

Unburials, Generals, and Phantom Militarism

Engaging with the Spanish Civil War Legacy

by Francisco Ferrándiz

Online enhancements: supplemental figures

This paper is based on a 16-year-long ethnography of mass grave exhumations in contemporary Spain and deals with the tortuous, painful, much-disputed, and incomplete unmaking of a concrete and massive militaristic inscription of Spain: that related to its last internal war (1936–1939) and subsequent dictatorship (1939–1975). To understand this process and its historical roots, the paper first dissects the formation of a “funerary apartheid” in the country since the end of the war. Second, it analyzes the impact on the social fabric of the mass grave exhumations of Republican civilians that started in the year 2000. Third, it traces how these disinterments have intersected with Spain’s most prominent Francoist stronghold, the Valley of the Fallen, and threaten the dictator’s burial place. Finally, it discusses the parallel dismantling of the dictatorship’s official statuary that once presided over prominent public spaces in many cities and some military quarters. It argues that rolling back militarization by dismantling war-derived cartographies of death, challenging military burial arrangements, or degrading statues of generals necessarily involves a certain level of remilitarizing by other means. I call this mirroring and deeply embodied memorial backfiring “phantom militarism.”

Overture

In *Baraka*, a 2007 documentary on his wheeling and dealing around Francisco Franco’s official statuary and its production process, iconoclast artist Fernando Sánchez Castillo discloses the origins of one dubious bodily trace that came into his hands by chance, encapsulating many of the tensions lingering in Spain’s contemporary relationship with its 1936–1939 Civil War and 1939–1975 dictatorship.¹ The story goes like this: in November 1975, when preparing funerary masks after the dictator’s death, one of the casting technicians managed to pull out two eyelashes from a cast where they had stuck. According to this unverified story, he stored the generalissimo’s eyelashes in a plastic cigarette pack container for decades as a curiosity. After disclosing this to Sánchez Castillo in a video, he offered the eyelashes to him. The artist then proposed an economic transaction, one that transformed these uncanny traces of Franco’s body into a devalued political commodity. What are two eyelashes of a dictator worth? Sánchez Castillo then put these hairs on the art market in military style, amplified by a magnifying glass and protected by a 400-kg urn made of double bulletproof glass and iron beams. The genetic material in the hair follicles could offer the possibility of DNA analysis, sci-

entifically resolving the contentious issue of the dictator’s infertility—linked to serious injuries he received in a skirmish in the African colonial wars in 1916—and the lingering gossip as to the true father of his recently deceased only daughter, Carmen. In the artist’s words, “It is curious how a pair of eyelashes could change many aspects of this country’s history, provoking a small convulsion among nostalgic followers. . . . What fascinates me is the potential power of such a small object, its repercussions and legal status, and the entire possibility of transforming the dominant history of virility, the family and the conception of the State as it exists in totalitarian regimes” (Mosquera 2015: 276). Despite touring leading art fairs, the dictator’s would-be eyelashes have so far found no buyers (see fig. 1).

This provocative art piece, which swings between relic, fetish, and fake, is a burlesque expression of the tremendous power that Franco’s phantom, albeit collapsed into two unauthorized bodily traces, still has to mobilize emotions and political tensions in contemporary Spain, more than 40 years after his death. Meanwhile, his funerary mask and a cast of his hands are still on display in Toledo’s Army Museum, while since his death in November 1975 his remains have been resting peacefully in an oft-visited tomb in the gigantic pantheon in the Valley of the Fallen, isolated from the outside world by a 1.5-ton tombstone behind the Basilica’s altar. Franco’s lingering shadow still reigns

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1. *Baraka*, a state of grace or charisma in Arabic, refers to the nickname given to Franco by Moroccan troops because of his good luck in combat during the African colonial wars (Preston 1993:46).

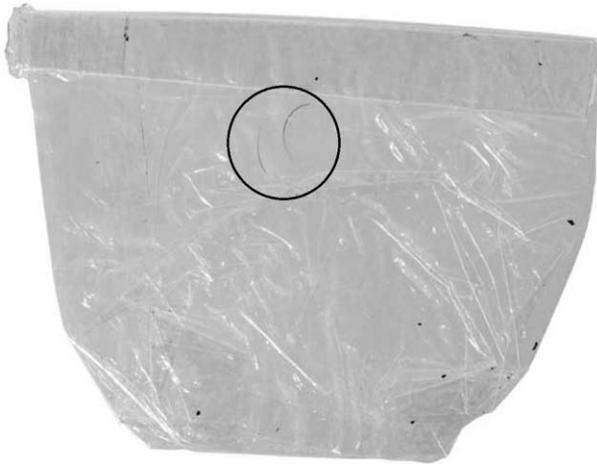


Figure 1. Franco's alleged eyelashes kept in a plastic cigarette container. Photograph courtesy of Fernando Sánchez Castillo. A color version of this figure is available online.

from this now-controversial monument, merging his regime's undisguised militarism with conservative Catholic ornamentation.

This paper is based on a 16-year-long ethnography of mass grave exhumations in contemporary Spain and deals with the tortuous, painful, much-disputed, and incomplete unmaking of a concrete and massive militaristic inscription of Spain: that related to its last internal war (1936–1939) and subsequent dictatorship (1939–1975).² To understand the intricacy of this process and its historical roots, it first dissects the formation of a “funerary apartheid” in the country since the end of the war, where the dictatorial regime increasingly forced the corpses of the winners and losers to inhabit two quite dissimilar “spaces of death” (Taussig 1987), as necropolitics became a salient feature in the architecture of national sovereignty (Mbembe 2003).³ Second, it analyzes the shocking impact on the social fabric of the mass grave exhumations of Republican civilians that started in the year 2000, as part of a broader social movement challenging the impunity of Francoist crimes. Franco's forgotten victims, in the form of unburied wounded skeletons, started posing uncomfortable questions about the scope and depth of Franco's legacy and the enduring impunity machine still covering it up decades after his death. This bottom-up process, initially driven by the grandchildren of those defeated in the war, defied public institutions and the judicial system's capacity to respond and provoked surprising aftereffects that have brought to light profound contradictions in Spain's relationship with its Civil War past. Third, as one crucial conse-

2. The web page of the nationally funded research team I have been leading since 2007 can be visited at <http://www.politicadela memoria.org/en> (accessed April 30, 2018).

