

How Spain Sees its Past:
The Monumentalization of the Spanish Civil War

by

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Class of 2007

A thesis submitted to the
faculty of Wesleyan University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts
with Departmental Honors in History and Iberian Studies

Acknowledgments

Very special thanks to all the experts who have helped me in the formation of this work: Nathanael Greene, who assigned *Homage to Catalonia* freshman year and advised me senior year; Carmen Moreno-Nuño and Montserrat Iglesias Santos, who led me to historical memory of the Spanish Civil War; Phillip Wagoner, who introduced me to the concept of *lieux de mémoire*; and Antonio González, who helped me with Lorca and all things Iberian.

Thanks to the Davenport Committee for enabling me to do research over the summer, and to Jaime Lipton, Cuchi Pereyra, Katherine Halper, Emilio Silva, Jesús de Andrés, and Beatriz de las Heras Herrero who helped me while there.

Thanks to Erhard Konerding who supplied me with feedback and puns. To Katie Barnett and Meg Adams for going to the NYU conference with me. To CML, because he was willing to be acknowledged. To every member of my family who clipped newspaper articles and sent them to me; even if I didn't end up using them, they were always appreciated. Thanks to Fran for always being ready to drop everything and help me de-stress. Thanks to Gavin and Judith, whose work on their theses kept me honest. Extra thanks to Dan, whose room was my second carrel, and whose music kept me sane. Finally, thanks to all my friends, including all the members of the Alpha Delta Phi, who put up with me and my closed door this year. I knew that something was right when 10 people responded to my desperate email the night before I printed this thesis; you all are amazing.

Note: All interviews and sources originally in Spanish have been translated by the author, with help from Antonio González.

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“Memory is shaped by our changing surroundings and the way we interpret them.” –Michael Richards, historian¹

“And it's necessary that we recover and we discover our historical memory. The winners wrote their own history; the losers never had the chance to do so. There is a collective need to recover that memory. A country without memory is a sick country.” – Dulce Chacón, Spanish author²

¹ Michael Richards, "From War Culture to Civil Society: Francoism, Social Change and Memories of the Spanish Civil War," *History & Memory* 14, no. 1/2 (2002), 94.

² Sylvia Poggioli, "Profile: Spaniards Just Beginning to Confront the Ghosts of Nearly 40 Years of Fascist Rule Under Francisco Franco," *NPR: All Things Considered*, 2 January 2003.

Introduction: A History of the Second Degree

Winners decide how to memorialize history. The clearest view of this is in the monumentalization of wars, in war memorials and tombs, for example. But winners do not always get to decide how their monuments will be read years later. What may seem to be a self-evident reference to a very specific historical reality can become distorted with time, as collective memory changes. This is the case in 20th century Spain, which has had multiple regime changes. As political context and collective memory change, monuments must be rethought for their new context or they risk losing relevance. However, there is also a chance that leftover monuments will affect historical understanding, passing on outdated interpretations of the past. Both of these possibilities can be seen in Spanish monuments to the Spanish Civil War, a conflict which has been seen through many different lenses during the 20th and 21st centuries. As political realities have changed, conceptions of history have changed with them. However, while representations of the war have changed forms, the representations of that war in monument form have not always changed accordingly. The result is a landscape littered with anachronism, a collection of monuments that show the full range of interpretations of the Spanish Civil War since the end of the war in 1939.

History and Historical Memory in 20th Century Spain

During the 20th century, Spain's government – which had been a monarchy for centuries (apart from a brief interruption in the 19th century) – changed numerous times. By 1930, the monarchy had been discredited for its role in supporting the Miguel Primo

de Rivera dictatorship.¹ On April 14, 1931, a republic was declared – the Spanish Second Republic. The king, Alfonso XIII, left the country, though he did not abdicate.² The Republic went through four governments in five years – a provisional centrist government, a leftist and mostly socialist government, a right-of-center government led by the CEDA,³ and a left-of-center Popular Front government.⁴ During these five years, the country progressively destabilized as the left took over the land, went on strike, and burned churches while the ultra-right committed acts of violence in the streets.⁵ Finally, the assassination of the monarchist leader José Calvo Sotelo on July 12, 1936 provided the impetus for the military coup that had been looming.⁶ A board (*junta*) of generals across Spain started an uprising on July 18, expecting that it would function like a 19th century *pronunciamiento*.⁷ Instead, groups of civilians, led by the trade unions and political associations, organized into militias and, with the help of some military units, fought back;⁸ the uprising had become a civil war between the Nationalists and the Republicans.⁹ The Spanish Civil War would last almost three years, until victory was

¹ Jesús de Andrés and Jesús Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado de la guerra civil española* (Madrid: Susaeta Ediciones, 2005), 15-17, Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War, 1936-39*, 1st Grove Press ed. (New York: Grove Press, 1986).

² Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 17.

³ *Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas* (Spanish Confederation of the Autonomous Right)

⁴ de Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 21, 23, 31, 33.

⁵ Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 34-36, Michael Seidman, *Republic of Egos: A Social History of the Spanish Civil War* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 20.

⁶ Gabriel Jackson, *A Concise History of the Spanish Civil War* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), 41, Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 48.

⁷ During the 19th century, the Spanish military periodically led *pronunciamientos*, coups that encountered no resistance and resulted in a government favorable to the military. Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 51.

⁸ Jackson, *Concise History*, 48-49.

⁹ Naming the two parties who fought the civil war is a contentious issue. Any choice of names implies a specific point of view. Those who led the uprising called themselves the Nationalists (because they believed the Spanish Republic to be anti-Spanish; they were the only true Spaniards). Their enemies often called them the “*sublevados*” (the rebels), because they had led a rebellion against the state. The term Nationalist has stuck, because the Nationalists, under Franco, had control of Spain for forty years and thus made their own version of history. The other side of the war was less homogenous and never created one term for their cause. They were often the Loyalists (loyal to the Republic) or the Republicans; their enemies called them foreigners or the “Marxist horde,” portraying them as un-

declared by Francisco Franco, who had become the lead general, on April 1, 1939.¹⁰ From that date until his death on November 20, 1975, Franco ruled Spain. The state was totalitarian at first, later passing to authoritarianism;¹¹ through repression and censorship, Franco was able to control the state and prevent opposition.¹² In the last years of his life, Franco made extensive plans to leave Spain “*atado y bien atado*”¹³ so that his regime would continue without him. However, due to a number of factors, including the untimely death of the President of the government,¹⁴ this attempt did not succeed. Instead, Franco’s death allowed his chosen successor, King Juan Carlos I, to facilitate the transition to a constitutional monarchy. The Spanish Transition,¹⁵ which started with Franco’s death in 1975, ended in the early 1980s, when the king was able to thwart a coup attempt and the 1982 elections returned a victory for the Socialists without incident.¹⁶ Spain had transitioned from dictatorship to democracy with very little bloodshed and had become a stable, modern constitutional monarchy.¹⁷ However, one of the conditions of the Transition was the tacit “*Pacto de Olvido*” or “*Pacto de Silencio*,”¹⁸ a

Spanish and subversive. Loyalists is a very highly charged term, and is generally only used by those who vocally sympathize with the Republic; Republican is slightly less politicized, but there were Nationalists who believed in a Republic, just not one as unstable as was the case in 1936. In an attempt to avoid the contentious debates about how to name the sides, Nationalist and Republican will be used – these are the two most common terms employed by historians.

¹⁰ de Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 164.

¹¹ Javier Tusell, *Dictadura franquista y democracia, 1939-2004* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2005), 43.

¹² de Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 168-76.

¹³ Literally, “Tied up and well tied up” or “bound and well bound”; the phrase could be translated as “leaving no loose ends.”

¹⁴ Luis Carrero Blanco was killed in 1973 in a spectacular effort by the Basque separatist group, ETA. They tunneled under a street in Madrid and set up a bomb in the center of the tunnel. As Carrero Blanco’s car drove over the bomb, it was detonated, sending the car into the air and killing all the passengers. The car was on display at Madrid’s Army Museum. Gijs van Hensbergen, *Guernica: The Biography of a Twentieth-Century Icon* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2004), 275.

¹⁵ The Transition has been seen as a set period, and therefore many authors have chosen to capitalize the term.

¹⁶ Tusell, *Dictadura franquista y democracia, 1939-2004*, 278.

¹⁷ Jose Álvarez Junco, “The Formation of Spanish Identity and Its Adaptation to the Age of Nations,” *History & Memory* 14, no. 1/2 (2002), 35.

¹⁸ The Pact of Amnesia (Forgetting) or the Pact of Silence

tacit agreement that, to avoid reopening the wounds of the Spanish Civil War, the blame for the war would be placed on all.¹⁹ Therefore, while the country moved forward, it never dealt with the most contentious elements of the Spanish Civil War and Francoism.²⁰ The version of history forced by Franco was never officially replaced by a new version appropriate to the new state. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, when it was clear that Spain was stable, Spaniards began the process of looking back to the Spanish Civil War.²¹ Some consider this to be reopening wounds; others saw it as necessary catharsis for those who had been victims of the war and the postwar repression.²² Signaling the importance of this new phase, the Spanish Parliament declared 2006 to be the Year of Historical Memory,²³ specifically providing resources for commemorations and other educational activities that looked back to the Second Republic, the Spanish Civil War, and the Transition.²⁴ Contemporary Spain is thus only now starting to deal with the legacy of a war that ended almost 70 years ago.

In their book entitled *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century*, Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan mark collective memory as a difficult term to define, and use the term “collective remembrance” instead, noting the importance of public acts of remembering

¹⁹ Paloma Aguilar claims that the idea that talking about the war inherently led to instability is one grounded in Francoism. To justify his regime, Franco stressed that he had saved Spain from the turmoil of the prewar period and that without him the country would slip back into war. Thus, the Pact of Silence, while well-intentioned, is a sort of “secondary Francoism.” On the other hand, Brian Bunk notes that “memories of distress” led to polarization in the 1930s, implying that a Pact of Silence might, in fact, have been necessary for a successful transition. Paloma Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia: The Role of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), 8, 25, Brian D. Bunk, ““Your Comrades Will Not Forget”: Revolutionary Memory and the Breakdown of the Spanish Second Republic, 1934-1936,” *History & Memory* 14, no. 1/2 (2002), 69, 86.

²⁰ Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, xviii, Selma Holo, *Beyond the Prado: Museums and Identity in Democratic Spain* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999), 79.

²¹ Paul Preston, “Prólogo,” in *Atlas ilustrado de la guerra civil española*, ed. Jesús de Andrés and Jesús Cuéllar (Madrid: Susaeta Ediciones, 2005), II.

²² Richards, “From War Culture to Civil Society,” 111.

²³ In the “*Ley de la memoria histórica*” – Law of Historical Memory.

²⁴ Pablo X. de Sandoval, “El Valle de los Caídos quiere liberarse de los 'ultras': el abad de la basílica se opone a las exaltaciones franquistas del 20-N,” *El País (Madrid)*, 21 November 2006.

in creating a memory which is held by many members of the collective. Collective memory, then, is the result of those who speak out, for “Passive memory – understood as the personal recollections of a silent individual – is not collective memory.”²⁵ They go on to state that collective memory should be viewed “as the outcome of agency, as the product of individuals and groups who come together, not at the behest of the state or any of its subsidiary organizations, but because they have to speak out.”²⁶ Winter and Sivan give the example of the stories of grandparents that create collective memory of recent history in younger generations.²⁷ But it is certainly not always so simple as to peacefully pass on memory from generation to generation. In the 20th century, political leaders have massacred collective memory, and this is true not only of dictators: “It would be idle to assume that these problems are restricted to authoritarian regimes. Even the democratic West has had trouble in reconciling its official versions of the past with memories of millions of ordinary people.”²⁸ This general assertion about historical memory in the 20th century clearly applies to Spain.

In one of her numerous studies of collective memory in Spain between 1939 and the present, Paloma Aguilar says the following about collective memory and consensus in Spain:

I understand “collective memory” to mean that which a society, either directly or through transmission via multiple sources, has of crucial recent events in this century. Subsequent historical deformations are usually added to this memory and eventually merge with it. With the passage of time, the lessons derived from the past merge with the memory of the past itself. On the other hand, since there are many sources of memory (family, school, occupation, the state, etc.), we may take “collective” memory to refer to the common elements in the memory of a

²⁵ Jay M. Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, “Setting the Framework,” in *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Jay M. Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, *Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 6.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

society composed of different sub-identities and age groups. Due to its very nature, when this consensus version exists – some societies are so fragmented that they do not have a single hegemonic interpretation of the past –, it is usually so simple and mythical in character as, indeed, was the case of Spain. Collective memory does not so much retain concrete historical facts as the lessons derived from these. Thus, in Spain, a consensus historical memory of the Civil War emerged in which, firstly, *all those involved were equally guilty* of the atrocities that had taken place during the war and, secondly, the tragedy must *never again* be repeated.²⁹

Regarding the universality of her conclusions, Aguilar states that it is true that some minor groups did disagree with this hegemonic conception of collective memory, but that they were excluded from “the negotiated process of the transition to democracy.”³⁰ It is hardly surprising that there was no alternative understanding of events. Those who had suffered during the war and the dictatorship were either dead, in exile, or afraid. Spaniards had been acting under fear of repression for so long that grandparents had been unable to tell their version of events. In addition to Francoist censorship, there also existed “self-silencing.”³¹ Many Spaniards never learned that their grandfather, father, or uncle had fought for the Republicans, had been a communist, or had served time in jail during or after the war, because their families feared that informing their children would lead the children to suffer as well. During the dictatorship the collective memory was the memory of the victors, because the vanquished were forced to keep their memories silenced, and after the dictatorship, collective memory tended toward the Pact of Silence. Only recently have large groups attempted to break the silence surrounding many aspects of Spanish history, including parts of the Spanish Civil War. Given the number of

²⁹ Paloma Aguilar Fernández, "Collective Memory of the Spanish Civil War: The Case of the Political Amnesty in the Spanish Transition to Democracy," (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones, 1996), 3-5.

³⁰ Ibid., 3.

³¹ During a dictatorship, collective memory is not the same as “public memory” (the memories that are allowed to be expressed). However, the intense repression exercised during Franco’s dictatorship and the forty-year duration of this repression and censorship did help suppress versions of history contrary to the Francoist one. Raanan Rein, "Introduction: A Political Funeral," *History & Memory* 14, no. 1/2 (2002), 8, Richards, "From War Culture to Civil Society," 94, 107, 110.

political changes in Spain during the 20th century, historical memory cannot be considered hegemonic. Rather, historical memory is an amalgamation of the different versions of historical consciousness that exist in Spain. In the words of José Álvarez Junco, “Revolutions and civil wars made it difficult for any government to have stability, legitimacy and the means to imprint any deep cultural mark on Spanish society.”³² This does not mean, however, that Spanish leaders have not tried to leave their marks.

Lieux de mémoire

In 1984, Pierre Nora published the first a seven-volume titled “*Les lieux de mémoire*.” Nora was attempting to understand the history of France (its entire history) through its *lieux de mémoire* – “places, sites, and causes” of memory.³³ To explain the difference between history and *lieux*,³⁴ Nora writes:

Unlike historical objects, *lieux de mémoire* have no referents in reality; or, rather, they are their own referents – pure signs. This is not to say that they are without content, physical presence, or history – on the contrary. But what makes them *lieux de mémoire* is precisely that which allows them to escape from history. The *lieu* is a *templum*: something singled out within the continuum of the profane (whether in space, time, or both), a circle within which everything counts, everything is symbolic, everything is significant. In this sense, the *lieu de mémoire* has a dual nature: it is a hermetic excrescence upon the world, defined by its identity and summed up by its name but at the same time open to an infinite variety of possible other meanings.

The fundamental characteristics of a *lieux de mémoire* are as follows: they are caused by “the interaction between history and memory” and they evolve symbolically as time

³² Álvarez Junco, “Formation of Spanish Identity,” 23.

³³ The title of Nora’s book is translated into English as *Realms of Memory*, a term that is intended to encompass the wide range of concepts Nora addresses. Because this thesis is focused on *lieux de mémoire* that are physical locations, I have chosen to use the terms “*lieux de mémoire*” and “sites of memory” interchangeably. Pierre Nora and Lawrence D. Kritzman, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, 3 vols., *European Perspectives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 14.

³⁴ Nora never succinctly defines the concept *lieux de mémoire* for his readers. Instead, he writes a 20 page introduction to the first volume explaining the concept. It is a very well-written and fascinating introduction, but one that leaves many things open to interpretation.

passes. First, “A will to remember must be present initially” or all objects could be considered sites of memory. Second, such sites are hybrids of past and present – “*lieux de mémoire* thrive only because of their capacity for change, their ability to resurrect old meanings and generate new ones along with new and unforeseeable connections.”³⁵ Nora considered not only sites, in the sense of places or locations; he also deemed that, with certain characteristics, other objects or rituals could be considered sites of memory.

To help refine the concept, Nora introduces a number of dichotomies that break down sites of memory into more specific groups. Speaking broadly, anything related to the national heritage or to the dead can be considered a site of memory, when the willingness to remember exists. Both historical events and history books are *lieux de mémoire*.³⁶ Within the grouping of historical events, Nora points to two basic categories – events that seemed minor at the time but have come to acquire significance and events that are “immediately invested with symbolic significance and treated, even as they are unfolding, as if they were being commemorated in advance.” The former are “foundational”; the latter are “spectacular.” In addition to events, there are “monumental” sites, such as statues. In general, “although location is by no means unimportant with such monuments, they could be placed elsewhere without altering their meaning.” On the other hand, there are those sites of memory where what matters is “their specific location, their rootedness.”³⁷ Finally, Nora draws a distinction between “dominant” and “dominated” *lieux de mémoire*. Dominant sites are “celebrations of triumph,” generally imposed by the government and “One doesn’t visit such sites; one is summoned to them.” Dominated sites are “places of refuge” and are visited in “hushed

³⁵ Nora and Kritzman, *Realms of Memory*, 14-15.

³⁶ Ibid., 16-17.

³⁷ Ibid., 18.

pilgrimage.” Some sites of memory are “pure” – their function is solely commemorative – while others are “composite” – commemoration is just one of their functions. Some are public; others private.³⁸ The only thing that all the sites of memory have in common is that they are foci for remembrance and commemoration of the past. Since Nora’s work, the concept of *lieux de mémoire* has been widely used to investigate the ways in which societal values are reflected in physical locations. It is clearly a fascinating lens to try to understand how governments educate their people.

These monuments are designed to convey information to the public, reminding them of the people, events, and values deemed important by the government. They are not necessarily educational, but they do reflect societal priorities in remembrance. As Sanford Levinson notes,

Public monuments that designate communal heroes or sacred communal events throughout time have been ways by which regimes of all stripes take on a material form and attempt to manufacture a popular consciousness conducive to their survival.³⁹

Studying monuments, therefore, gives a sense of what was deemed worthy of remembrance. Studying monuments in Spain to the Spanish Civil War will, consequently, reflect how historical memory of that war has changed along with the political transformations in Spain.

