

Figure 3.2<sup>526</sup>  
 Map of the *Ruta lorquiana*, showing  
 Granada, Fuente Vaqueros, Valderrubio, Alfacar, and Víznar



Figure 3.3<sup>527</sup>  
 The Huerta de San Vicente

<sup>526</sup> “Museo Casa Natal” brochure, acquired 17 June 2006.

<sup>527</sup> Antonio Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros* (Fuente Vaqueros, Spain: Casa-Museo Federico García Lorca, 1998), 48-49.



Figure 3.4

The Huerta de San Vicente, in June 2006

The door at the left is the door to the bookstore

The door to the right, in between the two windows, is the entrance to the house

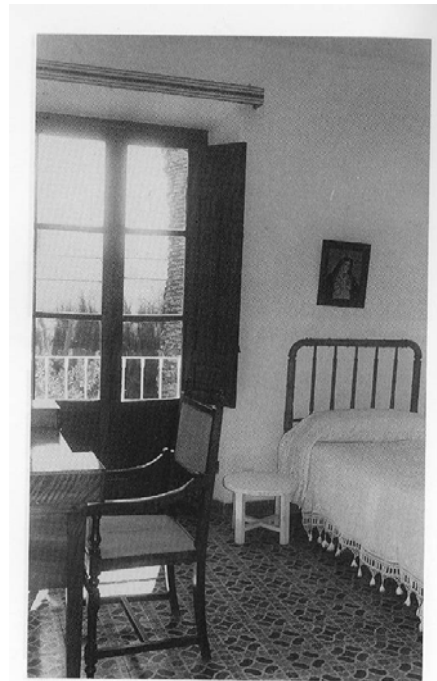
Above this door and to the left is Lorca's balcony, opening off his bedroom

Figure 3.5<sup>528</sup>

Lorca's bedroom

The desk is the same one he used  
when finishing many of his great works

Currently, there is a "La Barraca"  
poster over the desk



<sup>528</sup> Ian Gibson, *Lorca's Granada: A Practical Guide* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992).



Figure 3.6

The central plaza in Fuente Vaqueros, dedicated to Lorca  
The first thing that visitors see when getting off the bus is the red map, on the left,  
with a picture of Lorca and snapshots of all the Lorca-related sites in town



Figure 3.7

Along the central plaza are Lorca related images, including this emblem of “La Barraca,”  
the theater troop that Lorca led during the Second Republic

Figure 3.8

*“Cuando yo era niño vivía en un pueblo muy callado y oloroso de la Vega de Granada. Todo lo que en él ocurría y todos sus sentires pasan hoy por mí velados por la nostalgia de la niñez y por el tiempo... sus calles, sus gentes, sus costumbres, su poesía y su maldad serán como el andamio donde anidarán mis ideas de niño fundidas en el crisol de la pubertad.”*

“When I was a young, I lived in a very reserved and fragrant town in the Granadine vega. Everything that happened there and all those feelings pass by now, veiled by nostalgia for youth and by time... her streets, her people, her customs, her poetry, her evil will be the stage where my childhood ideas, formed in her melting pot, will be sheltered.”

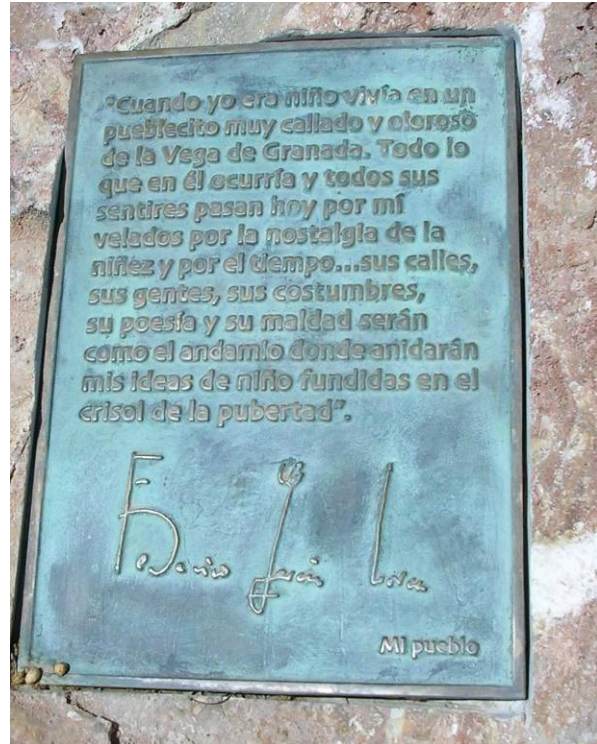


Figure 3.9



*“La poesía es algo que anda por las calles. Que se mueve, que pasa por nuestro lado. Todas las cosas tienen su misterio, y la poesía es un misterio que tienen todas las cosas. Se pasa junto a un hombre, se mira una mujer, se adivina la marcha oblicua de un perro, y en cada uno de estos objetos humanos está la poesía...”*

“Poetry is something that wanders through the streets. That moves, that passes by our side. All things have their mystery, and poetry is a mystery that all things have. One passes a man, sees a woman, guesses the slanting walk of a dog and in each of these human objects is the poetry.”

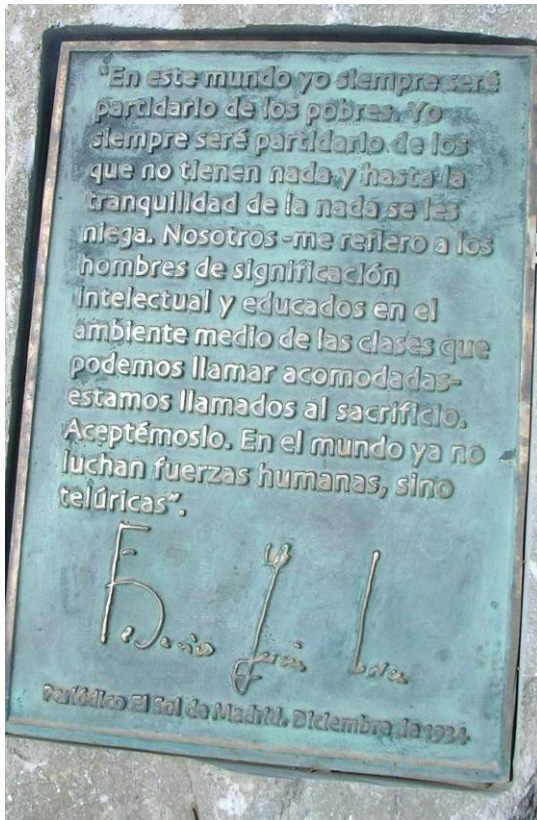


Figure 3.10

*“En este mundo yo siempre seré partidario de los pobres. Y siempre seré partidario de los que no tienen nada y hasta la tranquilidad de la nada se les niega. Nosotros – me refiero a los hombres de significación intelectual y educados en el ambiente medio de las clases que podemos llamar acomodadas – estamos llamados al sacrificio. Aceptémoslo. En el mundo ya no luchan fuerzas humanas, sino telúricas.”*

“In this world I will always be a supporter of the poor. I will always be a supporter of those who have nothing and who are even denied tranquility of nothing. We – I refer to men of intellectual formation and educated in the environment of classes that can be called well-off – we are called to the sacrifice. We must accept it. Human forces no longer fight in the world; rather, these forces are telluric.”

Figure 3.11

*“...El teatro es uno de los más expresivos y útiles instrumentos para la educación de un país y el barómetro que marca su grandeza o su desmayo... El teatro es una escuela de llanto y de risa y una tribuna libre donde los hombres pueden poner en evidencia morales viejas o equívocas y explicar con ejemplos vivos normas eternas del corazón y el sentimiento del hombre.”*

“... Theater is one the most expressive and useful instruments for the education of a country and the barometer that marks its grandeur or depression... Theater is a school of wailing and laughter and a free tribunal where men can disprove old or equivocal morals and show with living examples the eternal norms of the heart and the feelings of man.”

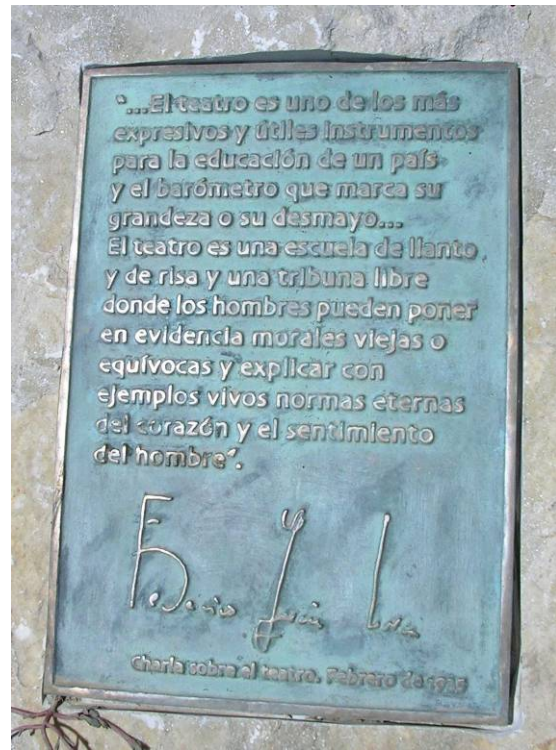


Figure 3.12

*“La guerra es algo monstruoso, criminal; increíble que todavía, tras el amargo trago del catorce, haya quien piense en ella. Yo creo que la guerra es una vergüenza para nuestra civilización.”*

“War is something monstrous, criminal; it is incredible that after the bitter swallow of fourteen there are still those who believe in her. I think that war is a disgrace for our civilization.”

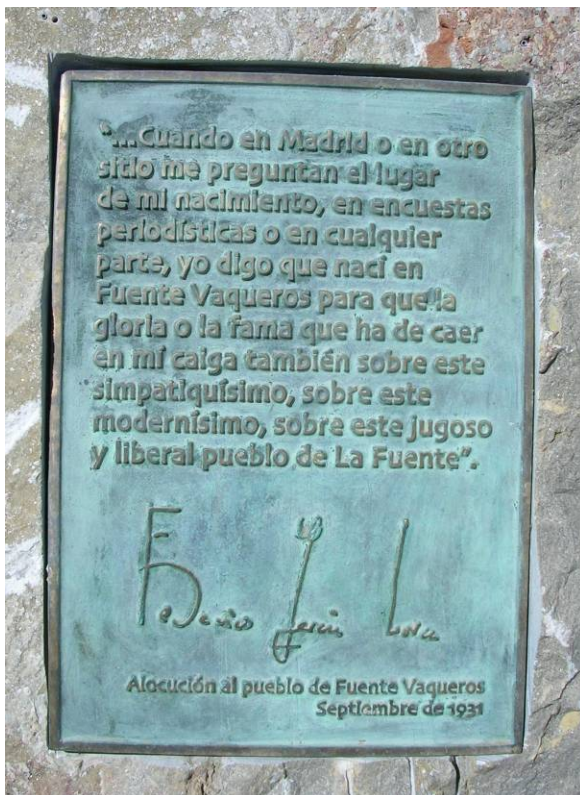
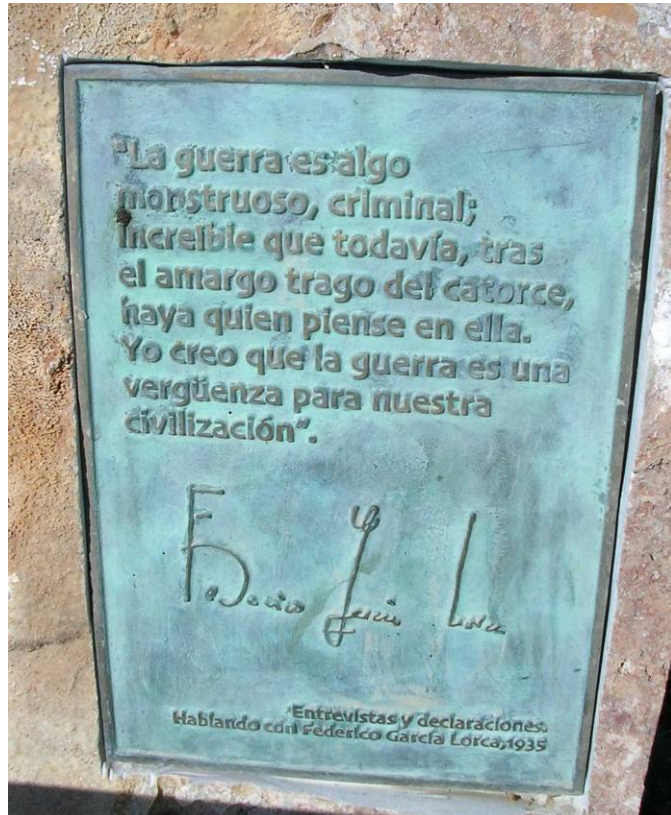


Figure 3.13

*“Cuando en Madrid o en otro sitio me preguntan el lugar de mi nacimiento, en encuestas periodísticas o en cualquier parte, yo digo que nací en Fuente Vaqueros para que la gloria o la fama que ha de caer en mí caiga también sobre este simpatiquísimo, sobre este modernísimo, sobre este jugoso y liberal pueblo de la Fuente.”*

“When in Madrid or some other location they ask me where I was born, in journalistic surveys or for some other reason, I say that I was born in Fuente Vaqueros so that the glory and the fame that falls upon me will also fall upon this most friendly, most modern, this pithy and liberal town of the Fuente.”



Figure 3.14  
The fountain at the end of the plaza  
Calle Poeta García Lorca is immediately to the left



Figure 3.15  
“El pueblo a F. García Lorca” (From the people and the town to F. García Lorca)

Figure 3.16  
Calle de la Trinidad, Number 4 –  
the Museo Casa Natal  
in Fuente Vaqueros



Figure 3.17<sup>529</sup>  
The storeroom at the Museo  
Casa Natal, which is used for  
temporary exhibitions

<sup>529</sup> "Cincuentenario de la muerte del poeta: Itinerario lorquiano," *Ideal (Granada)*, 19 August 1986.





Figure 3.18<sup>530</sup>

The monarchs (second and third from left) visit the Museo Casa Natal  
This picture was taken in the museum's patio

Note the bust of Lorca in the background  
This is the only of the three sites that has a sculpture of Lorca on site



Figure 3.19<sup>531</sup>

José Agustín Goytisolo, one of the Commission of 33, speaks at the first “el 5 a las 5”

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<sup>530</sup> Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 288-289.

<sup>531</sup> *Ibid.*

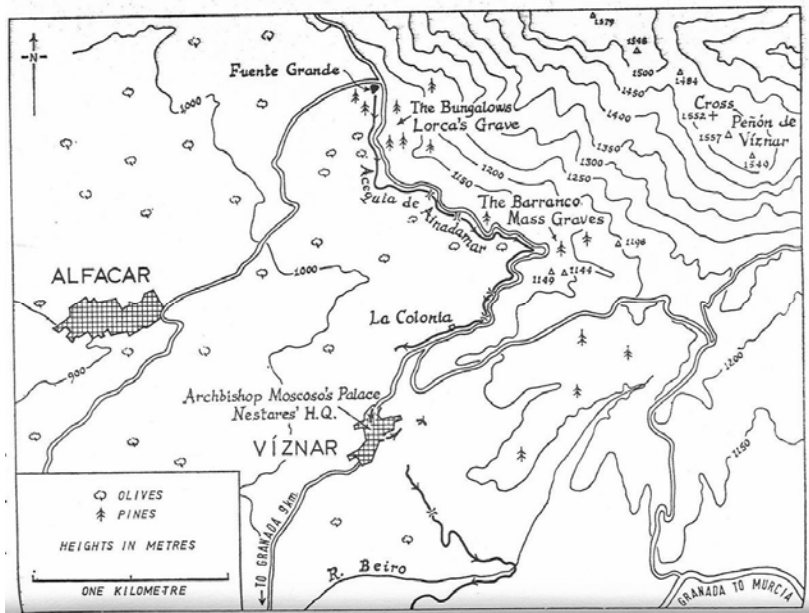


Figure 3.20<sup>532</sup>  
Map, showing the  
highway between  
Alfacar and Víznar  
as it was in the 1950s

Currently the town  
of Alfacar stretches  
to Fuente Grande



Figure 3.21<sup>533</sup>  
1983: The mayors of Alfacar, Víznar, and Fuente Vaqueros  
mark the anniversary of Lorca's death by laying flowers next to the olive tree

Note the absence of representation from Granada

<sup>532</sup> Ian Gibson, *Federico García Lorca: A Life*, 1st American ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989).

<sup>533</sup> Andrés Cardenas, "El recuerdo de Federico García Lorca unió para siempre a tres pueblos," *Ideal (Granada)*, 20 August 1983.



