

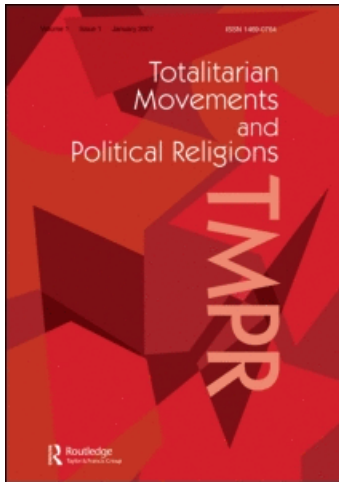
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From Invisibility to Power: Spanish Victims and the Manipulation of their Symbolic Capital

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ABSTRACT *This paper will explore the historical construction and negotiation of Spanish political victimhood, particularly the victims of the Francoist repression framed by the Spanish Civil War of 1936–9, the victims of the Basque terrorist organisation ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna) and those who died in the attacks perpetrated by Islamic terrorists on 11 March 2004 in Madrid. At the time of their victimisation, personal and social 'logics' were constructed to explain the events that culminated in the death of members of the social body, as the logic of the everyday was subverted by acts of extreme violence. Today, the victims, whose voices were silenced by death, have acquired the capacity to speak from a privileged space of integration and national 'reconciliation' premised on their inclusion, after having been 'othered' by extreme fanaticisms of religious and/or political creed. As the relatives of the deceased – themselves victims – and diverse political organisations vie for the representation of the victims and of the meanings that they embody, they engage in an exercise in memory and power amid a society still divided along lines reminiscent of those that led to the eruption of the civil war 70 years ago.*

Repression and its Handmaiden: Invisibility

The foreigner who turns an interested eye toward contemporary Spanish politics might be surprised by the sight of the entire country, 70 years after the civil war that devastated it, dug up in the search for mass graves that contain the remains of those killed during General Francisco Franco's uprising in towns that were conquered by the insurgents and in the repression that followed. After decades of official but unspoken silence, the most hidden and alienated dead whose very blood generated opprobrium during the dictatorship, emerge in the Spanish public scene with a surprising and deafening clamour. Their disinterment, and the power of the skeletons inscribed with visible signs of material and symbolic violence, has generated an intense debate about the war, its victims, and their memory.

This process has been made possible by the process of historiographical revision carried out during the last 20 years by scholars on the progressive Left, as well as by amateur revisions lacking academic rigour. The conflicting setting of today's public memory is witnessing a similar conservative revisionism, which reiterates theses already shuffled by the dictatorship, although made more

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sophisticated by scientific enquiry and objectivity, and points to the need for 'reconciliation'. Many among the Right trusted that the physical disappearance of those who had lived through the most violent period of Francoism's repression would silence the latent controversies of the civil war. But the truths and the suffering of the victims had been transmitted from one generation to the next, given the lack of closure imposed on the families by the mass burials of their loved ones' remains, and the active silencing of their murders. The interim of the dictatorship and the transition had in fact been the calm before the storm.

The victims who, from their opened graves, are now indirectly contributing to the construction of a counter-hegemonic narrative of the past, are those who were killed in the rearguard of the zone under insurgent military command. They were not war casualties, but civilians who were captured, many picked up from their homes under the complicit cover of night, and assassinated without due process. Many had turned themselves in when they found out that their names were on 'a list' in the hands of the victorious insurgents.

