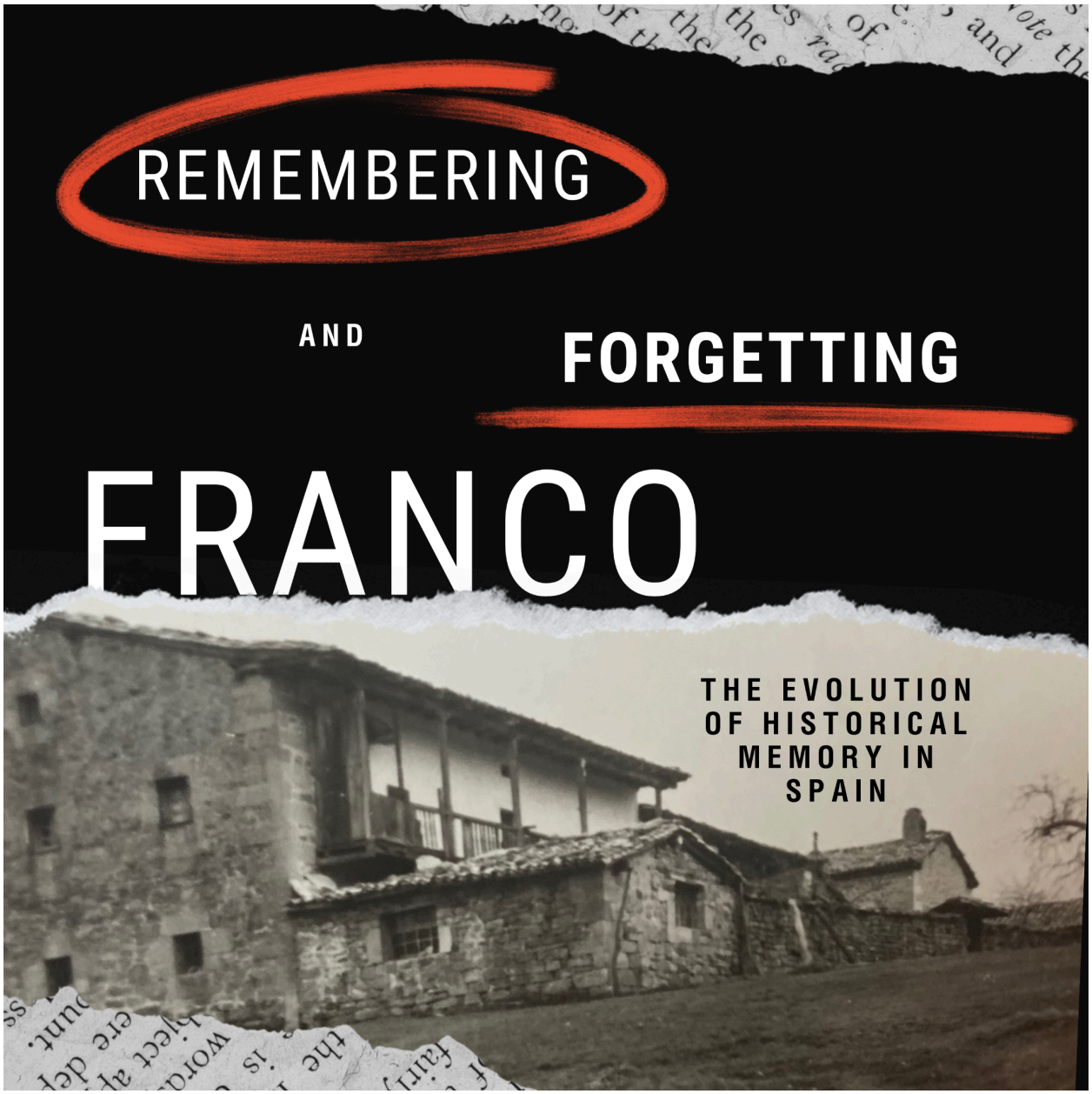
[106] RSS is the abbreviated form of Rich Site Summary or Real Simple Syndication. RSS allows podcast hosting platforms to detect new content when it's available, distribute it in real time, and notify listeners.

for each episode. The free service offers powerful tools for editing, analyzing listener statistics, and earning money from advertising revenue if the creator wishes to.[107] With its intuitive design and published how-to tutorials, using the interface is easy, even for beginner podcasters.

[107] "Spotify for Podcasters," Spotify for Podcasters, https://podcasters.spotify.com/.

Appendix I

Cover Image



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