Figure 3.22  
Main Entrance to the García Lorca Park in Alfacar



Figure 3.23  
The sign that accompanies the entrance to the park fails to explain the significance of either the park or García Lorca. The text focuses on the layout of the plaza, the “cascading water,” and the larger network of hiking trails in the area. No mention is made of Lorca, his death, or why the park was constructed on this site.

Figure 3.24  
The only reference to politics at  
the García Lorca Park is this  
graffiti with the symbol for  
anarchism: “Viva la revolución” /  
“Long live the revolution”



Figure 3.25  
The main plaza, viewed from above; this image was taken in summer 2006  
Note the tracks for water and what appears to be fountain in the center  
Despite the fact that the sign at the entrance mentions “cascading water” there is no  
evidence of running water at the site



Figure 3.26  
The central plaza in June 2006; note the state of disarray



Figure 3.27



Figure 3.28



Figure 3.29



Figure 3.30

*¿Si la muerte es la muerte,  
 qué será de los poetas  
 y de las cosas dormidas  
 que ya nadie las recuerda?  
 ¡Oh sol de las esperanzas!  
 ¡Agua clara! ¡Luna nueva!  
 ¡Corazones de los niños!  
 ¡Almas rudas de las piedras!  
 Hoy siento en el corazón  
 un vago temblor de estrellas  
 y todas las rosas son  
 tan blancas como mi pena.*

And if death is death,  
 what will become of poets  
 and sleep things  
 that no one now remembers?  
 Oh sun of hope!  
 Clear water! New moon!  
 Hearts of children!  
 Rough souls of the rocks!  
 Today in my heart  
 I feel a vague tremor of stars,  
 and all roses are white,  
 as white as my pain.



Figure 3.31  
 The first of the eight tiled excerpts of Lorca's poetry found in the park  
 The subsequent images are arranged from left to right  
 as viewed from the park entrance<sup>534</sup>

<sup>534</sup> All of the poems and translations come from Federico García Lorca, Christopher Maurer, and Catherine Brown, *Collected Poems* (New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2002).

*Y que yo me la llevé al río  
creyendo que era mozuela,  
pero tenía marido.*

*Fue la noche de Santiago  
y casi por compromiso.  
Se apagaron los faroles  
y se encendieron los grillos.  
En las últimas esquinas  
toqué sus pechos dormidos,  
y se me abrieron de pronto  
como ramos de jacintos.*

So I took her to the river.  
I thought she wasn't married,  
but she had a husband.  
It was St. James' eve,  
and almost as if we agreed.  
The streetlights all went out,  
the crickets went on.  
At the far edge of town  
I touched her sleeping breasts.  
They opened to me suddenly  
like fronds of hyacinth.



Figure 3.32

*Tardará mucho tiempo en nacer, si es que nace,  
un andaluz tan claro, tan rico de aventura.  
Yo canto su elegancia con palabras  
que gimen  
y recuerdo una brisa triste por los  
olivos.*

There will not be born for a  
long time, if ever  
an Andalusian like him, so open,  
so bold in adventure.  
I sing his elegance in words that  
moan  
and I remember a sad breeze in  
the olive grove.



Figure 3.33



*Verde que te quiero verde,  
verde viento. Verdes ramas.  
El barco sobre el mar  
y el caballo en la montaña.  
Con la sombra en la cintura  
ella sueña en su baranda,  
verde carne, pelo verde,  
con ojos de fría plata.  
Verde que te quiero verde.  
Bajo la luna gitana,  
las cosas la están mirando  
y ella no puede mirarlas.*

Green I want you green.  
Green wind, green boughs.  
Ship on the sea  
and horse on the mountain.  
With shadow at her waist  
she dreams at her railing,  
green flesh, green hair,  
and eyes of cold silver.  
Green I want you green.  
Under the gypsy moon  
things are looking at her,  
and she cannot return their gaze.

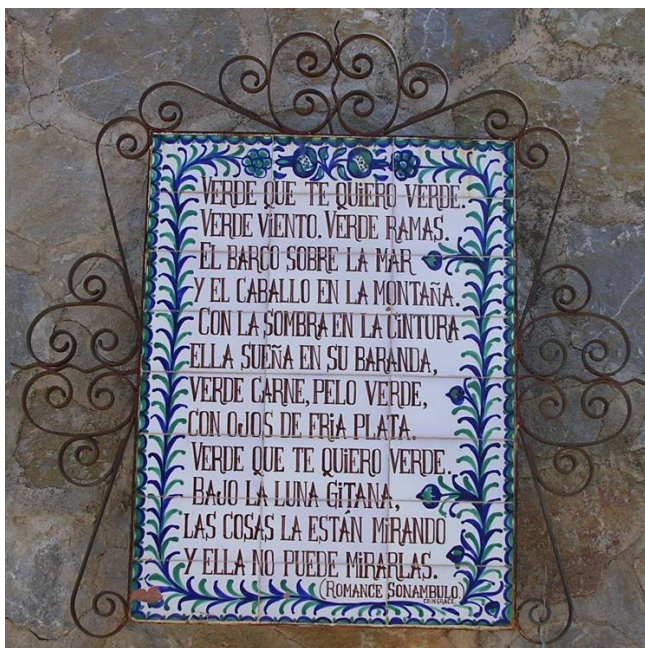


Figure 3.34



*Bañó con sangre enemiga  
su corbata carmesí,  
pero eran cuatro puñales  
y tuvo que sucumbir.  
Cuando las estrellas clavan  
rejones al agua gris,  
cuando los erales sueñan  
verónicas de alhelí,  
voces de muerte sonaron  
cerca del Guadalquivir.*

He bathed his scarlet tie  
in the enemy's blood,  
but there were four blades  
and he had to go down.  
When stars drive their lances  
into bulls of grey water,  
when calves are dreaming  
veronicas of gillyflowers,  
voices of death were heard  
near the Guadalquivir.

Figure 3.35

*Alto pinar!  
Cuatro palomas por el aire van.*

*Cuatro palomas  
vuelan y tornan.  
Llevan heridas  
sus cuatro sombras.*

*¡Bajo pinar!  
Cuatro palomas en la tierra están.*

Tall pine grove!  
Four doves ply the air.

Four doves  
fly off and return.  
There are wounds  
in their four shadows.

Low pine grove!  
Four doves are on the ground.



Figure 3.36



*La luna vino a la fragua  
 Con su polisión de nardos.  
 El niño la mira, mira.  
 El niño la está mirando.  
 En el aire conmovido  
 mueve la luna sus brazos  
 y enseña, lúbrica y pura,  
 sus senos de duro estaño.*

The moon came to the forge  
 wearing a bustle of nards.  
 The boy is looking at her.  
 The boy is looking hard.  
 In the troubled air  
 the wind moves her arms,  
 showing, lewd and pure,  
 her hard, tin breasts.

Figure 3.37

*Aquellos ojos míos de mil novecientos diez  
 no vieron enterrar a los muertos,  
 ni la feria de ceniza del que llora por la madrugada,  
 ni el corazón que tiembla arrinconado como un caballito de mar.*



Those eyes of mine in nineteen-ten  
 saw no one dead and buried,  
 no village fair of ash from one who weeps at dawn,  
 no trembling heart cornered like a sea horse.

Figure 3.38



Figure 3.39

This path appears to lead nowhere; it is, however, the only way to get to the olive tree where Lorca may be buried



Figure 3.40

The “plaza” at the top of the steps; the gravel “road” shows the way to the olive tree, but there are no signs



Figure 3.41

The olive tree, in the center, with the marker is the probable site of Lorca's grave



Figure 3.42

The marker next to the olive tree reads:

*“A la memoria de  
Federico García Lorca  
y a todos las víctimas  
de la guerra civil  
1936-1939”*

“To the memory of  
Federico García Lorca  
and of all the victims  
of the civil war  
1936-1939”

Note the dried flowers at the base,  
left by some Lorca admirer.



Figure 3.43

This entrance to the park, closest to both Alfacar and the bus stop, is always locked. This gives the impression, as one walks along the highway, that the park is closed.

One can see through the gate the olive tree and plaque that mark the site of Lorca's burial, so it is rather surprising that this gate is not open, since it is both closer to the town and bus stop and closer to Lorca's grave, which is, at least in theory, the reason that the park exists.



Figure 3.44<sup>1</sup>

Andy García, who played Lorca on film, leaves flowers at the plaque  
Note that the second gate is open in the background

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<sup>1</sup> Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 288-289.

## Gernika and *Guernica*: The Legacy of a Bombing

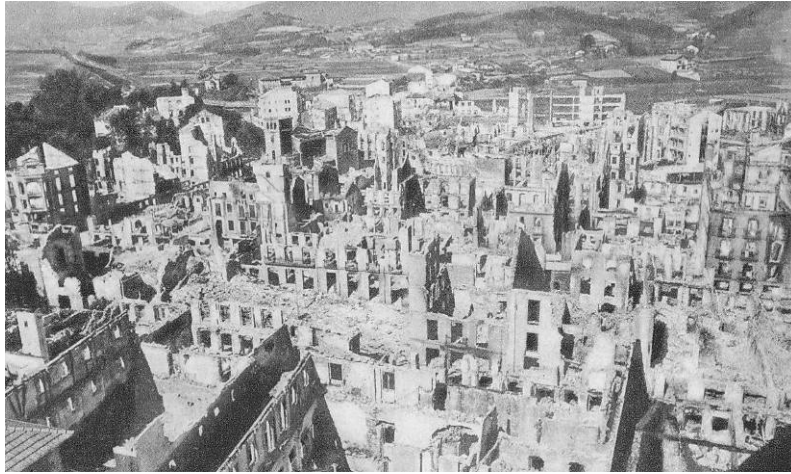


Figure 4.1<sup>1</sup>

“I will raze Biscay to the ground, beginning with Bilbao’s industries of war. I have the means to do so.” – General Emilio Mola (commander of the Nationalist forces in the north), January 1937<sup>2</sup>



Figure 4.2<sup>3</sup>

“A picture is not thought out and settled beforehand. While it is being done it changes as one’s thoughts change. And when it is finished, it still goes on changing, according to the state of mind of whoever is looking at it. A picture lives a life like a living creature, undergoing the changes imposed on us by our live from day to day. This is natural enough, as the picture lives only through the man who is looking at it.” – Pablo Picasso<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Federico de Urrutia, *Estampas de la guerra*, 6 vols. (Bilbao: Editora Nacional, 1937), 1: 56.

<sup>2</sup> Martin, *Picasso's War*, 236.

<sup>3</sup> Herschel Browning Chipp and Javier 'usell, *Picasso's Guernica: History, Transformations, Meanings, California Studies in the History of Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

On April 26, 1937, the city of Gernika<sup>1</sup> in northern Spain was bombed; due to the bombing and related fires, 71% of the city was completely destroyed. Already under commission by the Republican government, Pablo Ruiz Picasso used the bombing as the inspiration for a painting to be displayed at the 1937 Exhibition in Paris – *Guernica*. After display in Paris and a few world tours, it resided in the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York City until, in accordance with Picasso's wishes, it was returned to a newly democratic Spain in 1981. Despite claims from Gernika, Malaga (Picasso's birth place), and Barcelona, the painting has been housed in Madrid since then and is unlikely to ever move again. Although it was not initially well-received, the painting has come to be considered one of, if not the, masterpiece(s)<sup>2</sup> of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, specifically important as an allegory of the horrors of modern warfare.

Meanwhile, the actual bombing of Gernika was talked about much less than Picasso's painting. Like the rest of the Spain, Gernika was unable to discuss the aspects of the Spanish Civil War that did not favor Franco and the bombing was thus a forbidden topic until his death.<sup>3</sup> With Franco's death, it became more possible to talk about local history, and specifically the bombing; historical societies did form in Gernika to reinvestigate these topics. In the late 1990s, the local government decided to turn the unassuming local history museum into the Gernika Peace Museum, a reflection on the 1937 bombing that used the past as a platform to create activism for peace. Unlike the

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<sup>1</sup> Gernika is the spelling of the town's name in *Euzkera* (the language of the Basques); Guernica is the Castilian spelling for the same municipality. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, Gernika joined with a neighboring village to form the modern Gernika-Lumo. I will use the shorter Gernika to refer to the town and *Guernica* to refer to the painting, to avoid confusion and to underscore the differences in indigenous and other perception of the bombing and subsequent history of Gernika-Lumo.

<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, a list of the 100 greatest works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, published by the BBC in 1998 includes Lorca's *Poeta en Nueva York* (Poet in New York) and Picasso's *Mujer en azul* (Woman in Blue) but not *Guernica*. Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 285.

<sup>3</sup> One man who had witnessed the bombing stated that he had kept silent during the dictatorship because "we were all frightened to speak out, we lived in constant fear we would receive a beating." Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 201.



painting, this museum was specifically created to inform the public about the facts of the bombing and its impact on local culture. However, the painting is housed in one of the premier art museums in the Spanish capital, while the Peace Museum is in a small town, forty minutes away from the nearest airport and train stations. Furthermore, Basque Country is perceived, by most non-Basques, as an unsafe region, due in large part to the terrorist actions of the Basque separatist *Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna* (ETA; Basque Country and Freedom). Despite hopes that peace talks between the federal government and ETA would change the reputation of the area, those talks seem to have fallen apart and Gernika continues to have trouble attracting tourists, both Spanish and foreign.<sup>4</sup> Thus, while the Gernika Peace Museum is one of the first Spanish steps toward informing the public about the war, at least in the immediate future, it is the painting *Guernica* that will continue to have the most impact on the public's collective memory of the Spanish Civil War.

### **The Bombing of Gernika and its Aftermath**

In early 1937, the Nationalists did not control any of the industrial centers of Spain, and needed to focus their war effort on rapidly acquiring access to factories and shipping. In this context, General Mola declared that he would use any means necessary to advance in Basque Country in order to rapidly seize Bilbao, the industrial capital of

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<sup>4</sup> ETA was founded around 1960, designed to violently resist Franco and agitate for a Basque state. Their first lethal attack was carried out in 1961. Since 2000, their attacks seem to have decreased in scale – during the past four years only four have been killed by ETA compared to 800 in the previous 36 years. As a result of this decrease in violence, the socialist Prime Minister, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero agreed to open negotiations with ETA for a permanent ceasefire. However, a bombing in fall 2006 (possibly by a schism group within the organization) ended these talks and led the public to believe that negotiating with ETA was the wrong course of action, which means that the negotiations are unlikely to restart in the near future. "Spain and Terrorism: Zapatero's Dilemmas," *The Economist*, 17 March 2007, Paloma Aguilar Fernández, "The Memory of the Civil War in the Transition to Democracy: The Peculiarity of the Basque Case," *West European Politics*, 4 (1998).

the north, without damaging its production capacity.<sup>5</sup> Due to the terrain, Mola's ground troops advanced slowly, so he used air attacks to control the land as the Nationalists' air supremacy was not contested by the Republicans.<sup>6</sup> On March 31, the town of Durango, in Biscay, was bombed,<sup>7</sup> and the locals knew that any nearby village could be similarly attacked.<sup>8</sup> What they did not expect, however, was the wholesale destruction wreaked on Gernika, which would be the first civilian population center completely destroyed by aerial bombing.<sup>9</sup>

It is not entirely clear why Gernika was picked as a target,<sup>10</sup> but there are many factors that seem to explain its destruction. First of all, Gernika was the town closest to the only bridge over the Mundaca River, a "strategic military target."<sup>11</sup> There was also an arms factory just outside of town that was supplying aid to the Republican forces.<sup>12</sup> In addition, the German Condor Legion, supplied by Hitler to help the Nationalist effort,<sup>13</sup> was directed to provide aerial support for General Emilio Mola's advance, through Gernika on the way to Bilbao.<sup>14</sup> However, the Condor Legion could have destroyed the military targets and supported the ground troops without razing the town to the ground. It is likely that the Nationalists were trying to demoralize their Basque opponents,

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<sup>5</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 22, Martin, *Picasso's War*, 31.

<sup>6</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 23, Seidman, *Republic of egos*, 91.

<sup>7</sup> Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 16.

<sup>8</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 37-38.

<sup>9</sup> Gernika was "the first town ever bombed in order to intimidate a civilian population." Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!*, 410.

<sup>10</sup> Or, for that matter, by whom; Herbert Southworth delves into this debate as length in his book and comes to the conclusion that the Condor Legion instigated the attack but with either prior knowledge or posterior consent of the Nationalists. Even he, however, can not prove one way or another where the order originated. *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 24.

<sup>12</sup> Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!*, 14.

<sup>13</sup> Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 18.