The Monumentalization of the Spanish Civil War

As Pierre Nora writes, history through memory is a different kind of history. It is a history:

³⁸ Ibid., 19.

³⁹ Sanford Levinson, *Written in Stone: Public Monuments in Changing Societies*, Public Planet Books (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 87.

“... less interested in causes than effects; less interested in actions remembered or even commemorated than in the traces left by those actions and in the interaction of commemorations; less interested in the events themselves than in the construction of events over time, in the disappearance and reemergence of their significations; less interested in ‘what actually happened’ than in its perpetual reuse and misuse, its influence on successive presents; less interested in traditions than in the way in which traditions are constituted and passed on. In short, a history that is neither a resurrection nor a reconstitution nor a reconstruction nor even a representation but, in the strongest possible sense, a ‘rememoration’ – a history that is interested in memory not as remembrance by as the overall structure of the past within the present: history of the second degree.”⁴⁰

This work is, in the same vein, a history of the second degree. The Spanish Civil War is examined not to learn anything about the war itself; rather, the war is used as the means to understand Spanish attitudes toward the past.

This thesis concentrates on four of the most significant elements of the Spanish Civil War – one event and two people who were of great importance to the Nationalists and one event and one person who held such importance for the Republicans. Each site originated in a different historical moment, and each has changed significance at least slightly as Spain has changed around them. The sites are thus a microcosm of historical memory in Spain. Chapter One examines the Alcázar – one of the earliest major monuments to the Spanish Civil War. The monument and museum constructed at the site turned the event in question – a siege – from one of little practical importance in the war to one of great symbolic value. The monument was started in the 1930s, and displays that era’s bellicose imagery, but it also shows the changes in societal priorities in the 1960s and the post-dictatorship attempts at unity of the 1990s. Chapter Two studies the Valley of the Fallen, a monument to the victors of the Spanish Civil War constructed over 20 years, starting immediately after the war. The monument is a symbol that claims to remember the war dead, including the most representative of those dead, José

⁴⁰ Nora and Kritzman, *Realms of Memory*, xxiv.

Antonio Primo de Rivera. However, the site is actually a shrine to its creator, Francisco Franco, and all the values he embodied. Chapter Three concerns the memory of Federico García Lorca in the province of Granada. Lorca, one of the victims of the war, was Republican and thus could not be represented in monuments until after the death of Franco. These three sites, therefore, reflect the tentative attempts at a new historical memory during the Transition of the 1970s and 1980s. In one of three sites, the creators succeeded in re-interpreting history, educating the public according to the new democratic values. The other two sites, however, appear to be historic, but are void of information. Finally, Chapter Four examines one of the best-known episodes of the war, the bombardment of Gernika and the subsequent painting *Guernica* by Picasso. The painting, created in 1937, evolved in meaning as it moved away from the war, both physically and temporally. The town and its museum, on the other hand, continue to be focused on the events. The painting is better known than the town, but it is the town that carries historical memory; the painting has become a work of art, not a *lieux de mémoire*.

After selecting these sites, it became clear that all four specifically critique Francoism; the first two show the propaganda employed by Franco to justify his regime while the second two show important aspects of the war that were hidden because they painted Franco and his allies in a bad light. Investigating these sites, therefore, inevitably tends to show the seedier side of Francoism. This is not to say that there are not also sites of memory that could show the negative aspects of the Republican side of the war, because there certainly are. However, since Franco's discourse has dominated historical memory in Spain, his discourse also dominates the physical landscape, and any attempt to study the most visible *lieux de mémoire* will tend to Francoist myths and, conversely, the

sites that were deliberately avoided by Franco and have since been adopted by the democratic government.

Intellectuals, including numerous historians, have worked for the past thirty years to remove the biases of Francoism from history, yet many of the myths created by Franco's propagandists continue in popular imagination. A study of these monuments shows that the continuing presence of anachronistic versions of history is, at least in part, due to their continued propagation at highly influential sites of memory.

The Alcázar of Toledo

“Reader: we are going to enter in a very sacred enclosure – if I may say so – not just for Spaniards, but rather for the entire human civilization. The pen trembles and the spirit hesitates before initiating the story of the mythical heroism and of the universal feat that took place inside the walls of the Alcázar.” – Manuel Aznar, official Francoist historian, journalist by training



Figure 1.1

“...nothing extraordinary happened there.” – Herbert Southworth, pro-Republican historian dedicated to exposing the myths of Francoist propaganda¹

¹ Herbert Rutledge Southworth, *El mito de la cruzada de Franco: Crítica bibliográfica* (París: Ruedo Ibérico, 1963), 62.

Toledo, known as both the Imperial City and the Spiritual Center of Spain,¹ has been of great importance since long before the creation of the modern Spanish state. Like all important medieval cities, the most important buildings in Toledo, towering above the city, are the cathedral and the Alcázar, the fortress. Constructed in 1521, the Alcázar has a storied history; it was burned down multiple times, usually due to an epic struggle, at times due to accident, and subsequently reconstructed. Multiple monarchs used it as their palace. After falling into disrepair during the 19th century, it was turned into a museum and the Spanish infantry academy.² When the Spanish Civil War broke out in July 1936, the Republican militias controlled the city, but a group of Nationalists with hostages, a total of 1,000 individuals, enclosed themselves in the Alcázar rather than surrender to what they viewed as the “Red hordes.” The Republicans encircled the fortress and its dependencies and held them under siege until September 1936, when the fortress was liberated by the Army of Africa,³ commanded by General Franco.

The Alcázar was instantly turned into a site of memory, designed to justify Franco’s choice to liberate the fortress and, in addition, the uprising as a Crusade against an illegitimate authority. As a result, a story had to be constructed in such a way that the militarily insignificant events taking place at the Alcázar of Toledo were turned into a key

¹ Alberto Reig Tapia, *Memoria de la Guerra Civil: Los mitos de la tribu* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2000), 153.

² Ibid., 154.

³ Franco’s army is called the Army of Africa because it consists of the troops that were stationed in Spanish Morocco. As it happens, many of the troops were Moors, who had sided with the Spanish in local, Moroccan wars and ended up employed by the Spanish state. As noted again in Chapter 2, it is one of the great ironies of the Spanish Civil War that Franco’s Crusade was carried out, in large part, by Muslim soldiers from Africa. It is further ironic to consider that the Catholic Monarchs (Fernando and Isabel) and their Habsburg successors (Carlos V and Felipe II) also used foreigners and non-Catholics in their armies. Thus, in Franco’s attempt to emulate these Catholic rulers, he is actually emulating their actions, not their discourse. Álvarez Junco, “Formation of Spanish Identity,” 15.

part of the struggle against the “reds.” This version, the Francoist myth,⁴ became attractive and despite its factual and interpretive inaccuracies continues to hold the Spanish imagination captive, due in great measure to the continued propagation of the myth in the Siege Museum at the Alcázar. The site has certainly changed since Franco’s death, but, due to conflicting changes implemented by different government bodies, the site has failed to effectively define itself in the post-Franco Spain.

An “Impregnable Fortress:” The Siege of the Alcázar

In July 1936, the Military Academy of Toledo was dismissed for the summer. Colonel José Moscardó had taken a group of cadets to Madrid, on their way to Berlin, the site of the Summer Olympic Games. However, on July 16, 1936, Moscardó noticed that the tensions, which had been mounting since the Popular Front was elected, had reached a breaking point. With rumors of a revolt in the south, Moscardó contacted a number of officers in Madrid who were in on the plot, and decided to head back to Toledo. Moscardó was only a colonel at the time, but as it was summer and many officers were away, he found himself to be the ranking officer in Toledo. When the uprising started on July 18, Moscardó and the other officers in Toledo were working to gather as many proto-Nationalists as possible to join them in the Alcázar because they were sure in this “impregnable fortress”⁵ could be easily defended. Civil Guards, a handful of local cadets (the rest had been scattered by the vacation), officers, and a group of eager Falangists joined Moscardó in the Alcázar; there, too, were hundreds of

⁴ The Oxford English Dictionary defines a myth to be both “A widespread but untrue or erroneous story or belief; a widely held misconception; a misrepresentation of the truth” and “A popular conception of a person or thing which exaggerates or idealizes the truth.” The term myth thus refers to a story that may have a basis in reality, but is incorrect as it has come to be represented. The difference between “myth” and “fiction” is that many believe a myth to be true, even though it is not.

⁵ The phrase is borrowed from Paul Preston. Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 57.

women and children, but not Moscardó's family. His wife and two of his four sons were left to fend for themselves in the city of Toledo. On July 22, when the government of Toledo officially sided with the Republicans, Moscardó and the other defenders of the Alcázar declared their support for the uprising. The local militias began attacking the Alcázar and the defenders of the fortress found themselves besieged.

On July 23, the phone rang in the Alcázar. Cándido Cabello, a local lawyer who sided with the Republicans, was calling to speak with Colonel José Moscardó. Cabello said to Moscardó, "You are responsible for all the crimes and everything else that is happening in Toledo. I give you ten minutes to surrender the Alcázar. If you don't, I'll shoot your son Luis who is standing here beside me." Colonel Moscardó responded that he believed Cabello, but, to make sure, Cabello put Luis on the phone. Luis Moscardó and his father had the following conversation:

Luis Moscardó – Papá.

Colonel Moscardó – What is happening, my boy?

Luis Moscardó – Nothing. They say there are going to shoot me if the Alcázar does not surrender.

Colonel Moscardó – Well, commend your soul to God, shout "*Viva España!*"⁶ and die like a hero.

Luis Moscardó – A very strong kiss, father.

Colonel Moscardó – A very strong kiss, son.

Colonel Moscardó (speaking to Cabello) – You might as well forget the period of grace you gave me. The Alcázar will never surrender.⁷

At this point, the Republicans shot Luis Moscardó with Colonel Moscardó listening on the other end of the phone.

The siege continued without major incident for a period of time. One day in late August, the defenders heard a radio broadcast which said that the Alcázar had

⁶ "Long live Spain!" One of the many phrases used to signify identification with the Nationalist cause, as the Nationalists considered themselves to be the only true Spaniards.

⁷ There are many slight variations to this dialogue. I have chosen to use the version that would later be repeated in the museum created at the Alcázar, as this version is the one that visitors to this *lieu de mémoire* receive. Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 173.

surrendered, leading them to fear that Nationalist troops would never come to their rescue. However, a few days later, a plane flew overhead and instead of dropping bombs, dropped food and an encouraging message from General Franco, who said that help was on its way. On September 26, 1936, the Army of Africa arrived. They drove the militias from town and officially liberated the Alcázar on September 27th. The next day, Francisco Franco arrived to pay his respects to the brave defenders of the Alcázar. Franco approached Moscardó, who saluted and then reported, “*Sin novedad en el Alcázar*” (“Nothing new to report in the Alcázar”). The siege was over.⁸

This version of the story is the Francoist approved one, found in every newspaper article, book, and movie about the subject created under Franco, with only minor variations from account to account. However, closer investigation reveals that not all the parties involved with the battle for Toledo agreed on the narrative, and that, given the climate, this narrative seems too convenient to have happened organically. Franco and his allies had much to gain from creating a story fraught with heroism and moral imperative. For this reason, the details of the siege were exaggerated. Herbert Southworth, who has worked to deconstruct Francoist mythology, says that, “Since the beginning, the legend of the Alcázar has been stained by fraud.”⁹ Alberto Reig Tapia agrees with this assessment; he notes that while the story is certainly not entirely false, neither is it entirely true:

It’s not that the siege of the Alcázar is a myth, a fable, a pure falsehood; rather, the story has been *idealized* to the extent that it has been converted into a myth – the same as the other side did with their own successes – and its true reality has

⁸ This is an amalgamation of many different versions, for the purpose of not getting lost in the details. See, for example: Cecil D. Eby, *The Siege of the Alcázar* (London: Bodley Head, 1966), D. Fernández Collado, *El Alcázar* (Bilbao, Spain: Editorial Nacional, 1939), Augusto Genina et al., *Sin novedad en el Alcázar* (Valladolid: Divisa Ediciones, 1998), Videorecording.

⁹ Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 163.

been manipulated and distorted by the ideology of the winners of the Civil War, who used the event for merely propagandistic ends.¹⁰

Investigating the propagandistic ends involved will therefore help explain the parts of the story that have been idealized, in Reig Tapia's terminology. These propagandistic ends are twofold: first, the Nationalists needed to justify diverting troops from the march on Madrid and, second, the Nationalists needed, in general, to legitimize their uprising against a popularly elected government. While there are many angles of the story that could be analyzed in depth, the death of Luis Moscardó was the defining moment of the Francoist version of the story,¹¹ and, as such, has been the focus of all subsequent stories about the Alcázar, including the museum created after the war; therefore, disproving the story of Luis Moscardó's death invalidates the historical integrity of the Francoist propaganda, which in turn exposes the lies propagated on the site at the Alcázar.

Why a Myth Was Needed

Franco's Army of Africa had started in Morocco, crossed the strait of Gibraltar, swung west to unite the Nationalist section of Spain with Portugal, enabling support to cross the western border, and then headed due east to Madrid to unite with General Mola's troops and take the capital city.¹² However, for some reason, General Franco

¹⁰ "No es que el asedio del Alcázar sea un mito, una fábula, una pura falsedad, sino que ha sido *idealizado* hasta haberlo convertido en mito – al igual que en la otra zona se hizo lo propio con sucesos similares – y, su verdadera realidad, ha sido manipulado y tergiversada por la ideología de los vencedores de la Guerra Civil que se sirvieron profusamente del suceso con fines meramente propagandísticos." Ibid., 152.

¹¹ According to Cecil Eby, "The details of Moscardó's conversation with his son are as well known to present-day Spaniards as Don Quixote's tilt at the windmills. Without question, this is the most widely publicized single episode of the Spanish Civil War." I think that it is likely that the bombing of Gernika was even more widely publicized (due to Picasso's painting *Guernica*), but it is certainly clear that the telephone call between Luis and his father was a very familiar episode. Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 73.

¹² de Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 48.

himself¹³ decided to detour south of Madrid and rescue the Alcázar from its siege.¹⁴ Later, Francoists gave many reasons to explain Franco's diversion of troops, but none of them seem sufficient to justify not attacking Madrid in September 1936. At the time, the city was poorly defended. One month later, when Franco's troops finally arrived, the first International Brigades had made it to the front¹⁵ and the militias had, after six months of fighting, become more organized and at least slightly better defenders of the city.¹⁶ Madrid was not taken by the Nationalists in 1936, and when it fell in 1939, it fell because the Nationalists controlled the rest of Spain and the defenders of Madrid had taken to fighting amongst themselves.¹⁷ Herbert Southworth, an American historian, looked at these facts and raised the question, why relieve the siege of the Alcázar with troops that could have been attacking Madrid? In response, Rafael Casas de la Vega, a Francoist scholar, answered that "lifting the siege produced a propagandistic effect with incalculable advantages for the nationalist band,"¹⁸ which is a very non-specific answer. In response, Alberto Reig Tapia retorts that:

All things considered, it is evident that the "liberation" of Madrid would have entailed an even greater propagandistic effect. We find ourselves in the middle of September 1936. The capital was without defenses, there is not yet an adequately consolidated army, structured and disciplined to handle large battles. What are the spiritual effects of those enclosed in the Alcázar compared with thousands of prisoners in Madrid who would have seen themselves free of the supposed "Marxist yoke" they suffered from, thus probably celebrating the end of the war?¹⁹

¹³ Most of the daily operations of the army had been delegated from Franco to the generals in the field. However, he personally issued the order to attack Toledo rather than advancing straight to Madrid. Ibid., 66.

¹⁴ Southworth, *El mito de la cruzada de Franco*, 63.

¹⁵ The International Brigades were the foreign volunteers who fought with the Republicans during the war. Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 90.

¹⁶ Ibid., 66.

¹⁷ Ibid., 156, 164-66.

¹⁸ Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 156.

¹⁹ "Con todo, es evidente que aún mayor efecto propagandístico habría supuesto la 'liberación' de Madrid. Nos encontramos bien mediado el mes de septiembre de 1936. La capital se encuentra sin defensas, no hay todavía un ejército debidamente consolidado, estructurado y disciplinado para poder

As Reig Tapia points out, choosing to march on Madrid rather than to liberate the Alcázar would have entailed an earlier end to the war, which would generally be seen as a better military choice.

Even Francoists at the time noted that Toledo was of little military importance; an article written in 1956, at the time of Moscardó's death, tries to explain why Moscardó was in Madrid in July 1936 and why there had been no plans made for an uprising in Toledo. The article states, "In the plans of the Movement,²⁰ Toledo is not included, without doubt because of its slight provisioning."²¹ Another article in the same newspaper, written two weeks earlier as part of a series commemorating the 17th anniversary of the end of the war, wrote, in the section on the battle of the Alcázar, that "from the moral point of view" rescuing the Alcázar instead of marching directly on Madrid "would have evident repercussions on the future."²² This language is deliberately vague, seeming to state that morally it was best to save 1,000 men, despite the fact that their salvation prolonged the war, causing more men to lose their lives. *ABC* is trying to imply that the liberation of the Alcázar and the Nationalist seizure of Toledo helped the war effort. Yet, the article published two weeks later states that Toledo had such slight military value that the leaders of the uprising had not bothered to include the city in their

afrontar grandes batallas. ¿Qué es a efectos espirituales los encerrados del Alcázar con los miles de presos madrileños que se hubieran visto así libres del pretendido 'yugo marxista' que padecían y probablemente habrían podido celebrar el final de la guerra?" Ibid.

²⁰ The word "Movement" here refers to the National Movement, the only political party under Franco, which was formed by uniting the Falange and the Carlists and adding the church and military to the group. This use of the term "Movement" for something pre-war is anachronistic (see Chapter 2 for more).

²¹ "Provisioning" here seems to mean lack of strategic importance. Toledo did, however, possess an arms factory, so it is unclear what exactly the author is trying to say. In the end, it seems to be that Toledo was not important in the minds of the Nationalists. Joaquín Arraras, "La estirpe de los Moscardó," *ABC (Madrid)*, 14 April 1956, Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 19.