This process of extermination, concentrated in the first six months of the war, took the lives of approximately 59–70% of the total of victims during the civil war, and the subsequent dictatorship. The number of those killed by the insurgents during this period of 'hot terror' was around 90,000 (plus 5000 more produced by Franco's post-war 'justice'). Those assassinated by the Republican faction amount to nearly 55,000 dead, not a negligible number by far.¹

This systematic exercise was so clearly geared toward the complete extermination of the Republicans that there were so-called 'second and third rounds of cleansing' meant to eliminate those that had been missed in the first killings.² Politicians and those affiliated to parties in the Popular Front, members of leftist unions and members of the *Casa del Pueblo* [People's House], those who had publicly proclaimed Republicanism as their creed, suffered imprisonment and murder in areas which had already been pacified. This was what Mola's 'exemplary punishments' evidently came down to.³ Punishment did not stop there, however – the relatives of those assassinated were also victimised, as they suffered the loss of loved ones, the ignominious behaviour of neighbours and the constant marginalisation in their communities. Added to this was economic hardship, as the main provider of the household was dead, and they were impeded from acceding to certain jobs, and in many cases properties were taken from them. Female relatives were specifically targeted, as their humiliation symbolically increased the punishments of their husbands, fathers, sons or brothers. They were denigrated publicly, beaten, arbitrarily incarcerated, made to render domestic services for the military commanders and so on.

This violence of extermination in which the political rival had to be physically eliminated did not come from processes born in the brief and recent Second Republic. Its roots went back to the last third of the nineteenth century at least, when the conflicts of identity owing to the weak and incomplete consolidation of the Spanish nation-state became increasingly untenable. Throughout the first third of the twentieth century, moreover, Spanish political culture had not grown accustomed to the democratic process, and recourse to armed force became politically normalised. The lack of commitment to Republican democracy vitiated the Second Republic on both the Left and the Right. Finally, there existed an extreme socio-economic inequality that led to a radically polarised political situation. But the developments that took place between 1936 and 1939 were unthinkable at the societal level; the fact that some people had voluntarily turned themselves in

attests to this fact. Nothing like the type of violence unleashed then had ever taken place before, not during the divisive civil wars of the nineteenth century, nor during the dictatorship that was still fresh in everybody's memory, that of General Miguel Primo de Rivera's regime from 1923 to 1929.⁴

This extreme and organised violence generated irreparable damage to and fractures in the social fabric of the communities involved. That a sector of civil society virulently attacked and repressed their next-door neighbours was severely shocking, for despite tensions, relations of subordination, and conflicts, co-existence was premised on the minimum respect of the life and property of all community-members.

Silencing and Invisibility

More than 60 years would go by before Spanish society acknowledged that such killings and marginalisation had indeed taken place – that people had been killed for the mere fact of their political identity or activities, that the killers had had absolute impunity and had sometimes benefitted from their crimes. The imposed silence and invisibility that excluded the relatives of those assassinated from being an integral part of national society, keeping their memory and experience from being integrated into post-war national narratives, is still one of the many elements of Francoist repression that endures within our democracy.

This seeming societal indifference was fed by two factors: first, the state's denial that any politically motivated massacre had taken place (outside those perpetrated by the 'Reds'); and second, the tacit prohibition regarding any public discussion of the massacres, among other politically sensitive subjects. To Spanish society at large, the relatives of those massacred by the supporters of the victorious regime were invisible as a social sector that was part of the nation. To their neighbours in provincial towns and cities where killings were known to have happened, they were visible only as the embodiment of the vanquished past, their loss understood as directly related to the wrong-headed ideologies that their relatives had espoused.

Thus the relatives of the assassinated republicans suffered both a social invisibility, and an even more painful silencing that became, indeed, the continuation *on them* of the repression against their dead relatives. They were not allowed to mourn their dead or to bring flowers to the mass graves whose site was often known. They had to live side-by-side with the executioners of their loved ones, and not only could they *not* pursue justice against them, but they had to subordinate themselves socially and politically to them. They were the ones who carried on them the stigma of pariahs, they the ones expected to 'apologise' for being related to a *fusilado* [those executed without trials and buried in mass graves at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War], and not the actual killers.

