CHAPTER 14

FROM TEAR TO PIXEL: POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AND DIGITAL EMOTIONS IN THE EXHUMATION OF CIVIL WAR MASS GRAVES IN SPAIN TODAY[1]

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The exhumation of mass graves resulting from rearguard repression during the Civil War (1936-1939) is creating unprecedented political and emotional cartographies in contemporary Spain. These exhumations are taking place in a legal void since, according to Spanish penal law and the 1977 Amnesty Law, the statute of limitations on these crimes has expired and they cannot be prosecuted. As a result, the process of scientific investigation and social dignification of these radically anachronistic corpses—framed by the disorderly arrangement and display of burial pits and inscribed with explicit violence—has become part of a broad, internally diverse political culture linked to the memory of the defeated in the war, which claims these re-emerging bodies and the ideals they are understood to represent as a key foundation for activism and public action. In turn, the exhumations in Spain are connected with similar developments elsewhere in the world, within the framework of global human rights discourses and practices (Ferrándiz and Robben).

On the ground, controversies regarding the handling of these disturbing corpses amongst different "associations for the recovery of historical memory"—representing different identitarian and political sensibilities—have emerged in many areas, one of the most contentious being divergent views about the emotional management of this potentially "moving" past. In this context, I will analyze two interrelated topics. First, I will show how the ability of exhumations to provoke strong feelings in relatives, sympathizers, and onlookers has given rise to conflicting views on how to emotionally relate to the dead in a significant manner and on how these emotions ought to be played out in the private and public spheres. These disagreements include issues such as the "proper" emotional tone to be kept as the bones emerge, the "right" political symbolism to trigger and accompany the surfacing of feelings, and the "appropriate" relationship between emotions and the politics of victimhood. Second, I will consider how the management and public display of these emotions, understood as social processes in continuous negotiation, and their iconic power as expressions of traumatic memories are increasingly bound up with the contemporary proliferation of affordable, easy-to-use digital devices and networks. This increasing digital profiling of emotions expressed at exhumations and related events raises several connected issues. I shall pay particular attention to the modes and styles in which emotions are performed—

posed—for the new digital technologies (from video and still cameras to smartphones) and their dissemination networks in the new media (from Facebook to Twitter). Beyond this, we need to consider how this transformation of emotions into digital artifacts is affecting the construction of social memory in contemporary societies. The memories surfacing in Spain are linked with those arising from human rights violations elsewhere not just through the framework of global human rights discourses, but also thanks to their circulation and consumption via digital new media, leading to their homogeneization with other transnational digitized displays of suffering and mourning.

Contemporary exhumations are mostly related to repressive violence against civilians behind the front lines. The Spanish Civil War, caused by a military rebellion against the democratically elected republican government on 18 July 1936, lasted for almost three years, leaving around 500,000 Spaniards dead, with some 300,000 killed in combat and up to 200,000 civilians executed in the rearguard. These figures are estimates, and there are still some disagreements amongst historians. Regarding the execution of civilians, contemporary historiography places the numbers at around 55,000 executed in the Republican zone, and as many as 150,000 in the rebel Nationalist zone during the war and in the Francoist repression of the early postwar years (Rodrigo; Ferrándiz "Exhuming"). Paul Preston adds to this figure 20,000 executions more after the war, apart from those who died from hunger and disease in jails and concentration camps (17).

Contemporary exhumations in Spain are only the latest episode in successive waves of disinterment and reburial of Civil War corpses in Spain, each corresponding to rather different necropolitical regimes (Mbembe). Postwar exhumations started right away, as part of the mourning for the losses on the wining side, the reconstruction of the country, and the organization of the new dictatorial state. This happened within a pervasive official narrative of military victory anchored in the concepts of religious crusade, heroism, and martyrdom—known in Spanish political history as National Catholicism (Aguilar; Box). (See Figs. 14.1a and 14.1b). Later, starting in the late fifities, more than 30,000 Civil War bodies were dug up and transferred to the Valley of the Fallen, a huge memorial planned by Franco to commemorate his victory for eternity, which became his burial place in 1975.

Figs. 14.1 and 14.2 Official commemoration and public mourning at Paracuellos del Jarama (Madrid). *Semanario Gráfico Nacional Sindicalista* Year 3, no. 143 (25 November 1939). Fig. 14.1a: Photographer Santos Yubera. Courtesy of Archivo Regional de la Comunidad de Madrid. Fig. 14.1b: Photographer unknown. Private collection.

As for Republican mass graves, some were opened in clandestine fashion by relatives during the dictatorship, and after Franco's death other exhumations took place with scarcely any institutional or technical support, within the framework of the emerging political cultures of the transition to democracy. But it was sociologist and journalist Emilio Silva who, in October 2000, started the latest chapter in Civil War necropolitics in Spain when organizing the exhumation of a Republican mass grave in Priaranza del Bierzo (León) containing thirteen corpses, including that of his grandfather. This exhumation was the first to be conducted with the participation of technical experts (Silva and Macías).