²² Antonio G. Cavada, "En el XVII aniversario de la victoria de Franco y su ejército: algunas facetas de las operaciones realizadas en los treinta y dos meses que duró la lucha," *ABC (Madrid)*, 1 April 1956.

plans. So, the “repercussions” that the end of the siege had must have been something other than moral or military ones. In fact, while this is never said explicitly, the repercussions were not military but political – the increasing concentration of power in Franco’s hands after September 1936.²³ Or, as Jesús de Andrés and Jesús Cuéllar claim, the move to liberate the Alcázar was “as much a military error as it was a political success.”²⁴

Franco, ever the pragmatist, had abstained from committing himself to the rebellion until the last possible moment, leading his fellow generals to refer to him as “Miss Canary Islands.”²⁵ One of the plotters, General Sanjurjo, finally said they would rise up “with or without little Franco.”²⁶ Only through a series of coincidental accidents and very calculated (or incredibly lucky) maneuvering did Franco rise from uncommitted general in late June 1936 to head of the Spanish state by October 1, 1936. One of the principal generals, Sanjurjo, died in a plane crash on July 19, 1936, when he was on his way to Spain to join the uprising.²⁷ José Antonio Primo de Rivera,²⁸ the founder of the Falange, and thus a candidate for ideological, if not military, leadership of the new Spain, was, at the start of the war, in jail in Alicante, which was held by those loyal to the Republic. Franco knew this, yet he made no attempt to rescue José Antonio; when he was executed on November 20, 1936, Franco took control of the Falange apparatus, suppressing other ideologues, and turning the fascist party into a mass movement with

²³ Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 106.

²⁴ Jesús de Andrés and Jesús Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado de la guerra civil española* (Madrid: Susaeta Ediciones, 2005), 65-67.

²⁵ In summer 1936, Franco was stationed in the Canary Islands; he had to abandon his post there to get to Morocco and join the uprising. Jackson, *Concise History*, 43.

²⁶ Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 45.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 57, 59.

²⁸ Most Spaniards are known by their last name, but since José Antonio Primo de Rivera’s father is also well known, he has always been referred to by his first names – José Antonio not Primo de Rivera.

no particular ideology, designed to help Franco consolidate control of the Nationalist zone.²⁹ The church, it seems, was willing to support the Nationalists without trying to force one of their own into the position of head of state, and the Carlists, despite their regiments, the *réquetes*, were forced, by Franco, to incorporate their forces into the general army,³⁰ thus negating any leverage they may have had over the direction the country was to take during and after the Spanish Civil War. Thus, through a mix of accident and careful manipulation, the Nationalists went from a motley group led by a military *junta* (board) to a motley group led by one man, Francisco Franco.

But there were still other generals who would have challenged Franco for the title of *Caudillo*,³¹ and he had to handle public opinion as well. Franco, during the war and after, was a master of propagandistic manipulation (or he had advisors who were) and this is where the siege of the Alcázar returns to the story of Franco's consolidation of power in himself. If Franco was going to divert troops from the war effort, leaving Madrid to ready its defenses, it only made sense to do so if he would gain in the process. So, Franco made certain that the liberation of the Alcázar would be viewed as the result of his personal effort. To do so, he arranged for a plane³² to fly over the Alcázar and drop supplies.³³ There was not enough food contained in the aluminum containers to

²⁹ See Chapter 2 for more. de Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 71.

³⁰ Ibid., 71-72.

³¹ "Supreme leader"; the term is a reference to Medieval lords in Spain and was later adopted by Franco to show that not only was he the head of Spain but also that he was tied to Spain's imperial past. Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 39.

³² Lieutenant Count Max Hoyos, of the German Condor Legion, who would later serve during the bombing of Gernika (best known as *Guernica*, the painting by Picasso – see Chapter 4), earned prestige during the Spanish Civil War for successfully dropping crates of food into the center of the Alcázar in Toledo, effectively delivering the supplies directly to the defenders. It is, again ironic that at least some of the heroics attributed to Franco were carried out by German aviators. Russell Martin, *Picasso's War: The Destruction of Guernica and the Masterpiece that Changed the World* (New York: Dutton, 2002), 35.

³³ Of course, he may have just been making sure that the defenders know that help was on its way so that they would not surrender in desperation. However, Franco was a very astute politician, and it

sustain those living inside the fortress, but the delivery of fruit, milk, fish, ham, jam, and cocoa clearly lifted their spirits.³⁴ Accompanying the supplies was a letter from General Franco, wrapped in the red and yellow Monarchist flag. It said:

A greeting from this army to the brave defenders of the Alcázar! We are approaching; we shall relieve you. In the meantime, resist. Until this time comes, we will be able to help you little. Surmounting all obstacles, our columns are advancing, destroying resistance. *Viva España!* Long live the brave defenders of the Alcázar! / General Fr. Franco Bahamonde / August 22, 1936³⁵

Later events would show that it was more than just a message designed to prolong the siege until the army could come to the defender's rescue.

Franco's was not the only army advancing in the direction of the Alcázar, but he was the first general to alert the Alcázar that help was on its way, which enabled him to claim credit for the subsequent victory. On September 6, another container was dropped into the Alcázar, this time with a message from General Mola:

An embrace from our army for the brave defenders of the Alcázar! We are getting closer to you and we will rescue you; as you resist, we will send you some small help. All difficulties have been defeated; our columns advance, destroying resistance. Long live Spain! Long live the brave defenders of the Alcázar!³⁶

As Cecil Eby points out, the two messages were received very differently. Early in the siege, the Republican radio had falsely announced the defeat of the Alcázar,³⁷ and the

would be underestimating him to not assume that he was very deliberate in all the choices he made during the war.

³⁴ Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 116.

³⁵ Alberto Reig Tapia points out that in the museum at the Alcázar there are two messages that claim to have been dropped on the Alcázar on August 22, 1936, both signed by Franco. Eby attributes one to Franco, dropped on August 22, and the other to Mola, dropped on September 6. Despite the fact that Eby is not always the most reliable source, he cites *La epopeya del Alcázar de Toledo* as his source. The book may not be reliable, but it was written in consultation with Moscardó, and it therefore seems likely that the two messages were, in fact, dropped separately and combined into one composite message later. Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 169. Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 117.

³⁶ “¡Un abrazo de este Ejército a los bravos defensores del Alcázar! / Nos acercamos a vosotros vamos a socorreros, mientras resistir [sic] para ello os llevaremos pequeños auxilios. / Vencidas todas las dificultades avanzan nuestras columnas destruyendo resistencias. / ¡Viva España! ¡Vivan los bravos defensores del Alcázar!” Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 169. Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 150.

³⁷ Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 80.

defenders were concerned that they would never be rescued as a result. When Franco's message arrived, it thus assuaged their fears; Mola's message, on the other hand, did no such thing.³⁸ It came two weeks too late, for the defenders had already come to associate their salvation with Franco. In fact, Franco's message was so important that the date of its receipt became one of the four commemorated by the defenders, along with the start of the siege, the end of the siege, and the day of "final victory" (the end of the war).³⁹

General Mola was one of Franco's few competitors for control of the entire army,⁴⁰ and it is therefore key that the epic victory in Toledo was associated with Franco's name and not Mola's. In fact, on September 21, Franco and other generals attended a meeting at Salamanca in which it was decided that the *junta* would be replaced with a single leader. Despite the fact that Franco had promised the defenders in late August that help was on its way, it was not until this date that he decided to divert troops to liberate Toledo.⁴¹ One week later, the day after the Alcázar was liberated, Franco was named *Generalísimo* (Supreme General) of the Spanish armies. The next day – September 29 – Franco was named "head of the Spanish government"; he also visited the Alcázar for the first time since its liberation.⁴² It is no coincidence that the liberation of the Alcázar by Franco's forces immediately preceded his assumption of power. Rather, the

³⁸ Ibid., 150.

³⁹ Ibid., 244.

⁴⁰ According to Cecil Eby, at the beginning of the war, Mola was seen as the brains behind the uprising while Franco was perceived as its heart. His death in 1937 allowed Franco to be both the brains and the heart. Ibid., 29, Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 59.

⁴¹ Despite the fact that Paul Preston says unequivocally that it was on this date, and not earlier, that Franco decided to march on Toledo, Gabriel Jackson claims that Franco decided in early September to liberate the Alcázar. Neither of the two uses footnotes to prove his claims, so it is unclear who is correct. It is possible that they both are, if we assume that Franco had been considering liberating the Alcázar since mid-September but only finally committed his troops to this liberation when it served him politically. Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 66. Jackson, *Concise History*, 58.

⁴² Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 68, 70. *The Spirit of the Alcazar: Fifty Years of Change in a Spanish City* (Evanston, IL: Wombat Film & Video, 1986), Videorecording.

portrayal of the end of the siege increased Franco's importance among the generals sufficiently that he was named *Generalísimo*.⁴³

Propaganda which influenced public opinion in favor of Franco also helped the second goal – proving, both to Spaniards and to Spanish allies abroad, that the popularly elected government deserved to have been overthrown, as it was illegitimate. The way that Franco chose to do this was by claiming that the Popular Front government was immoral and influenced by foreign interests, and therefore, a truly Spanish crusade had to be led against it.⁴⁴ The Francoist version of the siege thus contains many epic images, designed to demonize the Republicans and idealize the Nationalists.⁴⁵ For example, the militias take advantage of an agreement honored by the Nationalists to kill a cadet and then set off two bombs in the basement of the Alcázar, despite the presence of hundreds of women and children there, while the Nationalists lived like stoics, sacrificing their desires for the good of the whole.⁴⁶ And, of course, the militias were so evil as to kill an innocent boy, Luis Moscardó, while the Nationalists allowed the boy to die rather than risk the deaths of all the defenders if they should surrender. All of this was designed to show that the true Spanish character, heroic and righteous, was embodied by the Nationalists who were fighting to liberate Spain from its unholy rulers.

⁴³ An *ABC* article written shortly after Franco became *Generalísimo* implies, among other things, that it was the liberation of the Alcázar that led him to receive this title. It is important to clarify that the Alcázar had very little intrinsic military value, and its liberation, in itself, was not, therefore, a significantly monumental feat to merit Franco's promotion. Rather, the events were represented in such a way that their importance was increased, allowing the already successful and influential Franco to take control of the entire Nationalist war effort. As Cecil Eby puts it, "No other Spanish general was in a position to compete with 'the Saviour of the Alcázar.'" Cavada, "XVII aniversario de la victoria de Franco y su ejército," 228, Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*.

⁴⁴ Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 66.

⁴⁵ A heroic narrative was especially necessary in the fall of 1936, as the massacre committed by the Army of Africa in Badajoz had horrified the public. One way to distract attention from Badajoz was to disseminate the heroic story of the defenders of the Alcázar. de Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 66, Southworth, *El mito de la cruzada de Franco*, 63.

⁴⁶ Fernández Collado, *El Alcázar*.

All of this could just be a propagandistic spin on a true series of events. What makes this highly improbable, however, is the fact that in sacrificing his son to defend the fortress, Colonel Moscardó was repeating the gesture of Guzmán *el Bueno* (Guzmán the Good). During the Reconquest, Guzmán *el Bueno* was defending a fortress in Tarifa, the southernmost point of Spain, when the Moors captured his son and threatened to kill him if Guzmán did not surrender. He refused, the son was killed, and in the end the Christians triumphed over the Moors, expelling them from the peninsula.⁴⁷ Given the fact that the story of Guzmán *el Bueno* and Colonel Moscardó follow the exact same pattern, it seems more likely that the story was fabricated than that it actually happened. It is also incredibly suspicious that Moscardó's wife's name was María Guzmán, and, therefore, following the Spanish custom of naming, Luis Moscardó's full name was *Luis Moscardó Guzmán*.⁴⁸ Either this is a highly beneficial coincidence for the Francoist propagandists, or else someone created (or embellished) a story which would turn José Moscardó into a "new Guzmán el Bueno," perhaps solely based on the simple fact that Luis Moscardó Guzmán died during the siege.⁴⁹ Moscardó could be seen as just a colonel who ordered a militarily foolish stand, which did not contribute to the war effort. Or, he could be a hero, encapsulating the essence of the Spanish crusade against foreign infidels.⁵⁰ And, as the latter, Franco became justified in both diverting troops away from

⁴⁷ Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 169.

⁴⁸ At times Moscardó's children were referred to by the last name Moscardó Guzman; other times they were Moscardó de Guzman (Moscardó of Guzman). Both versions are culturally standard, so I have chosen to agree with Manuel Aznar and refer to the son as Luis Moscardó Guzman. Manuel Aznar, *The Alcazar Will Not Surrender! A Reply to Certain Pages of "The Yoke and the Arrows"* (New York: [Friends of Spain], 1957), 15.

⁴⁹ Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 169.

⁵⁰ When Herbert Southworth discusses the similarities between the death of Luis Moscardó and the story of Guzmán el Bueno he states, parenthetically, that the only difference is that Guzmán "fought against the enemies of Spain, while Moscardó killed his own countrymen," which is true from one perspective, but given the fact that Franco and the Nationalists, especially during the war and the immediate postwar years, cast the Civil War as a national, Spanish crusade against the corruption

the fight in Madrid and leading an uprising against an internationally recognized government. Thus, rather than being seen as a foolish military choice, liberating the siege of the Alcázar comes to fit into a long, continuous narrative of Spanish history.⁵¹ What, then, really happened at the Alcázar?

Deconstructing the Myth?

The problem with any attempt to try to de-idealize the traditional version of the death of Luis Moscardó (and the story of the rest of the siege) is that public discourse was censored during so many years in Spain, leaving gaps in the information recorded. Numerous attempts, at first by foreigners and later by Spaniards, have been made to separate history from myth in the events at the Alcázar; each of these attempts, in turn, has been questioned by those loyal to the traditional, Nationalist version. In the end, neither side has been able to create a definitive model accepted by all; there are some points of debate that may never be resolved, given the information available.

brought by foreigners, the difference between the Reconquest and the Spanish Civil War is significantly reduced. Southworth, *El mito de la cruzada de Franco*, 53.

⁵¹ One would be remiss not to note here the other famous siege of Spanish history – Numancia. For almost two decades, the local Numantines fought off the invading Romans, despite inferior numbers. They were finally forced to surrender, in 131 CE, after being starved nearly to death in a siege of their city. The story is a very familiar one to Spaniards, especially due to the Cervantes play *La Numancia* about the siege and subsequent mass suicide of the Numantines. This play continued to be performed and was performed during the Spanish Civil War. During the war, a Nationalist unit was named the Numantine Regiment. In addition, the defenders of the Alcázar came to refer to themselves as the New Numantines in *El Alcázar*, the newspaper produced inside the fortress during the siege. It has also not escaped the notice of Francoist commentators that Moscardó, like the Christian God, sacrificed his son for the good of others. Hymen Alpern, José Martel, and Leonard Mades, *Diez comedias del Siglo de Oro: An Annotated Omnibus of Ten Complete Plays by the Most Representative Spanish Dramatists of the Golden Age*, 2nd ed. (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1985), 1-3, Jesús de Andrés, "Las estatuas de Franco, la memoria del franquismo y la transición política española," *Historia y política: Ideas, procesos, y movimientos sociales*, no. 12, 169, Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 131, Fernando Quesada Sanz, "El ejército romano: La conquista y el control de Hispania," in *Aproximación a la historia militar de España* ([Madrid]: Ministerio de Defensa, Secretaría General Técnica, 2006), 53, Southworth, *El mito de la cruzada de Franco*, 87.

One of the first attempts to question the traditional narrative can be found in Herbert Matthews' book, *The Yoke and the Arrows*. While the scope of his research was limited by censorship, Matthews did the best he could to find Republicans (two of them, living in exile) who might be able to contradict the Nationalist version of events, which he found to be "too good to be true." After relating the traditional version, Matthews continues, "Let us grant the sentiment, which is true enough, but what about the story?"⁵² After stating some facts which have since been proved untrue,⁵³ Matthews goes on to point out that even if it is not the case that the telephone lines were cut, and the phone call actually did take place, it is unlikely that it took place as related by the Francoists:

The absurdity of using this one hostage to achieve the surrender of the Alcázar ought also to be noted. Even if the story were true and even if he wanted to yield, Colonel Moscardó would have been powerless to do so with all the other officers present who knew that their lives would be forfeit if they were captured. The Moscardó story presupposes a naiveté and stupidity on the part of the Loyalists which are simply incredible.⁵⁴

Matthews makes a valid point, claiming that refusing to surrender was the only option available to Moscardó at the time, and therefore does not constitute a heroic sacrifice as it was represented. Then, trying to explain the origin of the story, Matthews points out the parallels between Moscardó and Guzmán *el Bueno*. He concludes, saying,

It is, perhaps, a shame to destroy a wonderful story like that of the Alcázar, but I firmly believe history is going to do so as surely as it did with the myth of George Washington and the cherry tree.⁵⁵

⁵² Herbert Lionel Matthews, *The Yoke and the Arrows: A Report on Spain* (New York: G. Braziller, 1957), 198.

⁵³ Matthews listed Luis' age as 19, not 24, and said that he was killed in the battle in the Cuartel de la Montaña (Madrid) on July 19, 1936. It is true that a man named Luis Moscardó was listed among the names of those who had been in the fortress and were presumed dead after it was stormed by street mobs. Luis Quintanilla reports this story in his book on the topic and is most likely Matthews' source. Ibid., 198-99, Luis Quintanilla, *Los rehenes del Alcázar de Toledo: Contribución a la historia de la guerra civil española* (Paris: Ruedo Ibérico, 1967), 49.

⁵⁴ Matthews, *The Yoke and the Arrows*, 199-200.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 201.

The parallel between George Washington and the Alcázar is well-thought out – both show ideals of character⁵⁶ in situations that seems to not fit logically with human nature. Matthews shows that the narrative is, in his words, “too good to be true.”

Not long after the publication of this book, Manuel Aznar, the Francoist historian par excellence (despite being a journalist by training), wrote a response to Matthews. In *The Alcázar Will Not Surrender!*, Aznar tries to show that Matthews is a biased ideologue who repeats only the information that suits him.⁵⁷ Aznar includes a number of photocopied documents – Luis Moscardó’s birth certificate, affidavits, newspapers articles, etc. – to prove his points.⁵⁸ Manuel Aznar does a very thorough job of rebutting Matthews’ factual points, with the most convincing evidence mustered being a copy of the Operations Diary of the Military Command of Toledo to prove that a telephone call took place on July 23. The paragraph is quoted in its entirety by Aznar:

⁵⁶ In the words of Michael Richards, the story of the siege was designed to “exemplif[y] the steadfastness, virility and sense of sacrifice inherent to Spanish nationalist identity.” Richards, “From War Culture to Civil Society,” 97.

⁵⁷ One odd example of this is a line in which Aznar says, “... a journalist who interprets the sending of the Prado Museum collection to France as a Red effort to save the paintings from destruction, has not taken the trouble to read the letters and memoirs of two famous painters: Ignacio de Zuloaga and José María Sert.” I cannot claim to be an expert on the subject, nor have I read the letters and memoirs references by Aznar, but information published after the end of the Francoist dictatorship sees the movement of art from Madrid’s Prado Museum to Valencia and then on to Geneva as the salvation of the works, given that the building was shelled numerous times during the war. Therefore, it seems that Aznar is as biased as he shows Matthews to be. See, for example, Juan Pablo Fusi Aizpurúa, “La cultura,” in *Franquismo: el juicio de la historia*, ed. José Luis García Delgado (Madrid: Ediciones Temas de Hoy, 2000), 178, Matthews, *The Yoke and the Arrows*, 191.