The Logic of Violence and Construction of the Victims During the Dictatorship: Understanding Repression from Within

In part, Spanish society could believe that there had been no politically motivated massacres, and simultaneously believe that those who died were guilty of *something*, because the logic constructed by the Francoist regime to explain the undeniable fact of tens of thousands of murders in non-combat zones made this plausible. Because they denied that their adherents had committed these

atrocities, they could not posit, for instance, that zealous townspeople had let things get out of hand in their just desire to help the insurgents cleanse Spain of the blemish of the 'Reds'. No: it was 'envy and petty hatreds' – *malos quereres* – that led some to take advantage of the disorder provided by war, following the unruliness of the Republican period, and kill people whose behaviour singled them out for killing. The regime thus tacitly acknowledged that the victims were indeed Reds, but denied that the perpetrators were acting on state-sponsored, state-sanctioned anti-Red feeling.⁵

In this environment of denial, official silence and ongoing state repression against political dissidence (which included the questioning of governmental statements-of-fact), the relatives of the deceased had to continue living their lives. Given the impact of the trauma, their incapacity to express their pain or reach closure, and the extra economic hardships that most suffered in addition to the emotional and social distress, one can argue that the world of the families of the repression's victims was 'ruptured'. In order to rebuild their lives on these broken foundations, families needed to construct a logic to the violence, to understand what had happened to them, why their loved ones had died, why their world had been turned upside down. Two aspects are important to understand how and why the relatives of the victims constructed the explanations that they did. First, families had to do this without the benefit of actual information, within a rigid system of censorship that made access to knowledge about what had actually happened virtually impossible for them, and their quest to find information dangerous. Second, the regime's discourses, imposed on them as the defeated side – and therefore, the wrong side – would evidently become the hegemonic context in which the relatives constructed their own narratives.

Not knowing that there were indeed orders given from senior officials to compile lists of 'Reds' and give them exemplary punishments, the first and second generation of the relatives of the victims believed that the local context was the only stage of the political violence. They witnessed, or heard from their parents, instances of local people demanding the execution of particular persons – even some who had been freed by the authorities – and just as importantly, they saw the economic and political benefits that accrued to some of the local instigators of violence. They remembered the quarrels that tore at the social fabric of their society, and they lived through a time when the absolute marginalisation of social pariahs was normalised to the extreme. Many relatives of assassinated Republicans accepted the thesis that the murders were the product of the envies, petty hatreds, greed and *revanchismo* [vindictiveness] that moved sectors of the townsfolk against the other, defeated, sectors.

As part of this 'logic of violence' constructed by the relatives, the assassinated were not random victims of senseless acts of violence. Their names were put on a list because of their political or social activism; or even because they were mistaken as political or social activists when they had nothing to do with politics. In reality they were murdered so that a particular person or family could accede to a job or secure an illegitimate source of wealth.

The responses and discourses of different relatives of both the second and first generation reflected different adaptations to the reality of death and silence. For some, it became important to underline that their deceased relatives had been totally and completely 'clean' of political blemishes – they were not 'Reds'. The stigma that such a label carried with it implied an almost immediate justification of their 'legal' or extra-legal execution. The murder of a 'Red' was not to be

blamed on the one who pulled the trigger, but on the Red himself for placing himself outside the bounds of the political body of the nation, threatening the moral order of society and practically 'forcing' the hand of his killer to react by attacking him. Because of this, it was logical that in their effort to underline the dignity and personhood of their murdered loved one, some people preferred to 'misremember' the deceased person's political activism and construe them as devoid of political ideology. In the end, they were murdered because they had become involved in politics unknowingly. They had been misled, misinformed, they had made a fatal mistake. Only then could the relatives say, 'he did nothing: his death was entirely unjustified'. The insidiousness of this construction lies in its equation of political activism and wrongdoing: the relatives who so constructed the victims of the repression had indeed internalised the regime's construction of political activists as inherently evil, genetically flawed, essentially 'othered'.

Other relatives rejected the construction of 'Reds' as 'killable others' by emphasising that their murdered loved one had done nothing wrong – as opposed to, had done nothing, period – and that his or her political activism did not justify their assassination. They were murdered because this or that prominent townsperson was angry at the victim's temerity or pride. They were murdered because they had stirred things up at local level, they had tried to change the conditions of work, they had tried to improve the position of the underdogs; they had faced up to *caciques* and corrupt leaders.