A political and media storm regarding the appropriate management of these anachronic bodies—or even questioning the need for their reappearance in a consolidated democratic state—hit Spain in the following decade, gaining international attention. The political right cried foul in the face of this emergent process of mourning in the public sphere, as it generally considered that Civil War suffering was a thing of the past and that reconciliation had been satisfactorily achieved during the transition. The main developments in Spain since the Priaranza excavation can briefly be summarized as follows (see also the preceding essay by Labanyi): the passing in 2007 of a Memory Law after high-voltage debates in parliament and more generally in the public sphere; the unsuccesful attempt in 2008 by internationally-renowned Judge Baltasar Garzón to link the Spanish case with international Human Rights Law, and the 2011 government appointment of a Comission of Experts to decide on the fate of dictator's Francisco Franco's tomb and the controversial monument hosting it.

In the period 2005-2012, under the socialist government of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, an official line of funding was established to carry out exhumations and other commemorative activities related to the defeated in the war, in what I have labeled elsewhere as a "human rights subcontracting system" where the State merely "facilitated" (Law of Historical Memory, art. 11.1.) the demands by civil society, transferring responsibility to the associations and technical teams (Ferrándiz "Exhuming"). After right-wing Partido Popular assummed power in December 2011, all State funding to carry out exhumations vanished. In 2014, two UN reports (by the Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances and the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-recurrence) admonished the Spanish State for refusing to frame these reburials—and the bigger issue of crimes agains humanity commited during the war and the dictatorship—within international human rights legislation and transitional justice frameworks, to no avail. As of July 2014, three hundred and fifty seven mass graves, containing 6,288 bodies, have been opened since 2000—a tiny fraction of the mass graves containing Republican victims, both executed civilians (almost 90% of the total) and prisoners who died while in jails and concentration camps (10%), largely left abandoned to their fate since the war.[2]

Emotional Afterlives

My work on mass graves is part of a long-term ethnography of memory politics in contemporary Spain, undertaken from the perspective of social anthropology. It is based on "multi-sited" fieldwork (Marcus) over a period of almost fourteen years. This has been carried out in diverse contexts including excavations, reburial rituals, cemeteries, commemorative events, conferences on memory, book presentations, art exhibitions, forensic laboratories, and NGOs devoted to the "recovery of historical memory." The research also includes the systematic compilation of press articles, news and television documentaries, and fieldwork carried out on the Internet where a great deal of information (and disinformation) circulates about different aspects of the recovery of the historical memory of the Civil War, and where intense debates about exhumations and the circumstances surrounding them are posted (Ferrándiz "Exhuming" and "El pasado").

When thinking about the management of politically sensitive dead bodies in contemporary societies, Katherine Verdery's *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies* (1999) is a crucial reference. In this seminal book, the author refers to the importance of researching the postmortem journey of exhumed or preserved bodies and contentious statues, and other forms of disquiet concerning the mortal remains left by the Soviet political past in Eastern Europe. To account for the Spanish case, I have elsewhere used and expanded Verdery's notion of the "corpse politic" to include the scientific, judicial, media, artistic, or associational afterlives linked to the reappearance of these exhumed bodies (Ferrándiz "Exhuming"). In this chapter, I will elaborate specifically on their emotional afterlives; that is, their ability to mobilize feelings both privately and in the public sphere, this being one of the most unequivocal signs of their impact on the present. I will analyze how the appearance, circulation, and consumption of uncomfortable images of cadavers in public spaces has set in motion a controversial transference of empathy from the bodies shot decades ago to their descendants and supporters, an emotional flow from the murdered body to the mourning body. This anachronistic, deferred grieving is translated into and modulated by complex, unstable emotional expressions and experiences.

From the standpoint of social anthropology and in the wider context of the debate on emotions, I adhere to the social constructivist approach that considers emotions to be necessarily colored by cultural and political meanings in the specific contexts in which they are expressed. In this respect, they are not "things" or mere biological or psychological drives, but complex spaces of historical, social, political, and culturally-bound experience, intercorporeal and intersubjective, negotiated and controversial, continuously learnt and recycled, and most importantly producers of knowledge, meaning, and subjectivities (Lutz and White; Lutz; Tarlow; Harding and Pribram). In their classic paper "The Mindful Body," Scheper-Hughes and Lock conceive of emotions as the "missing link capable of bridging mind and body, individual, society and body politic," questioning "whether any expression of human emotion and feelings is ever free of cultural shaping and cultural meaning" (28-9). Emotions are thus dynamic and should be viewed as productive ways of acquiring knowledge about the world. Furthermore, while arguing for the potential virtues of sentimental mobilization in contemporary societies, Daniel Innerarity has

demonstrated the extent to which feelings are a form of political experience and social knowledge of considerable significance in the configuration of the public sphere, and how the politicization of emotions—not to be confused with populism—can improve the quality of democracy ("El nuevo" and "El gobierno").