3. I take the notion of funerary apartheid from Emilio Silvia, who translated in these terms my earlier notion of the two differential spaces of death during a public debate in the Universidad Complutense in Madrid.

quence, the paper traces how these politically charged twenty-first-century disinterments came to intersect with Spain's most prominent Francoist stronghold, the Valley of the Fallen, and started to threaten both its patrimonial integrity, the status of its huge Civil War cemetery, and, very importantly, the dictator's resting place behind the monument's main altar. The disturbing finding that Republican civilians executed in the war could also be found in its subterranean crypts ignited a debate over the monument's status. The pressure to remove Franco's body from El Valle has unsettled the war-derived funerary hierarchy established during Francoism, especially the priority accorded to burial sites of other prominent generals participating in the 1936 coup d'état, whom public opinion growingly perceives as perpetrators of crimes against humanity (Ferrándiz 2014:205–259; Garibian 2016). Finally, it discusses yet another aftereffect of the exhumations and the mounting focus on the fate of the bodies of Franco and his generals, namely, the parallel dismantling of the dictatorship's official statuary that had once presided over prominent public spaces in many cities and some military quarters.

This demilitarization process does not mean that Spain departs in any significant way from broader transnational processes where largely patriarchal military logics, technologies, and imaginaries increasingly seep into other nonmilitary dimensions of social life, right into the most intimate spaces of experience, creating tenacious reverberations and resisting undoing (Enloe 2007; Lutz 2001). In fact, rolling back militarization by dismantling war-derived cartographies of death, challenging military burial arrangements, or degrading statues of generals necessarily involves a certain level of remilitarizing by other means (Weiss 2018). I call this mirroring and deeply embodied memorial backfiring “phantom militarism.” As argued throughout the paper, this reflective militarism infiltrates the political memorial cultures accompanying the historical memory process, inevitably drenched by the warmongering traces, logics, and narratives unveiled in forensic grave disclosure based on crime scenes (Crossland 2002; Dziuban 2017; Renshaw 2011) or in the professional military careers and historically proven cruelty of rebel leaders under critical public scrutiny (Preston 1993). These ghostly resonances of the multiple manifestations of a specific military apparatus are not just spectral or metaphorical yet socially determinant forces. They are also grounded in concrete forms of materiality, be they injured skeletons, grandiose monuments, authoritative statues, or fleeting eyelashes (Gordon 1997; Kwon 2008; Labanyi 2002; Winter 1995). It is the resilience or fragility of this phantom militarism in the long term that marks the success or failure of a demilitarization process.

Beyond these uneasy Civil War traces exposed and challenged in the last 18 years, different levels of militarism co-exist, flourish, and interlock in contemporary Spain, further restricting the undoing of militarism through the erasure of Franco's traces. Security concerns are as rooted in Spanish public culture as in other similar European countries, particularly in relation to migratory issues and global Islamic

terrorism. A member of NATO, Spain is scaling up its military expenditure from 0.9% to 2% of its gross domestic product, despite the context of global economic crisis and drastic cuts to public services. The country is also a crucial node in Europe's militaristic border fortification against immigrant flows from Africa (Suárez-Navaz 2015). The passing of the Law of Citizen Security in July 2015, restricting rights of expression and drastically extending state surveillance and punitive capabilities vis-à-vis its citizens, is another example of increasing militaristic seepage into public space and the everyday lives of its citizens. These developments have encountered considerable internal resistance in a country with significant antimilitaristic traditions cultivated in the opposition to the dictatorship, at least on the political left. Yet in the twenty-first century, except for the massive demonstrations against Spain's involvement in the 2003 invasion of Iraq (which dovetailed in 2004 with the landslide defeat of the ruling right-wing party a few days after the 11M Islamic terrorist attacks on Madrid trains), none matches the scale of the political, symbolic, and technical efforts set in motion to uproot the lingering traces of Francoism's anachronistic militarism.

On Funerary Militarism

The Spanish Civil War, originating in a military rebellion against the democratically elected Republican government on July 18, 1936, lasted for almost 3 years, leaving around 500,000 Spaniards dead. Around 300,000 were killed in combat, and up to 200,000 civilians were executed. These figures are only estimates, as there is still disagreement over casualties among historians, certain regions are understudied, and many data are still missing or difficult to access. As for the massive execution of civilians during the conflict, contemporary historiography places the numbers at around 55,000 killed in the Republican-controlled zone and as many as 150,000 in the rebel Nationalist zone during the war and the repression of the early postwar years (Ferrándiz 2013, 2015; Rodrigo 2008). To this figure, Paul Preston (2012:17) adds a further 20,000 executions after the war, not counting those who died from hunger and disease while trapped in a dense network of jails and concentration camps.

The killing sprees in the Republican and Nationalist zones were dramatic but differed significantly in numbers and scale. For Juliá (1999), "in the rebellious zone, repression and death had to do with the building of a new power; in the loyalist [to the Republic], repression and death were related to the collapse of any power" (25–26). General Emilio Mola, the main instigator and leader of the military uprising until his death in a plane crash in June 1937, openly referred to the insurgents' plan in a meeting with municipal mayors in Navarra right after the coup: "It is crucial to create an atmosphere of terror. . . . We have to establish an overwhelming feeling of dominion eliminating without any scruple or reservation all those who do not think like us. No cowardice is allowed. If we

hesitate and do not proceed with the utmost vigor, we will not win. Anybody hiding or protecting a communist or a Popular Front supporter [the left-wing coalition that won the 1936 elections] shall be executed" (Preston 2012:253). Drawing on Mola's instructions and subsequent war edicts, radio broadcasts by coup leaders, and archival evidence, particularly death certificates and the bureaucratic records of kangaroo military courts (*consejos de guerra*), historian Javier Rodrigo (2008:42–49) also argues that there were crucial differences between the repressive actions on civilians carried out behind the front lines in Republican and Nationalist zones (see also Casanova 1999: 159–177). According to Rodrigo (2008), the violence exercised by the Francoists responded to a well-designed "terror investment" (95) associated with a profoundly militaristic "blood pedagogy" (73), designed to paralyze the opponent during the war and inhibit any political or military response in its aftermath.

After the war ended on April 1, 1939, Franco shifted his attention from open battleground conflict and extensive rear-guard killing to other forms of repression and containment of the enemy in jails and concentration camps, as well as to trials, purges, forced labor, evictions, expropriation of property, and so on (Gómez Bravo 2017; Preston 1993; Rodrigo 2005). But he also looked to celebration, commemoration, and, very importantly for the core argument of this paper, honorable relocation of those who were killed on the Nationalist side, both on the front lines or in the rear guard. During the early postwar years, the state issued abundant funerary legislation specifically affecting the corpses claimed by the dictatorship. Meanwhile, the bodies of the defeated—expelled from the legitimate community of the war dead as "reds," "Marxist hordes," and ultimately "traitors" to their country—continued to accumulate in mass graves and remained outside lawmaking, ignored and excluded from the triumphant military-politico-religious project of a New Spain. The formation of a funerary apartheid, establishing asymmetrical connections between territory and necropower, therefore became a cornerstone in the construction of dictatorial sovereign control of the country (Mbembe 2003; Robben 2015).