In both these cases – which should be seen as schematic models which in reality are nuanced and sometimes mixed – the victim was an agent in his life and death – whether he or she was indeed politically active, or whether he or she was the object of envy or ill will. The killings were not random – local enmities and struggles framed their execution and logic. But in both cases, the victim was not a 'mere' victim – a bystander faced with the fact of his murder would say – if he was killed, he must have done *something*.

Dead Man Talking: Post-Authoritarian Constructions of Violence and Victims

Thirty-nine years passed between the most egregious massacres of the Second Republic's supporters and the death of the dictator. Five years more went by before democracy was tenuously restored. Within two years of the restoration of democracy, the Socialist party was in power in Spain. But the relatives of the victims, the families that had seen property taken from them, and had had humiliations heaped upon them for years, were still invisible, still silenced, not only during the transition to democracy, but during three consecutive Socialist administrations. Their demands to have the remains of their loved ones exhumed and given proper burial went unheeded, and the frustration of the first generation of relatives increased as they themselves reached old age and feared they would die and never be able to fulfil their duties to their dead fathers and brothers and uncles who lay in unmarked graves. The politicians responded by saying 'it is not the time', or 'we should not reopen the wounds of the past' to people whose present was still an open wound, and for whom the right time could no longer be delayed. Between 1978 and 1981, groups of relatives in fact undertook citizen-led exhumations, despite the lack of archaeological assistance that could have identified the remains of each victim, but the failed coup of 1981 revived old fears and cut even that option short.

It was not until the summer of 2000, after the exhumation of a grave in El Bierzo, in the northern province of León, that the claims of the relatives of the victims of the repression finally crystallised in the public sphere. Santiago Macías and Emilio Silva, the latter the grandson of one of those exhumed at El Bierzo, founded the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica [Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory; ARMH, Spanish acronym], dedicated to the recovery of the remains of those murdered and concealed in unmarked mass graves during the Spanish Civil War. In a matter of weeks, ARMH expanded like wildfire across the whole country, as chapters were formed in various locales, encouraged by an illustrated report published in the Sunday edition of *El País*, Spain's most important newspaper. That article was followed by a barrage of thousands of letters and e-mails from people around the country asking for guidance in the task of recovering their relative's remains.⁶

Silva and Macías presented a claim before the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances of the United Nations, which in itself became a piece of news of high social and political impact. This generated increasing pressure on the Spanish government to respond – or react – to the demands of the relatives agglutinated in the ARMH, and in the various other organisations dedicated to the same objectives that multiplied throughout the country.

Most importantly, the defeated were suddenly made visible at the societal level, as if indeed 'a large amount of memory floated around; it had not evaporated, even though it had been swept under the rug of history, because prudence, the need to coexist, or fear, had compelled it to be put there'.⁷ Different media finally picked up the stories of these people who had been killed, buried in unmarked graves, and then blamed for their own deaths, and the stories of their family members who had lived with the terrible suffering of mourning in silence, often feeling shame for the crime that was committed against them. Local and national radio stations, newspapers and popular texts started creating a counter-hegemonic narrative of the invisible and silenced past. Not only were the stories of the dead occupying these public spaces – those assassinated by Francoists – but the stories of their survivors' vexations, impoverishment, expropriations and exploitation were also made public for the first time. The concept of 'victim' was undergoing a fundamental transformation and broadening. But the acceptance by many of Francoism as a legitimate regime, the still present (though weakened) stigmatisation of the 'Reds' and the long neglect that their assassinations continued to receive under conservative and Socialist administrations alike, revealed that Spanish society had still not absorbed the magnitude of the injustice and the atrocities committed during the 'hot terror' and its aftermath.