That the mobilization of emotions in the public sphere is multifold and problematic—whether in democratization processes, in identity politics, or in relation to contemporary recreations of the past (in the case that concerns us here, a segment of a painful past irrupting into public space decades after the event)—goes without saying. Yet there is no clear template to understand this. It thus seems crucial to contextually and critically explore how these processes operate and in what modalities emotions express themselves. My argument here only scratches the surface of some of the more or less formalized regulatory codes and styles and repertoires of emotions that are being revealed in these tense, unstable, spasmodic spaces of death and grieving. The aim is to decipher the sentimental order or orders articulated around a poignant past which reappears abruptly and overwhelmingly in certain political and technical scenarios; that is, "structures of feeling" that are both emergent and in transit, and in which containing, feeling, or even giving free rein to emotion can be as controversial as it is unavoidable (Williams 128-135; Harding and Pribram 13). To all of this, I will add some reflections on the impact that new digital technologies are having on communication and knowledge with regard to the production, circulation, and consumption of emotions expressed, modulated, or repressed at gravesides or other events associated with exhumations and the recovery of historical memory.

The Politics of Emotion at Exhumations

To say that the exhumation of a mass grave is a setting of great emotional intensity is to state the obvious. However, the emotive textures are not always immediate and can only be understood in a framework of negotiation and controversy over the meaning and political and social reach of such excavations. To adopt a dynamic bodily metaphor, I follow Michael Taussig's suggestion that contemporary societies should be understood not so much as systems, but as nervous systems. We might therefore equate mass graves—crucial to the memory politics of the Civil War in contemporary Spain—with synaptic terminals with a capacity to jolt both private and public spaces of social experience, as would appear to happen in other historical and social contexts in which mass graves have become black holes for both present and past violence.

The processes of *dignification* of those considered by many to be "improperly buried" at roadsides or in pits, wells, or ditches is an integral part of a political culture undergoing a process of expansion and transformation, but also fragmented and with different groups involved with the "recovery of memory" and different autonomous communities taking different approaches. Indeed, there is no consensus on how to proceed and major disputes have arisen between the various associations over their conception of the political, symbolic, and emotional handling of exhumations. From the moment when

attention started to be given to the excavations and to public and media exposure of the remains, tensions began to surface over different ways of interpreting dignity when faced with a traumatic past (Ferrándiz "El pasado" 61-8, 191-201).

The "appropriate" handling of emotions in particular was from the beginning part of the debate within and between the associations involved. Initially some associations, such as the Archivo Guerra y Exilio (War and Exile Archive; AGE) and the Asociación de Familiares y Amigos de la Fosa Común de Oviedo (Association of Relatives and Friends of the Mass Grave of Oviedo; AFAFC), considered exhumations without judicial mandate a form of *genocidal erasure*, since evidence was destroyed. In their view the graves should remain intact, except in extreme situations. Using the example of the approach adopted at the mass grave in Oviedo (Asturias), where disinterments were ruled out, these associations proposed a "dignification" of graves that provided an alternative to exhumation, promoting their location, investigation, demarcation, institutional recognition, and commemoration, including the erection of monuments or other kinds of memorial, and the establishment of rituals to honor the victims and keep their memory alive. For the associations that took this line, exhumations would create uncertainty and decontextualized ossuaries, risking loss of dignity and dismantling for future generations sites that were crucial to the memory of the Francoist repression. Quite early on this position lost out to those associations favoring exhumation, with the corpocentric regime of truth and reparation associated with the public exposure of bones in mass graves winning the day.

Nonetheless, this early anti-exhumation sector made a significant intervention in the debate on the relationship between memory, dignification, and emotion. Its views were expressed in a 2002 communiqué issued by AGE, AFAFC, and others that anticipated future lines of debate and emotive performance. This document argued that the exhumation and handling of disinterred remains necessarily make for a macabre spectacle promoting a televised pathos that tends to encourage a sentimental treatment of grief, undermining the gravitas with which, the document insisted, the suffering of the defeated should be treated. Its position was summed up as follows: "No queremos ver escenas patéticas sino escenas de escenas de dignidad, no queremos heroicidades utilitarias sino valores profundos y sentidos, no queremos que se saquen en las televisions ancianitos que lloran, sino gentes que reclaman con dignidad y que saben llorar en silencio a sus muertos, presos y exiliados" (We don't want pathetic scenes but scenes of dignity; we don't want utilitarian heroism but profound, deeply-felt values; we don't want television channels to broadcast elderly people crying but people who make their demands with dignity and who are able to weep for their dead, imprisoned, and exiled relatives in silence.) A distinction was established between the "private tear" and the dignified, silent, and proud "political tear," amid fears that melodrama would prevail over activist remembrance. Thus this early stage of the process showed an awareness of the potentially problematic display of emotions in the "media circus," which has remained present in the debate ever since. Although I cannot pursue the topic here, this reasoning regarding the appropriateness or not of the public, even transnational, visibility of exhumed

remains, and the distrust some social stakeholders show toward the emotional life of these dead bodies, meshes with debates in journalism, humanitarian aid, and of course the humanities and social sciences on issues such as the limits that should be set when representing horror, the commercial manipulation of pain and shock, the pornography of violence, the effects of an excess of representation, or the cycles of saturation of empathy in the society of the spectacle.