<sup>14</sup> A lack of coordination between Mola and the Condor Legion may explain why the city was bombed a full three days before the troops arrived. Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 27.

forcing them to abandon Bilbao without a major fight; this was particularly important to the Nationalists, given that in the past 100 years Bilbao had withstood two sieges.<sup>15</sup> The leader of the German Condor Legion, Lieutenant-Colonel Wolfram von Richthofen had advised Mola that “nothing is unreasonable that can further destroy enemy morale and quickly,”<sup>16</sup> so all that remained was to pick a particularly acute location. Gernika, given its history as the center of Basque identity,<sup>17</sup> was a symbol of everything that the Basques were fighting against Franco for, and destroying the town was thus effective in convincing the Basques to give up the fight. This strategy has never been admitted by the Nationalists, but it does help explain an otherwise overly aggressive act. While there are tactical military explanations that can explain the bombing, they do not justify a full-on attack. Rather, the psychological effect of the bombing was what determined its target (Gernika) and scale (immense).

Monday, April 26, 1937 was a market day in Gernika; the town was full with villagers from the area who had come to buy and sell goods. There were also a large number of refugees, who had come to Gernika to escape the Nationalist advance. Early in the day, a local government official saw planes in the sky and, alarmed, canceled the day’s *pelota*<sup>18</sup> game. He also had guards stationed at the entrance to the town to prevent

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<sup>15</sup> Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!*, 384.

<sup>16</sup> Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 139.

<sup>17</sup> Gernika was the location of the Casa de las Juntas, the traditional Basque parliament. It was also the home of the Gernika Tree, the site that kings had gone to since the 14<sup>th</sup> century to swear that they would uphold the promise to grant Basque Country some degree of autonomy. The city was thus representative of the separatism that the Falange called a “sin that cannot be forgiven.” Destroying Gernika was thus even more demoralizing than destroying any other town. Interestingly, however, neither the Casa de las Juntas nor the Gernika Tree were destroyed. Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 17, 93-95, 112, Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!*, xiii.

<sup>18</sup> The traditional Basque ball game *pelota* (Spanish for “ball”) is also referred to as *jai-alai* (the *Euzkera* word).

villagers from coming in, but many had already entered.<sup>19</sup> In the afternoon, the planes returned. This time they were not scouting the location; they were bombing it. Over the course of more than three hours, from 4:30 PM to 7:45 PM,<sup>20</sup> the city was destroyed by 48,500 pounds (22,000 kilograms)<sup>21</sup> of bombs dropped by the German Condor Legion.<sup>22</sup> The bombs came in three rounds: first, a large number of bombs were dropped on buildings. Then, as the villagers fled their houses, trying to find safer spaces, a second round of small targeted bombs were dropped on the streets; during this stage, the planes also strafed the town, killing many of the fleeing townspeople. Finally, a round of incendiary bombs (made from thermite) was dropped, starting fires that may have burned as high as 3,000 degrees Centigrade.<sup>23</sup> About 25% of the town was destroyed by direct bombardment, with an additional 46% destroyed by the ensuing fires. Of the remaining houses, 7% were badly “battered” and the rest, 22%, were at least partially damaged.<sup>24</sup> It is impossible to determine the number of casualties, but it has been estimated that around 1700 died,<sup>25</sup> either immediately or soon thereafter due to injuries

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<sup>19</sup> The bombing was constant during this period. One observer noted that “Five minutes did not elapse without the sky being black with German airplanes,” which may explain the darkness of Picasso’s painting. Rudolf Arnheim, *Picasso's Guernica: The Genesis of a Painting* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), 20, Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 33.

<sup>20</sup> Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!*, 15.

<sup>21</sup> Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 141.

<sup>22</sup> The leader of the Condor Legion, Lieutenant Count Max Hoyos, was in fact the same pilot who had dropped the relief crates with their message from Franco into the courtyard of Toledo’s Alcázar eight months before (see Chapter 1). Martin, *Picasso's War*, 35.

<sup>23</sup> Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!*, 15, 367.

<sup>24</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 32, 34, Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!*, 356.

<sup>25</sup> Several factors complicate any attempt to count the dead. First, no one knows how many people were in Gernika at the time of the bombing. Its prewar population was around 7,000, but due to the movement of refugees and the fact that April 26 was a market day, it is not possible to know what the population was that day. After the bombing, many bodies were completely burned, leaving no remains (including a few of the refugee shelters); others were quickly buried in mass graves. Many of the injured were taken to Bilbao, and it is hard to account for the number who died either en route or after arriving. Finally, as the Nationalists advanced into Gernika three days after the bombing, any attempts at record keeping were negated. However, accounting based on eyewitnesses and the impartial information available makes it clear that the number of dead was not in the dozens, as reported by Nationalist propaganda and other Francoist apologists, but well over 1000. Chipp and

sustained as a result of the bombardment. Despite the fact that the bombing was carried out at low altitude, and could therefore have been very accurate in hitting targets, neither of the two potential military targets – the bridge over the Mundaca and the nearby arms factory – was hit.<sup>26</sup> When news of the bombing reached Bilbao, foreign journalists rushed to the scene to send news to Europe and the United States.<sup>27</sup> Three days later, the Nationalists advanced in Gernika, forcing a shift in reporting. The Nationalists intentionally obscured facts, perpetuating falsehoods to shift blame for the bombing.<sup>28</sup>

Despite the fact that there was little reason to doubt the initial reports of what happened in Gernika, Nationalist propaganda attempted to create confusion in the narrative, thus deflecting responsibility for the events from the Nationalists and their allies. Over the years, a number of claims have served to shift the blame from where it belonged: that the bombing never happened,<sup>29</sup> that the city was burned by the retreating “Reds,”<sup>30</sup> that the city had been a military target,<sup>31</sup> that the bombing could not have happened because there were no Germans in Spain,<sup>32</sup> that the bombing was carried out entirely by the Germans and could not be blamed on Spanish troops,<sup>33</sup> etc. George Lowther Steer, one of the journalists who arrived at Gernika the night of April 26, referred to the various claims advanced by the Nationalists as “some of the most

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Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 33, Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 16, 110, Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!*, 354.

<sup>26</sup> Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!*, 14.

<sup>27</sup> It is because the foreign journalists told the story that it has become as well known as it is; there are many other atrocious events from the war that were never reported and thus do not exist in the public consciousness. *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>28</sup> Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 14-15.

<sup>29</sup> Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!*, 33.

<sup>30</sup> The Republicans were accused of treating Gernika the same way they had treated the Alcázar in Toledo. This myth persisted at least as long as 1970; in the terminology of Herbert Southworth the Nationalist fictions have proved “surprisingly vital.” *Ibid.*, xvii, xx, 32.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 38-39.

<sup>32</sup> Southworth, *El mito de la cruzada de Franco*, 10.

<sup>33</sup> Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!*, 39, 362.

horrible and inconsistent lying heard by Christian ears since Ananais [sic].<sup>34</sup> These contradictory claims have all been shown to be wrong, first by the journalists on the ground and later by Herbert Southworth, in his monumental book *Guernica! Guernica! A Study of Journalism, Diplomacy, Propaganda, and History*. Unlike at Alcázar, in Gernika there were reporters on the scene immediately after the bombing and their reports agree with what eyewitnesses have since stated, which in turn has been confirmed by the immense project of investigation carried out by Southworth.<sup>35</sup> Unlike many polemic issues, there was no “debate” over the events at Gernika – the Republicans stated their version of the story, which they stuck to, while the Nationalists kept changing their story to try to justify the gaps in their arguments.<sup>36</sup> There are, of course, some doubts that will remain about the exact narrative of events, but there is no reason to doubt that the bombing, by German forces, took place, with some degree of knowledge of Nationalist authorities,<sup>37</sup> and that the Nationalists subsequently lied to try to deflect international criticism.

However, given that Franco won the war, his version of history was necessarily imposed on Gernika and its residents; there was no place in Spain for pro-Republican arguments. After the war, it was decreed that each town, like Gernika, that had been 70% or more destroyed during the war had to officially recognize Franco as an “adopted

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<sup>34</sup> Ananias is a Biblical figure who lied to Peter about the amount of money he made from a sale and then dropped dead for his lies (see Acts 5 in the New Testament). *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>37</sup> The German Condor Legion acted independently of the Nationalist war effort; it answered only to Franco. Therefore, it is unlikely that the attack was ordered by a Spaniard, but razing Gernika clearly coincides with the aims of General Mola, who directed the war effort in Biscay. Southworth produces at least one document that implies that the Nationalists knew beforehand that Gernika would be bombed. In 1977, the town of Gernika formed a committee to investigate the facts and concluded that “General Franco was not, in principle, free from responsibility.” It is unlikely that the bombing was ordered by Franco, but neither can he be cleared from blame for the event. Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 202, Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 21, Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!*, 372.

son”<sup>38</sup> before funds would be appropriated for reconstruction.<sup>39</sup> After being forced to submit to this humiliating gesture, the residents of Gernika were further forced to submit to Franco’s ideas of national unity, this time in the form of architecture. Of the two architects, Gonzalo de Cárdenas and Luis de Gana, assigned to the reconstruction of Gernika only one was local; the principal architect planned the city in the style that he was more familiar with – Castilian.<sup>40</sup> It has been argued that the use of arcades and other novel architectural features was intended to respond to the rainy Basque weather, importing a style from central Spain to suit local conditions.<sup>41</sup> However, the locals view this reconstruction differently. The official Gernika audio guide posits this change in architecture as a stylistic imposition of Francoist ideas on Spanish identity, supplanting the local architectural style with the Franco-approved Castilian style.<sup>42</sup> Whether intentional or unintentional, the choice of replacing the indigenous style with a Castilian one is emblematic of the lack of respect for local Basque culture during the Franco

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<sup>38</sup> In this case, the term “adopted son” (*bijo predilecto*) was used to try to convince the public that Franco was beloved of the people of Gernika and, therefore, could have been responsible for the bombing of that town. In other cases, the term was used to posthumously expropriate the memory of Francoist detractors, as with composer Manuel de Falla who died in exile. He was given the title “adopted son” after his death in an attempt to make him a Francoist in the afterlife. Rein, "A Political Funeral," 10.

<sup>39</sup> Franco received a commemorative medallion on the occasion. Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 128.

<sup>40</sup> Martin mentions two architects and does not specify where they are from. My other source, the Gernika audio-guide (produced by their tourism office) claimed that one of the two was Castilian and the other Basque, but the audio-guide did not clarify which was which. Gernika-Lumo Tourist Office audio guide, English, 8 July 2006, Martin, *Picasso's War*, 180.

<sup>41</sup> One must wonder what Martin’s source is for this conclusion. It seems likely that he read some euphemistic, Francoist explanation of the change in architecture and swallowed it whole. *Ibid.*, 180-81.

<sup>42</sup> Gernika-Lumo Tourist Office audio guide, English, 8 July 2006.

dictatorship. It is also highly ironic that the reconstruction<sup>43</sup> centered around a large, brand new, indoor marketplace, since Gernika was destroyed on a market day.<sup>44</sup>

### **The Evolution of a Masterpiece: Picasso and *Guernica***

In early 1937, the Republican government<sup>45</sup> approached Picasso and commissioned a painting for the 1937 Exhibition in Paris. The theme of the exhibition was modern technological progress, but the Republicans wanted to create a pavilion that would highlight their fight against the Nationalists and help them raise money from supporters abroad.<sup>46</sup> Picasso's initial idea was a reflection on artistry, depicting himself at work in his studio, but when he read about the bombing at Gernika his ideas changed completely. On May 1, he started the first of many studies for what would become *Guernica*.<sup>47</sup> By June 6 he was finished with the immense painting, which measures 11'6" high by 25'8" long (3.50 by 7.76 meters)<sup>48</sup> The painting was displayed in Paris for the summer of 1937 and then traveled to England in an effort to raise money; all revenues from show admission fees went to the Republican government.<sup>49</sup> In 1939, when the Spanish Civil War ended and World War II was clearly approaching, the painting was in the United States on a tour designed to raise money for Spanish refugees, huddled in

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<sup>43</sup> The reconstruction was carried out by POWs. At least in this case, POWs were used for a project that was integral to the economic progress of Spain, unlike the Valley of the Fallen and other projects of monumentalization. Martin, *Picasso's War*, 181.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Picasso had already been named Director of the Prado by the Republican government. It was a nominal title, but one that showed his willingness to work with the government. Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 7.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 148.

<sup>47</sup> Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 116.

<sup>48</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 110, 134-35.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 156.



camps in the south of France. Picasso decided<sup>50</sup> that the painting was safer there than in Europe and left it in the care of the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), where it would remain until 1981.<sup>51</sup>

Over the course of this period – 1937 to 1981 – critical reception of the painting would change greatly. Originally considered to be a lesser work by a great artist,<sup>52</sup> Picasso's *Guernica* was later considered to be ahead of his time, foreshadowing the bombing of the major European cities and the atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.<sup>53</sup> Removed from the context of the Spanish Civil War, the painting was seen as an allegory for the general terrors of modern warfare, rather than a specific reference to the destruction of Gernika.<sup>54</sup> Many interpretations were advanced to claim that *Guernica* had little to do with Gernika. For example, despite the fact that the title and timeline of completion of the painting make it clear that Picasso constructed the painting in response to reports of the bombing, the figures in the painting reflect earlier themes

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<sup>50</sup> Despite the fact that the Spanish government had paid for the painting, these documents had been lost, and it was legally considered to be the property of Picasso, to do with as he liked, until the documents were found again in the 1979. van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 289-90.

<sup>51</sup> Because *Guernica* had never been to Spain and was forced to stay in the US, rather than return to Europe, due to political factors, many personified the painting as an exile. Thus, the painting was an immigrant that viewed the Statue of Liberty as a symbol of hope in 1940 and in 1981 it was “the last exile” to return to Spain. Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 117, van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 105, 303.

<sup>52</sup> Martin, *Picasso's War*, 119.

<sup>53</sup> This is especially the case if one considers, as many historians do, that the Spanish Civil War was the prelude to World War II and not an entirely separate event. van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 5, 19.

<sup>54</sup> Gijs van Hensbergen goes so far to say that the painting “acquired” the title *Guernica*, implying that the title is coincidence, rather than one expressly picked by Picasso. This is but one of many dubious claims made by van Hensbergen; he says, for example, that in the same way Anne Frank has become “symbolic” of all Jewish children who died in the Holocaust, and Auschwitz has become “shorthand” for the Holocaust, *Guernica* has become “synonymous with indiscriminate slaughter in whatever corner of the world such tragedy takes place.” This seems like an absurdly large claim to make, with no evidence to back it up. In addition to these broad claims early in his book, van Hensbergen, as a narrator and not a historian, fails to use footnotes, and I thus find him to be an untrustworthy author. I am using his book primarily for description – layout of exhibitions, popular reactions, etc. – and not for analysis and interpretation. The casual reader may find his book interesting, and it is, but it is hardly to be considered definitive. *Ibid.*, 3, 6.

explored by Picasso.<sup>55</sup> In addition, it has recently been discovered that Picasso had started sketching a painting showing the relationship between artist and subject, to be exhibited at the Exhibition, with the same general arrangement that *Guernica* eventually took, thus demonstrating that the composition of the work had little to do with the bombing that inspired it and more to do with Picasso's artistic style.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, Picasso had never been to Biscay,<sup>57</sup> and thus was not familiar with the locality.<sup>58</sup> The painting is not an attempt to literally depict the events at Gernika.<sup>59</sup> The reports that he received about the bombing came from newspapers, so by time he created the painting he was already two degrees removed from the painting.<sup>60</sup> Finally, the painting depicts only the victims and their suffering, with no clear reference to those who have caused the pain. This lack of a duality between victim and perpetrator can lead the viewer to interpret the painting as a depiction of suffering, not a political statement that indicts the aggressors for their crimes.<sup>61</sup> For all these reasons, it has been claimed that the painting, in fact, has little to do with Gernika and the Spanish Civil War.

However, *Guernica* is certainly linked to the bombing at Gernika. Picasso had been unable to compose the mural he was commissioned to create until he saw the

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<sup>55</sup> In addition, during this period Picasso was particularly concerned about his mother, in Barcelona, and the possibility that she would be affected by bombardment, a consideration which may have affected his artwork. Brigitte Baer, Steven A. Nash, and Robert Rosenblum, *Picasso and the War Years, 1937-1945* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 56, Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 52, 61, 78.

<sup>56</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 58, 64.

<sup>57</sup> The bull is something that while considered universally Spanish is really linked to Picasso's native Andalusia and its bullfights (*corridos*). Gernika is completely on the other side of the peninsula from Malaga, and is thus "ironically as far removed from the sun-baked soil of the *corrida* as was Picasso's Paris." Baer, Nash, and Rosenblum, *Picasso and the War Years*, 86, Martin, *Picasso's War*, 86.