In response, many among the movement for the recovery of historic memory have attempted to redefine the victims of Francoist repression from the discourse of the universal principles of *human rights*. Their insistence on the inviolability of the individual's humanity was meant to break the shell of social indifference that did not see the massive assassination of 'Reds' as an attack on the very foundations of Spanish society and human morality. The restoration of democracy made available information and knowledge that were impossible to accede before – especially the knowledge that the military insurgents of 1936 had developed plans of extermination,⁸ and that the orchestration of 'lists' of marked individuals had followed orders developed at the top of the regime. This piece of information

(new at a general social level, although scholars had been talking about it for some time) has derived from the construction of a counter-hegemonic explanation for the massacres. In this narrative, intra-community tensions and local dynamics did not play an important role in the execution of violence – the blame was on the insurgent government. There is a clear tendency among some studies and associations to insist upon this external origin of the repression, considering local tensions and struggles as irrelevant in the extermination process. If this were the case, the victims were fully, totally and merely victims: their personalities, their actions as members of highly divided communities and the hatred or greed of their neighbours had little to do with their death. Only their political activism, or the perception of the regime about their political activism, singled them out. In this new construction of victimhood, the deceased – their bones now exposed by the exhumation process, handled by the hands of forensic scientists, journalists, family members and members of NGOs and associations – are abstracted from their social–historical context and made malleable Victims. The real and increasingly violent tensions of the Second Republic, as well as the immitigable culpability of the local perpetrators who murdered neighbours and strangers in cold blood and with complete impunity, were left on the wayside of this logic.

The discourse about the victims is re-defined in this new context: by underlining the outside force – the orders of extermination – the innocence of the victim is ‘consolidated’ in his or her abstraction from a complicated milieu in which good and bad things were happening, in which messy problems and tensions could potentially lead a bystander to say, ‘if he was killed, it must have been because of *something*’. The murdered men and women become total victims because their fate was in the hands of a removed entity that did not even know them, an entity that saw in them embodied ideologies and not persons when they were, first and foremost, human beings. But there is a series of problems with this narrative of the victims. First, the grounding of the victim’s personhood, and the experience of the relatives who were also surviving victims, is denied the importance that it indeed had and that forms an important part in the relatives’ memories about how they lived through the dictatorship. Second, the narrative lets in through the back door the notion that, if indeed the victims had in life been involved in messy political struggles, or had performed unpopular measures at local level, they had ‘done something’ and were therefore partly to blame for their own assassinations.

In any case, the struggle of the movement for the recovery of historic memory has indeed made it increasingly untenable for people to say out loud that, if a person was killed either by the Francoist regime or in the pacified zones during the war, they probably had *some* guilt. The victims of repression are increasingly understood as such – as victims, and therefore, as unjustifiably victimised.

Victims as Symbolic Capital: Redefinition of Victimhood in Light of 11 March

On 11 March 2004, a terrorist attack on Madrid’s urban train system profoundly altered the political and cultural terrain in which the definition of ‘victim’ was attached to a ‘logic of violence’. A notion of a ‘victim of absolute innocence’ emerged in this incident, as Spanish society poured into the streets to protest and mourn the death of men, women and children who had done nothing other than go on with their everyday, only to be met by an act of extreme violence that cut

their lives short. The loss of these individuals was seen as a loss for the universe of Spanish society, and the culprit or culprits – in the immediate aftermath, they were still unknown – carried all the blame.

This representation of victims of armed violence was entirely new in Spain. The 11 March thus inaugurated the social acceptance of the claim to innocence demanded by other victims but never totally obtained. But nothing about the actions or personalities of those who died from the attacks on the trains of Madrid could explain these deaths to their relatives, who were therefore seen to suffer the ultimate injustice. Entirely removed from their assassins, nothing about their ethnicity, nationality, social class, religious affiliation or political ideology justified their death even to the attackers. Inserted in the global context marked by The War on Terror, these were the most innocent victims of twentieth-century Spain.