Among the objections to emotional display, one of the most interesting is Ángel Loureiro's provocative article "Pathetic Arguments" which, speaking from a perspective sympathetic to the recovery of historical memory, criticizes the new global sense of "history as grievance" as expressed in contemporary Spain (227). While Loureiro shares with the AGE and AFAFC a distrust of the "easy tear," he does not acknowledge the internal debates on appropriate emotions within and between the associations concerned, nor the academic arguments on the crucial role of emotions in the regeneration of the public sphere, as discussed by Innerarity and others. Through analysis of specific contemporary documentaries on the exhumation process, Loureiro argues that historical memory movements are not so much interested in historical knowledge as in "the politics and affects mobilized in the personal discovery of horrors that in good measure were already in the public domain" (228). In his view, this emotional mobilization is undertaken by "injecting" mass graves and images of horror into the present, resulting in an abusive, obsessive use of mourning and melancholia as explanatory tools. The result of the sentimental rhetoric deriving from the contemporary boom in victimization accounts is, he argues, the replacement of "knowledge and reflection with easy sentimentality and moral admonitions" (233).

While Loureiro is right to highlight the potential misuse of emotion and of (actual or imagined) emotional links to the past as a privileged explanatory model, his argument is grounded in a problematic hierarchical approach to emotion and reason or, more specifically, to emotion and historical awareness. "[A] minimally rigorous history of the war will be infinitely more complex than any historical memory," he claims (226). Emotions are seen by him as simplistic, melodramatic devices supplanting reflection and knowledge. My premiss in this chapter is that, in both their private and public expression, emotions can create complex processes of signification and knowledge which, far from being opposed to other forms of knowledge available in the information society (for example, historiography), intersect with them. As I hope to show, the debates on the ground over exhumations, the emotions they induce, and their political and reparative signification are more nuanced and diversified than Loureiro's otherwise inspiring text allows..

Indeed, the politics of emotion are clearly expressed in a dispute that has caused particular tension between associations that agree that the exhibition of executed bodies plays a crucial role in denouncing and educating the public about the atrocities that took place, and that it is part of an urgent dignification initiative. Despite this agreement, these associations differ in their choice of scenography and protocol. From the outset, many associations decided to develop and apply scientific protocols in their excavations, involving a range of academic specialists, including archaeologists, forensic and social

anthropologists, psychologists, historians, and even lawyers. Whatever emotions may be expressed or repressed at exhumations, the latter are conducted according to these scientific protocols: data is systematically recorded, mainly by archaeologists and forensic experts who organize the excavation activities, generating professionalized forms of public presentation of cadavers, regulating access to bones, digitizing images of the remains and information about the social and political circumstances. This is done within a framework of differentiated professional cultures, using techniques of dissemination and analysis that are standard in their respective disciplines. Finally, after laboratory and desk research has been undertaken, the past violence is translated into bulky, profusely-illustrated technical reports for relatives and sympathizers, generating what, expanding on Katherine Verdery's term, I call "the scientific life of dead bodies."

Regardless of the establishment of forensic exhumation protocols, discrepancies have arisen between the main pro-exhumation associations regarding the irruption of exhumation-induced emotions into the private and public spheres. This is a debate about the political correctness of emergent structures of feeling at exhumations. The key issues are the proper emotional tone or appropriate "victimization gradient" in the expression of emotion, and the political and private symbolism accompanying and modulating the emergence and display of emotion in the complex context of the politics of grieving. That is: how, where, and to what extent should emotion be expressed, and what are the boundaries of emotional dignity? Should such emotion be kept private or displayed in public? And what level of political denunciation can or should these feelings communicate?

The major orders of sensibility that have evolved in relation to the exhumations in Spain since 2000 can largely be attributed to the practice of the two major nationwide historical memory associations: the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory; henceforth, ARMH) and the Foro por la Memoria (Forum for Memory; henceforth, Foro). There are, however, alternative approaches deployed by other associations and in Spanish regions with nationalist sensitivities, where the emotive configurations activated in the context of contemporary identity politics and even claims for independence from Spain—in, for example, Catalonia or the Basque Country— may vary quite substantially. For reasons of space, I will only mention here that memorial commemorations in these two regions, linked or not to exhumations, differ from each other and even more significantly from those in other parts of Spain, being linked to the fostering and display of nationalist and independentist collective feelings. In the Basque country, for example, these ceremonies are mostly celebrated in *euskara* and colored by Basque-specific dance, music, hymns, and political paraphernalia. While some participants may long for the defeated Republic, the predominant political feelings expressed relate to the continuity of a fight for independence long predating the Civil War, and to the historical suffering of the Basque people.