⁵⁸ Aznar even includes testimony from a man who had been a member of the Republican militias, Bernardino García Rojo, to show that the information he is conveying is not inherently Francoist. However, the testimony was produced on November 26, 1940 in the Provincial Prison of Toledo, which makes the information problematic. In 1940, the jails were overcrowded and the Francoist authorities had to get rid of many prisoners, so they tended to shorten sentences, especially in cases where the prisoner offered valuable information. In addition, torture was routine in treatment of prisoners. It is at least possible that García Rojo lied to be freed from prison, and even if this is not the case, nothing that García Rojo said under these circumstances can be considered authentic. Aznar, *The Alcázar Will Not Surrender!*, 34-36, Michael Richards, *A Time of Silence: Civil War and the Culture of Repression in Franco's Spain, 1936-1945*, ed. Jay M. Winter, *Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

At 10 AM the Chief of the Militias called, by telephone, the Military Commander [Moscardó], letting him know that he had in his power [Moscardó's] son, and that he would have him shot if in 10 minutes we did not surrender. So that we would see that this was the truth, he put his son on the line, who, with great tranquility, told his father that nothing was going to happen, which was followed by an exchange between father and son of farewell sentences displaying a great patriotism and religious fervor. Upon speaking to the Chief of the Militias, the Military Colonel said that he could save himself the promised 10 minutes for his son's execution, because the Alcázar would not surrender under any circumstances.⁵⁹

While this account does not explain the origin of the oft-repeated dialogue, Aznar claims that the dialogue must be free of error because Moscardó himself confirmed it “a thousand times.”⁶⁰ Aznar also goes on at length about the operations of phone lines, explaining that one can disconnect a line at the central exchange and then reconnect it at will, thus explaining how the line could be “cut” and still function.⁶¹ To explain the use of loudspeakers later in the conflict, Aznar says that they were not to replace the function earlier played by the telephones: “they were used not so much for communication purposes but for propaganda to lower the morale of the garrison.”⁶² In addition, Aznar corrects a number of Matthews' other errors, many in subjects that are no longer under debate.⁶³

⁵⁹ “A la diez horas, el jefe de las milicias llamó al comandante militar, notificándole que tenía en su poder un hijo suyo y que le mandaría fusilar si antes de diez minutos no nos rendíamos, y para que viese era verdad, se ponía el hijo al aparato, el cual, con gran tranquilidad, dijo a su padre que no ocurría nada, cambiándose entre padre e hijo frases de despedida de un gran patriotismo y fervor religioso. Al ponerse al habla el comandante militar con el jefe de las milicias, le dijo que podía ahorrarse los diez minutos de plazo que le había dado para el fusilamiento de su hijo, ya que de ninguna manera se rendiría el Alcázar.” Aznar, *The Alcazar Will Not Surrender!*, 19.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 32.

⁶¹ Ibid., 19, 21.

⁶² Ibid., 21.

⁶³ Matthews said, for example, that the first print source that told the story of Luis' death was published two months after the end of the siege, which is not true. The first print source, as Aznar points out, was in *ABC Sevilla* on September 30, 1936, a fact which no reputable source continues to debate. This is but one of many careless errors found in Matthews' book that Aznar corrects. Ibid., 23-26.

However, while Aznar does a very good job of mustering information to correct Matthews' various errors, he does not succeed in completely proving that the "traditional version" is completely factual. His best piece of evidence, the paragraph from the Operations Diary, appears without any information as to where Aznar found it. This is perhaps because Aznar is a journalist by training, but to meet the standards of a historian, Aznar would need to have included information enabling the next investigator to find this document. In addition, he fails to explain how the dialogue goes from one of "great fervor" to a highly scripted dialogue as later repeated. It is hard to believe that Moscardó remembers the dialogue exactly as it happened; of course, one might claim that the words are representative, but the fact that every source on the subject has the same exact wording might convince the average Spaniard that these words were transcribed at the time of their utterance, which is not the case. Finally, Aznar admits, as most reputable Francoists historians have had to, that Luis Moscardó died on August 23, a full month after the telephone call.⁶⁴ This takes away from the heroic, sacrificial nature of the phone call, as the threat was never carried out.⁶⁵ Aznar does claim that Luis Moscardó was arrested because he was recognized as being Colonel Moscardó's son,⁶⁶ thus linking his death to his father's actions, but not to the telephone call. In general, therefore, while Aznar succeeds in correcting some of Matthews' factual points, he has not resolved the debate over what actually happened on July 23, 1936. Aznar has missed (or intentionally avoided) the central point of Matthews' arguments, that the telephone call did not happen as reported by the Francoists and that, therefore, the story is not nearly as heroic as it has been represented.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 38.

⁶⁵ See, for example, the articles published in *ABC Sevilla* or the film *Sin Novedad en el Alcázar*. Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 174. Genina et al., *Sin novedad en el Alcázar*.

⁶⁶ Aznar, *The Alcazar Will Not Surrender!*, 43.

Herbert Matthews himself never responded in published form to Aznar's critiques of his book,⁶⁷ but other critics of Franco have. One such is Herbert Southworth, who takes up the debate in his book, *El mito de la cruzada de Franco*.⁶⁸ While it is certainly true that Southworth is ideologically inclined to agree with the Republican side of the conflict,⁶⁹ he was a trained historian and, compared to many other authors dealing with this subject, does an exceptional job of not repeating patently false information,⁷⁰ a sign of his impartiality. And, unlike earlier accounts published in Spain, Southworth's work was not subject to any censorship.

⁶⁷ This is perhaps because he had made so many enormous factual errors in *The Yoke and the Arrows*, but one must wonder why he never defended the other, more broad points about the nature of the events. At some point between the publication of *The Yoke and the Arrows* and 1960, Matthews seems to have changed his opinion of the events, as he wrote a letter to Señora María Guzmán de Moscardó, the widow of José and mother of Luis, stating that while, at the time, he critiqued the Francoist version in good faith, he has come to realize that he was wrong. Alfonso Bullón de Mendoza and Luis E. Togores, "El Alcázar de Toledo: final de una polémica," in *La Guerra Civil española: sesenta años después*, ed. Miguel Alonso Baquer (Madrid: Editorial Actas, 1999), 88.

⁶⁸ Herbert Southworth is one of a number of authors to have attempted to disprove the traditional version, as did Luis Quintanilla, whose book *Los rehenes del Alcázar*, was published by Ruedo Ibérico, the same publishing house that published Southworth's book and would publish Ian Gibson's work on the death of Lorca (see Chapter 3). I have chosen Southworth because he is a trained historian, has done much more research than some of the other authors (Matthews, for example) and uses logic to prove his points much more definitively than Quintanilla, for example. Quintanilla, *Los rehenes del Alcázar de Toledo*.

⁶⁹ "Si en cualquier conflicto degenerado en guerra no se puede asegurar que una sola de las partes tiene la razón, en el caso de la última guerra de España la razón estaba en absoluto del lado del gobierno legal." Ibid., 4.

⁷⁰ One could write a dissertation on all the false (or misleading) information used in accounts of the Alcázar. Matthews, Aznar, Quintanilla, Bullón de Mendoza and Togores, and Eby all have moments of blatant falsehoods included in their books, and even Reig Tapia (generally reliable) fails to state his points in logical order, making it hard for the reader to understand the facts. Of course, of all these authors, only Southworth and the team of Bullón de Mendoza and Togores are historians by training. However, Bullón de Mendoza's writings indicate that he did not specialize in the history of the Spanish Civil War until the publication of *Final de una polémica* and Togores' website seems to indicate that while he has studied the Alcázar in some detail, his specialization is Spanish-colonial relations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In addition, Bullón de Mendoza and Togores have organized conferences in which speakers, including Pío Moa and César Vidal, have talked about such subjects as the myth of the Republican legality, the role of Freemasons in the Spanish Civil War, the "Bermuda triangle" formed by three Republican leaders (Largo Caballero, Indalecio Prieto, and Juan Negrín – he seems to be implying that they are a void, but it is unclear what this phrase means), "repression and benevolence" (related to postwar Spain), the great poet Roy Campbell, Nationalist heroes and martyrs, Republican aerial bombing in the rearguard (but nothing on comparable Nationalist bombings), etc., all highly skewed and problematic topics to discuss seriously (see: http://www.uch.ceu.es/principal/congreso_republica/documentos/programa.pdf). While this does

Like all authors trying to determine the facts of the telephone call and Luis' death, Southworth is limited by the skewed information available. So he does his best to sift through the information available and try to show the contradictions inherent in the Nationalist version, enabling him to ascertain what most probably happened. Southworth does get involved in the debate over the telephone lines, but he does not go so far as to say that they were cut before 10 AM on July 23, 1936. Rather, he points out that there are no more telephone calls noted after that time, and that all subsequent conversations happen via loudspeakers, even though these conversations were notoriously hard to understand and communication would have functioned much better over the phone.⁷¹ Thus, Southworth points out that Aznar's version of a disconnected line does not make sense, given that the militias never chose to reconnect the line after July 23, even when it might have been useful to do so.

The most effective points that Southworth makes are about the actual circumstances surrounding Luis Moscardó's death. First, he cites the book *El sitio del Alcázar*, written by Joaquín Arrarás and L. Jordana de Pozas in 1937.⁷² They wrote the following about the death of Luis Moscardó:

In those days a few Nationalist planes had flown over Toledo, attacking military targets. The militias were so upset by the sight, that, provoked by the attack and unable to respond with a military offensive, they decided to take their revenge on the prisoners. Therefore, they went to the jail and conducted what they called a 'saca',⁷³ which consisted of gathering forty detainees, the most important, and taking them to the Tránsito Synagogue and to some alleys to be executed.

not discredit their work, it does seem to indicate that Southworth is the best informed on the subject. (See also Bullón de Mendoza's website – <http://universidades.universia.es/rectores/cv/alfonso-bullon-uch-ceu.pdf> – and Togores' – <http://gmceu.ceu.es/Investigacion/Profesores.aspx>).

⁷¹ Southworth, *El mito de la cruzada de Franco*, 55-56.

⁷² Published in 1937, this book precedes to most other bound versions of the siege. It was also published in Zaragoza, in the Nationalist zone, thus implying that, even after the war, the book would continue to be read by Francoists. I cannot claim that Manuel Aznar would have read this book, but if he is really as thorough a researcher as he claims to be in *The Alcázar Will Never Surrender*, he should have read this book.

⁷³ The Spanish Word "saca" means a taking out or a removal.

Among the condemned was Luis Moscardó... The massacre of the hostages took place on the 14th of August.⁷⁴

While the date August 14 is now generally considered inaccurate, the rest of the information seems likely, especially as this version of Luis' death is confirmed by one of Moscardó's aides who was present during the siege. Commander B. Gómez Oliveros, veteran of the siege of the Alcázar, and later General Moscardó's biographer, wrote that Luis Moscardó was killed on August 23 as part of "a reprisal for a bombing."⁷⁵ In Southworth's extended quotation from this autobiography, there is no mention of the telephone call in the same paragraph as Luis' death, implying that General Moscardó himself did not feel that the two events were connected. In fact, Manuel Aznar was aware of this book, and used other parts of it to refute Matthews' assertions. However, he conveniently ignored Gómez Oliveros' interpretation of how Luis died, one of Aznar's many "sins of omission."⁷⁶

That the telephone call (if it happened) and Luis' death were unrelated also helps make sense of an illogical situation that Southworth draws attention to: If the threat was to be carried out, and the telephone line was not cut (which is what Aznar claims), why did the militias not try the threat again? They had nothing to lose, so why hold Luis for one month, letting the defenders think they were soft, and then execute him on August

⁷⁴ "Por aquellas días habían volado unos aviones nacionales sobre Toledo, que atacaron objetivos militares; tan mal les sentó la vista a los milicianos, que, encolerizados por aquel ataque e incapaces a responder con una reacción ofensiva decidieron tomar venganza en los prisioneros, y así fueron a la cárcel, de donde hicieron la que ellos denominaban 'saca,' que consistió en reunir a más de cuarenta detenidos, los más significados, a los que condujeron a la Sinagoga del Tránsito y a algunos callejones para ser fusilados. Entre los condenados figuraba Luis Moscardó... La matanza de los rehenes tuvo lugar el 14 de agosto." Southworth, *El mito de la cruzada de Franco*, 52.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 53.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

23, without trying to use him as bait again? Even if the phone lines had been cut, this could have been attempted over the loud speakers.⁷⁷

All of these points made by Southworth are convincingly logical, as again when he shows how Manuel Aznar, in the volume *Historia militar de la Guerra de España*, obscures the time elapsed between the telephone call and Luis' death in an attempt to link the two events. Manuel Aznar, who views himself as a respected academic, cannot claim, like the most vehement Francoists, that Luis Moscardó was killed the same day as the telephone call, but admitting this "delay of one month, as Franco's propagandists recognized, damages the artistic symmetry of the story."⁷⁸ Therefore, Aznar decides to be less specific about dates, using the phrases "a few days later" and "a short time later" to de-emphasize the full month that passed between the threat and Luis' death; he also uses the phrase "and so the sinister threat of the chief of the militias was carried out," attempting to create causality in two unlinked events.⁷⁹ In conclusion, Southworth has demonstrated that, "Even if the telephone conversation took place as it is related, or with less dramatic words, the artificial story propagated by the rebels was falsified, as his execution is not related to that phone conversation."⁸⁰ Southworth does not believe that the entire story is false, but he attempts to make it indisputably clear to the public that the traditional version of the story is, at best, exaggerated or, at worst, entirely fabricated.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Ibid., 54.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 50.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 52.

⁸⁰ "... incluso aunque la conversación telefónica haya tenido lugar efectivamente, o, con palabras menos dramáticas, el artificio relato propagada por los rebeldes, está falseado, ya que la ejecución de aquél no guarda relación alguna con dicha conversación telefónica." Ibid., 62.

⁸¹ Southworth has a lot more to say to prove his points, but I have had to stick to just the parts about the death of Luis Moscardó. Interested readers who need more convincing should read the rest of what he has to say in *El mito de la cruzada de Franco*, which addresses all kinds of Francoist myths that have been and continue to be in print.

Later Francoist versions have not been able to disprove Southworth's criticism of the traditional version of the story. In their incorrectly titled book, *El Alcázar de Toledo: Final de una polémica* (The Alcázar of Toledo: End of a Polemic), Alfonso Bullón de Mendoza y Luis E. Togores,⁸² merely repeat Aznar's criticisms of Matthews,⁸³ but add no new information to explain what actually happened. Unlike Aznar, however, they do address the comments from the likes of Matthews and Southworth that reevaluating the traditional Alcázar narrative changes the politics of the Spanish Civil War. They say:

The Alcázar heroically resisted a siege that lasted more than two months, but it is not the case that because of this is the Nationalist cause any more or any less justified, nor is it better or worse, and the same is true of the Republican cause. Therefore, trying to deface events that, in themselves, lack political importance, we must ask ourselves what some authors would do with questions that could affect our perceptions of the past.⁸⁴

This statement profoundly misinterprets the issue at hand. While it is true that the siege of the Alcázar was not militarily important, it has political significance. Whether the story was invented or completely true, it was used to glorify the Nationalist effort and Francisco Franco. While it is not the case, as Bullón de Mendoza and Togores claim, that

⁸² I found this source in its abridged form in a compilation called *La guerra civil española: Sesenta años después*, a thoroughly Francoist collection. It also includes a chapter on Gernika by a Spanish officer (not even an officer who is also an academic) that tries to place the bombing of Gernika in a military context, thus justifying it. It makes no reference to the unnecessarily devastating nature of the bombing, ignores the fact that bombers made multiple attacks on the town over the course of three hours, and states the military "objectives" without giving any explanation as to why those objectives were not reached (see Chapter 4). This seems typical of the "historian" who finds himself on shaky ground – give lots of facts and numbers, and hope that the public doesn't realize that he is not addressing the real issues. It is therefore hard to find anything published in this volume to be as credible as the works of established historians with proper training, but neither can such writers be completely discounted. Miguel Alonso Baquer, *La Guerra Civil española: sesenta años después* (Madrid: Editorial Actas, 1999).

⁸³ Bullón de Mendoza and Togores, "Final de una polémica," 84.

⁸⁴ "El Alcázar resistió heroicamente un sitio de más de dos meses, pero no por ello la causa nacional es ni más ni menos justificable, ni mejor ni peor, e igual ocurre con la republicana. Por tanto, cuando se trata de desfigurar hechos que en sí mismos carecen de significación política, no podemos menos de preguntarnos con horror qué habrán hecho algunos autores en las cuestiones que sí pueden afectar a nuestra percepción del pasado." Ibid., 122-23.

altering the story of the Alcázar makes the Nationalists look “bad,”⁸⁵ the story as it is makes the Nationalists look good, which is an issue that can “affect” Spanish “perceptions of the past.”

Finally, to address the fact that reputable historians such as Paul Preston have decided to disbelieve that the Francoist narrative is completely true, Bullón de Mendoza and Togores say the following about the revised version⁸⁶ of the events at the Alcázar, “We are dealing, therefore, with a version of events that has not caught on among the majority of the population, although it has achieved a certain echo in the academic world.”⁸⁷ First, it is rather odd for two academics to imply that other academics, including those of such stature as Paul Preston who have done extensive research on the topic,⁸⁸ do not understand the subject as well as the general populace. Second, the sheer volume of misinformation surrounding the Alcázar is such that those who have not fully considered the topic are unlikely to have read all the different interpretations of what happened, thus making them far less qualified than Paul Preston is to decide what actually happened. Finally, especially in Spain, the Alcázar siege is one of the most often repeated stories from the Spanish Civil War, and it is therefore highly unlikely that the general population would accept a revision of a legend that they believe to be rooted in truth.⁸⁹ Bullón de Mendoza and Togores have strayed from the conventions of writing

⁸⁵ Ibid., 122.

⁸⁶ “Revised version” may not be the correct term to use here, as those who have questioned the Francoist narrative have been unable to arrive to a cohesive alternative. However, most of these historians would agree that the story of the Alcázar was exaggerated for propagandistic purposes, and that the telephone call is one of these exaggerations.

⁸⁷ “Se trata, por tanto, de una versión que aunque no ha conseguido excesivo crédito entre la mayoría de la población, sí ha logrado un cierto eco en el mundo académico.” Bullón de Mendoza and Togores, “Final de una polémica,” 122.

⁸⁸ Comparing their publication history, Preston has certainly done much more research on the subject than Bullón de Mendoza and Togores combined.