For days, Spanish newspapers printed small biographies of each of the victims in an exercise of humanisation and individualisation that contributed to validating the feeling of global loss felt by society for each of these lives. From this, let us say, purification of the concept of ‘victim’, the other victims of armed ‘political’ violence in Spain are being imbued with newfound humanity – the victims of Francoist repression and the victims of the Basque terrorist separatist organisation ETA – as evidenced in their treatment in the general press.

ETA and Francoism: Similar Exclusion and Similar Experiences of Victimhood

Somewhat paradoxically, given its early anti-Francoist politics, ETA and the Francoists operated in similar ways, and produced similar social processes of victimhood. Both the Francoists and ETA defined their victims *a priori* as outside the national body politic, and thus *othered*, proceeded to ‘eliminate’ them in order to protect and maintain the purity of those who remain inside, who, unlike ‘those others’, are social persons. Francoists applied the ultimate ostracism – assassination – to those labelled ‘Reds’ and as such, not true Spaniards, while ETA ostracises those who are declared as not deserving to belong to the Basque people.

The victims of ETA, like the victims of Francoism, tend to be paradoxically inscribed with a degree of guilt – a notion that, if they were not randomly chosen, they must have some responsibility or play some part in the political universe that made ETA take their lives. Many testimonies of relatives of those murdered by the terrorist organisation affirm that they were treated as if they were a plague, guilty of *something*. More than receiving the solidarity of their neighbours, they were treated with suspicion. In a similar vein, some relatives of Francoist victims claimed that other family members distanced themselves, as if they feared they would somehow become ‘contaminated’ by their condition of *desafectos al regimen* [dissidents]. Blame was not entirely in the hands of the killers.

Significant sectors of Spanish society likewise believed that political militancy or belonging to police or military corps explained – and partly justified – the death of most of these victims of ETA. The logic of their deaths was therefore similar to the logic and construction of victims and violence of Francoism. Moreover, ETA’s victims were mediated before society by their political affiliation to the parties and organisations that ‘patrimonialised’ their deaths as ‘one of theirs’, and not a member of Spanish society as a whole.

The Victims of Armed Violence as Symbolic Capital

From the total innocence of the victims of 3–11 emerges a symbolic capital that not only redefines the concept of victim, and therefore affects the victims of Francoism and their relatives as well as ETA's victims. It charges the political terrain with meanings embodied by the 'victims' that go beyond themselves and, in fact, condense visions of the past and the future that also inform ideas about the Spanish nation.

When the attack of 11 March took place, the governing party – the conservative Popular Party (PP) – clung to the idea that ETA was the culprit. The PP government had evident political interests in this version – general elections were about to take place in three days, and the PP had taken onto itself the mantle of Spain's own domestic 'war on terror' and ETA was the main enemy. Such a shocking attack by ETA made the PP the evident choice on the ballot. But immediately after the attacks, Spanish society clamoured for a thorough and objective investigation into the incident, as links to Islamic terrorism became apparent. The PP's refusal to admit that indeed evidence pointed away from ETA was evidently tied to the fact that Spanish society had rejected the country's entry into the war on Iraq, and would now perceive the terrorist attack as indirectly caused by the PP's illegitimate entry into the war.

The Socialist Party [Partido Socialista Obrero Español, PSOE], on the other hand, had insisted from the beginning, along with other parties and organised elements of civil society, that the victims and the relatives of the victims had a right to know what was being investigated and what had actually taken place. They had also previously made electoral promises related to removing Spain immediately from the war, and related to the fully fledged support of the Movement for the Recovery of Historic Memory and the relatives of Francoism's victims. When, three days after 11 March, the PSOE found itself in control of the government, they had become the defenders of the victims of 11 March and the defenders of Francoism's victims. The symbolic capital that this accrued to them as managers of the pain and memory of these groups of innocent victims was so significant that the opposition party, the PP, attempted to gain some of this capital itself.