The first wave of civilian exhumations took place immediately after the war, as part of the mourning for losses on the winning side, national reconstruction, and the organization of the new dictatorial militarized state (see fig. S1; figs. S1–S15 are available online). Both the military forces and core forensic institutions participated in hundreds of unburials and identifications, and the central government issued formal instructions to prevent spontaneous diggings (Ferrándiz 2014:145–155; Solé i Barjau 2008:96–102). In an unparalleled high point in November 1939, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, the founder of Falange (Spain's main Fascist party) was dramatically paraded for almost 500 km over 10 days as his coffin was carried on the shoulders of his followers from his tomb in Alicante to the monastery of El Escorial, the most distinguished symbol of the Spanish monarchy and empire, where he was reburied in the Basilica above the Royal Pantheon (Box 2009). Many others

were reburied with religious and military honors in local cemeteries, occupying visible priority pantheons that can still be seen today (fig. S2). Plaques with the names of those “Fallen for God and Spain”—always presided over by the name of Jose Antonio, “martyr of martyrs”—were placed outside church walls in almost every village in the country, refreshing a centuries-deep alliance between nation, military, and Catholic Church.

As years went by, in parallel with the consolidation of the dictatorship and the honorable relocation of the mass graves of the victors, the country underwent an exhaustive militarization of its public spaces. Monuments to the memory of Francoist war martyrs were inaugurated everywhere. Streets were named after military officials and heroes across Spain. The sites of heroic battles were preserved in ruins, transformed into symbols of resilience and triumph (Viejo-Rose 2011:45–104). Roman-style equestrian statues of Franco were placed in prominent locations in Spanish cities. A triumphal arch commemorating the military victory was erected in one of Madrid’s main gateways (fig. S3). If the 3-year fratricidal war had not already generated enough combat, repression, executions, military operations, and long lines of terrorized civilians painfully shuffling into exile, Spain was now thoroughly reinscribed by a militarized symbolic and political logic. The memorial choreography of the war dead took place 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—where the cult to the fallen played a predominant role in refashioning the new political body (Aguilar 2000; Box 2009, 2010). Many of these pantheons, plaques, monuments, and

other heterogeneous infrastructures are still in their original locations in contemporary Spain, albeit now heavily questioned by sectors on the political left (Rubin 2018).

In 1959, 20 years after the end of the conflict, a new wave of unburials was to stir the Civil War dead, reinscribing worn-out religious and militaristic notions of martyrdom, sacrifice, and patriotism in the corpses of many war winners and generating further funerary slippage between the death spaces of triumphant and defeated. Over two decades, more than 33,000 bodies, both military and civilian, were dug up from burial locations across Spain and transferred to subterranean crypts in the Valley of the Fallen (Olmeda 2009). An early arrival was José Antonio Primo de Rivera, transferred from the monastery of El Escorial and ceremoniously placed before the main altar. For 15 years, he presided over the monument on his own, as the side crypts were filled with thousands of bodies of diverse origin. It was an honor he was to share as of November 1975, when, after a heavily militarized state funeral, the Valley became the burial place of Franco himself, who was placed behind the main altar, creating a politically charged funerary axis with Primo de Rivera (fig. S4). The fact that both men had died on November 20, albeit 49 years apart, consolidated a powerful commemorative date for the victors. The arrival of the dictator’s remains in El Valle unequivocally sealed the monument as Spain’s chief Francoist stronghold. Although most were brought during the 1960s, bodies from all over the country continued to arrive in the Valley until 1983 (see fig. 2).

Meanwhile, the vast majority of mass graves containing Republican loyalists—which continued to grow in the postwar years as a result of a repression that lasted well beyond the limits



Figure 2. Bottom-up view of the Valley of the Fallen, showing Franco’s emblem and the huge cross topping the subterranean Basilica. Photograph by the author. A color version of this figure is available online.

of the formal conflict—remained abandoned in miscellaneous locations outside cemeteries (at times right outside the wall) or in “second-class” civil sections of formal burial grounds. This topography of death was initially the result of a funerary punishment meted out in addition to the killing of people who were thus expelled not only from the legitimate community of the living by means of summary executions but also from the community of the dead by inappropriate or dishonorable burial. These undignified graves, outside conventional funerary spaces and ignored by postwar reburial laws, carried an admonitory message to potential political dissidents. As decades passed, some of these unprotected mass graves slid progressively into public secrecy, while others simply vanished. In cemeteries, bones frequently ended up in mixed ossuaries during refurbishments and relocations. Meanwhile, an unknown number of outdoor mass graves have been destroyed under Spain’s infrastructure modernization and real estate development, which entailed freeways, high-speed trains, urban and rural development, and general landscape transformation (fig. S5).

Oral testimonies from elderly people suggest that a small number of graves were furtively opened by relatives during the war itself and the subsequent dictatorship and the bodies clandestinely reburied in family pantheons in cemeteries. After Franco’s death in 1975, relatives conducted many exhumations with little institutional or technical support and limited media attention, within the framework of the emerging political cultures accompanying the transition to democracy. These local unburials—some followed by massive reburials in municipal cemeteries—gave those defeated in the war a crucial glimpse of public visibility after decades of erasure affecting both the executed and the survivors and initiated the process of acknowledgment and commemoration of their decades-long suffering and marginalization (see fig. S6; Aguilar 2017; Aguilar and Ferrándiz 2015; de Kerangat 2017; Mateo and de Kerangat 2018).

Franco’s Militarist Imprint under Siege

In his 1969 Christmas speech, approaching death, Franco reassured supporters that his militaristic legacy was “sewn up, all sewn up” (*atado y bien atado*) with the recent designation by parliament of Prince Juan Carlos de Borbón as his successor. A new monarchy was to emerge from his glorious military victory and dictatorial regime. There was at least some truth to this. His dictum is still recalled in public debates whenever a progressive initiative is successfully blocked or resisted by his political heirs. It is a fact that Spain is still struggling to fully get rid of the conspicuous traces of a dictatorial militarism dating back to the 1930s and that certain conservative forces that originated and flourished during Francoism remain strong in democratic guise, particularly in the political and legal arenas, as well as in powerful sectors of the Catholic Church. Paradoxically, the armed forces, heavily reformed during the tenure of Socialist president Felipe González (1982–1996), are credited by international observers such as Pablo de Greiff (2014:5–7),

the UN’s Special Rapporteur on the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation, and Guarantees of Non-recurrence, with a more professional and politically neutral role, except for some vanishing—though tenacious—nostalgic right-wing pockets.