⁸⁹ To illustrate this point, one only need look at “Toponimia franquista en las calles de Madrid.” Found on a Spanish website that advocates the return to a republic, the document catalogues and

history in assuming that the Spanish population is better informed than an authority on the subject; it is therefore very hard to believe anything that they say.

Neither, however, can the legend be dismissed. It has shown incredible staying power in the Spanish psyche, and, in the absence of information that would definitively prove that the story was either entirely invented or deliberately exaggerated for political gain, it seems unlikely that anyone will ever be able to convince the majority of the population that the story of the Alcázar is a highly poetic myth, not the absolute truth. Even a well-written logical account, such as Southworth's, has done little to prevent Franco's supporters from perpetuating the fiction. This is due, at least in part, to the physical reminders of the myth. The Alcázar itself has been turned into a shrine to the events that took place during the siege and the ensuing Francoist victory. The building has been, and remains, one of the most visible and best known sources of the myth's propagation.

“The Glorious Remains”

Not only was the Alcázar instantly converted into a myth – it was also instantly converted into a *lieu de mémoire*. When Franco arrived on the scene on September 29, 1936, one day after the end of the siege, he restaged the event for film so it could be transmitted around Spain and across the world, aiding Francoist propaganda.⁹⁰ In the months following the end of the siege, a deliberate choice was made by the Francoist

explains all the streets in Madrid whose names relate to the Spanish Civil War. In the explanation of Calle General Moscardó, the document states that while defending the Alcázar of Toledo he allowed his son to be killed rather than surrender the fortress. The document then includes the date July 23, 1936 in parentheses, making it unclear if they are referring to the date of Moscardó's refusal to surrender or the son's death or both. Thus, if even a document that intends to question the Francoist influences in street naming cannot question the story of the Alcázar, it is hard to argue that the Spanish population is able to question the truth of the legend. See: http://www.nodo50.org/foroporlamemoria/simbolos_franquistas/00164_callesfranquistas.pdf

⁹⁰ Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 70.

authorities not to reconstruct the Alcázar,⁹¹ leaving it as a monument to the destruction inflicted by the “Red horde.”⁹² The goal was to turn the Alcázar into a permanent site of memory for Spanish society.⁹³ To serve this goal, parts of the building were converted into a museum.⁹⁴ The only major change to the outside of the fortress was the addition of a metal cross, in honor of the fallen, on the west façade of the Alcázar.⁹⁵ In addition, the area immediately surrounding Toledo was redesigned to facilitate pedestrian and vehicle traffic to the fortress, a non-essential project that was nonetheless carried out immediately.⁹⁶ Given the enormous number of reconstruction projects that were needed after the war, it is indeed notable that Toledo was addressed as early as 1940, no doubt due to the city’s symbolic weight.⁹⁷

The site, complete with authentic rubble acting as a ramp to enter the building, became an obligatory stop for high-profile tourists.⁹⁸ Toledo, seen as the cradle of Catholicism in Spain, was a key part of the image that Franco wanted to portray to

⁹¹ To serve the original function of academy, a new building was built across the Tagus River. *El Alcázar de Toledo: Palacio y Biblioteca. Un proyecto cultural para el siglo 21, Imágenes y Palabras*; 27 (Toledo: Junta de Comunidades de Castilla-La Mancha, 1998), 61.

⁹² The same was done at Belchite, a small town in Aragón. During the war, the town was mostly destroyed by Republican troops; after the war, the remaining residents were moved to a new town – Belchite Nueva – while old Belchite was left as a reminder of the “futile destruction wrought by communism.” Next to the destroyed town was a new monument to those who had “Fallen for God and the *Patria*.” Richards, “From War Culture to Civil Society,” 105-06.

⁹³ *Palacio y Biblioteca*, 61, 71.

⁹⁴ I have not found definitive information as to what this museum did and did not contain at any given moment between 1936 and 1961. The following descriptions of rooms and their contents must be seen as representative of what the visitor might have experienced. I also have very little information on the period 1986 to 1997; I am willing to hazard a guess, based on my conversations with Professor Jesús de Andrés (specialist in Francoist iconography) and the information included in Alberto Reig Tapia’s book, *Memoria de la guerra civil: Los mitos de la tribu*, that little changed during this period, but I cannot be certain.

⁹⁵ *Palacio y Biblioteca*, 71.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 70-71.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 70.

⁹⁸ Despite the fact that the site was, for all intents and purposes, mostly ruins that one could sneak into (as Cecil Eby did when he was researching the subject), there were guides and guards during the day. Entrance cost money, and there were guest books to be signed. Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 253.

visitors, and the Alcázar was, as such, the most important stop on any tour of Toledo.⁹⁹ In fact, a guest book designed for high-profile visitors was kept, with Francisco Franco himself signing the first entry in the book. Other well-known signatories include the king of England, Eva Perón, Marshal Pétain, King Abdullah of Jordan, the president of Lebanon, and the regent of Iraq, just a few of the countless “heads of state, cardinals, ambassadors, officers, poets, and famous writers” who signed in “Spanish, English, French, Portuguese, German, Italian, Japanese, Chinese, Arabic, etc,” after coming from “the four corners of the world” to “satisfy” their curiosity and their “fervent and almost religious yearning to personally know the superb stage where the epic took place.”¹⁰⁰ The full content of the messages from these visitors has not been published, but an article in the newspaper *ABC* printed the comments of some of the high-profile Spanish visitors to the site. Two of them who signed the book made reference to the Guzmán-esque quality of Moscardó’s sacrifice. Doctor Plá y Daniel, the Bishop of Salamanca and Primate of Spain, wrote of the new Guzmán *el Bueno*, “whose dialogue with his son shall remain immortal.”¹⁰¹ In a similar vein, Don Julio Casares, perpetual secretary of the Spanish Royal Academy, referred to Moscardó as the “*el mejor Guzmán entre los Buenos*” – the best Guzmán among the Good.¹⁰² These celebrities were not, however, the only visitors to the site in the early years of the dictatorship – perhaps as many as three

⁹⁹ The newspaper *El Alcázar*, started during the siege and then moved to Madrid at the end of the war, documented many such visits in great detail. *Palacio y Biblioteca*, 19.

¹⁰⁰ Luis Moreno Nieto, “Desde 1936, tres millones de personas han visitado las ruinas del Alcázar de Toledo: La reconstrucción de la gloriosa fortaleza quedará terminada probablemente el año que viene,” *ABC (Madrid)*, 27 September 1961.

¹⁰¹ “El Alcázar de Toledo en el siglo XX ha hecho revivir las glorias de la Eterna España, mostrando la potencialidad del espíritu sobre el materialismo y dando a la posteridad el heroico ejemplo de un nuevo Guzmán el Bueno, a cuyo heroísmo se juntó el de su hijo en un diálogo que quedará siempre inmortal.” *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

million people toured the site in the first 25 years after the end of the siege.¹⁰³ Through the end of the dictatorship, all the guides at the site were former defenders.¹⁰⁴ Very prestigious visitors were, in fact, led around the site by Moscardó himself.¹⁰⁵ Thus, while it is hard to ascertain how many visitors attended the site and what exactly they saw, it is certain that the version of history they received was colored by the pro-Franco tour guides.

From 1936 on, the center of the museum was the room represented as Moscardó's office.¹⁰⁶ In 1965, Cecil Eby published a picture of this room in his book *The Siege of the Alcázar*, which shows that room was kept as if it had just survived a siege – torn ceiling plaster hanging in strips, shattered floorboards, and bullet holes.¹⁰⁷ On the desk was a portrait of Franco with the dedication, “To General José Moscardó, excellent friend and great soldier, on the 7th anniversary of the heroic gesture / Francisco Franco.”¹⁰⁸ Behind the desk in the room were hung two portraits – one of Moscardó,¹⁰⁹

¹⁰³ While the newspaper *ABC* cites the figure 3 million, I have not seen this number quoted in any other source. It is highly unlikely that an accurate figure can be given for the early years, as the site was not gated, making accurate record keeping difficult. Until 1962, the Alcázar was a museum built on rubble; as Cecil Eby notes, it was “closed” at night, but he was able to tour it after hours anyway. After 1962, I have been able to find any estimates, even inaccurate ones, as to the number of visitors. Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 253, Moreno Nieto, “Tres millones de personas han visitado las ruinas del Alcázar de Toledo.”

¹⁰⁴ The documentary *Spirit of the Alcázar* seems to imply that in 1986 the defenders were still employed as tour guides. I have been unable to find any information as to when this practice ceased. *The Spirit of the Alcázar: Fifty Years of Change in a Spanish City*, Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 237.

¹⁰⁵ *Palacio y Biblioteca*, 70.

¹⁰⁶ I have been unable to find any book that focuses specifically on the Alcázar after 1936, and it is thus very hard to create a timeline of when events happened. In addition, the building was closed at the time of my research (summer 2006) and will not reopen until some time in 2008, making it hard to give a very comprehensive account of the site. This section, therefore, has been created by piecing together accounts found in various print sources, but cannot be considered authoritative. A better account would require much more research to get past the layers of propaganda that surround the siege and its aftermath.

¹⁰⁷ Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, facing page 129.

¹⁰⁸ “Con honores de capitán general, en la cripta del Alcázar de Toledo será enterrado hoy el General Moscardó: su cadáver reposará junto a los de sus hijos Luis y José, asesinados por los rojos,” *ABC (Madrid)*, 13 April 1956.

on the left, and one of his son, Luis, on the right. Each one was hung over a telephone,¹¹⁰ and between the two portraits is an immense plaque replicating the telephone conversation, in its most canonical form.¹¹¹ The plaque is marble, designed to be impressive. On top is the symbol of Franco's eternal Spain, the imperial eagle, the yoke and arrows, and Hercules' pillars.¹¹² Alberto Reig Tapia says about the room,

This is the main course of Toledo's Alcázar Museum. The room has been conserved as it was when the fortress was liberated, in its ruined and somber state. The wall is sown with texts that reproduce the conversation in numerous languages, which can also be heard in many tongues, provoking the mute amazement of tourists from all over the world who leave the room completely convinced that the plaque is a transcription of the conversation between father and son and that the son was executed immediately after. In this manner, day after day, year after year, they come and pay their respects to an authentic exercise in historic amnesia.¹¹³

The central feature of the museum developed under Franco in the Alcázar is, again, the telephone conversation, repeated in "French, English, Italian, Japanese, Arabic, Greek,

¹⁰⁹ The portrait of Moscardó hung where a portrait of Manuel Azaña, who became President of the Second Republic in May 1936, had hung before the war broke out. Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 238.

¹¹⁰ The telephones are intended to be seen as literally the same telephones used for the call between Moscardó and his son. Why two telephones are needed to represent this has not been explained. Cecil Eby, who photographed the room and included it in his book, states that, "The telephone on the right is the one [Moscardó] used when he told his son Luis, in the portrait above it, he could not surrender the Alcázar to save his son's life." Cecil Eby, as usual, seems to trust the Francoist myths to the extent of appearing foolish; even if it is the case that the phone is authentic, it would be nearly impossible to prove that. *Ibid.*, facing page 129.

¹¹¹ Alberto Reig Tapia transcribes the entire plaque in his book as. Curiously, while Cecil Eby includes a photograph of the plaque in his book, he does not translate this dialogue literally when telling the story of the phone call. Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 173. Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 72, 129.

¹¹² Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 173. Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, facing page 129.

¹¹³ The word "desmemoria" can be translated as amnesia, but might better be considered "misremembering," as amnesia is generally considered to be passive forgetting, while the act taking place here is a washing away of history with an invented version of the past portrayed as if it were history. "Se trata del plato fuerte del museo del Alcázar toledano. Se ha conservado la habitación tal y como estaba, tras la liberación de la fortaleza, en estado ruinoso y sombrío. La pared está sembrada de textos que reproducen la conversación en numerosas idiomas que, incluso, pueden ser escuchados igualmente en diversas lenguas y provocan el mudo asombro de turistas provenientes del mundo entero que abandonan la sala en el convencimiento pleno de que se trata de una transcripción taquigráfica de la conversación entre padre e hijo y que éste fue ejecutado a continuación. Así, día tras día y año tras año, se viene cumplimentando un auténtico ejercicio de la desmemoria histórica." Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 173.

and nearly every other widespread language – except Russian.”¹¹⁴ Despite the fact that the room was destroyed by war, one is led to believe that not one but two original telephones survived and that they have remained on display, beside a heroic, simple conversation that despite having taken place during a war and never being written down during the two months that the siege lasted is exactly the conversation exactly as it took place. The room is an exercise in hyperbole – numerous half-truths and embellishments have been strung together to create an impressive picture of the most epic siege imaginable; an epic siege that, no doubt, bears little resemblance to the reality of the events that took place in the Alcázar.

In the same way that the telephone call is the most important incident in the traditional depiction of the siege of the Alcázar, Moscardó's office is the “main course” of the museum created at the Alcázar. There are, however, two other rooms of major importance – the Siege Hall and the crypt¹¹⁵ – both of which increase the pro-Francoist impression received by the visitor.¹¹⁶ The Siege Hall contained numerous artifacts from the siege: the motorcycle used to grind wheat, a swab used for wiping blood during amputations, a bottle of horse fat, a small loaf of the blackened bread made from the few foodstuffs available, and the aluminum container dropped by Franco's airplanes.¹¹⁷ Next to the container is the text of the message attributed to Franco and, in a representation of the malleability of history, the text of the message originally attributed to General Mola, dropped on September 6. In the museum, it is claimed that both were in the

¹¹⁴ Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 237.

¹¹⁵ The crypt, of course, is not explicitly part of the museum; rather, it is a devotional site. However, as it is also located in the building, the visitor who goes to the museum is likely to visit it as well, making it, for all intents and purposes, part of the “educational” experience of visiting the Alcázar.

¹¹⁶ That I know of; at least one other room existed at the museum – the preserved hospital located in the cellar, which contains the beds arranged as they were during the siege and little else. *The Spirit of the Alcázar: Fifty Years of Change in a Spanish City*.

¹¹⁷ Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 237.

container dropped by Franco's forces on August 22.¹¹⁸ This, however, makes no sense, because their content is essentially the same and it is not logical for Franco to have dropped two messages on the same day with similar content but different wording. However, since Mola died in 1937 and therefore had no political importance in Spain after the war, it seems to have been more convenient to attribute both messages to Franco, who did, after all, reach the Alcázar first.¹¹⁹ In addition, the room contains a thoroughly unremarkable sonnet written by J. Sempere Ferrero. The poem, dedicated to Moscardó, compares him to El Cid, the legendary Spanish warrior, and makes reference to the death of Luis Moscardó: "You were a father as well as loyal warrior / they made your son prisoner / and victim if you did not surrender."¹²⁰ While there is some reference to the dead defenders¹²¹ – a wall of "mildewed photographs of men"¹²² – the emphasis in this room was clearly on Franco and Moscardó, not the average man whose name is no longer remembered by the guides.¹²³

The other major room in the Alcázar is the "Crypt of the Fallen," the final resting place for those who died during the siege. This room is located below the south façade of the Alcázar.¹²⁴ More than one hundred men¹²⁵ are buried here, most of them

¹¹⁸ Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 169.

¹¹⁹ It is always said that the winners get to write history, usually implying that the loser's version of events has been ignored. As can be seen with Francoist Spain, Franco (the greatest winner on the winning side) gets to write history and even those who fought with him may be written out of the narrative. See Chapter 2 for more examples of this phenomenon.

¹²⁰ "Erais padre a la vez que fiel guerrero / a vuestro hijo lo hicieron prisionero / y víctima si vos no erais rendido" Reig Tapia, *Los mitos de la tribu*, 171.

¹²¹ The men who served at the Alcázar are not remembered as individuals; on the walls of the Siege Hall are the numbers – those present: 1,197 fighting men, plus 573 non-combatants; the losses: 113 dead and 35 deserters. None of their names are written down. The focus, therefore, is on the aggregate, not the individuals represented by each number. Ibid., 186.

¹²² Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 237.

¹²³ The guides, of course, fought alongside these dead defenders, yet Cecil Eby claims that they no longer remember their fallen compatriots' names. Ibid.

¹²⁴ "Los restos, en Toledo: inhumación en el Alcázar," *ABC (Madrid)*, 14 April 1956.

¹²⁵ An article from *ABC* published on April 14, 1956 mentions 135 "defenders of the glorious bulwark." Ibid., 29.

killed during the course of the siege. The crypt is a small, subterranean room, with the dead men's remains in niches along the two side walls and an image of the Virgin of Pilar,¹²⁶ the patroness of Spain, in the center of the back wall. At the entrance are the following words, "Their bodies rest in peace; their fame will last through the generations."¹²⁷ The burial of the "fallen" in the Alcázar was designed to remind Spaniards of the sacrifices made to create the Francoist state; the room was not just a burial ground, it was also a "cradle of patriotism."¹²⁸ It was used, too, as a focus for prayer; later cadets would pray to the Virgin of the Alcázar¹²⁹ for promotions and other favors and, when granted, visit the crypt to engrave their thanks in the walls directly outside the crypt.¹³⁰

While the majority of those buried in the "Crypt of the Fallen," died in the Alcázar during the siege, there are some notable exceptions, including José Moscardó and two of his sons. Moscardó had four sons, and two of them died during the war – Luis, of course, and his eldest son José, known as Pepe. Pepe, a grown man at the time of his death, had been serving in the military and was in Barcelona when the war broke out. Finding himself a member of the military who supported the July 18th uprising in Barcelona, one of the most strongly anarchist cities in Spain, he was executed on July 23, 1936; this was, coincidentally,¹³¹ the same date as the telephone call between his father

¹²⁶ A statue of the Virgin of Pilar was present in the Alcázar survived the bombing, a miraculous feat. This specific statue is therefore referred to as the Virgin of Pilar or the Virgin of the Alcázar.

¹²⁷ "Los restos, en Toledo: inhumación en el Alcázar."

¹²⁸ Blas Piñar, "Los católicos y el Alcázar," *ABC (Madrid)*, 27 September 1961.

¹²⁹ The Virgin of the Alcázar was a constant reminder of the events during the siege; the image, which had been in the fortress, lost her toes when the mines exploded. (*ABC*, 9-28-1961, 53)

¹³⁰ Moreno Nieto, "Tres millones de personas han visitado las ruinas del Alcázar de Toledo."

¹³¹ Or perhaps it was no coincidence. All of the sources I have read agree that Pepe died in Barcelona during the fighting, and none give any date other than that of July 23, which makes sense, given that the left had control of Barcelona, even in the very early days when the war was mostly confusion. However, despite the fact that no one has yet disagreed with the established date of Pepe's death, all reporting in the early days of the war must be viewed with suspicion. Further, it is also possible that

and brother, and exactly one month before the death of said brother.¹³² While Luis was not technically a defender of the Alcázar¹³³ and Pepe's death had nothing to do with either Toledo or the Alcázar, both were "killed during the siege of the Alcázar,"¹³⁴ in the language of the newspaper *ABC*. This sentence, while true, is deliberately misleading, designed to imply that Luis and Pepe Moscardó deserve to share in the glory of those who "fell" in the defense of the Alcázar. When José Moscardó died, on April 12, 1956, his sons were moved from a tomb in the Toledo cemetery to a sepulcher in the center of the crypt. The sepulcher was designed with four spaces¹³⁵ – one for each of the boys, one for Moscardó, and one additional space that was left empty at the time.¹³⁶ Since then, the "glorious remains"¹³⁷ of Moscardó and his sons have become the central feature of the crypt.