The ARMH explicitly identifies itself as an association of victims' relatives and sympathizers with the losing side in the Civil War. While for the ARMH exhumations have many objectives—including the search for truth,

forensic identification, denunciation of the shortcomings of the transition and democracy in Spain, the establishment of further reparative practices to honor the war's losers, and the "dignified" re-interment of the bodies—a crucial tenet of their activism is the need to provoke chain reactions in the public sphere through visual and emotional impact—initially, even shock. The production of large scale empathy with victims of the Francoist repression through an alliance with particular media organizations and the public exposure of bones of the executed was decisive in order to break what the ARMH considers the shameful taboos surrounding, and silent complicity with, Francoist residues in a low-quality democracy.

This is clearly expressed in the style of political activism of its founder and leader, the sociologist and journalist Emilio Silva. In his well-known book co-authored with the ARMH's other founder, Santiago Macías, he affirmed the important role of emotion in connecting past with present, the individual with the social and the political. First, by describing his attempts to recreate the emotions of those who knew they were about to be executed: "más de una vez he cerrado los ojos y he tratado de ponerme en su lugar, de sentir la misma angustia, la misma impotencia, el mismo pánico" (more than once I have closed my eyes and tried to take their place, to feel the same anguish, the same powerlessness, the same panic; 47). And second, through his sense of having a moral duty to transfer to the public sphere the "immense emotion" and "anguish" he had felt in locating his grandfather's mass grave, in order to help other victims' relatives and secure recognition and justice (24-5).

Without denying a clear affinity with the left and the defeated in the Civil War, the ARMH as an organization is not directly connected to any specific political party. It sustains an increasingly elaborated discourse on human rights and transitional justice and, very importantly, considers victims' relatives to be the decisive agents in the management of affliction and of the commemorative rituals organized around exhumations. In shyng away from imposing symbolic or emotional guidelines, the ARMH is open to all available approaches to private or public mourning, including religious counsel if that is the family decision, but also more politically oriented performances. As Silva states, exhumations elicit multilayered political and emotional responses that represent contemporary Spain's diversity. In this context, the connection between the private and the political is important: even "una simple lágrima, setenta años después, puede tener un valor politico enorme" (a simple tear, seventy years after the fact, can have a powerful political meaning)" (personal communication).

For this reason, the Foro has consistently accused the ARMH of having become the neoliberals of Spain's historical memory movement, of privatizing and de-politicizing mourning, or of practicing what has been called *abuelismo* (grandfatherism); that is, a sentimental and family-oriented approach to the past which elides the political nature of the killings. In its famous 23 January 2004 manifesto, *Apoyar a la ARMH es enterrar la memoria* (*To Support the ARMH is to Bury Memory*), the Foro's longstanding president, José María Pedreño, claimed that prioritizing the recovery of the bones of grandfathers—caricatured in the emotive parody "¡mi abuelo, mi abuelo, mi abuelo!" (My grandpa! My grandpa! My grandpa!)—defuses the true nature of the repression, which was

and is a political crime, turning it into a mere matter of private mourning and trivial media consumption.

Thus, in contrast to what we might dub the "open mourning" attitude of the ARMH, the Foro considers it essential that exhumations be openly politicized and that attributes of the left-wing circuit within which it operates—specifically, that of the Communist Party—be incorporated into the memory process. Any emotion that surfaces at the excavations must necessarily be relevant to this political and ideological context. Here ideological kinship takes precedence over biological kinship. The Foro argues that this should occur irrespective of the feelings of the families concerned, since it is the presumed anti-fascist and Republican ideas of the dead that should be respected and given priority. According to their 2007 protocol, respect for the victims' ideals implies the use of political elements and rituals (flags, hymns, etc.) that are specific to the ideals they defended and for which they died, even when these differ from those of their relatives today. The Foro believes this issue to be fundamental to moral reparation, because recovering values and ideals is not "una cuestión nostálgica" (a nostalgic matter) but one that is instrumental "para las luchas de hoy en día" (for today's struggles.) They conclude: "Siempre se ha dicho que el Foro por la Memoria es una combinación de amor, rigor y lucha. Amor a los ideales por los que combatieron al Fascismo antes que nosotros, rigor en el trabajo y, finalmente, lucha incansable " (It has always being said that the Foro is a combination of love, rigor. and struggle. Love of the ideals of the past fight against fascism, rigorous work, and tireless struggle.)[3] Accodingly, the Foro provides precise, non-negotiable instructions as to the appropriate emotional order for exhumations and related events—one that is unilaterally geared to the presumed political feelings of those who were killed—in a kind of post-mortem ideological and emotional communion in which decades of repression and oblivion are collapsed into a shared political objective: the continuity of the fight (Smaoui). To the ARMH, this attitude amounts to the imposition of an emotional political commissariat akin to the Communist Party's activist sensibility, which mutilates and impoverishes the multiplicity of legitimate emotional responses available in Spanish society (Silva, personal communication).