To cut a complex debate short, in Spain’s transition to democracy (1975–1982), the dominant driving force was that of reconciliation, and the crimes committed by the rebellious army and paramilitaries during the war and later during Francoism were purposefully “thrown into oblivion” for the sake of peaceful coexistence, as Santos Juliá (2003), a highly influential Socialist historian, has put it (Ferrándiz 2008). An Amnesty Law passed in 1977 secured impunity for Francoist crimes. Despite these major concessions by the descendants of the defeated, a failed military coup in 1981—during which the parliament was taken by civil guards during the investiture of Prime Minister Calvo Sotelo and the city of Valencia, occupied by tanks, was declared to be in a state of emergency—sent shivers down the collective spine, reminding the country that the army remained vigilant and ready to restore order if necessary (fig. S7). As years went by, Spain’s transition, deemed exemplary across the world, was thoroughly studied by political scientists and even became a model to export (Aguilar 2000; Bermeo 1997; Encarnación 2012; Gunther 1992).

Yet troubling turn-of-the-century events—when the grandchildren of those defeated in the war began to revisit the repression of civilians by Franco’s army and paramilitary—threatened to destabilize these consensually sanitized perceptions of the Civil War, dictatorship, and transition to democracy (Labrador 2017; Sánchez León and Izquierdo 2017). In October 2000, sociologist and journalist Emilio Silva opened the latest chapter in Spain’s Civil War unburials when he promoted the exhumation of a Republican mass grave in Priaranza del Bierzo (León) containing the body of his grandfather and 12 others (fig. S8). Led by technical experts, it set off a dizzying wave of excavations and reburials, increasingly linked to the global expansion of human rights protocols to promote truth, justice, and reparation for victims (Ferrándiz 2014; Ferrándiz and Robben 2015; Silva and Macías 2003; Wagner 2008).

A political and media storm regarding the proper handling of these anachronistic and highly disturbing bodies struck Spain in the following years, with international repercussions. The political right wing, in good part heir of the dictatorship’s political elites, loudly resisted this emergent process, arguing that reconciliation from the painful conflict had been satisfactorily achieved during the transition to democracy and that looking back amounted to the unnecessary opening of old wounds. Despite such staunch opposition, exhumations multiplied in the following years, mostly promoted by the grandchildren and later the great-grandchildren of executed Republicans, originating what Rojas-Perez (2017) has defined as a new and alternative “necro-governmentality of postconflict,” altering “the wartime relationship between the geography of violence and the geography of memory” (259).

The main developments in Spain since the decisive Priaranza unburial can be summarized as follows: the passing in 2007 of a Memory Law to “recognize and increase rights and establish

measures in favor of those who suffered persecution and violence during the Civil War and the Dictatorship” (BOE 2007) by a Socialist government after heated debates in parliament and more generally in the public sphere; the unsuccessful attempt in 2008 by Judge Baltasar Garzón—internationally renowned for issuing an arrest warrant against Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet for genocide, international terrorism, torture, and forced disappearances in 1998 (Golob 2002)—to connect the Spanish case with international human rights law by reframing Francoist repression as crimes against humanity (see fig. S9; Ferrándiz 2014:205–259); the judicial testimony of victims of Francoism in the Supreme Court during Garzón’s trial for malfeasance; the development of memorial institutions in some of Spain’s autonomous communities, with uneven scope and results; a second lawsuit filed in 2010 by a number of Spanish associations for the recovery of historical memory and victims in Argentina regarding crimes against humanity committed during the Civil War and Francoism under international law (known as *Querrela Argentina*); the 2011 appointment by the government of a Commission of Experts, in which I participated, to decide the fate of Francisco Franco’s tomb and the controversial monument housing it; and the uneven and largely disconnected drafting of regional memory policies in certain parts of Spain, affecting the exhumation of mass graves, the recognition of the suffering of diverse types of victims, the removal of physical traces of apology to Francoism, and the memorialization of anti-Francoist resistance, among other controversial topics (Basque Country, Andalusia, Catalonia, Navarra, and others).

In the 2005–2011 period, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero’s Socialist government funneled more than €20 million of state public funding to support exhumations and other commemorative activities related to rescuing the memory of the war’s defeated (see fig. S10), although a tiny part was also assigned to projects pursuing the promotion of the “other” memory, as some authors now refer to the memory of the Francoist winners (García Alonso 2018; Salas 2006). During this period, unburials and reburials, documentaries, commemorative monuments, local research on repression, conferences, and acts of tribute proliferated, as other traces of the Francoist regime started to be called into question. The online initiative Hunt a Fascist Monument, launched by one major memorial association, *Foro por la Memoria*, is a good example.⁴ But when the right-wing *Partido Popular* (PP) came to power in December 2011, state funding for exhumations and related Civil War memorial activities ceased completely. Spain’s prime minister in the period 2011–2018, Mariano Rajoy, publicly stated his disdain for the Memory Law and his intention to starve it to death economically. In all, since 2000, more than 740 mass graves have been opened and over 9,000 bodies have been unearthed (Francisco Etxeberria, personal conversation, December 2018).

Whatever the political leanings of the party in power, the Spanish case became increasingly entangled with transnational human rights processes, a connection promoted by many sectors

of the associative movement and skillfully dodged by successive governments. 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 unburials—and the bigger issue of crimes against humanity committed during the war and the dictatorship—within international human rights legislation and transitional justice frameworks. They demanded, to no avail, that the state acknowledge these crimes as forced disappearances, assuming the responsibility to investigate all of them (de Greiff 2014). Although the dominant memorial mode in Spain is connected to this mainstream “cosmopolitan” abstract and apolitical victim-centered human rights culture, there are also traces of what Cento Bull and Lauge (2016) have called “agonistic memory,” a reflexive memorial frame that—departing from standard cosmopolitanism—fosters the contextualization and politicization of memory struggles and aims at building counterhegemonic narratives of the past in a dialogic and controversial public space (Ferrándiz and Hristova 2018).

The history of the bullet-riddled bodies now retrieved began with denunciations, arrests, jails, military trials, tortures and mistreatment, executions, and hasty mass grave burials several decades ago. All of these repressive techniques are to be understood as instruments of a generalized political terror that was an integral part of Franco’s military strategy: to sow fear and eliminate dissidence as his troops took control of the country. Thus, the memory work around mass graves and the exhumation and reburial of the executed skeletons raises the highest stakes, as it necessarily unmakes a systematic form of military sovereign domination that included the intentionally offensive placement of executed cadavers in unnamed ditches.