<sup>58</sup> Basque painter Juan María Uslay considered it an affront that Picasso was to paint *Guernica* and not himself or another Basque who would have a better sense of this tragedy in a local context. Uslay continued the finished work to be "just 7 x 3 metres of pornography, shitting on Gernika, on Euskadi, on everything." This is yet another example that shows *Guernica's* ambiguous place in the creation of historical memory. van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 32-33, 72.

<sup>59</sup> Baer, Nash, and Rosenblum, *Picasso and the War Years*, 113.

<sup>60</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 42.

<sup>61</sup> Arnheim, *The Genesis of a Painting*, 21.

photographic report on the bombing at Gernika, with its “smoking rubble, shattered walls, and victims.”<sup>62</sup> As Herschel Chipp concludes in his definitive study of the painting, Picasso was affected by the horrors of the bombing of Gernika and created a piece of artwork, using symbols that he found meaningful despite their lack of literal reference to the events, to depict his reaction.<sup>63</sup> The painting is a “history painting,”<sup>64</sup> if not in the traditional sense of the term;<sup>65</sup> it is a painting inspired by events that happened, even though it does not represent those events in a literal way. Furthermore, it is certainly true that at the time he painted *Guernica*, Picasso was ideologically associated with the Republican side of the war, and he used his art as a fundraiser for the Republican cause.<sup>66</sup> In addition, *Guernica* was Picasso’s only work ever named after a specific, historical event which shows the importance that Picasso must have placed on the Gernika bombing.<sup>67</sup> However, his goal was not to create a photograph of the bombing. The elements of the painting:

...do not come together merely in a scene of war, a traditional picture of battle, or a propaganda statement; instead they invoke, with overwhelming compassion and devastating and mordant imagery, a universal experience of anguish and torment. Imbued as it is with all the power and force of Picasso’s expression, *Guernica* has endured for more than half a century as a beacon against violence, the cry of all humanity for peace and justice.<sup>68</sup>

Or, as another writer has described it, Picasso was committed to “the creation of art which is politically informed but not doctrinaire; to art which is reality-based but

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<sup>62</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 71.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

<sup>64</sup> An art history term; refers to a painting that depicts an episode that actually happened. Martin, *Picasso's War*, 266.

<sup>65</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, vii.

<sup>66</sup> Among other works created by Picasso at this time, the etching *Dream and Lie of Franco* was reprinted in postcard form, and the proceeds from its sale were used to support the Republican government. *Ibid.*, 16, 66.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

imaginatively elaborated.”<sup>69</sup> In other words, while the painting *Guernica* is linked to the Spanish Civil War and the Republican struggles, it is not merely a depiction<sup>70</sup> of that event.

While the painting itself does not tell the story of Gernika, its initial context did imply an educational and propagandistic function for the painting, a function which has disappeared over time. Context clearly affects the meaning that any individual takes from viewing *Guernica*, and, given the number of locations that it has been shown over the course of 70 years, this complicates any attempt to assign meaning to the painting. In its first context, at the Exhibition, the painting was next to an homage to the murdered García Lorca and across the aisle from a small cinema where pro-Republican documentaries were shown, thus giving it an inherently anti-Franco slant.<sup>71</sup> When the painting subsequently toured England, it was used as a fundraiser for relief agencies operating in Republican-occupied territory, thus continuing the use of the painting as propaganda.<sup>72</sup> However, soon thereafter, the meaning of the painting shifted. The Spanish Civil War ended, decreasing the painting’s use as pro-Republican propaganda and, at the same time, World War II started, which led the public came to see Picasso’s work as prescient of the new style of warfare.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, the work came to the United States and after a brief tour to raise money for refugee camps in the south of France, it was moved to MOMA, where it formed part of a Picasso retrospective. The

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<sup>69</sup> Quoted in Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> It is, in the end, hard to say exactly what Picasso wanted to represent with the painting. On some occasions, he claimed that each figure had specific symbolic meaning while on others he stated that in *Guernica* the horse was just a horse and the bull was just a bull. In general, Picasso did not use strict allegory or metaphor to represent concepts, so it would be nearly impossible to assign one meaning to each of the characters in the painting. Those looking for an explanation of the figures in *Guernica*, from an art history perspective, should consult the works by Rudolf Arnheim and Herschel Chipp. Arnheim, *The Genesis of a Painting*, Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*.

<sup>71</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 194.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 155.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 159.

painting thus transitioned from propaganda to the newest masterpiece created by Picasso; it was an artwork, rather than a document about the Spanish Civil War.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, due to the change of alliance with the Cold War, “While *Guernica* was on exhibit at MOMA all references to Franco and the Spanish Civil War on the painting’s explanatory label were discreetly lost.”<sup>75</sup> Instead, the horrors of Gernika were blamed solely on the Germans, a tactic that made sense in 1943.<sup>76</sup> This de-politicization of the painting over the course of forty years in MOMA<sup>77</sup> must have affected subsequent interpretations of the painting. Each of these changes, in the world and in the location of the painting, thus progressively disassociated *Guernica* with the bombing at Gernika and the Spanish Civil War.

At the same time, the changes in the meaning of *Guernica* moved in a slightly different direction in Spain. Initially, the painting, which had never been shown in Spain, seems to have been of little interest to that audience, which makes sense given that the Spaniards were living the tragedy represented in the painting.<sup>78</sup> However, while it is hard to track public opinion in Spain in these years, due to censorship and the inability of critics to see the painting, the painting had to have been well-known enough to worry the Franco government to the extent that it did. The painting and all reproductions were banned in Spain. Holding a copy, smuggled in across the French border, amounted to an act of political defiance, and some, like Basque writer Xabier Gereño, were even jailed

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 162, 167.

<sup>75</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 186.

<sup>76</sup> Presumably, at some date between 1943 and 1981, the references to German responsibility were toned down given the post-World War II world order. However, given the de-unification of Germany during this period, it would have been easy enough for scholars in general, and MOMA in particular, to continue blaming Nazis for the bombing. Baer, Nash, and Rosenblum, *Picasso and the War Years*, 115.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>78</sup> Only, perhaps, in Basque Country could the painting have proved cathartic. van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 217.

for receiving copies of the image.<sup>79</sup> For two generations of anti-Franco Spaniards, seeing the work was a form of “silent resistance.”<sup>80</sup> In some cases, the resistance was less silent and more public. In 1967, Barcelonan intellectuals and students used a print of *Guernica* in their protest.<sup>81</sup> Generally, the painting became a symbol associated with student protest.<sup>82</sup>

The painting gradually decreased in offensiveness to the Franco regime, and appreciation of Picasso and *Guernica* widened from disaffected Spaniards to a greater swath of society.<sup>83</sup> While the painting never lost its power as a political symbol, it did decrease in explosiveness over time, becoming, in Spain as in the rest of the world, an artwork. By 1960, a mention of *Guernica* was allowed to pass through the Spanish censorship<sup>84</sup> and in 1967 a Navarrese priest was acquitted after having been indicted for writing that the Nationalists destroyed Gernika.<sup>85</sup> As Spain moved further away from the war and the painting came to be seen as a masterpiece rather than a mess, Spain’s government was attracted by the prospect of possessing it. Even Franco tried to acquire the painting for Spain in the 1960s, probably because the creation of a Picasso Museum in Barcelona left Madrid behind in terms of Picasso collections.<sup>86</sup> However, given

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<sup>79</sup> One could also be jailed for attempting to observe the anniversary of the bombing. In 1970, 22 were detained in Gernika when they tried to protest on April 26. Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 127, van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 264.

<sup>80</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 237, 248.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 257.

<sup>82</sup> Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 117.

<sup>83</sup> Ironically, the first reproduction of the painting in Spanish press was in *El Alcázar*, the same conservative publication started by the defenders of the Alcázar during the siege. van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 258.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 230-32.

<sup>85</sup> Jackson, *Concise History*, 125.

<sup>86</sup> Equipo Crónica, an art collective from Valencia, used the painting in a 1969 series also called *Guernica*, which criticized Franco’s attempts to acquire the painting for his regime. Among other things, the group depicted the painting in a sterile gallery being viewed by a group of officials (one of whom seems to be royal, perhaps the crown prince). This specific work seems to critique exactly what happened to the painting – it was converted from a political symbol to an artwork displayed in a gallery, attended by some of the same people the painting was intended to criticize. Equipo Crónica’s

Picasso's statements, it was clear that he would never allow the painting to return to Spain while Franco was still in power.<sup>87</sup>

Franco's death, therefore, led some to believe that Spain was ready to receive the painting.<sup>88</sup> Picasso himself had died four years earlier, on April 8, 1973, leaving behind a will. Essentially, Picasso stipulated that *Guernica* could be returned to Spain when public liberties were reinstated, and he left it up to Roland Dumas, the executor of his will, to determine when this condition had been met.<sup>89</sup> The unclear direction of Spain in the late 1970s and concern about Spain's inability to adequately house the painting led Dumas to state that Spain was not yet ready to receive the painting. So, it was held by MOMA until 1981, when after a lengthy process, all parties involved<sup>90</sup> agreed that it was time to send *Guernica* to Spain for the first time.

The only remaining question was where to display the painting. Four locations – Madrid, Barcelona, Malaga, and Gernika – laid claim to the work. Madrid, the capital, was the home of most-respected art museum in Spain, the Prado. Barcelona was the site of the Picasso Museum. Malaga was the painter's birthplace. Gernika was the town whose history had inspired the painting. Each of these locations would have implied a

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work is now displayed in the Reina Sofía art museum with Picasso's. Joseba Elósegui, who saw Franco's attempt to acquire the painting as yet another expropriation that attempted to rewrite history, set himself on fire when Franco came to Gernika for the *pelota* championships. He did not succeed in harming Franco, nor did he kill himself, nor does it seem that he succeeded in his attempt to make Franco "feel on his own flesh the fire that destroyed Gernika." Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 170-71, Holo, *Beyond the Prado*, 40, van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 259-60, 271.

<sup>87</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 209.

<sup>88</sup> Martin, *Picasso's War*, 212.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 194-95.

<sup>90</sup> Dumas may have had control over the destiny of the painting, but he also had to secure the support of the Spanish government and the approval of MOMA. In addition, Picasso's heirs were in a lengthy suit over the distribution of the inheritance, so Dumas had to secure their approval as well, only finally convincing them to surrender claim to the painting when a ledger was found that showed that Picasso had been paid for the painting and that it was thus the property of the Spanish state, not of Picasso himself and, therefore, by extension, not the property of his heirs. Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 180-190, van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 211.

different meaning for the painting. In Madrid, it would be a symbol of *españolidad*,<sup>91</sup> part of the tradition of Spanish painting, and representative of the essential Spanish characteristics of the painting. In addition, as Paloma Aguilar notes, placing the painting in Madrid would stress the canonical truth of the Transition; we were all to blame and we were all victims. In this formula, *Guernica* is emblematic of the suffering of the entire Spanish population during the war; placing the painting in Madrid reinforces this new myth, born from the Pact of Silence.<sup>92</sup> In Barcelona, the painting would have been a work of Picasso, the great painter who spent many of his formative years there. Placing *Guernica* in Malaga, the least likely option,<sup>93</sup> would have implied some link between Picasso's place of origin and his work, stressing perhaps the Andalusian Picasso. Finally, had *Guernica* gone to Gernika, it would have reinforced the story of the Spanish Civil War and the painting's historical origins, more than its value as a masterpiece of art produced by Picasso. Gernika had been trying to acquire the painting since 1937, but until Franco's death they did expect any results. When he died in 1975, Gernika's mayor appealed directly to Picasso's widow, Jacqueline,<sup>94</sup> and later by speaking publicly about all the reasons that Gernika deserved the painting: "moral, artistic, historical, political, social and economic reasons for why exhibiting *Guernica* in Gernika was both recompense for the tragedy suffered and would act to heal the wounds of [the town]."<sup>95</sup> Despite these attempts, it never seemed likely, or even possible, that the painting would go to Gernika,

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<sup>91</sup> *Españolidad* can translate as "Spanishness" or "Spanish character." It specifically pertains to things that are pan-Spanish, encompassing some essence of Spanish identity that transcends all the other forms of the identity that exist in Spain. Madrid is the only one of these four cities that could possibly encompass *españolidad* because Barcelona, Malaga, and Gernika are each representative of very specific regional identities, Catalan, Andalusian, and Basque, respectively.

<sup>92</sup> Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 203.

<sup>93</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 292.

<sup>94</sup> Chipp and Tusek, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 177.

<sup>95</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 292.



at least in part because there was no place qualified to house it,<sup>96</sup> but more importantly because of the political connotations of the town.

Despite major debate, the Spanish authorities made it clear that the painting would be housed in Madrid. After all, Picasso, who had been Director of the Prado, and was an avid admirer of the masters, had always envisioned his work being housed there.<sup>97</sup> Furthermore, it was claimed that placing the painting in Madrid would give the largest number of visitors access to it. In addition, associating the painting with the capital of the state enabled the painting to be linked to a less federal and more unified notion of Spanish identity, one that clearly would have appealed to the central government. In the end, public opinion supported this decision;<sup>98</sup> of those interviewed in 1980, 40% said it should be placed in Madrid (specifically in the Prado), with 20, 10, and 7 percent, respectively, for Barcelona, Gernika, and Malaga.<sup>99</sup> Unfortunately, the Prado Museum was not equipped to handle the crowds expected, and the only space adequate for housing the painting, the main hall, was ill-suited to protect the painting. The solution, therefore, was to place it in the Casón del Buen Retiro, a 17<sup>th</sup>-century palace next to the Prado that had, until then, housed relatively inconsequential works of art.<sup>100</sup> While the

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<sup>96</sup> By spring 1981, Gernika had selected, by jury, a proposal on how to house the painting and submitted the report to the federal government. By this time, however, the Prado had already started construction on their space, which would be finished in June, and the federal government seemed to have already made its decision. *Ibid.*, 301-02.

<sup>97</sup> Martin, *Picasso's War*, 216.

<sup>98</sup> Basques strongly disagreed with the government's decision to place the painting in Madrid and they protested in Gernika when the painting arrived in 1981. The Basque Nationalist Party claimed that placing the painting in Madrid was "an authentic cultural kidnapping done by the Madrid government." They also stated, "We gave up the dead and they have the picture." Massive protests did not continue after September 1981, but the Basques have never renounced their claims on the painting. When the painting was later moved to the Reina Sofía art museum, the then mayor of Gernika, Eduardo Vallejo de Olejua, stated: "We will keep demanding it until the day it's here." Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 186, van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 304, 316.

<sup>99</sup> Martin, *Picasso's War*, 221.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 220.

exhibition space was appropriately planned with a wall of glass, guards, and appropriate climate control to protect the painting, the building's ornate, imperial style stood in great contrast to the painting itself. The painting arrived in Spain on September 10, 1981, after being rolled up and placed on a transatlantic flight.<sup>101</sup> Six weeks later, on October 25, the painting was displayed to the public – that date was also the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Picasso's birth.<sup>102</sup>

Political realities in Spain at the time made it difficult to express opinions about the painting in terms of the Spanish Civil War. Despite the fact that the political transition was ending, the Pact of Silence was still the rule. Iñigo Cavero, Minister of Culture, stated upon seeing the painting in the Casón del Buen Retiro used the occasion to attempt to create a depoliticized interpretation of the past:

*Guernica* is a scream against violence, against barbarism, against the horrors of war, against the denials of civil liberties that an armed insurrection implies. This painting is no longer the banner of any single group. *Guernica* is now the patrimony of all of Spain.<sup>103</sup>

Cavero thus interprets the painting as it has come to be seen – an allegory showing the destruction wreaked by modern warfare – and does not address its original context, the Spanish Civil War. Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, President of the Council of Ministers, said that he wished it had been titled not *Guernica* but the “horrors of the war,”<sup>104</sup> a wish no doubt shared by many who did not want to deal with the messy legacy of the Spanish Civil War. Even La Pasionaria, the communist orator, did not speak of politics. She said, simply, that “The Civil War has ended.”<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> The flight was a commercial Iberia flight, in a plane named “Lope de Vega.” Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 181, 184, 185.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.

<sup>103</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 307.

<sup>104</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 188.

<sup>105</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 307.