The 11 March victims increasingly embodied the refusal of the PP to take into account the largest peaceful demonstration in contemporary Spanish history;⁹ and then, their incapacity to admit the truth about a major incident because of vested electoral interests. They embodied, therefore, a commitment to the democratic process and a fundamental respect for the right to life beyond political or religious ideologies. Having led Spain to become part of the coalition of the War on Terror, the PP sought to capitalise on these Spanish victims of this same war, not only to deflect their own blame, but to impede the electoral and political benefits accruing to the PSOE as the governing party that successfully managed the issues suffered by the victims of 11 March. After the intervention of Pilar Manjón before the National Chamber of Deputies,¹⁰ president of the Asociación 11-M Afectados de Terrorismo, the Regional Government of Madrid, controlled by the PP, created a parallel association of victims called the Asociación de Ayuda a las Víctimas del 11-M to counteract the support that they perceived accrued to the government in its successful management of the victims' situation. This association has declared through its president its dissidence from the original group based on the politicisation of that group, and its desire to remain independent from the government

and to criticise what it perceives to be unnecessary measures such as the creation of a Commissioner of Victims that responds to all 'categories' of victims of armed violence in the country.

On the other hand before 11 March, the symbolic capital of the only officially recognised group of victims of armed violence – ETA's victims – had been politicised by all the parties concerned. But insofar as the PP had taken the mantle of Spanish national security and an exclusivist Spanish nationalism reminiscent of Francoism that left little room for 'separatist' ideologies, ETA's victims are particularly meaningful. The PP's capture of one of the most important organisations of victims, the Association of Victims of Terrorism, is evident in the fact that José María Aznar was named honorary president of the association, and in the various public statements that place AVT in conflict with other victims' associations, especially Pilar Manjón's.

Finally, another very recent process that affects the visibility of all victims and their use as capital was the so-called (failed) *permanent ceasefire*, declared by ETA (from 22 March 2006 to 30 December 2006). All political speeches regarding the process of peace began with a message of support and solidarity with ETA's victims, without the usual labelling of the victim's political affiliation or ideological affinity. This shift from the partisan patrimony that, until recently, characterised the treatment accorded the victims of ETA is arguably informed by the new terrain of innocent victimhood and global social loss initiated by the attacks of the 11 March. A process of peace negotiation with ETA became the road assumed by the PSOE-led government, which underlined the need for reconciliation with justice, or truth, or both – while the PP operated from a logic of 'defeat' as the only way to maintain society and the nation. A game of mirrors juxtaposes the symbolic meanings embedded in the victims of Francoism and ETA for the PP: for the former, reconciliation is prescribed and imposed without any redress, reparations or recognition; for the latter, 'negotiation' with terrorists implies a reconciliation that the victims should in no way accept, for it would demean the death of their loved ones. In this way, the PP was the only party to vote against a resolution passed in the Chamber of Deputies that named 2006 as the Year of Memory, in honour of the 75 years of the proclamation of the Republic and to commemorate the 70 years after the start of the Civil War. A spokesperson of the PP said that the year should be declared the 'Year of Concord', underlining the divisiveness that is rekindled by 'memory'.

Conclusions

Perhaps two normative points regarding scholars' responsibility in the transformation of Spanish historic memory and the construction of true social reconciliation are the best way to conclude this paper. First, in order to promote the respect that is indispensable for a truly integrative social and historical interpretation of the conflicts of the past, it is necessary to reflect on the experience and suffering of the Civil War and the repression associated with it. Confronting the conflicts that led to and that were unleashed by the repression from an ideological standpoint does not bring us closer to a solution on how to negotiate this traumatic past. To break the perpetual reproduction of an exclusivist history of the victors that became hegemonic memory that left no room for dissidence or difference, we must document and listen to people's testimonies and experiences¹¹. It is necessary to connect emotional, personal and communal experiences with the wider

national context to understand how central orders or programmes intermingled with local spheres to produce diverse and particular types of violence.¹²