This process of reclamation required the bodies’ relocation within a legitimate funerary and memorial cartography. Yet initially, for many families and memorial associations, it was not easy to know how to deal with the unexpected homecoming of 60- or 70-year-old skeletons inscribed with decades-old repressive violence, in a context of full media visibility and in a highly politicized and confrontational social environment. None of the available funerary arrangements provided either by the Church—Spain’s main provider in this respect, albeit one strongly rejected by many associations due to its complicity with the dictatorship and the very crimes unearthed—or by the funeral homes’ service charts could properly accommodate, as a general principle, these unsettling corpses rescued in extremis from oblivion and destruction.⁵

Most activists and relatives involved in the internally diverse and troubled memorial social movement agree that unburials and reburials make sense only if those executed during the war and postwar and later abandoned and mistreated by the nation for decades are somehow “dignified” in the process. Yet there are crucial disagreements on how to proceed—technically, politically, and symbolically—with the undoing and re-

4. See http://www.foroporlamemoria.info/simbolos_franquistas.php?id_prov=2 (accessed April 30, 2018).

5. On the development of funerary arrangements for exhumed bodies, see Ferrándiz (2018).



Figure 3. Forensic doctor Francisco Etxeberria holds a “mobile seminar” in the 2009 mass grave exhumation in Milagros (Burgos). Photograph by the author. A color version of this figure is available online.

location of this stigmatized space of death (Ferrándiz 2014:191–203). Early initiatives to commemorate and resignify mass graves without unburials or public exposure of the bones were soon sidelined by the success of a body-centric forensic turn in the memory-recovery associative field after 2000, as technical exhumations accumulated, archeologists and forensic doctors became crucial interpreters of the Civil War and postwar repression, and the executed skeletons took center stage in memorial practices, public debates, and the media, including the new digital media (fig. S11; Dziuban 2017; Ferrándiz 2016; Ferrándiz and Baer 2008). Ironically, due to the 1977 Amnesty Law and the statute of limitations in Spanish criminal law (20 years), in the absence of the kind of legal framework for the exhumations that exists in countries such as Argentina or Bosnia (Robben 2015; Wagner 2008), forensic interventions are carried out in an “as if” mode, creating the legal fiction that some justice is being done. That is, although in many cases forensic doctors write internationally approvable scientific reports on the exhumations, they have no legal value as of today—though they could be legally reactivated as evidence if in the future there were some sort of trial of Francoist crimes. That they have no current legal status does not detract from their social and symbolic efficacy for relatives, as they provide powerful scientific evidence that they were large-scale, thus undermining revisionist approaches to the war and the dictatorship.⁶

In this eye-catching bare-bones forensic scenography, wounded human remains; premortem, perimortem, and post-

mortem violence traces; coups de grâce; calibers; ammunition shells; tying ropes and wires; blindfolds; quicklime; and personal objects came to express the ground zero of Franco’s militaristic repression, often overshadowing other alternative narratives of the past (Anstett and Dreyfus 2015; Crossland and Joyce 2015; Davis 2017; Dziuban 2017; Ferrándiz 2013; Ferrándiz and Robben 2015; Rosenblatt 2015; Weizman 2012). Transmission of this forensic connection to the past occurs in diverse ways: in the “mobile seminars” where experts give attendees their interpretation of the day’s scientific progress at the exhumations (Bevernage and Colaert 2014), in PowerPoint presentations that have become an integral part of the return ceremonies, or in the flow of scientific data to different types of nonofficial archives, either personal, familial, or managed by memorial associations (Aragüete-Toribio 2017), to name some relevant ones (see fig. 3). In this authoritative evidence-driven interpretative framework where forensic medicine becomes the crucial memory science and the crime scene—in its crimes against humanity version—logics and aesthetics develop into a salient access point to the violent past in public space, and the violent repression inscribed in the executed civilians lying in the graves necessarily colors the memorial culture that attempts to dismantle it (fig. S12; Hacking 1996; Keenan and Weizman 2012).

The (Now Unquiet) Resting Place of the Generalissimo

A 2003 exhumation of a mass grave in the province of Ávila turned the Valley of the Fallen into a very uncomfortable hot

6. On the different types and epistemologies of evidence at exhumations, see Crossland (2013).

spot, directly connected to the emerging unburial process. When technicians attempted to exhume the grave, they were unable to find more than a few broken, scattered bones, suggesting that a previous and rather careless excavation had already taken place. Fausto Canales was the driving force behind this 2003 exhumation, when searching for his father and six fellow residents from the village of Pajares de Adaja, all members of the local Socialist Party, killed in 1936 by Falange paramilitary. A retired engineer, he undertook private investigations after the exhumation fiasco, finding evidence that the bodies had been moved to the Valley in 1959. The case was particularly striking because it was the first documented example that a Republican mass grave had been raided without the relatives' knowledge during Francoism to help fill up the Valley's crypts. Many local officers had been under pressure to contribute bodies to the Francoist monument and saw this as an opportunity to erase awkward evidence pointing to the embarrassing killing of neighbors during the war (Olmeda 2009). The discovery was a bombshell, bringing Fausto Canales media attention both at home and abroad and transforming him into a symbol of courage and resilience for historical memory recovery associations, ranging from ephemeral local clusters of relatives of victims to full-fledged, legally constituted organizations with national implantation. Yet this was only part of a broader and equally striking public revelation—that the Valley's crypts actually hosted more than 33,000 Civil War bodies, around 12,000 of them unknowns, an indeterminate number of which were executed Republican civilians.

As research provided more information on the genealogy and magnitude of the crypts, memorial activists, spearheaded by Canales, started filing legal injunctions for their relatives' immediate exhumation from the Valley and return to their families. So far, these lawsuits have languished in religious, bureaucratic, political, and legal labyrinths and are threatened by counterlitigation for funerary profanation by the main association defending the Francoist essence of the Valley (Ferrándiz 2014:261–303). A firm legal ruling of 2016 authorizing the disinterment of anarchist brothers Manuel and Antonio Ramiro Lapeña from the town of Calatayud, executed in 1936 and transferred to the monument in 1959, initially hailed as historic, has met with “Kafkaesque” judicial, political, and technical obstacles, in the words of Manuel's granddaughter (Ejerique 2016). By late 2018, its actual implementation seems remote if not impossible.

Keepers of the monument's most hidden secrets, the Benedictine monks in charge of the monument and the cult of the dead transferred there since its inauguration by Franco in 1959, reacted quickly to preempt any attempt at unmaking the crypts. First, they argued that their own census might be wrong and that the actual number of bodies was probably double the number on file. Second, they conveyed to the press the impossibility of any kind of exhumation or individualized identification of remains, claiming that the leaks and seepage the monument had suffered over the decades had affected the crypts where the corpses were buried to such an extent that

the ossuary had dissolved into the rock, making one body indistinguishable from another. An anonymous declaration by Valley sources states verbatim: “The remains were used to fill the internal chambers of the crypts and are now part of the building's structure. Damp has done the rest.” It reads as a euphemism for the radical melting of biographical and political identities into one complex, contradictory, and indissoluble collective corpse, architecturally consolidated in the cement of the monument's underground vaults (Junquera 2008). This powerful religious allegory would express, according to these sources, the definitive embrace of the “two Spains” under the welcoming arms of the huge cross: a truly devastating prospect for those opposed to preservation of the monument's status quo, who are eager to open and clarify this subterranean cemetery.