Partially to remedy the awkwardness of housing *Guernica* in the elaborate Casón and partially to help out a new museum, in 1992 the painting was moved to the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (the Queen Sofía National Museum and Art Center, Reina Sofía for short).<sup>106</sup> The Reina Sofía was an expansion of the small contemporary art museum that had been housed in the *Ciudad Universitaria* (University City) in Madrid.<sup>107</sup> Here, the painting would be more appropriate thematically, and it would provide the draw to make the new museum a success.<sup>108</sup> The governments of Malaga, Barcelona, and Gernika used this move as an opportunity to re-advance their claims on the painting, stating that if the painting was able to move across Madrid, it should also be able to travel within Spain, at least for temporary exhibitions. However, the conservation teams and government officials decided otherwise.<sup>109</sup> In fact, the painting was deemed so fragile from years of traveling that when it moved the 10 blocks from the Prado to the Reina Sofía it was not detached from its frame and rolled up, as it had been in every previous move. Rather, the painting was packed between glass plates, hoisted, by crane, out of the Casón del Buen Retiro, and driven on a truck to the Reina Sofía, where it was hoisted into an elevator expressly designed to fit the painting.<sup>110</sup> At the Reina Sofía, the painting remained behind glass and under armed guard until 1995,

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<sup>106</sup> Selma Hoyo claims the Socialists, in charge of the federal government at the time, did not appreciate classical art as much as contemporary work and that this is why they moved *Guernica* from the Prado to the Reina Sofía. Hoyo, *Beyond the Prado*, 35.

<sup>107</sup> Martin, *Picasso's War*, 242.

<sup>108</sup> I have been unable to find any surveys that confirm this, but it is my strong opinion (based on my experiences) that *Guernica* continues to be the reason that the Reina Sofía continues to be so highly reputed. Many of my acquaintances, despite a general lack of interest in art, show willingness to pay the entrance fee to be able to see *Guernica*, and, after having seen the painting, they leave the museum. The collection does certainly have some other masterpieces of 20<sup>th</sup> century Spanish art, but none seem to have a crowd gathered around them in the way that *Guernica* consistently does. (This may also be attributed to the complexity of the painting and its immense size, both of which mean that the visitor is required to spend more time contemplating the painting than a less monumental work would require.)

<sup>109</sup> Martin, *Picasso's War*, 244.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 242.

when the Minister of Culture, Carmen Alborch, decided that it was safe to exhibit it without such protection. The painting was moved down the hallway into the permanent exhibition of the museum and it has not moved since, nor is it likely to ever change location again.<sup>111</sup>

Despite the logic of placing the painting in the Reina Sofía, the painting is still not very well displayed, as has been the case for most of its history. When the painting was initially housed in the 1937 Exhibition in Paris, it was more or less ignored; Le Corbusier, the famous architect, claimed that “no one looked at *Guernica* because they all had their backs to it,” which is a statement of fact for those who were in the theater, and seems to be metaphorically correct from the point of view of the art critics.<sup>112</sup> After this, it was shuffled from location to location, until it arrived at MOMA where some visitors perceived it to be “squashed, jammed into an end space almost exactly as high and as wide as the painting itself.”<sup>113</sup> Herschel Chipp disagrees, stating that placing *Guernica* in semi-darkness made it seem like “a votive piece in a chapel for meditation.”<sup>114</sup> Either way, the painting was surrounded by other Picasso works – *Les Femmes d’Alger* and *Girl before a Mirror*<sup>115</sup> – thus divorcing it from its political origins. At the Casón, in addition to being behind glass (which makes it seem distant, metaphorically separating the painting from contemporary concerns), the painting was out of place given the ornate decoration surrounding it. The painting’s modernity did not fit with its “overbearingly formal, heavy, and imperial” surroundings.<sup>116</sup> At the Reina Sofía, the painting is located in such a way as to prevent the viewer from experiencing it from all

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<sup>111</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 321, 327.

<sup>112</sup> For more information on the layout of the Spanish pavilion and the 1937 Exhibition, see *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>114</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 168.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 308.

angles. One approaches the painting from its left, thus receiving a skewed view of the painting. Furthermore, a wall opposite the painting impedes the ability of the viewer to back up and appreciate the painting at a distance, which is really necessary for a painting so large, because only at a distance can one appreciate the entire composition.<sup>117</sup>

In fact, the only space that was explicitly designed for *Guernica* is the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. As part of the construction of the site in the early 1990s, local authorities chose to create a space designed to house the painting, hoping that this would convince authorities in Madrid to move the painting. Frank Gehry, the architect of the Guggenheim, designed a room he called the “chapel” gallery on the third floor of the museum. He announced this to the Spanish monarchs when they visited the site, stating “This is where *Guernica* will go.” Not only was the space designed for *Guernica* but also Bilbao is the closest city to Gernika (one hour away by both bus and train), thus enabling visitors to link their trip to see the painting to the town itself. In 1996, as the museum was planning its inaugural exhibition, the director, Juan Ignacio Vidarte, stated,

There would have been such poetry ... in bringing *Guernica* to within thirty kilometers of Gernika on the sixtieth anniversary of the bombing, and to this building that is such an important new symbol of Basque culture and the Basque determination for peace.<sup>118</sup>

However, despite the fact that when *Guernica* arrived to Spain in 1981 it was deemed to be in excellent condition, in 1997, experts stated that it could, under no circumstances, be loaned out.<sup>119</sup> Thus, while Frank Gehry designed the Guggenheim Museum expressly

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<sup>117</sup> Unfortunately, viewing the painting from far away, in its original Reina Sofía, created bottlenecks among the viewers, so for practical reasons the painting had to be repositioned. This does not change the fact, however, that the painting is inadequately displayed as it is. Martin, *Picasso's War*, 252.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 250-51.

<sup>119</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 329-30.

to enable the display of *Guernica*, it does not seem likely that the painting will ever be exhibited there.<sup>120</sup>

As this narrative of events suggests, the movements of the painting and the developments of the world around it have only decreased the painting's associations with Gernika. While it can be debated that, initially, the painting was modeled on, or at least inspired by, the 1937 bombing of that town, this has become progressively less true. From being a work of propaganda inspired by the bombing of Gernika, it has come to be viewed as masterpiece by Picasso that happens to depict the horrors of 20<sup>th</sup> century warfare:

*Guernica* lost its quality as a weapon of war, against the anti-Republican aggression of Francoism, transforming into a spectacular, horrific gesture against destructive violence... *Guernica* became a museum piece like the *Execution of May Second* [by Goya].<sup>121</sup>

Thus, it is not the case that the painting *Guernica* constitutes a *lieu de mémoire* – it does not relate back to the Spanish Civil War and it certainly does not educate the visiting public about the events that inspired Picasso to create the work. Rather, it is a piece of art that, housed in a modern museum surrounded by other pieces of art, relates back to its initial context in name only.

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<sup>120</sup> It is, however, possible that the Reina Sofía will loan out the sketches made by Picasso before painting *Guernica*. A request was made in the summer of 2006 and while the Reina Sofía refused to lend out all the drawings, it was agreed that at some unspecified future date the sketches would be displayed in Gernika. "El patronato del Reina Sofía rechaza la cesión del 'Guernica': El museo ve 'razonable' el préstamo de los bocetos que Picasso realizó del cuadro," *El País (Madrid)*, 22 June 2006.

<sup>121</sup> "... el *Guernica* fue perdiendo su calidad de arma de guerra contra la agresión antirrepublicana del franquismo, para transformarse en un gesto espectacular de horror ante la violencia destructiva (...), el *Guernica* se convirtió en una pieza de museo como los *Fusilamientos del Dos de Mayo*." Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 116.

## Gernika's Peace Museum

Gernika, as part of Basque Country, was never particularly wedded to Franco's interpretations of history; it is thus not very surprising that the town has succeeded in reframing their history in a more factual way. The town was able to distance itself from Francoism even during the dictatorship. In 1966, Gernika tried for the first time to retract the title "adopted son" that it had been forced to grant Franco in 1946, asking for the return of the commemorative medallion.<sup>122</sup> This request was not granted, but it shows the desire of the locals to reclaim their history, an attempt that became even easier after the death of Franco. On the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombing, April 26, 1977, Gernika held a mass funeral in town; it was the first time in forty years that residents of Gernika "could openly express their grief."<sup>123</sup> On this occasion, Gernika's elected officials decided to create their own version of the painting, in the form of a full-size replica, placed in the town square. They hoped that the painting would soon come back to Spain and be housed in Basque Country, but this was not their overarching goal. Rather, it was one step in the process of reshaping their history. In 1979, a new Gernika Tree, the third in the line, was planted to symbolically renew Basque independence.<sup>124</sup> At some point during this period, Gernika renamed the street facing the old market, destroyed in the bombardment, in honor of Pablo Picasso.<sup>125</sup>

Over the course of the next twenty years, this process continued. Gernika honored both Herbert Southworth and George Steer with plaques in the town, thanking them for their efforts in disseminating the true story of Gernika around the world. As part of this larger project of monumentalization, Gernika replaced the photographic

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>123</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 282.

<sup>124</sup> Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 128.

<sup>125</sup> Martin, *Picasso's War*, 240.

replica of *Guernica* with a tile mosaic version in the center of town. The image is comprised of 540 tiles;<sup>126</sup> below it are written two words: “*Guernica Gernikara*” or “*Guernica* for the Gernikans.” In 1986, Gernika repeated its petition for the return of Franco’s commemorative medallion. This time, the petition was directed at his family, but this did not change the outcome.<sup>127</sup>

In addition to the cosmetic changes in the streetscape, Gernika decided to use its history, as bombing victim, to inform its future. The goal was not just to memorialize the past in street signs; rather, Gernika’s leaders wanted to use the town’s resources to educate. The first example of this is the Gernika Gogoratuz<sup>128</sup> Peace Research Center, formed “in a unanimous decision by the Basque Parliament in remembrance of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Bombing of Gernika.” The center’s mission is “to enrich the symbol of Gernika with regard to the past, by remembering and honouring the history of Gernika, and with regard to the future, by contributing, with a backing of scientific thought, to the generation of an emancipatory, just and reconciliatory peace both in the Basque Country and worldwide.”<sup>129</sup> The center, which is supported by both Gernika’s City Hall and other Basque government organizations, is designed to educate the public about the history of Gernika and then to use this information to affect peace movements in Spain and around the world. Starting in 1991, the organization has held an annual “Gernika International Workday for Culture and Peace” on April 26. The organization has also organized various conferences designed to give older residents of Gernika the chance to share their remembrances from the war and bombing. In addition to aid for

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 268.

<sup>127</sup> Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 128.

<sup>128</sup> *Gernika Gogoratuz* means “in memory of Gernika” in *Euzkera*.

<sup>129</sup> According to <http://www.gernikagogoratuz.org/englishgernikagogoratuz.html>, the Gernika Gogoratuz Peace Research Center website. Accessed 15 March 2007.



researchers, the center has also specifically worked to educate teachers, who can then spread the information they learn around the country and world.<sup>130</sup> The center further expanded its audience by deciding to create a peace and history museum. In the mid-1990s, the research center decided to join the International Network of Peace Museums,<sup>131</sup> and worked to create the Gernika Peace Museum, which opened on January 8, 2003 in the central plaza of Gernika.<sup>132</sup>

The Gernika Peace Museum is an example of how history can be employed to make contemporary political statements. According to the museum's website,

The mission of the Gernika Peace Museum Foundation is to preserve, display, publicise, conduct research and educate visitors in the basic ideas of the culture of peace, and the past and present relation of this culture to the history of Gernika-Lumo, so that, together with other history and peace organisations, Gernika-Lumo, the province of Bizkaia and the Basque Country be used as local, regional, national and international references in the search for peace and culture.

To meet this mission, the museum is organized to answer three questions: "What is peace? What happened in Gernika in the absence of peace during the Spanish Civil War? What about peace in the world today?"<sup>133</sup> Each of these questions is addressed in turn, thus easily enabling the public to follow the organizing questions.<sup>134</sup> The first two rooms

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<sup>130</sup> "Curriculum Vitae, 1997-2004," (Gernika Gogoratuz Peace Research Center, 2004), 4-6.

<sup>131</sup> There are two other peace museums in Spain: the Vall d'Uixó Peace Museum (located in rural Valencia) and NoVA (Non Violence Active): The Center for Social Innovation (located in Barcelona, Cataluña). I do not think that it is a coincidence that all three of these locations are in regions of Spain known for separate nationalities, as Basque Country, Valencia, and Cataluña have been known to be more pluralistic in nature. <http://www.museumsforpeace.org/>, the International Network of Peace Museums website. Accessed 15 March 2007.

<sup>132</sup> "Curriculum Vitae, 1997-2004."

<sup>133</sup> According to <http://www.peacemuseumguernica.org/en/initiate/homeeng.php>, the Gernika Peace Museum website. Accessed 15 March 2007.

<sup>134</sup> Don't just take my word for it – take the virtual tour on their website. (Spain is still not as website driven as the United States is, which may explain the terrible quality, or complete lack, of websites for many of the locations I have been investigating. The Gernika websites (both the Peace Museum and the Gernika Gogoratuz Center) stand out in stark contrast to most Spanish websites – they are multilingual, interactive, well-designed, and frequently updated.) <http://www.peacemuseumguernica.org/en/initiate/homeeng.php>, the Gernika Peace Museum website. Accessed 15 March 2007.

on the first floor<sup>135</sup> define different types of peace and the manifestations of peace in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the third room, “Begoña’s House,” the content of the museum shifts to the specific narrative of the bombing of Gernika.

For the student of history, the next three rooms are the most impressive in the museum. “Begoña’s House” is an audiovisual experience, designed to recreate the experience of being in Gernika on April 26, 1937. One enters a small room and the door seals behind. The room looks like a kitchen or dining room from the 1930s. A woman starts to narrate<sup>136</sup> her day – she is off to market – when a distant rumbling sound becomes louder. Alarm bells go off and then bombs start falling – the experience here is not just auditory, the room actually shakes as the bombs fall. The narration continues until the lights go out<sup>137</sup> and all is silent. One solitary light then turns back on, focusing on the calendar in the corner which shows, in Basque, the date April 26, 1937. A door on the other end of the room opens and the visitor re-enters the museum. The following room is the museum’s largest and it relates to the history of Gernika-Lumo, from “its first inhabitants to the moment of reconciliation (between Gernika and Germany and at other locations worldwide) [sic].”<sup>138</sup> The room specifically focuses on the history of the bombing, its antecedents, the bombing itself, and the legacy of the bombing, with excellent use of primary sources – letters, orders, transcripts, newspaper articles, and photographs. The material is unquestionably accurate historically, and clearly debunks

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<sup>135</sup> Following the virtual tour, I am using European numbering conventions. Thus, the ground floor has the welcome desk and shop and the first floor, where the museum starts, is one level up from the street.

<sup>136</sup> The narration is offered in at least four languages – Castilian, Basque, English, and French.

<sup>137</sup> Arnheim notes that during the bombing the sky went from sunny to black, which is represented in Picasso’s painting by the sharp contrast between light and dark. This, then, is parallel with the experience conveyed by “Begoña’s House.” Arnheim, *The Genesis of a Painting*, 20.

<sup>138</sup> These “other locations worldwide” are, in many cases, cities that also have museums in the International Network of Peace Museums. <http://www.peacemuseumguernica.org/en/initiate/homeeng.php>, the Gernika Peace Museum website. Accessed 15 March 2007.

the lies propagated to deflect blame for the bombing. In addition to serving as a history lesson the room also attempts, like “Begoña’s House,” to enable the visitor to experience the bombing.<sup>139</sup> The floor, rather than being solid, is a layer of clear plastic covering mounds of brick, designed to mimic the rubble in the streets of Gernika after the bombardment. The final room on the first floor in another audiovisual room, which shows a short documentary on reconciliation processes around the world.<sup>140</sup>

On the second floor, the museum continues with its reflections on the nature of peace, this time focusing on the current state of the world. One room reproduces *Guernica* and interprets that the painting shows the lack of the three basic expressions of human rights – life, freedom, and equality – all of which were stripped from the residents of Gernika on April 26, 1937. The last room upstairs relates all this material to the current conflict in Basque Country, over the degree of sovereignty to be afforded the Basques, and looks at the costs of violence and the ways to achieve peace for the Basques. Upon leaving this room, the visitor is passes a quotation from Mahatma Gandhi that sums up the philosophy of the museum: “There is no way to peace, peace is the only way.” The visitor is then directed to the basement, which has space for temporary exhibitions. A full list of exhibitions, including planned exhibitions for the rest of the current year, can be found at the Gernika Peace Museum website. Judging from the website, these temporary exhibits tend to relate to the Spanish Civil War, other episodes in Gernika, or the stories of other cities that also have museums in the

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<sup>139</sup> The heavy audiovisual component in the museum is extremely effective. Hearing a woman narrate is certainly more memorable than just reading a letter in a sterile museum case would be, so the visitor will better understand what happened at Gernika, and showing the horrors of war also reminds that one should work toward peace, which is exactly what a “peace museum” ought to do.

<sup>140</sup> The presentation specifically focuses on Gernika/Germany, South Africa, and Northern Ireland, although one expects that the documentary could be easily updated to reflect more current reconciliations as time passes.