Second, we must understand that those 'Reds' (and Francoists) assassinated far from the battle field during the Civil War were indeed innocent: their assassination without due process was entirely unjustified. Their loss was a loss for all of Spanish society, not only for 'the Republic', the party or the family they belonged to. Through their adherence to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Movement for the Recovery of Historic Memory had already touched on this new significance of innocence, victimhood and violence. But they had not entirely succeeded, and scholarly research can provide stronger foundations for the construction of new meanings. Spanish society and Spanish political organisations must learn that the loss of civilian life in the hands of political criminals, both in the past and the present, has negatively affected all Spanish national society. This injustice should not be 'capitalised' for electoral or political purposes through the celebration of partisan 'lists of martyrs.' If we can do this, we will have taken an important step as a mature democratic society in the construction of a truly polyphonic and integrative society.

Translation: Yesenia Pumarada Cruz

Notes

1. Julián Casanova, "Una dictadura de cuarenta años," in Julián Casanova (coord.), *Morir, matar, sobrevivir: La violencia en la dictadura de Franco* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2002), pp.8 and 19 and 20. Julián Casanova, "Rebelión y revolución," in Santos Juliá (coord.), *Víctimas de la guerra civil* (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 1999); Julián Casanova, "La historia que nos cuenta TVE," *El País*, 3 April 2005.
2. Stanley Payne, in *Los militares y la política en la España contemporánea* (Madrid: Sarpe, 1986), pp.438–9, describes some claims for the unjustified assassinations of these lower-class people.
3. Emilio Mola Vidal, *Obras completas* (Valladolid: Librería Santarem, 1940).
4. See the books of Stanley Payne, *Politics and the Military in Modern Spain* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1967); *Spain's First Democracy. The Second Republic, 1931–1936* (Madison, WI: Wisconsin University Press, 1993); *The Spanish Civil War, the Soviet Union, and Communism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004); *The Collapse of the Spanish Republic, 1933–1936: Origins of the Civil War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006).
5. Ignacio Fernández de Mata, "The "Logics" of Violence and Franco's Mass Graves. An Ethnohistorical Approach", *International Journal of the Humanities*, 2/3 (2006), pp.2527–35.
6. Emilio Silva and Santiago Macías, *Las fosas de Franco. Los republicanos que el dictador dejó en las cunetas* (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 2003). The ARMH is not the only association concern with *historic memory*. Other organizations include: Archivo Guerra Civil y Exilio, AGE; Asociación de Familiares y Amigos de Represaliados de la II República por el Franquismo; Asociación de Amigos de la Fosa de Oviedo; and Foro por la Memoria. However, the impact of the ARMH in the Spanish society has made it the main protagonist of the present process.
7. Iñaki Gabilondo, "Prólogo. Generosidad," in Carlos Elordi (ed.) *Los años difíciles* (Madrid: Suma de Letras, 2003).
8. Julián Casanova (coord.), Francisco Espinosa, Conxita Mir and Francisco Moreno Gómez, *Morir, matar, sobrevivir. La violencia en la dictadura de Franco* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2002). Francisco Espinosa, *La columna de la muerte: el avance del ejército franquista de Sevilla a Badajoz* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2003); Francisco Espinosa, *Contra el olvido: historia y memoria de la guerra civil* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2006).
9. 15 March 2003.
10. 15 December 2004.
11. Walter Benjamín, "Tesis de filosofía de la historia," in Walter Benjamin, *Ensayos escogidos* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sur, 1967). See Thesis 9.
12. Philippe Bourgois, "The Continuum of Violence in War and Peace: Post-Cold War Lessons from El Salvador," *Ethnography*, 2/1 (2001), pp.5–34; Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Mamphela Ramphele and Pamela Reynolds (eds), *Violence and Subjectivity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press,

2000); Nancy Scheper-Hughes, "Coming to Our Senses. Anthropology and Genocide," in Alexander Laban Hinton (ed.), *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), pp.348–81; Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, "Introduction: Making Sense of Violence", in Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois (eds.) *Violence in War and Peace. An Anthology* (Malden: Blackwell, 2004).