Let's rewind a few decades for a better understanding of why relatives of Republican victims are so disturbed by these developments regarding the monument they see as the staunchest and most extravagant stronghold of Francoism—in Canales' words (personal conversation) a “cavern of horror” inconceivable in a democratic state. The Valley of the Fallen is Spain's most conspicuous militarist-religious compound. The monument was visualized by Franco during the war to host the bodies of the victors, creating a permanent religious cult to commemorate their martyrdom and sacrifice, as suggested in the foundational decree signed by Franco in April 1, 1940:

The magnitude of our Crusade, the heroic sacrifices that victory entails, and the transcendence of this epos for the future of Spain, cannot be perpetuated by the unassuming memorials commonly used in towns and villages to commemorate the outstanding deeds of our History and the glorious episodes of its sons.

The stones erected must be endowed with the splendor of ancient monuments, defying time and oblivion, and must constitute a place of meditation and rest where future generations can pay a tribute of admiration to those who left them a better Spain. (BOE 1940; translated by the author)

Parts of the monument imitate the imperial style created by the architect Juan de Herrera and canonized in the nearby monastery of El Escorial, built by Philip II in the sixteenth century, which currently houses the Royal Pantheon. Just 13 km apart, these two architectural power structures are joined by an umbilical cord connecting different imperial utopias. Indeed, Franco always sought to recast his military victory as a continuation of the Crusades and the Spanish Empire. To this day, both monuments are included on an “Imperial Route” in tourist itineraries. Christianity's tallest cross soars 150 m above the Valley site, hewn into the granite hill. The subterranean Basilica is packed with a blend of Catholic and militaristic symbols, sealing a decades-long alliance (Casanova 2011 [2001]). Welcoming visitors at the entrance are two huge angels holding downward-pointing swords made

out of melted bronze cannons from the Civil War. The six side chapels in the central nave are dedicated to Virgins, each representing a different military force. The impressive tiled dome reviews Spain's history as a Catholic country, featuring representations of the nation's martyrs. One section alludes directly to the Civil War and its share of martyrs, where Francoist and Falangist flags are on full display.

Just before its formal inauguration on April 1, 1959, on the 20th anniversary of Franco's military victory, one of the first bodies to be transferred to the monument, as we have seen, was that of Fascist leader Primo de Rivera, reexhumed from the monastery of El Escorial and placed before the Basilica's main altar (fig. S13). The next few years saw a large-scale funerary parade of Civil War dead, with thousands of bodies—ranging from senior military officers to rank and file and civilians killed in the war—brought to the monument from different parts of Spain. In 1969, all of the 3,185 soldiers believed to be resting in the military cemetery of Griñón, a town close to Madrid, were transferred to the Valley (Olmeda 2009:281–284).

But the Valley's militaristic profile was particularly sharpened in 1975. Although it is unclear how the decision to bury the generalissimo in the monument was reached, or if he had even agreed to it, on November 23 he was brought to the Pantheon after a 2-day vigil in the Royal Palace (Alija Fernández 2016). Buried in full dress uniform right behind the altar, he was set in a heroic axis with Primo de Rivera's tomb. For decades, the Valley became the main site of militaristic nostalgia for bygone times on their shared death date of November 20. Although their numbers faded over time, groups of Francoist supporters and Falange members staged celebratory rituals, including military parades from Madrid to the Valley, Roman salutes, and the singing of Fascist anthems by the tombstones. In their outdated homilies, the Benedictines still pray daily for the "unity of Spain" and the blood shed by Civil War martyrs. While Jose Antonio's tomb has lost prominence with time, Franco's grave—and more specifically his bodily remains—have increasingly become the ultimate bastion of his regime's protracted but decaying sovereignty (Yurchak 2015).

In 2011, the Socialist government appointed a Commission of Experts to propose alternatives to "democratize" and "re-signify" the monument, stripping it of its explicit militaristic and predemocratic tone (BOE 2011). As a result of my ongoing research on mass graves and long-standing relationship with memorial associations, I was a member of this body, to which the political right and their associated media were openly hostile in view of their position that the Valley is already a place of reconciliation. The commission's plenary sessions were held in the prime minister's compound in Moncloa and was subdivided into three sections dealing with the legal status of the monument, the preservation or removal of its symbolic elements, and finally the provision of ideas, in which I participated, to resolve the ongoing contradictions and tensions emanating from both the privileged burial sites in the Basilica and the huge underground cemetery.

In our Crypt Subcommittee, we established that any transformation of the monument required radical elimination of the Francoist funerary hierarchy dominating the Valley, as this was the keystone of the broader funerary apartheid being dismantled in statewide exhumations since 2000. First, we argued, if the monument was truly to the Civil War dead, Franco had to be exhumed and handed over to his family for private burial. Next, Primo de Rivera should be moved to a side crypt, away from his privileged burial site. Finally, the cemetery should change its status from a pseudoreligious character into a special public cemetery under the full oversight of the state. This would facilitate exhumations like the ones demanded by the relatives of the Republicans surreptitiously buried there.

The commission's three most conservative members signed a private vote against Franco's exhumation from the Valley, warning of the social alarm that this would create in Spain and arguing that no such proposal existed anywhere else in Europe. Furthermore, as both leaders were buried on holy ground (in the Basilica), any removal had to abide by the 1979 agreement between the state and the Vatican, involving permission from the Pope and therefore tricky and delicate international diplomacy. In the extreme case that the unburial eventually occurred, the operation should be performed as befit a head of state.⁷ Since then, the inviolability of Franco's tomb has become a major red line for a political right that shrinks away from claiming explicit ties with his military regime but actively resists every effort to dismantle its legacy. Yet for the first time since his death, Franco's tomb had come under siege, as the very possibility of his removal entered public debate and periodically gives rise to bold media headlines. Parties on the left will not let the issue go. In May 2017, for example, the Spanish parliament passed a nonlegal proposal (PNL) to disinter Franco. As PNLs are not legally binding, the conservative government simply ignored the vote.⁸

7. See the final report by the Commission of Experts at <http://digital.csic.es/bitstream/10261/85710/1/INFORME%20COMISION%20EXPERTOS%20VALLE%20CAIDOS%20PDF.pdf> (Ministerio de la Presidencia 2011; accessed April 30, 2018).