International Network of Peace Museums. Overall, while the Gernika Peace Museum addresses many topics, it does not feel disjointed. The museum succeeds in its goal, and very clearly links the experience of Gernika during the Spanish Civil War to the need for peace, which is in turn linked to ways of achieving peace, in history and for the future.

The Gernika Peace Museum is so successful, in fact, that it has been internationally recognized. In 2004, the United Nations Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) announced that it had awarded the city of Gernika-Lumo the title “City of Peace” in recognition of municipal efforts to “consolidate social cohesion, better the living conditions in the most vulnerable neighborhoods, and create harmonious urban coexistence.” Gernika was specifically commended for its efforts in creating the Gernika Gogoratuz Peace Research Center and the Gernika Peace Museum, as well as the public reconciliation with Germany,<sup>141</sup> symbolized by a joint Spanish-German conference in April 1997, which ended with the German Ambassador, Henning Wegener, apologizing for Germany’s role in the bombardment.<sup>142</sup> This recognition of Gernika by UNESCO came one year after UNESCO admonished Toledo for the ill-advised addition to the Alcázar.<sup>143</sup> This is to say that at the same time that the Gernika *Ayuntamiento* and Basque government were taking steps toward creating urban harmony, the Community of Castilla-La Mancha and the Defense Ministry were taking steps to ruin the historic integrity of Toledo’s old city, and UNESCO recognized both of these facts.

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<sup>141</sup> According to <http://www.gernikagogoratuz.org/englishgernikagogoratuz.html>, the Gernika Gogoratuz Peace Research Center website. Accessed 15 March 2007.

<sup>142</sup> Unsurprisingly, the Spanish government has never acknowledged its role in the bombing nor apologized to Gernika. Germany also opened its archives about the bombing before Spain did. Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 202, van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 329.

<sup>143</sup> See Chapter 1.

Gernika is a site where a bombing happened and a site that has transformed itself into a constructive *lieux de mémoire*. In addition to the cosmetic changes, the creation of Gernika Gogoratuz Peace Research Center and the Gernika Peace Museum have made it a town that looks both back to the past and forward to the future, using the lesson of the bombing as a means to educate for peace. The town has completely divorced itself from any remnants of Francoism, which is hardly surprising, given that Basque Country was never strongly Francoist because of his complete lack of respect to traditional autonomous rights.<sup>144</sup> Unlike many towns in Spain, Gernika has moved forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century without fear of change, and the Gernika Peace Museum reflects this.

## Conclusions

The versions of the bombing portrayed at Gernika's Peace Museum and in the painting *Guernica* differ significantly. This is due, at least in part, to the clear difference in the type of work. Museums are designed to educate; artworks are designed either to please or stimulate the viewer. In addition, while the town never moved and therefore could not avoid the local context, the painting traveled the world and the changing international audience in turn changed the meaning of the painting. However, the differences in historical memory cannot be attributed only to style of work and country. The painting is used by the Peace Museum as part of its reflections on peace and *Guernica* is currently located in Spain. Therefore, the differences in historical memory must be attributed to a willingness (or lack thereof) to refer to historical facts.

The Basque Country is associated with the Spanish Civil War in different ways than the rest of Spain. First, Basque Country, like Catalonia, felt particularly repressed

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<sup>144</sup> Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 201.

under Franco because it was not allowed to use its native language; the bombing of Gernika was commonly referenced by Basques as proof of this excessively severe repression exercised by Franco against the Basques.<sup>145</sup> In addition, the Basques have consistently shown themselves to be more left-of-center than the general Spanish population; during the Transition, “on a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 represents the extreme left and 10 the extreme right), Spaniards as a whole located themselves at 5.9, and Basques at 4.4.”<sup>146</sup> For these reasons, the Basques were much less likely to identify as Francoist than the general Spanish population. In the late 1970s, a Spanish report found that “whilst 29 per cent of Spaniards as a whole defined themselves as Francoist and 36 per cent anti-Francoist, the equivalent figures for the Basque and Navarrese<sup>147</sup> population were 10 per cent and 56 per cent respectively, the first being the lowest regional figure, the second the highest.”<sup>148</sup> Finally, the most orthodox Basques view Castilian Spaniards (including the federal government) as foreigners.<sup>149</sup> For all these reasons, Basques were never wed to Francoist interpretations of history. For this reason, Basque Country was one of the first regions (along with Catalonia) of Spain to represent its distance from Francoism by retiring the symbols of the dictatorship.<sup>150</sup> As part of this process, Gernika, like the rest of the Basque Country, has made a choice to inform its residents (and visitors) about local history, in an attempt to give voice to the memories

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<sup>145</sup> It is not necessarily the case that the Basque Country was actually subject to more repression than other regions, as Paloma Aguilar notes, but they perceived their situation as more repressive. Aguilar Fernández, "The Memory of the Civil War in the Transition to Democracy: The Peculiarity of the Basque Case."

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>147</sup> Navarre is the community next to Basque Country. They have always been separate entities, but Basque nationalists claim that Navarre is part of the larger Basque homeland, which also includes regions in France.

<sup>148</sup> Aguilar Fernández, "The Memory of the Civil War in the Transition to Democracy: The Peculiarity of the Basque Case."

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> Andrés, "Las estatuas de Franco," 183.

that Franco attempted to silence. This stands in sharp contrast to *Guernica*, which is the property of the federal government and is located in Madrid. The federal government and Madrid both show the attitude toward the Spanish Civil War characteristic of the Transition – support of the arts and silence about history.

*Guernica* is certainly one of the best known paintings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and, because of this, it is unlikely that the bombing of Gernika will ever be forgotten. However, the painting itself conveys little historical information and viewing the painting has never been an exercise in historical education. The town of Gernika, on the other hand, has built itself in such a way to encourage its residents and visitors to learn more about the history of the village and, of course, the bombardment of April 26, 1937.<sup>151</sup> In addition to street names, plaques, and other minor monuments, the town has focused on the Peace Museum as a way to educate locals, other Spaniards, and foreigners. The museum is thus specifically linked to its location. Unlike the painting *Guernica*, the town Gernika is a site of memory designed to educate. However, as long as the painting is housed in the Reina Sofía, more people will view it than attend the Peace Museum. Madrid, after all, has more residents and receives more visitors than Gernika ever will. Thus, it is the painting and not the town that people are familiar with, which means that the story of Gernika is being told in art, not as history.

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<sup>151</sup> Gernika's Tourist Office has an audio-guide with 16 stops around town. Of the 16, 13 refer to either the Spanish Civil War, the bombing of Gernika, or both. Gernika-Lumo Tourist Office audio guide, English, 8 July 2006.



Figure 4.3<sup>691</sup>  
Gernika before  
the bombing



Figure 4.4<sup>692</sup>  
Gernika immediately  
after the bombing



Figure 4.5<sup>693</sup>

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<sup>691</sup> Gijs van Hensbergen, *Guernica: The Biography of a Twentieth-Century Icon* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2004), 35.

<sup>692</sup> Herschel Browning Chipp and Javier Tusell, *Picasso's Guernica: History, Transformations, Meanings, California Studies in the History of Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 32.

<sup>693</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.



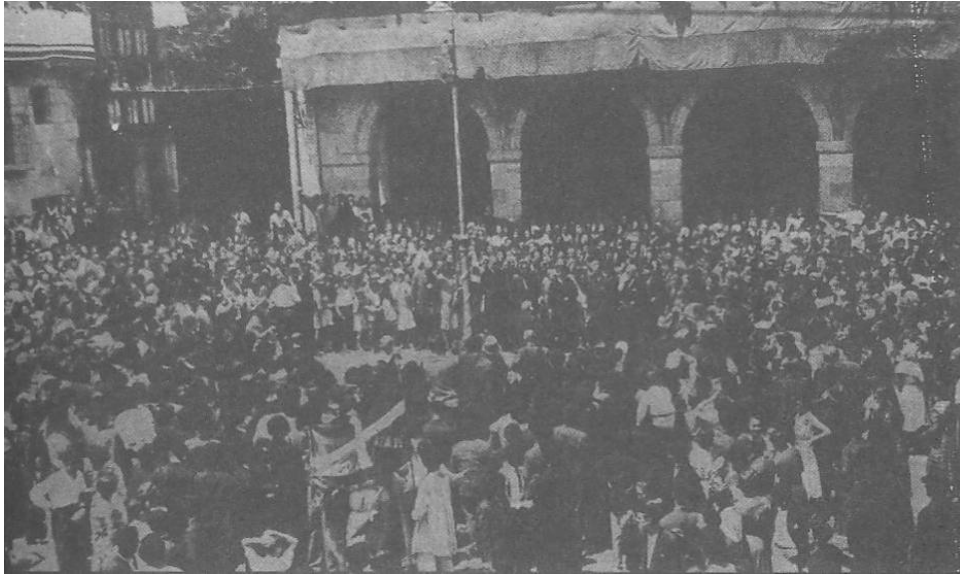


Figure 4.6<sup>694</sup>  
Gernika's central plaza in 1931



Figure 4.7  
The central plaza in 2006; note the difference in architectural style

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<sup>694</sup> José Luis de la Granja Sainz and José Angel Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil: symposium, 60 aniversario del bombardeo de Gernika (1997)*, *Gernikazarra bilduma; 1* (Gernika-Lumo, Spain: Gernikazarra Historia Taldea, 1998), 99.



Figure 4.8<sup>695</sup>  
Picasso at work on *Guernica*



Figure 4.9<sup>696</sup>  
The exterior of the Spanish pavilion at the 1937 exhibition in Paris

<sup>695</sup> Pablo Picasso, F. Calvo Serraller, and Carmen Giménez, *Picasso: Tradition and Avant-garde* (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado and Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2006), 20.

<sup>696</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 60.



Figure 4.10<sup>697</sup>

The interior of the Spanish pavilion; *Guernica* is on display in the background  
The seats in the foreground are part of the movie theater



Figure 4.11<sup>698</sup>

*Guernica* on display at the MOMA

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<sup>697</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>698</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 167.

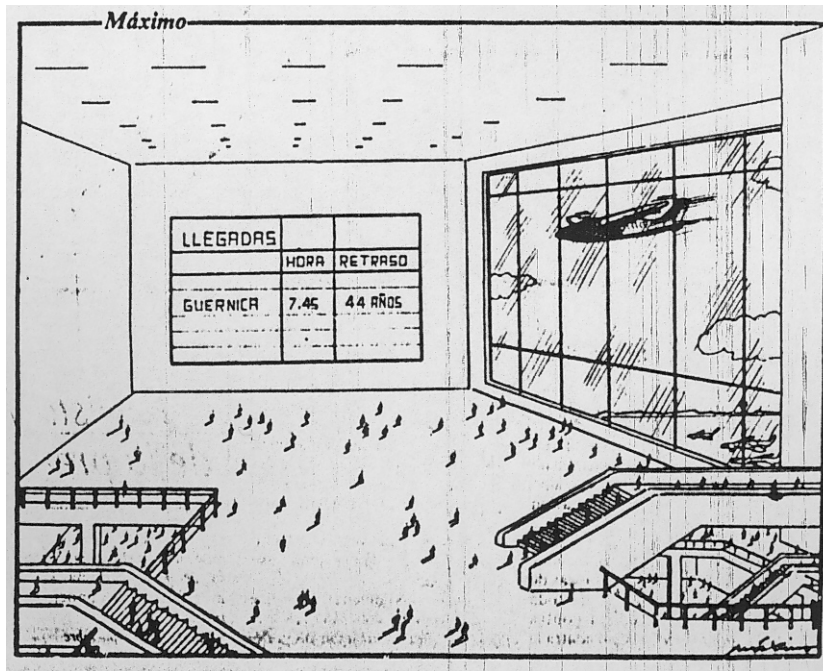


Figure 4.12<sup>699</sup>

September 1981: the arrival board shows the status of *Guernica*  
 Hour: 7:45 AM; Delay: 44 years



Figure 4.13<sup>700</sup>  
*Guernica* arrives at the  
 Casón del Buen Retiro

<sup>699</sup> "Máximo," *El País (Madrid)*, 11 September 1981.

<sup>700</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 181.



Figure 4.14<sup>701</sup>  
*Guernica* is unrolled for the last time

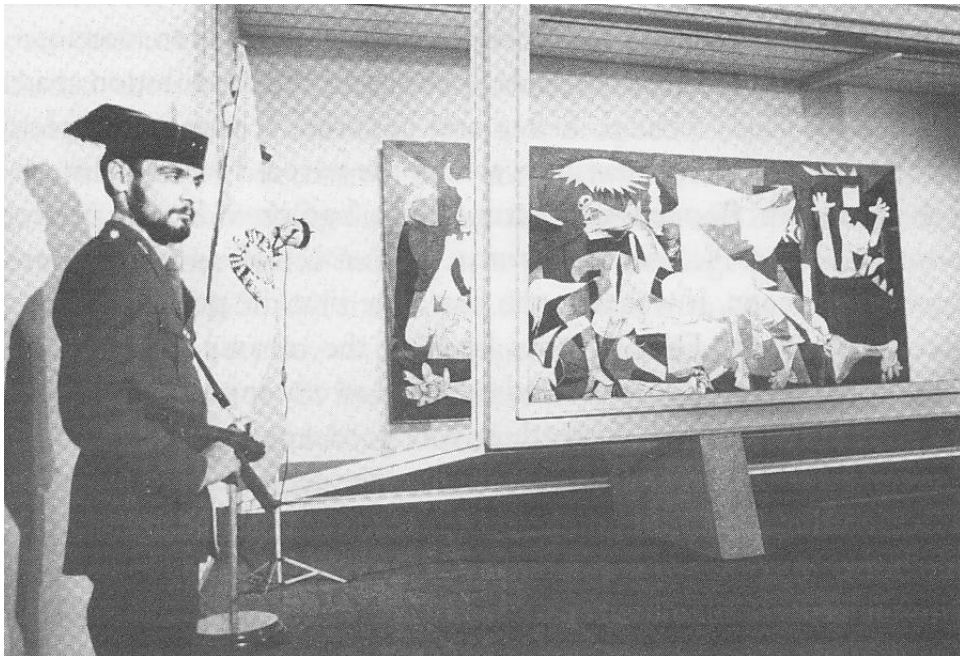


Figure 4.15<sup>702</sup>  
*Guernica* on display at the Casón del Buen Retiro

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<sup>701</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 305.

<sup>702</sup> *Ibid.*, 307.

Figure 4.16<sup>703</sup>  
The Reina Sofía



Figure 4.17<sup>704</sup>  
*Guernica* is hoisted in to the  
Reina Sofía in 1992

<sup>703</sup> Selma Holo, *Beyond the Prado: Museums and Identity in Democratic Spain* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999), 38.

<sup>704</sup> van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 323.



Figure 4.18<sup>705</sup>  
Full scale replica of *Guernica* on display in Gernika

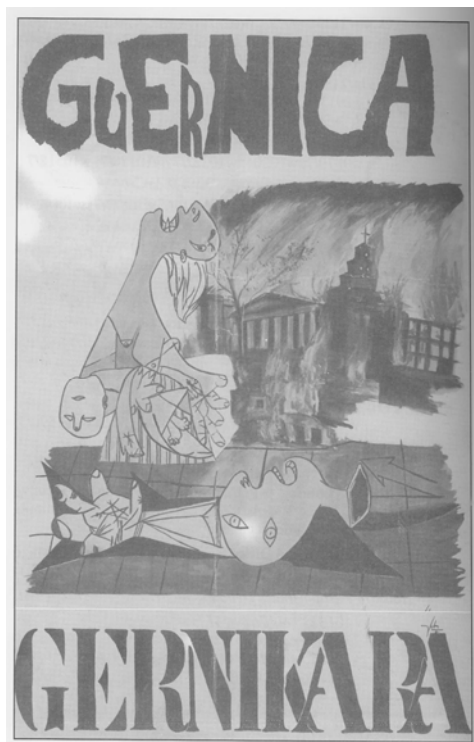


Figure 4.19<sup>706</sup>  
The “*Guernica Gernikara*” campaign flyer

The poster links the painting to images of the bombing in an attempt to persuade the federal government to send *Guernica* to Gernika

<sup>705</sup> Chipp and Tusell, *History, Transformations, Meanings*, 179.

<sup>706</sup> Granja Sainz and Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil*, 464.