In addition to the physical structure of the Alcázar as a site of memory, annual commemorations around Toledo reminded Spaniards of the myth. It may be the case, as the newspaper *ABC* claimed in 1956, that it was not necessary to actively remember the specific events during the siege each year, because remembering the events on September 28th would imply that Spaniards had forgotten what happened at the

all the sources I have seen are citing one original, potentially flawed, source. Even the production of a death certificate proves nothing, as can be seen in the case of Federico García Lorca, who died in 1936 but did not have a death certificate until 1940 (see Chapter 3). Therefore, it may never be possible to prove one way or another the date of Pepe's death and July 23 will have to stand, even though this is a huge coincidence.

¹³² "ABC en Toledo: la ciudad está de luto," *ABC (Madrid)*, 13 April 1956.

¹³³ One could make the case that Luis' death enabled the Alcázar to resist longer, thus enabling him to be considered a defender who "fought" outside the fortress. However, this relies on the assumption that Luis' death came about as a result of the threat made on July 23 and not due to an anonymous reprisal, which, as I have demonstrated, is likely not the case.

¹³⁴ "Con honores de capitán general."

¹³⁵ The sepulcher was created in 1945 and left in reserve until Moscardó's death. "La ciudad está de luto."

¹³⁶ Presumably, this was designed for Moscardó's wife, or for one of his two other sons (Miguel and Carmelo), but not for both. I have been unable to find any information as to the current status of the tomb and whether the space remains vacant or has been filled.

¹³⁷ "La ciudad está de luto."

Alcázar.¹³⁸ Even so, the annual celebrations certainly helped refresh the Francoist myths in the minds of the Toledans. The date September 28 became a local holiday,¹³⁹ with a procession¹⁴⁰ of the Virgin of the Alcázar from the cathedral, through the streets, and into the Alcázar, where a mass was said.¹⁴¹ Another funeral mass was said annually for the fallen.¹⁴² In addition, the commemoration was tied to the anniversary of Franco's assumption of power, as every year the remaining survivors of the defense of the Alcázar sent a letter to Franco, pledging their continued support for his leadership.¹⁴³ Thus, not only was the siege of the Alcázar remembered, but also Franco's role in its liberation was deliberately emphasized.

By the late 1950s, Franco had decided to rebuild the Alcázar.¹⁴⁴ Spain was changing, and while the myth of the Alcázar would never be corrected to be historically accurate, it was no longer politically necessary to justify the regime based on having won the "Crusade"; rather, Franco was now focused on the economic success of the state.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁸ "El Alcázar, veinte años después," *ABC (Madrid)*, 28 September 1956.

¹³⁹ "Misa de campaña en Toledo con motivo del XX aniversario de la liberación del Alcázar," *ABC (Madrid)*, 29 September 1956.

¹⁴⁰ The procession, a parade with religious brotherhoods carrying "*pasos*" (lifelike sculptures of religious figures), is a standard Spanish expression of Catholicism.

¹⁴¹ Luis Moreno Nieto, "Ayer se conmemoró en Toledo la liberación del Alcázar: En la catedral hubo un funeral en sufragio de los Caídos y, por la noche, la imagen de la Inmaculada fué llevada en procesión al histórico baluarte," *ABC (Madrid)*, 28 September 1956, Luis Moreno Nieto, "El ministro de la Vivienda preside una procesión en Toledo," *ABC (Madrid)*, 28 September 1961.

¹⁴² Luis Moreno Nieto, "Comienzan los actos conmemorativos de la liberación del Alcázar de Toledo," *ABC (Madrid)*, 26 September 1961.

¹⁴³ "Actos conmemorativos del XXX aniversario de la liberación del Alcázar toledano: en el recinto de la fortaleza se celebró una misa de campaña, presidida por el teniente general Agulla," *ABC (Madrid)*, 29 September 1966, "Misa de campaña en Toledo."

¹⁴⁴ In 1961, the newspaper *ABC* reported that most of the major work had been completed and that construction would likely be finished within a year. In contrast however, the book *El Alcázar de Toledo: Palacio y Biblioteca* claims that all the repair work had been finished by 1961. By 1966, the monument had been completed; some interior work continued through the 1970s. "Actos conmemorativos de la liberación del Alcázar toledano," *ABC (Madrid)*, 28 September 1966, *Palacio y Biblioteca*, 71, 72, Moreno Nieto, "Tres millones de personas han visitado las ruinas del Alcázar de Toledo."

¹⁴⁵ With the change from Spanish Civil War to Cold War, Franco moved from autarchy to capitalism, and the successful economic boom that followed, in addition to the validation from the international

Therefore, instead of leaving the site as ruins to the horrors carried out by the Marxists, Franco decided to rebuild the site. While it has never been asserted that this is the case, the reconstruction of the Alcázar seems to be a clear sign that the Francoists took pride in their ability to invest resources in reconstruction, given the newfound economic prosperity in Spain. In addition to the reconstruction of the fortress, a monument was built to its defenders outside the building, specifically designed to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the liberation of the Alcázar. This monument, designed by Juan de Ávalos,¹⁴⁶ was dedicated to “the heroes of this glorious gesture.”¹⁴⁷ The reconstructed Alcázar, while no longer a visible testament to the horrors perpetrated by the Republicans, would continue to play an important role in dispersing the Francoist version of the siege of the Alcázar.

21st Century Developments: The Future of a Deconstructed Myth

At the time that the Alcázar was reconstructed, some plans were made to change the content of the museum. It was suggested that the Army Museum of Madrid be moved to Toledo and placed in the Alcázar. While some contents of the museum were moved, the whole scale changeover never took place. With the death of Franco, many plans for monument construction and other exercises in historical memory were put on

community, Franco no longer had to justify his regime’s origins. This is not the say that the concept of the Spanish Civil War as a Holy Crusade against the foreign Reds was abandoned, but it was no longer as central to the state’s propaganda. For this reason, the Alcázar remained a prominent site, but it was not necessary to keep it in ruins. In addition, the economic success of the state also provided the funds necessary for the reconstruction. Jesús de Andrés, “Las estatuas de Franco, la memoria del franquismo y la transición política española,” *Historia y política: Ideas, procesos, y movimientos sociales*, no. 12, 173.

¹⁴⁶ Ávalos also constructed most of the sculptures at the Valley of the Fallen (see Chapter 2). *Palacio y Biblioteca*, 71.

¹⁴⁷ What has happened to it since 1961 is unclear; as of 1986, it was still outside the Alcázar, and while it may continue to be there, I have no evidence one whether it does or not. *The Spirit of the Alcazar: Fifty Years of Change in a Spanish City*, “XXV Aniversario de la liberación del Alcázar,” *ABC (Madrid)*, 27 September 1961.

hold,¹⁴⁸ and the Alcázar seems to have been one such project.¹⁴⁹ The site remained in stasis for twenty years, until three things happened. First, the *Comunidad de Castilla-La Mancha*¹⁵⁰ decided to turn the space into the central library of the region. At the same time, the federal government decided to carry out the plans for the transfer of the Army Museum in Madrid to Toledo. Finally, around the same time, one of the last (well-known) defenders of the Alcázar, Jaime Milans del Bosch, died and was buried in the Crypt of the Fallen. The result of this series of events, each independently motivated, has worked to turn the Alcázar into a very ambiguous site of memory, one which has never officially distanced itself from the Francoist views of history, but which today serves at least a slightly different role in the world view of Toledans.

Sometime in the mid-1980s, the provincial government decided that the expanding Toledo library needed a new seat and that the Alcázar would be the ideal location. The goal of the local authorities was to create a use for the building that enabled it to be appreciated by the entire population, for as long as it remained a site devoted to Francoist triumph it only represented one part of Toledan and, consequently, Spanish, society; the building had been appropriated by the winning side, losing “its habitual integration in the life of the city,” and the city was to be reunited by the new library.¹⁵¹ The new Alcázar would be a cultural site, a symbol of peace and tranquility,

¹⁴⁸ Although, it is also the case that some projects affecting historical memory were started immediately after the death of Franco. On the right, streets were renamed and monuments were built to remind the people of Franco; on the left, some began to take actions that had been illegal for 40 years, like exhuming mass graves. de Andrés, "Las estatuas de Franco," 179-80, Emilio Silva, "The Work of the Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory" (paper presented at the King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center (New York University), New York, 2006).

¹⁴⁹ Holo, *Beyond the Prado*, 91.

¹⁵⁰ Spain is broken up into nineteen autonomous communities. Castile-La Mancha is the name of the community in which Toledo is located.

¹⁵¹ *Palacio y Biblioteca*, 19.

rather than a divisive site.¹⁵² Seeing the Alcázar as an anachronistic symbol of the former regime, the *Junta de Comunidades de Castilla-La Mancha* (the governing board of the community) worked with the Defense Ministry to reuse the Alcázar.¹⁵³

There was definite need in Toledo for a better library. The city possessed a large collection of books, which had been acquired over the course of more than two hundred years by Cardinal Borbón, Cardinal Lorenzana, and a series of other archbishops of Toledo. These books were held in the Archbishop's Palace until 1844, when the government decreed that church archives were to be turned into public archives and the government of Toledo took over the control of the Borbón-Lorenzana collection. From 1919 on, with brief interruptions, this collection was housed in the Santa Cruz Hospital, but this came to be an inadequate arrangement, as the hospital lacked the necessary space and modern amenities to serve as an effective library.¹⁵⁴ With the Transition, it was decided that Castilla-La Mancha needed a more fitting library for the regional capital,¹⁵⁵ and the Alcázar was proposed as the place.

It took nine years to construct the new library, which was established by law on May 4, 1989 and opened on October 16, 1998. In addition to the Borbón-Lorenzana Collection, the library contains a copy of every book published in Castilla-La Mancha after 1983 and other modern publications – in total, more than 300,000 volumes on site, which is by far the largest collection in the region. The two upper floors of the building had been used for the past two decades as administrative space for the military, a very ineffective use of such a monumental building, so it is understandable that the Defense

¹⁵² Ibid., 21.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 19.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 89-95, 98.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 139.

Ministry was willing to relinquish control of the upper floors and the towers;¹⁵⁶ the Defense Ministry retained control of the lower floors, including the Siege Museum and the Crypt of the Fallen.

Meanwhile, plans continued to move the Army Museum from Madrid to Toledo, housing it in the lower floors of the Alcázar.¹⁵⁷ While the original impulse behind this plan seems to have been to glorify the military in the ultimate Francoist site of memory from the war, authorities after Franco justified the move by claiming that moving the Army Museum would allow the Prado Museum to expand into the Salón de los Reinos del Buen Retiro,¹⁵⁸ the building where the Army Museum had been housed which happens to be next to the Prado. In 1997, a Spanish senator, Juan Antonio Barranco Gallardo, member of the Socialist Group, asked of the Defense Ministry whether it was strictly necessary to move the Army Museum and, if it had to be moved, why it could not be moved to some other location in Madrid, so that the Madrileños would not be deprived of “a non-transferable part of [Madrid’s] cultural and historical heritage.”¹⁵⁹ Despite the fact that Barranco Gallardo specifically asked the Defense Ministry to answer three questions – whether the Army Museum was in fact moving to the Alcázar, whether keeping the museum in Madrid had been considered, and how the move would be paid for – the Secretary of State for Relations with the *Cortes*¹⁶⁰ only answered two of the three questions. He¹⁶¹ said that the government was working to help the Prado

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 72, 74, 141, 142, 157.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 20.

¹⁵⁸ “Monarch’s Salon of the Buen Retiro” (Buen Retiro being the name of a park in Central Madrid) “Boletín oficial de las Cortes Generales” Senado. 6th Legislature, Number 174. (March 24, 1997).

¹⁵⁹ Barranco Gallardo is referring to the fact that the Army Museum was created as the Artillery Museum and housed in the Monteleón Barracks, which played a key role in the Madrid uprisings on May 2 during the War of Spanish Independence. Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ “Cortes” is a Spanish word that means legislative body; in modern Spain it refers, collectively, to both the Congress and the Senate.

¹⁶¹ Or she. No name is given in the bulletin I am working with.

maintain its status as the premier national gallery, and the Army Museum to modernize its collections and the display thereof. The Alcázar¹⁶² was the destination for the collection, and that the transfer would be paid for by the Defense, Culture, and Education Ministries.¹⁶³ No answer was given to Barranco Gallardo's other question, why the collection of the Army Museum had to be moved to the Alcázar, and not some other building.

Work started on the Alcázar, mostly in the form of excavation for the new building, in 1999.¹⁶⁴ The Alcázar's lower floors will remain closed until 2008, when the new museum is scheduled to open.¹⁶⁵ The Army Museum closed on June 30, 2005 to allow for the transfer of its collections to Toledo.¹⁶⁶ The new museum will consist of the two floors of the Alcázar not occupied by the library in addition to a new six-story building next door, which effectively obscures views of the Alcázar from the center of the city. Such a large building, three times the size of the Salón de los Reinos del Buen Retiro, is claimed to be necessary to enable the entire collection of the museum to move to Toledo.¹⁶⁷ However, many authorities did not agree that the building such a large complex was a good idea. The local authorities, they claim now, were pressured by the federal government into agreeing to the move and new construction, despite fundamental disagreements. In fact, the new building is considered so inappropriate in proportions that the United Nations Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization

¹⁶² Which was described as a former palace that was part of the historic and secular tradition; no mention was made of the Spanish Civil War or the site's importance under Franco.

¹⁶³ "Boletín oficial de las Cortes Generales"

¹⁶⁴ Laura L. Caro, "Nuevo 'sitio' al Alcázar," *ABC (Madrid)*, 4 December 2005.

¹⁶⁵ According to the Toledo Tourist Information Office, June 2006.

¹⁶⁶ Caro, "Nuevo 'sitio' al Alcázar."

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

(UNESCO), which declared Toledo to be a World Heritage Site in 1986, announced in 2003 that completing the work could lead the city to lose its status as such.¹⁶⁸

It is difficult to say what shape the new Army Museum in Toledo will take. The Army Museum in Madrid had been a notoriously pro-Franco site, with multiple rooms dedicated to the Spanish Civil War, Francoism, and Franco himself.¹⁶⁹ This is not very surprising, given that the museum, like many locations in Spain, was not updated in the 25 years following Franco's death. Moving the museum affords the government an excellent excuse to change the content of the museum,¹⁷⁰ but they have not signaled exactly how this will be done. What percentage of the space will be used for exhibition and what percentage for archival storage has not been publicly announced, nor has any indication been made as to whether the museum will retain the Alcázar's Siege Museum and Crypt of the Fallen, or whether these will be closed, or, perhaps, accessible by a separate entrance. In any case, as the Royal Association of the Friends of the Military Museums points out, the Alcázar continues to be one of the most recognizable symbols of the Spanish Civil War and, therefore, it does not seem to be an appropriate location for the installation of a military museum.¹⁷¹ Installing a military museum in a site associated with the successful propaganda of a dictatorial regime based on a military uprising against a popularly elected government seems poorly calculated choice for a constitutionally based government, even one that has little fear of another successful coup d'état.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Jesús de Andrés (Professor of Political Science at the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia), interview with the author, Madrid, 3 July 2006.

¹⁷⁰ This has been a common practice of local governments since the death of Franco. Andrés, "Las estatuas de Franco," 182.

¹⁷¹ Fernando Eguidazu, José Guillo, and Enrique Hervas, "El futuro del Museo del Ejército," *El Mundo (Madrid)*, 16 November 1998.

Similarly, the burial of Jaime Milans del Bosch in the Crypt of the Fallen is a powerful anti-democratic symbol. One of the last living defenders of the Alcázar, Milans del Bosch was buried in the Crypt of the Fallen when he died in 1997. Like Moscardó, he fought inside the Alcázar and lived, but unlike Moscardó, that is not what Milans del Bosch is most likely to be remembered for. He is best known for his role in the attempted coup d'état led by Colonel Tejero on February 23, 1981 against the new Spanish constitutional monarchy.¹⁷² During the night between the 23rd and 24th of February, Milans del Bosch, who was Captain General of the III Military Region and stationed in Valencia, ordered his troops out into the streets. Milans del Bosch was clearly inspired by his experiences during the Spanish Civil War in supporting this coup; his edict in 1981 literally copied passages from an edict dating from 1936.¹⁷³ He later retired his troops when the King's intervention demonstrated that the coup was not going to succeed.¹⁷⁴ Milans del Bosch was sentenced to 26 years in prison for his involvement in the affair; in 1991, after having served 10 years of that sentence, he was freed and went to live under house arrest with his family.¹⁷⁵ Milans del Bosch died on July 26, 1997,¹⁷⁶ and was buried in the crypt of the Alcázar,¹⁷⁷ in one of the niches along the side, with his name engraved.¹⁷⁸ There is little information about the jurisdiction that controls the crypt, but the Defense Ministry must be the organization that either allowed

¹⁷² Like many events, this coup is best known in Spain by the abbreviation of the date on which it occurred – 23-F (the 23rd of February, in Spanish nomenclature).

¹⁷³ José A. Olmeda, "The Process from Authoritarianism to Democracy in Spain: The Impact of the 1981 Failed Coup," (CPA Estudios, 2003), 7, 8.

¹⁷⁴ Paloma Aguilar Fernández and Carsten Humlebaek, "Collective Memory and National Identity in the Spanish Democracy: The Legacies of Francoism and the Civil War," *History & Memory* 14, no. 1/2 (2002), 146.

¹⁷⁵ Nick Caistor, "Obituary: General Jaime Milans del Bosch," *The Independent (London)*, 29 August 1997.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ "Muere general golpista en España," *Reforma (Mexico D. F.)*, 27 July 1997.

¹⁷⁸ Jesús de Andrés (Professor of Political Science at the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia), interview with the author, Madrid, 3 July 2006.

Milans del Bosch to be buried in the Alcázar or, alternately, failed to disallow him to be buried there. Jaime Milans del Bosch never expressed any regret at having participated in the coup,¹⁷⁹ which makes him a very dangerous figure for contemporary Spain.¹⁸⁰ While it is true that Spain is a very stable country, in little danger of falling victim to another authoritarian coup, it is a political blunder to allow a perpetrator of a modern uprising to be buried with the “glorious heroes” who died in the defense of the Alcázar, as it deemphasizes the negative legacy of his actions.