8. On May 11, 2017, the Socialist Party (PSOE), then in the political opposition, won a nonbinding majority vote in parliament calling for new impetus to be given to Spain's historical memory policies and in particular to Franco's exhumation from the Valley and the transfer of José Antonio Primo de Rivera to a nonpriority burial site in the monument, both initiatives that had been suggested in our Commission of Experts report of 2011. The PP conservative party, then in power, simply ignored the vote. One year later, on June 1, 2018, the Socialist Party took over the Spanish government after a corruption scandal hit the PP and Prime Minister Rajoy was forced to resign. Petitions to the Socialist Party to abide by its own proposal regarding Franco's unburial were not long in coming. A powerful example was the opinion piece in *El País* by prestigious writer and journalist Manuel Vicent, who urged the new Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez to act swiftly on this matter. "If the new Socialist government needed a symbolic action with a high moral impact, this is it," wrote Vicent, adding, "At this stage, it would be truly scandalous for the reverential fear inspired by the

So the generalissimo continues to cast his shadow from the afterlife, with his unconventional escort of more than 33,000 Civil War bodies. When our commission officially visited the Valley, accompanied by major state authorities, the Benedictines revealed their discomfort by remaining in their monastery to pray against our mission (and, allegedly, for the true soul of Spain; fig. S14). We were allowed to climb to the top of the huge cross and visit the impressive tiled subterranean vault. In the section specifically dedicated to war martyrs, one astounding optical illusion encapsulates the lingering threat of Franco's military rule, depicting a tank that appears to move along with the observer on whom it seems to keep in its sights.

Yet the circle seems finally to be closing in on Franco's resting place as his ironfisted militarist inscription of the country progressively comes apart and the fallout spreads from the mass grave exhumations of Republicans that started in 2000. This is directly affecting other senior members of his military entourage, with a rise in public consciousness of their role as the perpetrators of crimes against humanity and sight increasingly restored to the blind eye that political elites agreed to turn to the atrocities of Francoism during the transition to democracy. Late 2016 saw removal of the remains of Generals Emilio Mola—the true mastermind of the 1936 military rebellion—and José Sanjurjo—a recidivist putschist who had already made a previous attempt to overthrow the Republican government in 1932. Both killed in plane crashes during the war, they were reunited in the same mausoleum during the dictatorship and have now been exhumed from a crypt located below the Monument to the Fallen—now an exhibition center—in downtown Pamplona and returned to their relatives, amid heavy controversy. Although Mola's disinterment on October 24 was more discreet, the conditions imposed by Sanjurjo's relatives and the Church for disinterring his body on November 16, following tense negotiations and legal skirmishes with the City Council, were strict: the exhumation was to be carried out by religious and municipal personnel—thus excluding any forensic handling; it had to be registered by a notary, and no pictures were to be taken, much less reach the public domain. In a press release, Sanjurjo's family expressed their “profound pain for the sub-

stance of the case, the form and purpose of the exhumation” (*La Gaceta* 2016). This major development in conservative Pamplona seemed unthinkable until 2015, when the City Council changed political hands and a Basque proindependence mayor came to power for the first time (Martínez Magdalena 2017; Ojer 2017). As part of the same process, 900 km away, the tomb of another top Francoist commander in a famous Basilica in Seville, General Gonzalo Queipo del Llano, is now also in the process of removal, as the city's current Socialist mayor has yielded to pressure from the Andalusian historical memory movement that considers him guilty of genocide. General Queipo del Llano is known for his cruelty and incendiary radio broadcasts during the war, in which he openly called for indiscriminate rapes and killings, and had the ultimate responsibility for the ruthless wave of repression in Andalucía that resulted in the execution of thousands of civilians, including the well-known poet Federico García Lorca on August 18, 1936 (fig. S15; Espinosa 2000; Gibson 2005:174–175).

But despite the Pamplona unburials, the game was not over so soon. An unexpected development has revealed how Francoist militarism still persists in the labyrinths of Spain's four-decade-old democracy. Only 3 months after his exhumation, Sanjurjo was secretly reburied with military honors in a military pantheon in the colonial town of Melilla on the northern coast of Africa, where he had been general commander. After this honorable reburial was leaked to the press, a source in the Spanish Defense Ministry was forced to acknowledge that Melilla's mayor-president, local chief commander, and “a small commission” from the Ministry had all attended the ceremony (Europa Press 2017).

In the Interstices of Militarism: Warehouse Statuaries

The grandchildren of those defeated in the Civil War saw the exhumations and the prestigious resting places of leading Francoist military rebels as evidence of the lingering militarization of Spain's public landscapes and urban spaces, and this awakening set off a parallel process designed to further dismantle the symbols, monuments, street names, and cartographies of Franco's regime, coupled with the archaeological reinterpretation of abandoned Civil War traces linked to the defense of the Republic, such as ruins, trenches, weapon hideouts, or concentration camps (González Ruibal 2016). Some such political and symbolic refashioning had already been undertaken in the 1980s and 1990s during the tenure of certain left-wing mayors. Madrid's two main arteries, renamed Avenida del Generalísimo and Avenida José Antonio Primo de Rivera after the war in an urban reflection of the funerary setup in El Valle, were themselves renamed Paseo de la Castellana and Gran Vía in 1980 and 1982, respectively. But these early resignifications of urban space, while crucial, did not achieve today's scale. The political culture emerging from the mass grave unburials has expanded progressively to question all

dictator's remains until now to continue, as if his grave were a concrete pot containing a nuclear fuel rod capable of releasing an uncontrolled radioactive load. Be bold, Prime Minister” (Vicent 2018). A week later, on June 18, 2018, Pedro Sánchez confirmed his intention to do so in an interview in prime time on the main public television service (RTVE), and although he did not set a precise date, the debate on the opportunity and modality of the exhumation raged in the media. On August 23, the Council of Ministers approved a Royal Decree-Law—a legal formula that requires the approval of parliament and would carry the signature of the king—establishing the conditions for the exhumation and setting in motion the administrative procedure. By the end of 2018, the exhumation had not yet been completed, and there was controversy regarding the location of the reburial, as Franco's relatives proposed moving his body to a family pantheon in Madrid's Cathedral (Almudena)—a most prestigious funerary placement right in the center of town.

vestiges of Francoism in public space, and the campaign against the dictatorship's funerary spaces, territorial landmarks, and symbols is erupting in every corner of the country. Almost every village, town, or city in Spain is now engaged in a political battle to rename its streets, track the biographies of the historical figures represented in its sculptures, or remove plaques with lists of martyrs and the fallen in the Crusade "for God and Spain" from the external walls of churches. In an unintended phantom effect, public debate surrounding this aspect of Spain's divisive past has also become significantly militarized.