Figure 4.20  
The permanent facet of the “*Guernica Gernikara*” campaign is this tile replica of the painting on the streets of Gernika



Figure 4.21  
The Gernika Peace Museum





Figure 4.22<sup>1</sup>  
The Peace  
Museum uses the  
content of  
*Guernica* to teach  
forms of peace



Figure 4.23<sup>2</sup>  
Begoña's House in the Gernika Peace Museum

Figure 4.24<sup>3</sup>  
The Gernika Peace  
Museum uses primary  
sources, and simulated  
rubble, to teach the history  
of the bombing



<sup>1</sup> According to <http://www.peacemuseumguernica.org/en/initiate/homeeng.php>, the Gernika Peace Museum website. Accessed March 15 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

## Conclusion: Sifting the Wheat from the Chaff

The issues examined in this thesis – the Alcázar, the relationship between Francisco Franco and José Antonio Primo de Rivera, the death of Federico García Lorca, and the bombardment at Gernika – are all elements of the Spanish Civil War, yet it cannot be said that investigating them presents a unified narrative of that war. Each event has a range of significance; meanings have changed both over time and according to who is remembering the event in question. As a result, the *lieux de mémoire* examined here range significantly in how they portray the war and what lessons they draw from it. The Alcázar was a site devoted to Francoist myth; more recently, the local government has tried to depoliticize the site and relate it to modern, democratic values, but their efforts may be overturned by the Ministry of Defense's plans. The Valley of the Fallen is an intentionally erroneous representation of the relationship between Franco and José Antonio; while many of the more egregious remnants of Francoism have been removed from the site, no contemporary interpretation has been advanced to replace the older Francoist propaganda. The *Ruta lorquiana*, administered by three different municipalities, reflects the "Pact of Silence" from the years of the Transition; only Fuente Vaqueros has moved past the rhetoric of the 1970s and 1980s to rethink Lorca in the context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, seeing him as both a literary and political figure. Finally, while Gernika has clearly broken with the Francoist representations of the bombing and is using the local history of suffering to encourage world peace, the painting *Guernica* has been removed from its original context; located in a sterile museum, it still points to the horrors of war, but it no longer decries the atrocities of the Spanish Civil War. Each of these sites, then, is very different in form and content; together, these *lieux de mémoire* show the varied nature of the existing historical memory of the Spanish Civil War.

So how do Spaniards understand the Spanish Civil War? In addition to the sites themselves, one must consider the body of knowledge to which Spaniards have access.<sup>1</sup>

In all cases, misinformation abounds about the Spanish Civil War. As Herbert Matthews stated in 1957,

There are lots of true stories about the Spanish Civil War that remain to be told by the historians of future generations. Only they will be able to sift the wheat from the chaff, the true from the false, to weigh the good and the bad, to lay the blame or met the praise. We are too close to it. Many facts are not available, and those we have are clouded by our emotions.<sup>2</sup>

This is especially the case with the sites that I have chosen, as each site relates to a contentious event. Whether the issue is what happened at the Alcázar, how and why the Valley of the Fallen was constructed, how Lorca died, or what really happened at Gernika, there are some questions that may never be definitively answered. However, 70 years of research have led to some conclusions that, if not definitely, are at least probably correct. For example, while there will never be proof of this, it is almost impossible that the phone call between Luis Moscardó and his father happened exactly as it has been portrayed by Francoists since 1936. Thus, the historians have succeeded, at least partially, in sifting the wheat from the chaff. However, misconceptions abound. Why is this the case? Many of the erroneous beliefs that exist about the Spanish Civil War are enforced by the lack of clarity at the *lieux de mémoire*. These sites do not agree with scholars of history, either through outright lies or omissions. For example, it is untrue that both messages in the Siege Hall of the Alcázar were dropped by Franco on the same day;

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<sup>1</sup> Examining the most prominent monuments to the war addresses how the war is physically represented in Spain, but it does not answer how Spaniards understand these representations. As Selma Holo points out, it is not necessary to place a disclaimer a site like the Valley of the Fallen if the visitor is well-enough informed about Francoist propaganda to know the difference between the truth and Franco's exaggerated version of that truth. Therefore, a complete survey would have to address, in addition to the monuments themselves, what Spaniards already know about the sites. Due to the lack of statistical analysis, historians have been limited to surveys of the sources available to the public. Holo, *Beyond the Prado*, 90.

<sup>2</sup> Matthews, *The Yoke and the Arrows*, 201.

representing the facts otherwise ignores the roles of other generals in the war. While no one is certain that Lorca is buried next to the olive tree in the García Lorca Park, the planners of the monument were certain enough to place a plaque there; the plaque, however, does not explain this, leaving the public ignorant. The first example is a lie, destined to adjust Spanish history to suit contemporary realities. The second is a sin of omission, intended to avoid difficult topics due to fear of instability. Yet, the realities of the 1940s and the fears of the 1980s are history now; why then have the sites not been updated, taking into account 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge, priorities, and opinions? Answering this question requires an investigation of contemporary Spanish politics.

### **“Benign Neglect”: The Politics of Memory**

In the mid-1990s, Catalonia (one of Spain’s autonomous regions) started the process of asking for “items of cultural interest held in state museums”<sup>3</sup> with the intention of displaying them locally. This included all material related to Catalonia’s role in the Spanish Civil War; at the time, these materials were held in a regional library in Salamanca.<sup>4</sup> Catalonia believed that the materials should be readily accessible to all Catalans who wanted to consult them, while Salamanca wanted them to remain there, so researchers could gain access to all the materials they needed without having to visit

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<sup>3</sup> Sometime before 1995, Catalonia requested its “share” of the Velázquez masterpieces held by the Prado. Holo, *Beyond the Prado*, 24-25.

<sup>4</sup> Salamanca is not merely any town in Spain; it has symbolic importance for this debate. First of all, it is located in central Spain in Castile-León, one of the regions that speaks Castilian, the language that most foreigners would call Spanish, exclusively. It is therefore not linked to one of the other nationalities within Spain, unlike Catalonia. Furthermore, Salamanca *was* linked to Franco during the war and the dictatorship. It was there, on September 21, that Franco was picked as sole leader of the Nationalists. Subsequently, the meetings in Salamanca, led by Franco, decided the direction of the new Francoist state. The city continues to honor him with a bust in the Royal Pavilion, as if he had been a king of Spain. José I. Madalena Calvo et al., “Los Lugares de la Memoria de la Guerra Civil en un centro de poder: Salamanca, 1936-1939,” in *Historia y memoria de la Guerra Civil: encuentro en Castilla y León, Salamanca, 24-27 de septiembre de 1986*, ed. Julio Aróstegui ([Valladolid]: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Cultura y Bienestar Social, 1988), 497, Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 66.

multiple locations. The split on the issue was not just regional, however; it also split along party lines. The *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE, Spanish Worker's Socialist Party), which tends to support regional autonomy, believed that the archives should be split and moved around the country. On the other hand, the *Partido Popular* (PP), the conservative party, believed that that pluralism, if pushed too far, would lead to Spain's "fragmentation," and that, therefore, all the materials should be housed together. In the words of Miguel Ángel Cortés, the PP's spokesman for culture, "Either Spain is all or it is nothing." One year after this debate came to a head, in 1995, the PP gained control of the Parliament and it became clear that the archives would not be split. Instead, a new archive was created in Salamanca, so that the documents were collected not in a general library but in a center dedicated exclusively to the Spanish Civil War.<sup>5</sup>

Ten years later, in 2006, the Spanish Parliament declared 2006 to be the "Year of Historical Memory." The decision was made to recognize the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the proclamation of the Second Republic and the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the Spanish Civil War with federal funding to aid educational programs that referenced Spain's 20<sup>th</sup> century history. The Parliament was controlled by the PSOE; the party and its allies worked to pass this motion. The law had originally been designed to provide recognition for those who were victims of the Spanish Civil War, the postwar repression, or the Francoist dictatorship due to their defense of democratic values. At the last minute, in the hopes of acquiring the support of the PP, the law was modified to include those who made the Transition possible. Despite this change, the PP chose to abstain from the

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<sup>5</sup> All this information can be found in Selma Holo's book *Beyond the Prado*. Holo, *Beyond the Prado*, 23-25.

vote, which passed on June 22, 2006.<sup>6</sup> The law was thus passed six months into the year, in a watered-down form, and without the support of the opposition. The law specifically provided funds for commemorative stamps and declared that “public powers” should celebrate “commemorative acts” in memory of those who had been the victims.<sup>7</sup> Some socialists had great hopes for progress in historical education as a result of the law. Mirta Polnorov, an employee of the PSOE who works in the *Senado*, Spain’s upper house, noted that the grandfather of the Spanish Prime Minister, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, was killed during the war and buried in one of the mass graves, and that therefore Zapatero was likely to work toward funding mass exhumations for others like him.<sup>8</sup> However, those outside the PSOE have less optimistic expectations. Emilio Silva, founder of the Association for the Recuperation of Historical Memory, the organization that arranges these exhumations, considered the bill to be well-intentioned but ineffective.<sup>9</sup> The law did have some effects later in the year, as can be seen with the changes in commemorations of Franco and José Antonio at the Valley of the Fallen,<sup>10</sup> but it is still too early to understand fully what tangible changes, if any, will result.

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<sup>6</sup> Carlos E. Cué, "El Congreso, sin el apoyo del PP, declara 2006 Año de la Memoria," *El País (Madrid)*, 23 June 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Mirta Polnorov, interview with the author, Madrid, 26 June 2006.

<sup>9</sup> This whole episode is a repeat of a process that happened ten years earlier with slightly different outcome. While the PP came to power in 1996, the PSOE tried to force them into a corner by sponsoring a bill that would “publicly condemn the dictatorship.” The PSOE wanted to compel the PP to either vote for the measure (alienating the many Spaniards who continued to believe that Franco’s reign was a benevolent one) or against it (thus symbolically linking the PP to Franco). The PP rejected the measure at the time. When the party was reelected in 2000, with an overwhelming majority, it ceased to worry about losing the far right vote, and it passed a similar measure, though the public condemnation had no practical effect. Meanwhile, the PSOE had been in power for fourteen years (1982-1996) and only attempted to pass such a law when it had lost power, showing that the party was condemning Francoism not due to any strong conviction but rather in a political ploy to decrease support for the PP. Aguilar Fernández and Humlebaek, "Collective Memory and National Identity," 132.

<sup>10</sup> See Chapter 2 for more information. Sandoval, "El Valle de los Caídos quiere liberarse de los 'ultras'."

These two stories help illuminate some of the tensions that exist in Spain over how to remember the Spanish Civil War. The first set of tensions is generational, and divides those who fought the war from those who were born under Franco, who are, in turn, divided from the post-Franco generation. These three groups each view the war very differently. The first was traumatized by the war and its aftermath. Consequently, they are particularly committed to never having to relive the instability and suffering of the 1930s and 1940s, which, in turn, makes them unwilling to talk about the war in any capacity.<sup>11</sup> The next generation is composed principally of individuals who were socialized by Franco.<sup>12</sup> These individuals had adopted the analysis of history provided by Franco and therefore believed in stability and order above all. Therefore, they were not concerned by Francoist repression, because they believed the repression was necessary for the state to function. As a result, these individuals had no intention of questioning Francoist propaganda surrounding the Spanish Civil War.<sup>13</sup> Finally, there are the children of democracy, who have no reason to fear instability and thus do not avoid the Spanish Civil War in the way that their parents and grandparents did. Overall, this generation is the first to want to learn more about Spain's recent past. Young Spaniards consistently

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<sup>11</sup> Many also feel that speaking out leads to punishment; in this respect, their memories of Francoism had led them to believe that talking freely about the past will never be allowed by the authorities, despite current political realities. As Susana Narotsky and Gavin Smith note, this is due largely to public silences during the dictatorship. In their 1996 study, two elderly women refused to talk about their experiences as socialists (during the Second Republic) because they feared being jailed. Susana Narotzky and Gavin A. Smith, "Being politico" in Spain: An Ethnographic Account of Memories, Silences and Public Politics," *History & Memory* 14, no. 1/2 (2002), 192.

<sup>12</sup> There is another, smaller group composed of those who had opposed Franco during the dictatorship. However, due to the state's authoritarian nature, most of these people were forced into silence. In addition, Franco's regime ended organically (due to his death), and not due to their protest, a fact which prevented this opposition from claiming to have ended the dictatorship, which, in turn, marginalized their voices in the post-Franco era. Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 32, Medina Domínguez, *Exorcismos de la memoria*, 181.

<sup>13</sup> Aguilar Fernández and Humleback, "Collective Memory and National Identity," 132, 158.

express both ignorance about the Spanish Civil War and willingness to be educated.<sup>14</sup> Summing up this generational difference, author Manuel Rivas notes that 20-somethings are more interested in his historical novels than are 40 and 50 year olds.<sup>15</sup>

Further tension exists between the socialists and the conservatives. The PSOE has existed since long before the Spanish Civil War, and even when it was outlawed under Franco it continued to exist in exile. Since the Transition, therefore, it represents itself as having a legacy of fighting for the people, looking back on its anti-Franco status; since it could not take responsibility for the end of Francoism, however, its activism was not a significant boon for the party.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the PSOE also had to avoid being associated with the instability of the socialists during the Second Republic.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, the right had to show that it was pro-democratic but still conservative; many members of the PP had been Franco-supporters while he was alive, and the party wanted to welcome them without having this imply that the party believed in authoritarianism.<sup>18</sup> As a result, the PSOE is more interested in looking back at the past than the PP is, which is ironic

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<sup>14</sup> There are exceptions, of course, and many young adults could care less about history. But, given that a certain percentage of any population will display apathy toward history, it is clear that, as a generation, these younger Spaniards are less apathetic than their parents or grandparents. In June 2006, I viewed a series of documentaries at the *Filmoteca nacional* (National Film Library) in Madrid; the series was entitled *Imágenes contra el olvido: lo que nunca se contó del franquismo* (Images Against Forgetting/Amnesia: That Which was Never Said about Francoism) and all documentaries were accompanied by a discussion panel after the screening. Watching and listening, I noted two consistent themes. First, the subjects of the documentary showed this generational split (apathetic older individuals in contrast to interested but ill-informed younger individuals). Second, the audience displayed this split as well. Those who attended the film were either older and very political (the minority that had been vocally anti-Franco during his lifetime) or younger and unaware, but interested in learning more. *Imágenes contra el olvido: lo que nunca se contó del franquismo* ([Madrid]: [Suevia Films], 2006), Videorecording.

<sup>15</sup> Halper, "Voices from the Valley", 120.

<sup>16</sup> Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 238-39.

<sup>17</sup> After 40 years of emphasis on stability and order, most Spaniards would have found it terrifying to vote for a party that routinely burned churches, among other things, during the Republic. Surveys conducted between 1984 and 1990 consistently show that Spaniards do not view the Second Republic as a model period. Aguilar Fernández and Humlebaek, "Collective Memory and National Identity," 145.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.



because in general conservative ideologies tend to be more focused on the past than socialist ones are.<sup>19</sup> This means that the PSOE and the PP have very different priorities in historical memory, which can be seen in the projects each has attempted, or stood in the way of.<sup>20</sup> The result is that “the right does not want to be identified with Francoism and its exclusionist use of Spanish identity; on the other hand, the left displays an instinctive negative reaction to concepts such as patriotism and nationalism that it is unable to find a natural way of dealing with these questions.”<sup>21</sup> So while the PSOE tends to be less identified with Francoism than the PP is and thus more able to critique Francoist mythologies, overall, both parties have uncomfortable historical pasts and therefore neither party has a unified historical narrative it is aiming to present.

Tension also exists between the center and the periphery. The various autonomous regions<sup>22</sup> view Spain and Spanish identity differently. Each of the

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<sup>19</sup> Holo, *Beyond the Prado*, 37.

<sup>20</sup> I have selected four events that I consider to be very important in the Spanish Civil War for this thesis. It happens that all four, in their purist versions, favor the Republicans. The Alcázar and the Valley of the Fallen show Franco at his most grand, and deconstructing the myths surrounding them is therefore favorable to the Republicans. The other two events – the death of Lorca and the bombardment of Gernika – were Nationalist-perpetrated (or at least permitted) atrocities and accounts of both events were thus censored for 40 years. Therefore, in all four cases that I am addressing, the PSOE is more likely than the PP to be interested in what actually happened. However, there are other sites, like Belchite (mentioned in Chapter 1) or Paracuellos de Jarama (the location of an immense massacre of Nationalist prisoners by their Republican captors) that are more difficult for the PSOE to address, and, therefore, they provide fodder for PP accusations of hypocrisy on the part of the PSOE. This is another shade of complexity that must be considered when discussing how the Spanish Civil War is represented by the main political parties. Belchite and Paracuellos de Jarama are both less important than the sites I have studied and less shrouded in controversy because Francoists had forty years to investigate the horrors committed at each location; I have not chosen to get involved in the debates between the PSOE and the PP over these sites, but it is worth noting that the PSOE cannot claim the moral high ground when dealing with atrocities from the war.