Conclusions

The Alcázar of Toledo, one of Franco’s oldest monuments, is also one of his longest lasting. Through the 1980s and 1990s, the content of the museum did not adapt to the change in political realities in Spain. Some viewers considered this anachronism to be “shocking.”¹⁸¹ There are certainly reasons that the Defense Ministry failed to update the content of the museum, including fear of what might happen if the museum were dismantled or recreated. As Selma Holo puts it,

By granting the ultraright wing their corners of space and allowing the time its adherents needed to adjust to their unexpected fate, they contributed to the calm and constructive atmosphere of the transition. Left and center politicians made no moves to prevent this constituency from spinning its own superheated, partisan version of history in the Army Museum and Museum of the Alcázar. By extension, this openness further demonstrates that a fair and free society, one distinct from the society out of which it emerged, was going to be the norm. Now, with the passage of time, the last bastions of the outdated military culture will finally give way – their power to shape identity in the old way depleted. They will not, however, have “disappeared.” Rather, they will have to share their own

¹⁷⁹ Caistor, "Obituary: General Jaime Milans del Bosch."

¹⁸⁰ In fact, Jaime Milans del Bosch is the incarnation of the very Francoism that modern Spain has distanced itself from. He edited the newspaper *El Alcázar*, started during the siege for the defenders and continued afterwards to staunchly support Franco and his principles. During World War II, Milans del Bosch fought in the Blue Division, the volunteer forces sent by Franco to aid Hitler and Mussolini in their war effort. Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Holo, *Beyond the Prado*, 78.

best public forum – the museum – with versions of history that will differ from their own.¹⁸²

Holo raises an interesting point – the appeasement through museums of the far right during the transition – but she seems to misunderstand the situation at hand. The problem is that “appeasing” them has other costs, including the misinformation of the rest of the Spanish public. Holo implies in her discussion of the Alcázar that the only visitors are Francoists, who are comforted by the museums, and the leftists, who know enough to question the “lies” around them. However, there are also the “casual visitors,”¹⁸³ and, whether Spanish or foreign, it is unlikely that these visitors know enough to question the propaganda around them. For the purposes of the transition, it made sense to work not to risk the rebellion of the ultra-right, but as Spain is a democracy, and as such its state-sponsored symbols should be democratic ones, representative of a version of history that incorporates the experience of all Spaniards. As of 1998, Toledo still had a Calle General Moscardó¹⁸⁴ and the Siege Museum still tricked the uninformed public into believing, among other things, that Luis Moscardó died immediately after a telephone call in which his father refused to surrender the Alcázar. Unwillingness to offend the right thus means, de facto, acquiescence to the history imposed by the victors of the Spanish Civil War.

Using the Alcázar for a more constructive and universal purpose is one step in the direction of creating a more inclusive historical memory, and the local government has done a service to the entire public in turning the upper floors of the Alcázar into a library. However, it remains to be seen how the addition of the Army Museum will affect the content of the museum. It seems likely that, thirty years after Franco’s death, the new

¹⁸² Ibid., 90.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 85.

¹⁸⁴ *Palacio y Biblioteca*, 67.

museum will no longer have to worry about angering the ultra-right and can thus move from “antiquated” versions of history to more accurate, contemporary interpretations of the role of the Army and the Alcázar in Spanish history. It is unlikely that the museum will be turned into a tribute to peace, as some have proposed,¹⁸⁵ but there is a chance for the federal government to create a museum fitting for the 21st century. However, given that UNESCO is considering retracting Toledo’s status as a World Heritage Site, it is clear that the Defense Ministry has planned the move poorly, so it is possible that they will fail to adequately respond to the challenge.

¹⁸⁵ Holo, *Beyond the Prado*, 79.



Figure 1.2²²⁹
The Alcázar in 1936, before its destruction

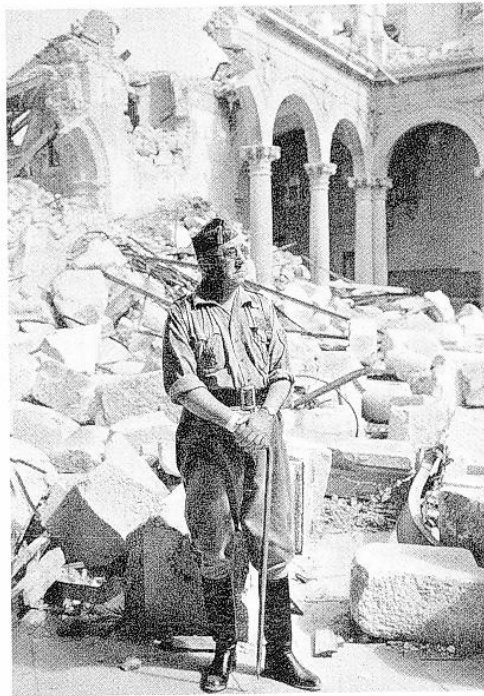


Figure 1.3²³⁰
Colonel Moscardó stands in front of
the ruins of the Alcázar

²²⁹ *El Alcazar de Toledo: Palacio y Biblioteca. Un proyecto cultural para el siglo 21, Imágenes y Palabras*; 27 (Toledo: Junta de Comunidades de Castilla-La Mancha, 1998), 18.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 68.



Figure 1.4²³¹
The Alcázar in August or early September 1936

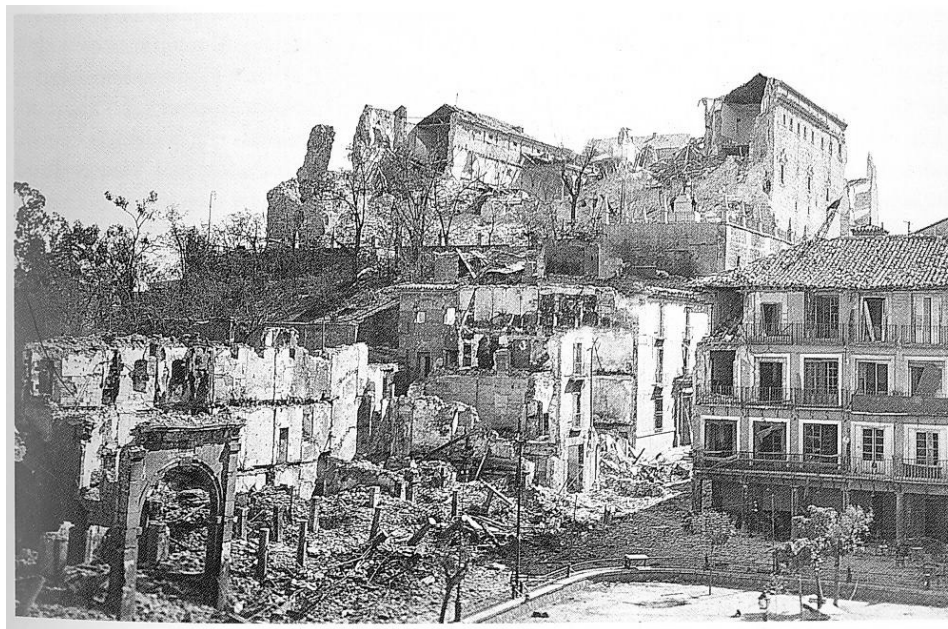


Figure 1.5²³²
The Alcázar in mid-September 1936, after the mines were detonated

²³¹ Ibid., 66.

²³² Ibid., 67.



Figure 1.6²³³
The most emblematic image of the Alcázar
in the postwar period

The plaza shown in the bottom right is the
Zocodover, the central plaza of Toledo;
citizens were essentially required
to interact with the ruins
during their daily business

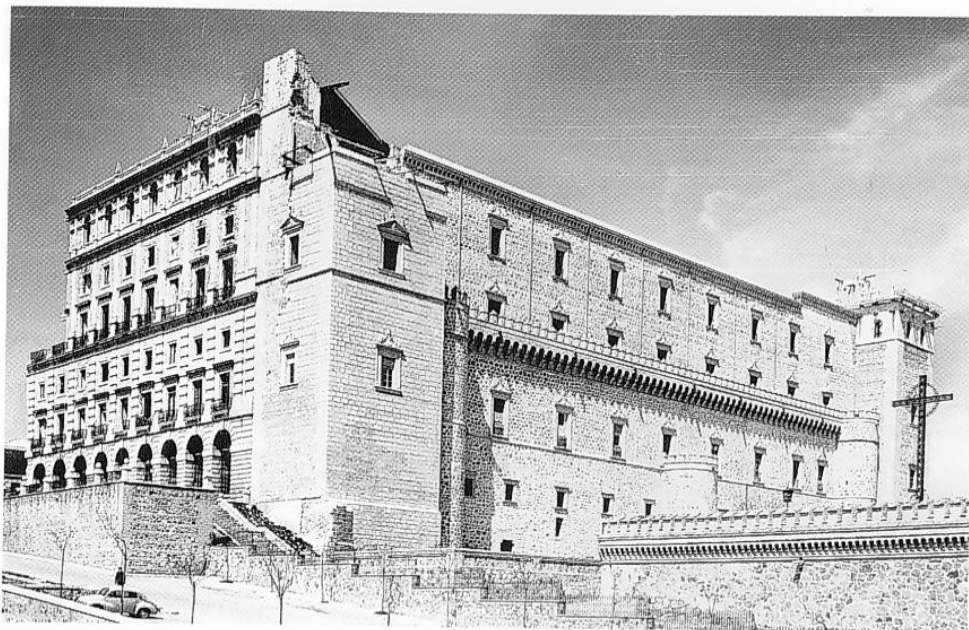


Figure 1.7²³⁴
The Alcázar during its reconstruction
Note the cross dedicated to the fallen

²³³ Federico de Urrutia, *Estampas de la guerra*, 6 vols. (Bilbao: Editora Nacional, 1937), 6:55.

²³⁴ *Palacio y Biblioteca*, 71.

Figure 1.8²³⁵
The Alcázar today,
after reconstruction

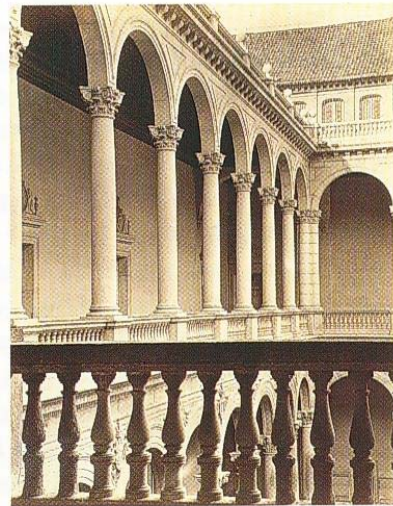


Figure 1.9²³⁶
The interior patio of the Alcázar
On the left, today
On the right, in the 1880s
The statue is of Carlos V and I

²³⁵ Ibid., 39.

²³⁶ Ibid., 38.

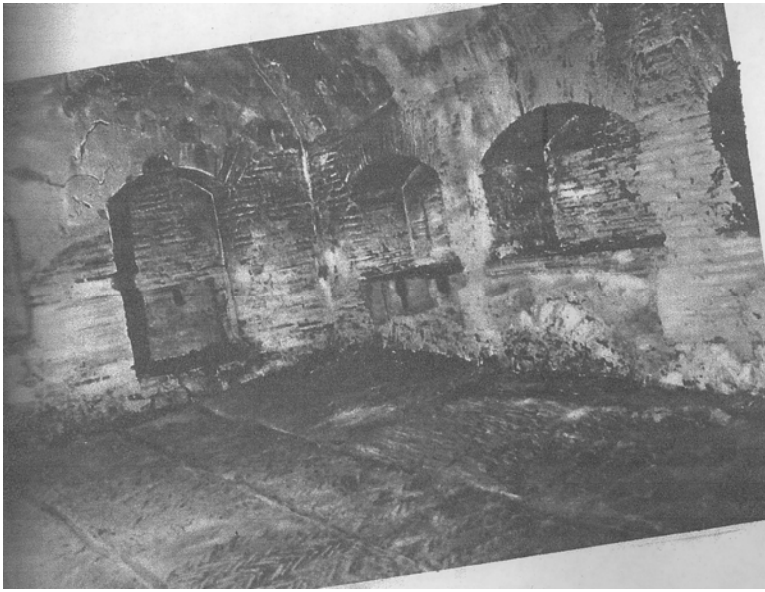


Figure 1.10²³⁷
The cellars where the woman and children hid during the siege

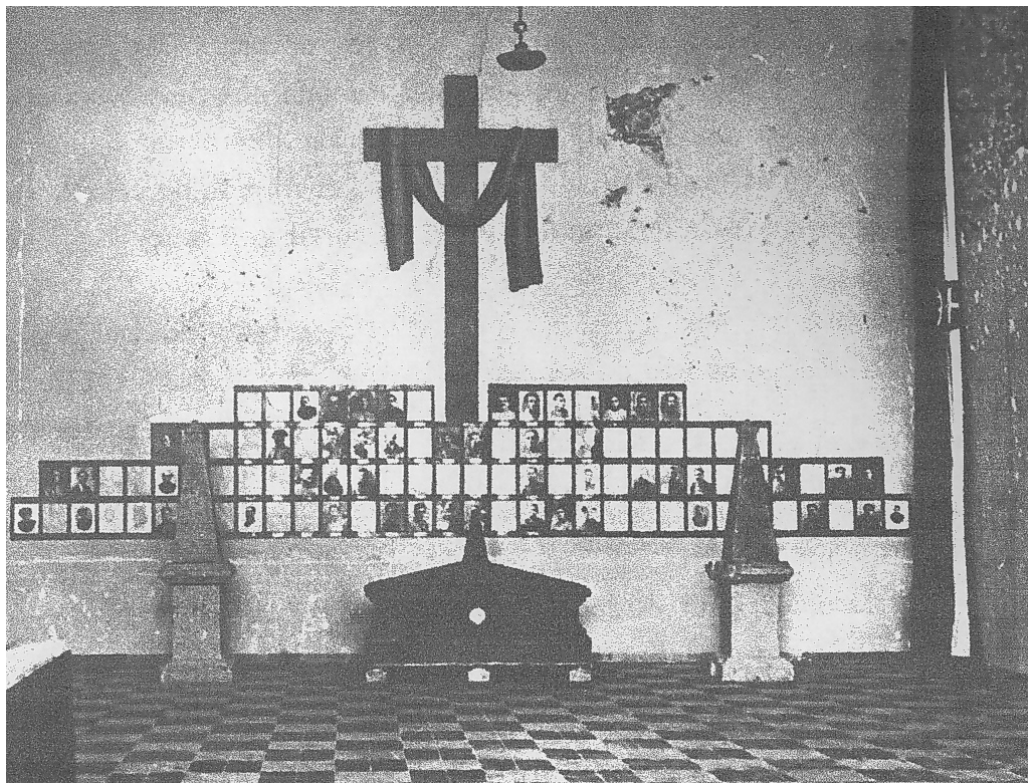


Figure 1.11²³⁸
1939: an early version of the Crypt of the Fallen

²³⁷ D. Fernández Collado, *El Alcázar* (Bilbao, Spain: Editorial Nacional, 1939), 25.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 45.

Figure 1.12²³⁹
 Moscardó's office
 Note the two telephones and
 the portraits of Moscardó on the left
 and Luis on the right
 Featured is a copy of the supposed
 dialogue between the two

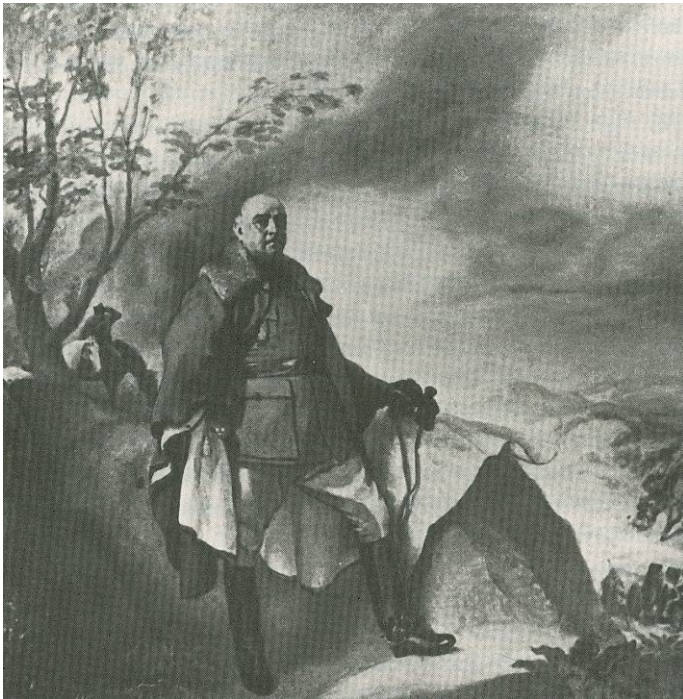
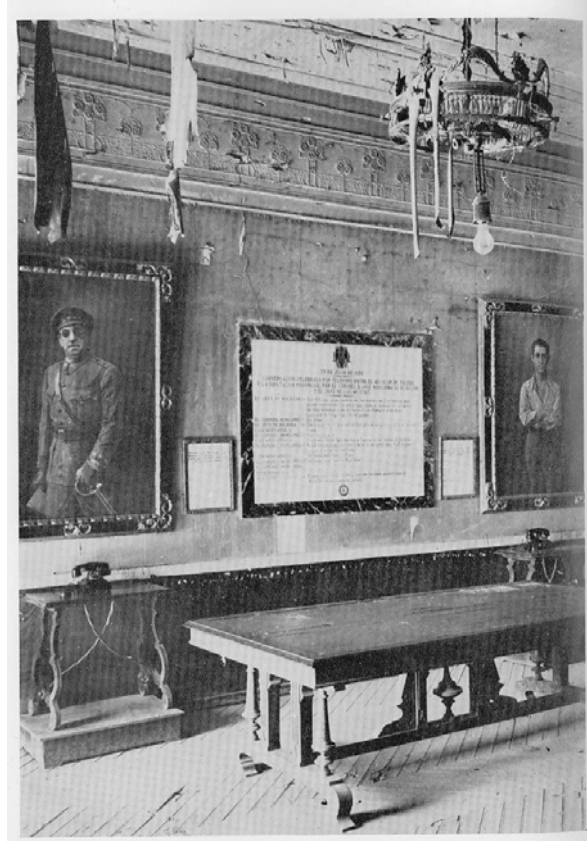


Figure 1.13²⁴⁰
 The portrait of Franco that
 hung in the entryway to the
 Army Museum before that
 museum was closed for
 renovation

²³⁹ Cecil D. Eby, *The Siege of the Alcázar* (London: Bodley Head, 1966), 129.

²⁴⁰ Selma Holo, *Beyond the Prado: Museums and Identity in Democratic Spain* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999), 84.