In particular, the controversies around Franco's equestrian statues, suddenly transformed into heavily contested "pariah heritage" and an explicit symbol of the irremissible decline of the Francoist political body, have been paramount in this struggle for the progressive demilitarization of public space. The Madrid statue was dismantled overnight in March 2005, amid some controversy, and brought by tow truck to a municipal warehouse escorted by the municipal police and covered with a canvas. Statues in Zaragoza, Santander, and Ferrol (Franco's hometown) left their squares for similar destinations. Some nonequestrian statues were also removed after being vandalized, as in Guadalajara, near Madrid

Particularly indicative of the predicaments of this statuary demilitarization is the bizarre story of a figure on display for some years in Montjuïc Castle, Barcelona's seventeenth-century military fortress. The work of Catalan sculptor Josep Viladomat, a former Republican exile, it was inaugurated by Franco himself in 1963 during an official visit to the city. In 1985, political activists painted it pink. A year later it was moved to Montjuïc's Military Museum. Franco's left leg had to be cut off, as the statue would not go through the storehouse door. In 2008, in connection with the broader drive to remove vestiges of Francoism from public spaces and buildings, it was definitively removed from the Montjuïc fortress altogether and transported to a municipal warehouse in the north of the city, where other Francoist objects were already stored away from public view. In 2013, a routine inspection discovered that the statue had been cleanly beheaded and that Franco's head was—and still is—missing (Sancho 2016).

Finally, in October 2016, Barcelona's new Historical Memory Commissioner, historian Ricard Vinyes, promoted an exhibition in the city's emblematic Born Cultural and Memorial Center, where the beheaded statue was brought back to the public arena as part of a broader exhibition on the impunity of Francoism during Spain's early democratic period. Called *Impunity and Urban Space*, the installation—conceptualized by its curators as an iconoclastic countermonument (Iniesta 2017; Young 1992)—was placed in the street, close to the center's entrance, where Franco's statue featured alongside an allegory of the war victory, which failed to attract as much attention. A significant public argument followed. For the organizers, bringing a beheaded statue of Franco into open public debate had a clear ironic, even iconoclastic twist, and the potential to foster critical reflection on the legacies of the war, on statues as



Figure 4. Beheaded statue of Franco vandalized outside the Born Cultural and Memorial Center in Barcelona, October 2016. Photograph courtesy of Ricard Vinyes. A color version of this figure is available online.

complex processes, and on local complicity with the military dictatorship in Catalonia. Some opponents, many on the pro-independence political left, failed to appreciate the curators' conceptual proposal, rejected the return to public space in whatever form of a statue that had been withdrawn only after considerable effort, and considered the display offensive to victims of the war and dictatorship, even accusing the organizers of apologia for Francoism.⁹

The controversy captured headlines around the country and was a trending topic on Twitter but did not last long. The headless statue was soon vandalized: a sex doll was placed on the horse's back, and its rider was crowned with a pig's head. When, on the fourth day of exhibition, it was toppled altogether by a group of proindependence political activists, it broke into several pieces. An instant emblem of public hostility to the legacy of Francoism, it was immediately brought back to yet another municipal warehouse in a garbage truck, continuing the dishonorable itinerary on which it had embarked at the outset. Many of the attacks and insults aimed at the statue were filmed by the organizers and incorporated into the Born exhibition (see fig. 4).

9. The Francisco Franco Foundation, on their part, labeled the exhibition a "barbarous witches' coven" (*eldiario.es* 2016).

Fernando Sánchez Castillo's artistic proposal plays on this carnivalesque territory in the interstices of militarism, opening up new grounds to rethink Franco's legacy and, beyond the specific history of Spain, the deep impact of military apparatuses and totalitarianism on contemporary consciousness. The exhibition of two of the dictator's alleged eyelashes at leading art fairs—almost unnoticeable and weightless yet heavily protected, transformed into fetishes of the past (Barenblit 2015)—problematizes the lingering resilience of his legacy. But the most important part of Castillo's critical art is devoted to questioning the political and emotional afterlives of statues linked to absolutist or dictatorial political power (Verdery 1999). In *Spitting Leaders* (2013), designed as a fountain, bronze busts of Louis XIV, Stalin, Franco, and Hitler spit water at one another. In *National Episodes: Tactic*, Sánchez Castillo brought blind people to feel two of the equestrian statues removed from the streets and now stored in municipal warehouses, including the Montjuïc figure, recently revandalized. In *Madrid Treaty*, presented at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, he placed a fake statue of Franco in what seems to be a mass grave but could equally be read as a bomb crater. The spectator does not know whether the statue is being buried or unburied, whether it is coming up or going down, or ultimately, whether Francoist militarism is fading or reemerging (see fig. 5; Sánchez Castillo 2015).

Military Disassemblage

Unmaking militaristic legacies is a daunting, lengthy, multi-leveled, incomplete, shadowy, and often frustrating task, in Spain or elsewhere. Franco, who fought and won a scorched-earth war and led an ironfisted 36-year-long dictatorship, is still deeply ingrained in Spanish institutional, political, symbolic, and emotional landscapes. After 40 years of democracy, opening abandoned mass graves, relocating generals, erasing the names of perpetrators from street maps, removing statues of a dictator, or dismantling politico-religious cults paying homage to a tyrant or his most prominent comrades still suffuses Spanish society with a surprising uneasiness. When the transition was hailed as a neat example of a clean democratization, none of this belated "warped mourning" process could even have been imagined (Etkind 2013). Yet this is the juncture at which Spain currently stands, caught up in an intense debate about the Civil War, the protracted dictatorship that followed it, and the scope and depth of its legacy of militarism. Opening the mass graves of the defeated and the increasing social and political pressure on the general's burial sites and monuments are proving decisive tools in the historical, political, and emotional unlearning of Francoism, and yet they are also testimony to the endurance of its foundations and the historical and political depth of its terror machinery, deeply suffusing the me-



Figure 5. *Tratado de Madrid* (*Madrid Treaty*). Photograph courtesy of Fernando Sánchez Castillo. A color version of this figure is available online.

morial process as a lingering militaristic phantom. This demilitarization of Spanish society through exhumation practices and the questioning and removal of other Francoist traces or bodies is forcing the country to travel the depths of the physical wounds inscribed on the executed corpses and to detail the military honors invested in the burial arrangements of perpetrators. So too must this process critically decipher the corpses' afterlives, from deep emotions to cyberspace, from artistic proposals to judicial resolutions, from fleeting biological traces to impregnable monuments, from political laws to grassroots commemorations, from statues to street name signs, from local dynamics within families or villages to transnational processes.

Above all, after 18 years of hectic hereafter, the exhumed bodies of those defeated in the Civil War have become crucial actors in the final dismantling of a political corpse that, though decaying, is still influential. The tensions, fissures, and backlash provoked by their uncontrollable flooding into civil society, the judicial system, political agendas, media circuits, emotional regimes, and the country's historical consciousness are bound to extinguish the agonistic breath of a vanishing military regime that in many senses has outlived its formal conclusion and is only now starting to lose its claim to impunity. Far from a necrophilic anecdote, the comeback of the executed Republicans is not just part of the history of Spain but part of the history of humankind, increasingly claiming a significant slot in the universal catalog of complicities between militarism and extensive human rights violations.

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