<sup>21</sup> Aguilar Fernández and Humlebaek, "Collective Memory and National Identity," 141.

<sup>22</sup> Spain has seventeen “autonomous communities” or states. Some of these communities are more autonomous than others. Catalonia, for example, follows the boundaries of the historical region bearing the same name. Residents identify as Catalan and many speak the language. The same is the case for the residents of Galicia and Basque Country and, to a lesser extent, the Balearic Islands, Valencia, Asturias and Navarra. Other communities, like Castile-La Mancha and Castile-León, for example, are modern-day inventions that have neither a unique language nor any tradition of autonomy within the Spanish state, because these areas are identified with the kings of Spain and did

autonomous regions has local parties devoted to local rights, like the Catalans who requested their share of the Salamanca archives and the Basques who want *Guernica* to be housed there and not in Madrid. The main Spanish parties, the PSOE and the PP, are national and therefore cannot be so wholly devoted to local issues, but neither can they afford not to take a stand on them. The basic difference is that “Conservatives believe in the primacy of Spain as a shared community where the socialists do not.”<sup>23</sup> According to this distinction, on the federal level, socialists support decentralization of historical memory and allow for divergent voices while the conservatives believe in a central narrative of Spanish identity that applies to all. Clearly, the PSOE encourages expression of regional culture. However, it is in favor of a unified Spain, and it must therefore avoid supporting any actions that could be seen as separatist, for fear of losing votes in the non-autonomous parts of Spain. Meanwhile, the PP does not agree with autonomy and supports a strong central government,<sup>24</sup> but it too is a national party which does not want to lose votes, in this case in the periphery; the result are coalitions between the PP and local, conservative parties, which value autonomy.<sup>25</sup> Thus, while in general the socialists believe in multiple Spanish identities and the conservatives do not, the debate cannot be simplified, equating socialists with autonomy and conservatives with centralism.

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not need special protection to preserve their local customs. I do not consider these latter regions to be truly autonomous in the way that the former are. “Autonomous regions,” therefore, refers only to the former. As it happens, Castile is located in the center of the country, while the autonomous regions are located along its edges. Debates between Castile and the rest of Spain are thus literally the center versus the periphery.

<sup>23</sup> Holo, *Beyond the Prado*, 24.

<sup>24</sup> Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 159.

<sup>25</sup> As can be seen in the case of Basque Country, even conservatives in regions that have a history of autonomy support some degree of local control. Aguilar Fernández, “The Memory of the Civil War in the Transition to Democracy: The Peculiarity of the Basque Case.”

The three sets of tensions identified here – generational, ideological, and regional – combine to create a very complicated political landscape. Since these are all subjects that affect historical memory, it is hardly surprising that no national consensus on recent history exists. The result is two national parties who hesitate to get involved in debates over historical memory on the national level, leaving most decisions to local authorities. In general, Spain is not used to having nationwide policies,<sup>26</sup> which means that two communities, or even two neighboring towns, might address the same issue very differently. This reality dates back to the origins of modern Spain in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Educating the People**

Before Franco, Spanish governments had never successfully created cohesive national myths that helped define Spanish identity. This is due to frequent regime change over the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, at the time that the rest of Europe was creating national myths and symbols.<sup>27</sup> Even during the stable periods of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the country was led by the liberal oligarchies, there was no attempt at creating historical memory through symbols; the liberal leaders did not bother to socialize the masses.<sup>28</sup> Spain, due to ever-changing politics and disinterested elites, was unable to agree on a set of myths and symbols; “In the absence of a consensus on which values to transmit to the nation, the liberal state opted for a policy of benign neglect.”<sup>29</sup> While the Spanish flag was adopted in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, during the reign of Carlos

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<sup>26</sup> Except under Franco, which means that it is unlikely that Spain will try to standardize such things as education and monument construction in the near future, for fear of resembling a dictatorship.

<sup>27</sup> Álvarez Junco, "Formation of Spanish Identity," 24.

<sup>28</sup> Carolyn P. Boyd, "The Second Battle of Covadonga: The Politics of Commemoration in Modern Spain," *History & Memory* 14, no. 1/2 (2002), 43.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

III,<sup>30</sup> it has been challenged since then by both Carlists and Republicans, and the seal on the flag has been changed twice in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, by Franco and during the Transition.<sup>31</sup> The Spanish national anthem, the Royal March or the March of Honor, was also adopted during the reign of Carlos III,<sup>32</sup> but “to this day, it has no words, which means that it cannot be sung, thus forfeiting one of the main emotional effects of an anthem.”<sup>33</sup> Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the task of education and socialization was left mainly to the church, which was concerned with creating Catholics, not with creating Spaniards. The only exception to this was during the Second Republic,<sup>34</sup> and these changes – shifting education from church to state as part of an attempt to create a country of republicans – helped destabilize Spain during this period.<sup>35</sup> The only regime that succeeded in educating the people was Franco’s, and he did so through a mix of myth and force, which meant that successive governments could not emulate his style, for fear of appearing anti-democratic. As a result, “governments since the transition have studiously avoided the nationalist cultural politics associated with the previous regime”<sup>36</sup> and, therefore, Spain has not succeeded in creating a version of historical memory that is capable of superseding the account put forth by Franco.<sup>37</sup>

This inability to articulate a cohesive national discourse can be seen in Spanish education during and after the Transition. The 1978 Constitution requires that control over education be shared by the local and federal government, which led to a system where the federal government decided a set percentage of the school curriculum. In the

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<sup>30</sup> Aguilar Fernández and Humlebaek, "Collective Memory and National Identity," 163.

<sup>31</sup> Álvarez Junco, "Formation of Spanish Identity," 24.

<sup>32</sup> Aguilar Fernández and Humlebaek, "Collective Memory and National Identity," 163.

<sup>33</sup> Álvarez Junco, "Formation of Spanish Identity," 24.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>35</sup> Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 26.

<sup>36</sup> Boyd, "Second Battle of Covadonga," 58.

<sup>37</sup> Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 29-30.

traditional autonomous regions (Basque Country, Catalonia, and Galicia) the local government was given control of 45% of the syllabus; in the rest of Spain the local government decided 35%. This percentage afforded to each community tended to be used for teaching local history and customs. The idea was that children learned better when they could apply their education to their immediate context. However, many feared that this local focus took time away from national history and culture. They were concerned “that if future citizens do not recognize the landmarks of Spanish history, the common references of the nation’s past, they will feel no attachment to the state.”<sup>38</sup> The PP stated that “the regional education authorities were deliberately downplaying the concept of Spain.”<sup>39</sup> In addition, there were some who believed that the history being taught to Basque and Catalan children, in particular, was blatantly false.<sup>40</sup> When the PP came to power in 1996, they made it their priority to change the educational system, creating standard textbooks to be used across the country. However, due to the Constitution, they were not able to fully wrest control of the schools from the communities, and a portion of the history syllabus remained in the control of local authorities.<sup>41</sup> On top of this, contemporary pedagogy tends to emphasize the importance of learning skills – such as critical thinking – in place of facts, theorizing that in an ever-changing world what you know is not as important as how you think.<sup>42</sup> While this may be correct from a developmental standpoint, the result is a void of historical awareness. As a result, despite some attempt to standardize the curriculum, there is no version of Spanish history that is taught to all students in Spain.

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<sup>38</sup> Eduardo Manzano Moreno and Juan Sisinio Pérez Garzón, "A Difficult Nation?: History and Nationalism in Contemporary Spain," *History & Memory* 14, no. 1/2 (2002), 275.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 276.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 275.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 276.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 274.

The lack of standardization means that Spaniards tend to be ill-informed about the Spanish Civil War. In a poll from 1983, despite the fact that one-tenth of the respondents had family in exile, one-quarter had a relative who had died in the war, and two-thirds had relatives who had fought, many Spaniards (about one-third) did not know whether the International Brigades and German Condor Legion fought on the Republic or Nationalist side of the war, nor did they know which side was supported by Stalin and which by Hitler.<sup>43</sup> This poll is from more than 20 years ago, but it is clear that the general ignorance about the war has not changed. In the summer of 2006, the *Filmoteca nacional* (National Film Library) in Madrid screened *Santa Cruz ... por ejemplo*, a documentary about a mass grave exhumation in the small town of Santa Cruz. The documentary included a scene in which young people from the town were approached and asked for their opinions on the exhumation; the teenagers were clearly ill-informed and unable to accurately explain what was going on around them. After the film, during a question and answer session with the film director, an audience member claimed that this was indicative of deplorable teenage apathy; however, many in the audience, including some students in their early 20s, disagreed with this audience member. These students pointed to the failure of Spanish education to explain the Spanish Civil War, noting that textbooks tend to devote a minimum of pages to the conflict and that, especially at the high school level, the academic year tended to end before the teacher had reached 20<sup>th</sup> century history.<sup>44</sup> Given the nature of college in Spain, in which students tend to only take classes within their area of study, high school is the only time when students are

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<sup>43</sup> This was not asked explicitly, but it seems unlikely that they knew that the International Brigades fought against the Condor Legion and that Stalin and Hitler supported opposing groups. Halper, "Voices from the Valley", 96-97.

<sup>44</sup> Shown on 28 June 2006 in Madrid's *Filmoteca nacional*. Günter Schwaigery and Hermann Peseckas, *Santa Cruz ... por ejemplo* ([Madrid]: [Suevia Films], 2006).

required to learn history. It is clear, therefore, that not only is historical education different across the country but also that the Spanish Civil War is neglected in the classroom, creating a void of historical memory.

It is not, however, the case that the people are not at all interested in the Spanish Civil War. Paloma Aguilar Fernández and Carsten Humlebaek may be correct when they claim that most Spaniards would prefer to leave the recent past alone,<sup>45</sup> but this is not the only point of view. There are also those Spaniards who are ready to learn about the civil war and Francoism.<sup>46</sup> Ángela Cenarro Lagunas notes the publication of a book about civil war-era repression in Aragón, written by Julián Casanova, whose first two editions sold out quickly. This publication leads her to conclude that, “The recovery of the darkest episodes of the Spanish recent past has not been sponsored by the state. The task has been demanded by civil society, and historians have been the leaders in this process.”<sup>47</sup>

Furthermore, whether the people like it or not, it is the role of the state to decide what to teach. During and after the Transition, the Spanish government had a chance to create new historical memory, but they neglected this possibility, due to a fear of the army and the ultra-right.<sup>48</sup> There were many lost opportunities to create a new democratic identity during the Transition, using historical memory to orient toward the

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<sup>45</sup> Aguilar Fernández and Humlebaek, "Collective Memory and National Identity," 123.

<sup>46</sup> The difference, as with politics, between those who do not want to address the past and those who do may be generational, ideological, regional, all of the above, or none of the above.

<sup>47</sup> Ángela Cenarro Lagunas, "Memory Beyond the Public Sphere: The Francoist Repression Remembered in Aragón," *History & Memory* 14, no. 1/2 (2002), 165.

<sup>48</sup> This fear seems irrational in retrospect, given the poor showings of the ultra-right in elections and the ease with which King Juan Carlos defeated the 1981 coup attempt. However, Spaniards were legitimately concerned that a violent break with Francoism would lead to another civil war. Andrés, "Las estatuas de Franco," 179.

future. Instead, the federal government chose to avoid contentious issues, resulting in a generation of Spaniards who have not been taught about the Spanish Civil War.<sup>49</sup>

In the absence of a cohesive narrative, it is impossible to fully undo Francoist mythologies. There exist in Spain three generations – a dying group who remember the Spanish Civil War, a large group who were taught by Franco, and an ever-growing group educated by the democratic government of Spain. Therefore, with the exception of those who actively resisted Franco and the intellectuals, historical memory of the Spanish Civil War still reflects Franco's teachings, and will, on some level, continue to do so until education in Spain is oriented to refute Francoist mythology. This will not be possible until the political leaders come to a consensus about education. This, however, is not a priority for Spanish politicians and, even if it were a priority, unlikely to happen given the generational, ideological, and regional divides over the nature and lessons of the Spanish Civil War.

### **What Next? The Future of Historical Memory**

The Spanish Civil War ended 68 years ago. Franco died almost 32 years ago. The Transition ended a long time ago; Spain has had a Constitution since 1978 and the coup attempt was in 1981. The state is no longer fascist or authoritarian. It does not rely on the Church and army for moral and political guidance. It is, instead, a modern political entity, with a constitutional monarchy and an increasingly heterogeneous population. There is room in Spain for multiple languages, religions, and value systems. Given this, it is time for Spain to address the contentious parts of its history, by, for example, addressing multiple points of view at monuments. To be considered truly pluralistic,

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<sup>49</sup> Aguilar Fernández and Humleback, "Collective Memory and National Identity," 155.



Spain cannot continue to allow Francoists to gather at a state funded monument, like the Valley of the Fallen, without recreating the site in such a way that Republican veterans can commemorate their version of the past there too.

Perhaps the most interesting developing site in this regard is the outdoor monument created by the Community of Aragón, which opened in 2006. Los Monegros<sup>50</sup> was an active battlefield throughout the war and, as such, has numerous sites of memory related to both the Nationalists and Republicans. Therefore, the local government has decided to create a route that links these very different sites into a cohesive narrative, capable of showing many points of view. On one side of the front are the trenches where George Orwell fought for the POUM militias.<sup>51</sup> On the other side is the San Simon Position – a monument to Nationalist dead who were lured into a Republican ambush. Finally, there is a Visitors Center with space for permanent and temporary exhibitions.<sup>52</sup> The group of sites is not ideological in nature; it informs visitors. The visitor learns that Falangists were fighting for “fatherland, bread, and justice” while the militias, on the other side of the front, considered these men to be “Fascists” who were trying to reverse the revolution of the masses. Executions are mentioned, and the war is depicted as bloody and violent. There is no idealization of either side. It remains unclear what the Visitors Center explains about the war, but from

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<sup>50</sup> A large desert just east of Zaragoza, which is the capital of Aragón.

<sup>51</sup> *Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista* (The Worker’s Party of Marxist Unification); the group was part of the Popular Front and its militias fought for the Republic. In Aragón, militias from different political parties fought in very close proximity, so while Orwell fought with the POUM, the men fighting 100 meters on either side of him fought with other militia units, until they were all subsumed into the Republican Army.

<sup>52</sup> The Visitors Center website is not yet online; this page of the Los Monegros website has been “under construction” since June 2006, with no indication of when the center opened or when its website will be online. However, there is information about a temporary exhibition, open in the spring of 2007, of war posters from both sides. This same exhibition was being shown at the Gernika Peace Museum when I was there in July 2006, which leads me to believe that the Los Monegros Visitor’s Center will have a similarly thorough and balanced treatment of history in its permanent exhibition.

the outdoor sites alone<sup>53</sup> the visitor receives a basic understanding of the uprising on July 18, 1936, and the subsequent civil war, including who fought on which side and some of the issues they were fighting for. Francoist monuments have not been removed, they have been explained; this means that the relatives of the dead who were commemorated in the first place have not been offended, but neither are the ignorant receiving propaganda. On the other side of the front, Orwell enthusiasts and other Republican supporters have a place to visit where they can feel close to their side. Given that each site has only a few explanatory signs, it is a refreshingly comprehensive experience, one that gives objective information to the uninformed and places of reverence for the ideologically inclined.

If commemoration of the Spanish Civil War is moving in this direction, Spaniards will soon be better educated about their history than they have been at any point since the end of the war. There is no longer a need to create propaganda to justify a regime based on a military uprising, nor is there a fear of political instability that could be caused by questioning this propaganda. The Spanish Civil War is over; it is past, not present. The war may continue to affect Spain, and thus be material for politicians, but the events of the war should be dealt with by historians, who at least attempt objectivity. Street naming and small monuments may continue to reflect ideological biases, but the major sites of the memory from the Spanish Civil War need to be updated if Spain is going to avoid anachronism and teach, instead, contemporary perspectives at these sites. In the words of Sanford Levinson, “Legitimacy is a classic scarce resource; no social

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<sup>53</sup> These opened before the Visitor’s Center. I was able to see three of them in July 2006 (the Orwell trenches had been completed; the two Nationalist sites lacked their explanatory signs) and all three are depicted online, with copies of the signs displayed at the sites themselves. Information can be accessed (Spanish only) at <http://www.losmonegros.com/guerracivil/inicio.htm>, Los Monegros Civil War website. Accessed 30 March 2007.

order bestows it promiscuously (even though many bestow it unwisely).”<sup>54</sup> Monuments are one manner of conveying such legitimacy, and until Spain updates its *lieux de mémoire*, it will continue to convey legitimacy inconsistently.

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<sup>54</sup> Levinson, *Written in Stone*, 87.

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