Regardless of these programmatic stances, many exhumations actually involve a mix of approaches depending on the specific circumstances. Thus, in practice, private forms of mourning and emotional remembrance are mixed with more politicized modes, resulting in unstable emotional kaleidoscopes, the tone of which may vary from one exhumation to another. Referring back to Loureiro's argument: whatever the preferred emotional style and tone, in no case do they oppose or replace available forms of scientific knowledge of the past, whether forensic, historiographical, anthropological, or otherwise. Many activists read historical studies and promote local historical and archival research. Forensic reports and public presentations are part of funerary practices (Ferrándiz "El pasado" 237-53). It is important to remember that, since most of the emotional display at exhumations occurs within forensic and archaeological frameworks, the emotions concerned are not only politically but also scientifically informed. A different issue is the more or less problematic

way in which evolving academic knowledge about the past is recycled by associations, activists, or relatives.

Posing for Pixels: Digital Emotions

Against this background of controversy, I shall now move to discussion of the range of particular *emotional repertoires* that have taken shape around exhumations. Here I give another twist to the discussion by exploring the increasing importance of digital technologies in the configuration of the historical memory of these seventy-year-old crimes. Analysis of how new digital technologies, devices, and online platforms are profoundly affecting the production, circulation, and consumption of information about and images of past atrocities is a huge field, not only in the Spanish case, acknowledged by the growing interest in this issue in memory studies—as illustrated by the September 2014 special section of the journal *Media, Culture and Society* on "Digital Media—Social Memory". In Spain, particularly in the last ten years, the arrival and increasing accessibility of digital technologies have radically changed and accelerated the memory-construction process with regard to the Civil War, projecting it into the global arena. The wide availability of digital devices that can be used on-site and the increasing pre-eminence of cyberspace in the transmission of memory also means its reconfiguration as a social construct, with the digital reframing of social memory having drastic effects on the relationship between past and present, and with new technologies transforming social movements and their forms of activism.

The astonishing speed with which traditional black-and-white family photo albums and the associated social contexts of memory circulation have given way to the predominance of a mostly digital memoryscape in the memory movement in Spain is one of its most salient features (Ferrándiz and Baer). After the first four or five years of exhumations, still recorded in analogic formats, pixels took over in a very short period of time. Images and information regarding exhumations started to become an integral part of blogs, Powerpoint presentations, websites, and social networks and platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and Youtube as this new "digital media ecology" took off and transformed "the temporality, spatiality, and indeed the mobility of memories" (Hoskins 93-4). This new media ecology can allow faster or even instant visual consumption of emerging memories; for example, when photos or video clips taken with mobile phones at exhumations or commemorative events are rapidly distributed within particular "memory recovery" networks via WhatsApp, Facebook or, at closer range, Bluetooth. Although full discussion of this topic exceeds the scope of this chapter, it is evident that, as digital devices and social networking services proliferate, the new equipment and platforms are constructing new avenues for the production, circulation, and consumption of historical memory, as well as, more generally, new genres, iconographies, and styles of imaging, imagining, and recycling the past. The potentially instant accessibility of content and images in real time afforded by digital cultures also creates new forms of witnessing, new subjectivities, new political identities, and new sites for configuring multidimensional memories. It also brings memory processes closer to the global media spectacle (Rabinovitz and Geil; Torchin).

Fig. 4.2 The relative of a victim of Francoism takes a picture with his Smartphone of an exhibition of images showing the exhumation process in Calera and Chozas (Toledo) on 10 February 2013. Photo by the author.

In this rapidly evolving digital memoryscape, to which many associations have very skillfully adjusted, one of the key phenomena that allows us to explore emotional encoding and decoding is that of what I call "emotive poses." Such performances are increasingly conditioned by what I label the "cyberspace consciousness" of social actors on the ground; that is, awareness of the potential global projection of the images recorded, and the modalities and frames (new social networks) of this open display. They are also affected by common knowledge of other salient features of the digital ecology: the multiplication of recording devices and registers, the speed of digital image taking, and the profusion of images recorded, whose only limit is the capacity of huge memory cards. In Hoskins' terms, "contemporary memory is thoroughly interpenetrated by a technological unconscious in that there occurs a 'co-evolution' of memory and technology" (96). With this growing savvyness with regard to the workings of new technologies and social networks, the different stakeholders present at exhumations and other related activities stage their emotions for cyberspace via their digital recording by still or video cameras and, more recently, smartphones.

If it is true that different modalities of emotive posing have been integral to exhumations since the year 2000, they have gained increasing relevance with the spread of digital recording. These dramatizations, relating to the above-mentioned debates on what constitutes "proper" emotions and to the emerging "cyberspace consciousness," take on a new dimension as they enter into global information flows. At this point, it must be mentioned that the Foro exercises stricter control of image-taking at its exhumations, in line with its previously-discussed political protocol, but that the Foro's exhumations comprise only a small fraction of the more than 300 undertaken so far in Spain. Thus, most of what follows refers to exhumations carried out by the ARMH, the Sociedad de Ciencias Aranzadi (Aranzadi Scientific Society), and other organizations, necessarily colored by the broader debates within the memory movement.

As described, this conjunction of emotion with the display and representation of emotion in digital formats increases the level of self-consciousness and control that social players have in the face of their own emotiveness, given the growing awareness of digital technologies, the types of visibility associated with social networks, and ultimately the uncontrollable circulation in cyberspace of the images taken. Such emotions could therefore be considered "emotions to the second degree," "posed emotions," or "digital emotions," expressed in public in the knowledge that they may be recorded by the different electronic devices always present at the excavations, whether by relatives, members of the technical team or the association, or just onlookers. I have organized these emotions into three main categories, although I am aware that they partially overlap. For the sake of coherence, I have structured them as a sequence, ranging from more contained and even stereotypical emotional experiences to other acts of—or experiments in—empathetic identification with those executed and subsequently recovered from mass graves.

The first category, which is the most general, includes what I call "digital album" poses. These include both private poses and more political poses of individuals or groups, which may then be used by families, associations, or even technical experts and academics in their reports and presentations. For instance, for victims' relatives the exhumation may be a culminating moment in family history and emotions overflow; what happens is photographed as freely and easily as digital memory cards of several gigabytes will allow. Photographs of people at gravesides or commemorative events linked to mass burial sites and exhumations sometimes represent a meeting of the analog and the digital, with analog family photographs included in the pose that will be photographed and circulated digitally. I use the concept "digital album" to refer to the many forms of digital recycling and organization of photographs, for example in blogs, Powerpoint presentations, etcetera. By "digital album pose" I mean the particular kinds of pose adopted thanks to digital cameras' ability to take multiple photographs in rapid succession, in the knowledge that the photographs taken can be circulated in multiple digital platforms. A variant of the digital album pose are the poses of emotional communities governed by the construction, however ephemeral, of a photographable community of sufferers or celebrants involved in a tragic event, as expressed at exhumations and reburial ceremonies. These communities can be of many types and they gather specifically and provisionally for the purpose of posing. The living and the dead are sometimes photographed together, creating in such cases an emotive iconographic bond or 'digital kinship' with the executed which immortalizes for cyberspace a key moment in the exhumation process, before the bodies are removed from the grave by archaeologists and forensic experts. In one of the preferred visual displays of the Foro, the community of comrades poses with the appropriate political paraphernalia and embodied expression of their activism, such as the adoption of a solemn posture with fist raised.

Fig. 14.3 Webpage of Foro por la Memoria, showing the "community of comrades" celebrating the reburial in 2011 of the remains of sixteen people recovered in a mass grave at Menasalbas (Toledo) the previous year. Courtesy of Foro por la Memoria.

A second category is represented by poses with photographs of executed persons. There are clear transnational precedents for these emotional performances at public demonstrations which render the disappeared visible, particularly in certain Latin American countries such as Argentina and Chile, where such practices have been at the heart of the political and judicial movement against the legacy of dictatorship. As Ariel Dorfman has observed, such poses have become repertoires of images of suffering that are "only conceivable in the context of present day globalization" (256). These poses, linking the living and the disappeared, have become "a widespread, almost epidemic, image of tragedy and defiance that is just as much a part of our planetary imagination as the brands and logos that pervade us with an opposite sort of message" (Dorfman 255). Given their iconographic power and their

potential to counter official attempts to cover up political repression, such poses are an appropriate response to the disappearances, since they reverse the politics of invisibilization of the victims by meeting the needs of the contemporary media with "extreme efficiency and extraordinary poetry" (Dorfman 256). Also, in these images, whether their content be private or political, complex iconographic alliances occur between past and present poses, past and present emotional regimes.

In Spain, most of the photographs used of those executed decades ago in these digitally recorded performances are either portraits from private family albums or sometimes framed and hung on the wall, taken before the war in photographers' studios or by itinerant photographers, or else they have been extracted from official documents, such as military service records. The transnational connection with other similar poses and similar claims for recognition and justice enables the relatives who come to these graves or commemorative acts with photographs of their relatives to express their emotion and their political message under the globalized umbrella of "crimes against humanity" pre-established in international human rights legislation. Once uploaded in cyberspace, they become part of a global category of victims' portraits.

Fig. 14.4 Milagros (Burgos), 18 July 2009. Pedro Cancho poses for photographers with a portrait of his murdered grandfather, next to the mass grave where the latter is believed to be buried. Photo by the author.

Thirdly and finally, the most controversial poses are those we might call "*corps-à-corps* poses"; that is, those images circulating in cyperspace in which there is some form of direct contact with skeletal remains or with the spatial and biographical traces they have left behind. First of all, there is a series of poses which, due their proximity to open graves and the actual bones, express a kind of intimacy with the cadavers which may have precedents in Baroque painting and in broader funerary practices.[4] These images confer a sense of historicity on those posing ("I was there"), as well as digital identification with the historical experience of those executed. . A second type of *corps-à-corps* pose, takes place when relatives publicly come into direct physical contact with the verified bones or fragments of bones of their executed loved ones, after on-site or laboratory identification (Ferrándiz "El pasado" 104-5). A third category which has become popular in some memorial circles, is the pose lying in the earth where the now exhumed bodies previously lay, a quite plastic mode of what Etkind calls "mimetic mourning" (1-24). This secular ritual was invented by Francisco Etxeberria, the main forensic scientist involved in the grave openings since 2000, and has proved a great if somewhat melodramatic success in rural communities. Archaeologists or forensic specialists instruct relatives, onlookers, and members of the technical team alike to lie in the former mass grave, adopting the approximate position of each of the exhumed corpses, based on anatomical reconstructions drawn by hand or reconstructed though specialized software (Ferrándiz "El pasado" 242-44). This rite was first performed in august 2005 in the exhumation of five bodies in the Valladar gulch

in the municipality of Vadocondes, Burgos (Lourdes Herrasti and Francisco Etxeberria, personal communication). Without any precedent in Spanish forensic or political culture, the picture of the re-enactment made its way to the forensic report, where the caption reads: "interpretation of the way the bodies were left".[5]

Figs. 14.5a and 14.5b Forensic ritual of emotional identification with the exhumed victims, Casavieja. (Ávila), March 2009. Fig. 14.5a shows the drawing on which the reconstruction (Fig. 14.5b) was based. Courtesy of archaeologist Trinidad Caballero.

This empathetic forensic ritual of occupying the very same place and position as the dead, of reversing the transition from flesh to bone, of returning to the very moment when the grave was created, with the bodies not yet decomposed and thus constructing a continuity with their historical experience as victims of the Francoist repression, is at times accompanied by the percussion of metal objects which reproduce the rhythm of the likely shots and the *coup de grâce*. During the celebration of this ritual, dominated by the solemnity of the participants, the silence is absolute. In the instances when I have seen this emotionally charged performance, it was considered neither undignified nor transgressive by those who participated or witnessed it, although some associations like the Foro consider it emotionally fraudulent. This is how Ana Fuentes, the great-grandniece of one of the six people exhumed in Casavieja (Ávila) in March 2009, described her feelings on participating in the re-enactment illustrated in Fig. 14.5b:

[Al principio nos daba un poco de risa, íbamos bromeando, pero cuando pidieron silencio, un escalofrío me recorrió la espalda, y fue como dejar de estar donde estaba y estar en 1936 … fur súper emocionante … esa sensación de frío en la espalda … cuando hicieron esa foto, solamente se ve un trozo de mi camiseta, hay unos calcetines rosas encima de mi cara … yo estaba abajo de espaldas contra el suelo … cierras los ojos y lo ves, yo no podia dejar de pensar en el miedo que debieron pasar aquella noche, sabiendo que les iban a dar el tiro de gracia … es una sensación como que le está pasando a otra persona .. es difícil de explicar … impactó a todo el mundo]

> (At first it felt like fun, we were even joking, but when there was a call for silence, I felt a shiver running down my spine, and suddenly it was like being transported back to 1936 …. It was highly emotive … that coldness in the back …. You can barely see me in the picture, I was lying face up below the other five people, there were some somebody else's pink socks on top of my face … I closed my eyes and I could see it, I couldn´t help thinking about the fear they experienced that night right before the *coup de grâce* … I felt I was not myself …. It is too strong a feeling to put into words .... Everybody was shocked.)

It is crucial to take into account the potential misuse of emotions in the public sphere, as well as the far-reaching consequences of their increasing imbrication with digital technologies and flows—their transit from tear to pixel.

But to regard emotions as by definition inferior forms of experience that simplify or obfuscate implies an incomplete understanding of the nature of social action. I believe it is important to make the effort to grasp the complexity of the diverse emotional regimes that are evolving and taking shape in the modern-day world; this case study has attempted to do so in relation to one specific instance: that of the memory movement in contemporary Spain. When analyzing emotions and the politics of emotion, we must consider their historical precedents, as well as their cultural and political referents, and their transformation in the context of globalization and the information society and society of the spectacle. If, as Innerarity suggests, their creative and productive management is integral to the configuration of a new contemporary public sphere, if we acknowledge that feelings can be—as an aspect of "mindful" bodies—forms of knowledge, experience, political action, and social knowledge, and that they partake of the synaptic connections which constitute the spasmodic nervous system of the contemporary age, in the case of the exhumation process in Spain it is essential, indeed urgent, that we pay serious attention to the contemporary impact of the emotional life of dead bodies.

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[2] Thanks to Francisco Etxeberria, Lourdes Herrasti and Luis Ríos for providing me with these up-to-date figures.

[3] See http://www.foroporlamemoria.info/ideario/index.htm (accessed July 30th, 2014).

[4] My thanks to Juan Pimentel and José Ramón Marcaida for this fertile suggestion, which requires further and more nuanced analysis.

[5] See the last page of the 2006 Vadocondes forensic report at http://www.sc.ehu.es/scrwwwsr/Medicina-Legal/valladar/Exhumacion%20Valladar%20Burgos.htm (accessed October 4th, 2014)

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