Figure 1.14¹
The Borbón-Lorezana
room in the new library
at the Alcázar

This room houses the
historical collections
of the library

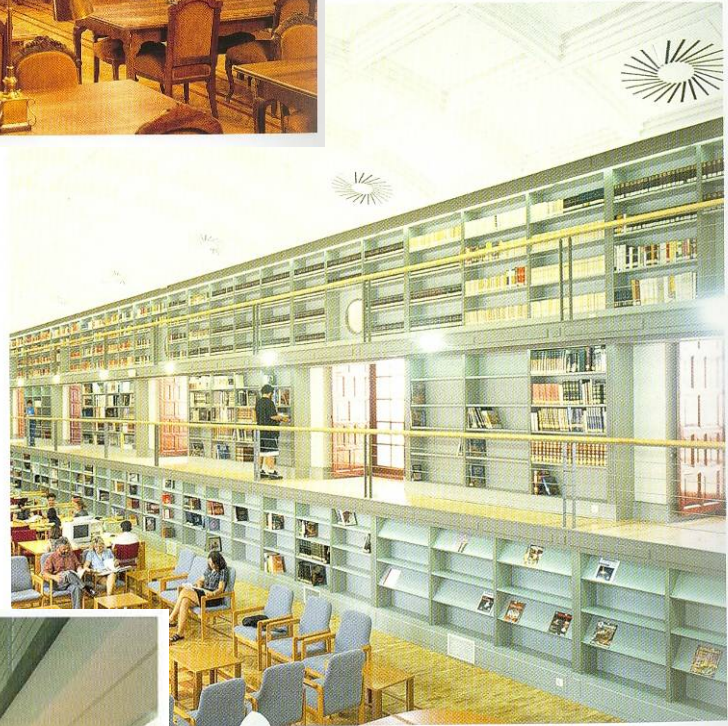


Figure 1.15²
The main reading room, which
houses current publications



Figure 1.16³
The periodical archives in
the library make use of
the Alcázar's towers

¹ *Palacio y Biblioteca*, 144.

² *Ibid.*, 140.

³ *Ibid.*, 142.

The Valley of the Fallen



Figure 2.1¹

“The Monument to all those who fell in the Spanish Civil War, the erection of which was considered while the war was still in progress and decided upon when it ended, should be regarded by all Spaniards as a just tribute to the memory of all those who gave their lives for their ideals. No man can give more.

It would not be fair if the survivors of the struggle were to forget those who sacrificed their lives for it. But there is only one way in which this memory can be properly expressed, and that is in the form of prayer, and there can be no more lasting visual reminder of this than the Holy Cross to commemorate the deeds of these heroes of Spanish history.” – Guide Book to the Valley of the Fallen²

¹ This picture was taken on 20 November 2005.

² *The National Monument of the Santa Cruz del Valle de los Caídos: Tourist Guide-Book, A Series of Tourist Guide-Books - Patrimonio Nacional* (Madrid: Editorial Patrimonio Nacional, 1965), 5-6.

Francisco Franco was buried at his pet project, a war memorial called the Valley of the Fallen. As its name suggests, it was constructed as a final resting place for many of the Nationalist dead, yet its focus was never these 70,000 individuals.¹ The individuals, after all, already had resting places around the country. Leaving them scattered, however, did not enable Franco to use their memory in the service of the state's propaganda. The monument's principal architect, Diego Méndez, may have claimed that the Valley of the Fallen was created to provide a Christian resting place for all the people who made Spain a better country,² but a closer look at the site reminds visitors that the real focus of the monument is the two individuals buried at its central altar – José Antonio Primo de Rivera³ and Francisco Franco. José Antonio Primo de Rivera was the founder of the *Falange Española*,⁴ the Spanish fascist party, who was executed by the Republicans in the early days of the conflict, and had been temporarily lain in state at El Escorial (the location of the Spanish Pantheon), awaiting the opening of the Valley of the Fallen, 20 years later.⁵ Franco, too, had the option of being buried at El Escorial with the Spanish kings, but instead chose to be interred at the monument he had designed. What then is this place that Franco designed both to remember his Crusade and in which he would be buried? According to the planners, it “should be a latent, living monument so that when the memory of the actual event is confused in the cloudiness of time, it will not be necessary to go to the Valley with an open book and a guide to know that ‘this’ was

¹ Daniel Sueiro, *El Valle de los Caídos: Los secretos de la cripta franquista*, 2 rev. ed., *Colección Primera plana*, 23 (Barcelona: Argos Vergara, 1983), 192.

² Diego Méndez, *El Valle de los Caídos: idea, proyecto y construcción*, 1a ed. ([Spain]: Fundación de la Santa Cruz del Valle de los Caídos, 1982), 11.

³ José Antonio is the son of a well-known, but short-lived, Spanish dictator of the 1920s, Miguel Primo de Rivera. Since his father is known by the last name Primo de Rivera, the son is often referred to by his first names, José Antonio, instead of by his last name.

⁴ The Spanish Phalanx; the group was often referred to as the “Falange” or “FE,” the initials of its Spanish name, which also form the word “fe,” the Spanish word for faith.

⁵ Méndez, *El Valle de los Caídos*, 160.

constructed for ‘that.’”⁶ But does the site achieve this goal? A more in-depth examination will reveal that, in fact, the monument does not succeed in the way its planners had intended.

José Antonio and the Falange: Franco’s Bureaucratic Claque

José Antonio Primo de Rivera is a very complex figure, whose identity has been shaped by how he was posthumously remembered. It is therefore difficult to identify exactly who he was and what he stood for, but a brief biographical sketch should illuminate some of the basic aspects of his life. He was born on April 24, 1903, into a family of privilege, and eventually became a politician to defend the honor of his father.⁷ Originally, José Antonio’s sympathies lay with the monarchists, specifically the Andalusian landowners, and it was only with the success of Hitler’s version of fascism as a mass movement that José Antonio turned in that direction.⁸ José Antonio therefore started a new party, the *Falange Española*, which was to be modeled after Mussolini’s version of fascism.⁹ The party was revolutionary, but it was revolutionary from a middle-class perspective, devoted to goals like the separation of church and state, not land reform or other populist actions.¹⁰ Despite having founded the Falange, José Antonio would first be elected into office as a monarchist candidate, serving a term from 1933 to 1936 as the representative of Cádiz in the *Congreso de los Diputados*. In 1936, he ran as a Falangist; as it was not a popular party, he lost the election and, with it, his parliamentary

⁶ Ibid., 12.

⁷ Tomás Borrás, *El Madrid de José Antonio* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Madrileños, 1953), 7-8, 14, 33.

⁸ Paul Preston, *Comrades!: Portraits from the Spanish Civil War* (London: HarperCollins, 1999), 79-81.

⁹ Stanley G. Payne, "La política," in *Franquismo: el juicio de la historia*, ed. José Luis García Delgado (Madrid: Ediciones Temas de Hoy, 2000), 244.

¹⁰ Jackson, *Concise History*, 110.

immunity.¹¹ Accused of inciting violence, he was tried and found guilty in March 1936.¹² When the war broke out, he was being held in an Alicante prison.¹³ Alicante became Republican territory and the local authorities tried José Antonio for his role in the lead-up to the coup. José Antonio served as his own lawyer and lost the case. He was executed on November 20, 1936, when he was 33 years old.¹⁴

From a small party devoted to the ideals of José Antonio and the co-founders of the Falange, the party very quickly evolved into something entirely different. By February 1934, it had been renamed *Falange Española de las JONS*, due to its merger with the other Spanish fascist party, JONS.¹⁵ The Falange was beholden to José Antonio's wealthy contacts, many of whom were Andalusian landholders; the party therefore could not afford to be very radical. JONS, on the other hand, had been a radical party, until the combination of the two forced a more moderate stance to continue the union. In the end, FE de las JONS kept the symbols of JONS – most importantly the yoke and the arrows¹⁶ – and the moderate political stance of the Falange.¹⁷ The next change happened during the war when Franco forced FE de la JONS to join the Carlists, the fringe monarchists also known as the “*tradicionalistas*.” The new party, formed on April 19,

¹¹ During the Spanish Second Republic, there was a unicameral legislature called the Deputies' Congress. de Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 52.

¹² Preston, *Comrades!: Portraits from the Spanish Civil War*, 97-98.

¹³ Ibid., 100.

¹⁴ Ibid., 101, 106.

¹⁵ The first two Spanish fascist parties, the *Conquista del Estado* (Conquest of the State) and the *Junta Castellana de Actuación Hispánica* (Castilian Board of Spanish Behavior) had already merged into the *Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional-Sindicalista* (The National-Syndicalism Offensive Board). Ibid., 81.

¹⁶ The yoke and the arrow were originally the symbols of the so-called Catholic Monarchs – Fernando and Isabel. The emblem was selected to emphasize the historic character of this new movement, and the symbol would be adopted by Franco due to its links to the status quo. de Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 68.

¹⁷ Preston, *Comrades!: Portraits from the Spanish Civil War*, 86, 90.

1937, was named the *Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las JONS* – FET de las JONS.¹⁸ The two mass movements of the state¹⁹ were thus combined into one party – a heterogeneous group whose members had little in common except that they were all fighting on the same side of the war. The last change to the party organization came in 1945, when it was rechristened the “*Movimiento Nacional*” (National Movement; *Movimiento* for short)²⁰ to take the party away from its origins and focus instead on its role in bringing together the supporters of Franco and his state.²¹ The change was more than just a semantic one, as the party was now officially disassociated with its ideological origins.²²

During the period 1941-1942, supporters of the Falange occupied some of the highest posts in Franco’s administration, including Ramón Serrano Súñer, Franco’s brother-in-law, who was Minister of Foreign Affairs until, in 1942, the course of World War II changed. As fascism fell out of power, it was no longer convenient for Franco to have fascist advisors and Serrano Súñer was forced to resign.²³ After that point the

¹⁸ With this unification, Franco was declared Supreme Chief of the Movement. At the same time, the “fascist” salute was renamed the “national” salute, symbolically distancing the party’s symbols from its ideology. Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 69, Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 106, 110.

¹⁹ The Carlists were smaller but very enthusiastic; the Falangists had more members who were slightly less committed to the Nationalist cause. Combining them made a large, enthusiastic party; all the disaffected party members were forced, through censorship and repression, into agreeing with Franco. Jackson, *Concise History*, 112.

²⁰ de Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 69.

²¹ Cecil Eby notes that the defenders of the Alcázar cried “*vivas*” in honor of a wide range of concepts – Spain, the Civil Guard, the army, the worthy civilians, the Foreign Legion, the Moors, etc. He concludes, “For the Nationalists, always vague about specific goals, it seemed to take a great many ‘vivas’ to make a war.” Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 130.

²² I have not attempted to define Falangist ideology here, because my focus is how the Falange was appropriated by Franco. Due to José Antonio’s early death and subsequent inability to speak up for himself, the Falange has alternately been claimed as conservative and socialist, in an attempt to link him to whichever party happens to be speaking. The same can be seen in Franco’s attempts to use Lorca and the painting *Guernica* to support his regime, despite their clear links to the opposition (see Chapters 3 and 4). Preston, *Comrades!: Portraits from the Spanish Civil War*, 75-77, Rein, “A Political Funeral,” 6.

²³ Edward Malefakis, “La dictadura de Franco en una perspectiva comparada,” in *Franquismo: el juicio de la historia*, ed. José Luis García Delgado (Madrid: Ediciones Temas de Hoy, 2000), 34.

Falange would not serve a major role in the Spanish state's foreign affairs. Until 1951, the Falange still had some domestic control in the form of press censorship, but a reshuffling of portfolios ended this last vestige of power that the Falange had.²⁴ After this point, the only influence that the Falange retained was over the culture of the regime, specifically high culture and its aesthetic standards,²⁵ but also the national anthem which continued to be the Falangist "*Cara al Sol*."²⁶ Despite the existence of youth groups, the Falange had little influence in the formation of young Spaniards because the Church retained control of education.²⁷ Overall, the Falange was the least organized of the "families"²⁸ that comprised the regime; lacking it was seen as "anemic."²⁹ When Franco was asked what role the Falange played in the state, he replied that they functioned as a "bureaucratic clique,"³⁰ a statement which does not show any profound respect on Franco's part for the Falange. Franco used the party most to frighten the other families – when the army would get out of control, for example, he would threaten them with the loss of support from the Falange if they got their way and the threat of Falange sponsored violence³¹ would then calm down those who were complaining.³²

Even the bits of Falangism that did remain after the end of the war had little to do with the Falange that José Antonio created. One Falange journal, *El Escorial*, used its

²⁴ Fusi Aizpurúa, "La cultura," 175.

²⁵ Ibid., 178.

²⁶ "Facing the Sun"; the anthem is a "song of love and war" that glorifies death. Borrás, *El Madrid de José Antonio*, 28.

²⁷ Fusi Aizpurúa, "La cultura," 180.

²⁸ There was only one party, so the smaller groups (Falangists, monarchists, Carlists, army, etc.) within Francoism were each called a "family." Richards, "From War Culture to Civil Society," 100.

²⁹ Malefakis, "La dictadura de Franco," 34.

³⁰ Ibid, Preston, *Comrades!: Portraits from the Spanish Civil War*, 102.

³¹ The Nationalists used Falange-sponsored violence as a justification even before the dictatorship. During the Republic, the Falange perpetrated numerous acts of violence in the streets, which prompted leftist violence, creating a progressive destabilization of the country. The coup plotters, conservative and monarchist, used the violence (largely instigated by the Falange) to justify overthrowing the state. Preston, *Comrades!: Portraits from the Spanish Civil War*, 96.

³² Malefakis, "La dictadura de Franco," 35.

power to legitimize Franco's regime.³³ Franco himself made it clear that the new FET de las JONS was not a guiding ideology for the Spanish state; rather, it would serve as starting point, and that the principles of the Falange could be modified as needed.³⁴ In general, while being in power was more important to Franco than was having an ideology, he did have certain basic principles. These were, above all, Spanish unity, the Catholic Church,³⁵ the creation of a single party in place of multiple factions, and economic authoritarianism,³⁶ principles which have been summed up in the term National Catholicism.³⁷ Franco believed very strongly in these ideals and would not compromise them, especially given that he knew that as he had the army on his side that the Falange, for all intents and purposes, did not have the power to stop him. Therefore, he was willing to use the Falange as long as he did not have to change his plans for the future.

In fact, the relationship of the Falange with the new Francoist state mirrored the personal relationship between Franco and José Antonio. Despite the fact that they had similar goals for the new Spanish state, they did not agree on how to achieve them,³⁸ nor did they like each other. When the Falange decided in 1934 to attempt an ill-timed coup

³³ Fusi Aizpurúa, "La cultura," 179.

³⁴ Payne, "La política," 244.

³⁵ Franco had not always been a devout Catholic, but he was pushed toward the Church by both his wife, Carmen, and Republican actions, like Church burnings, which he found appalling. Jackson, *Concise History*, 108.

³⁶ While Franco did not have a slogan per se, it was common to find graffiti in Nationalist zones stating the following: "Honour – Franco, Faith – Franco, Authority – Franco, Justice – Franco, Efficacy – Franco, Intelligence – Franco, Will – Franco, Austerity – Franco." These principles were ideals that Franco would aspire to for the rest of his life. Payne, "La política," 237-238, Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 116.

³⁷ Rein, "A Political Funeral," 9.

³⁸ Discussing the siege of the Alcázar, Cecil Eby states "Like many other conservatives, Moscardó had an ambivalent attitude toward the Falangists. They were mortal enemies of the Popular Front parties – this was good; but they spoke out against both the Church and the Army – this was very bad." This general statement also seems to encapsulate the relationship between Franco and José Antonio. Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 26.

against the government, the army and the monarchists did not join because, at the time, the government was led by the *Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas* (CEDA; Spanish Confederation of the Autonomous Right), a right-of-center party. Franco did not respond to José Antonio's request for help; "Believing that only the Army had the right and the might to determine the political destiny of Spain, Franco can have felt little but disdain for the nascent Falange."³⁹ The same disdain toward José Antonio can be seen in José Antonio's death.

Despite the fact that José Antonio was being held by the Republicans, it was not a foregone conclusion that he would be killed. Prisoner exchange was common;⁴⁰ prominent Nationalists, including the aforementioned Ramón Serrano Suñer, were freed this way.⁴¹ José Antonio was perhaps too prominent to be able to escape from jail, but small-scale attempts were made to free him.⁴² However, any serious attempt to rescue José Antonio would have required the approval of the army and its chief, the new Head of State, Franco, who was not inclined to help.

José Antonio was more useful to Franco dead than he was alive. Alive, he was able to critique Franco, advocating changes in the status quo. Dead, he was not able to lead his party; Franco assumed leadership of the Falange and, in the words of Herbert Southworth, "the stage properties, costumes, décor, scripts, and *mise en scène* of FE y de las JONS were stolen to mask the doctrinal poverty of Francoism."⁴³ When Franco was approached, in October 1936, about rescuing José Antonio, Franco did not provide his full support for the plan because:

³⁹ Preston, *Comrades!: Portraits from the Spanish Civil War*, 89.

⁴⁰ Jackson, *Concise History*, 112.

⁴¹ Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 97.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Preston, *Comrades!: Portraits from the Spanish Civil War*, 106.

Franco needed the Falange both as a mechanism for the political mobilization of the civilian population and as a way of creating a spurious identification with the ideals of his German allies. If the charismatic José Antonio Primo de Rivera were to have turned up at Salamanca, Franco could never have dominated and manipulated the Falange as he was later to do. After all, since before the war, José Antonio had been wary about too great a co-operation with the army for fear that the Falange would simply be used as cannon-fodder and political trimming for the defense of the old order.⁴⁴

Franco's failure to rescue José Antonio was a conscious act.⁴⁵ Almost a full two months before José Antonio's death, Franco and his Army of Africa succeeded in liberating the Alcázar, which served for little, militarily. In the meantime, José Antonio was stranded in Alicante, with no official attempts at rescuing him. Perhaps the only reason that the Alcázar was liberated was that it was at least somewhat on the way to Madrid, which is not the case with Alicante. However, if Franco could waste his forces' effort on a militarily insignificant battle to retake the Alcázar, it would seem that some part of the army could have at least attempted to rescue José Antonio. It is possible that José Antonio's death should be attributed to forces outside of Franco's control, but given his liberation of the Alcázar, there are few things that Franco did not have control over. In both cases, Franco benefited from the outcome, and therefore just as he chose to liberate the Alcázar, he chose not to rescue José Antonio.

Once José Antonio was dead, Franco refused to acknowledge this fact. While José Antonio lived and was in prison, there was no active leader of the Falange and Franco was free to order them to do whatever he pleased.⁴⁶ When he was finally forced to admit that José Antonio was dead, Franco created the cult of "*el ausente*" (the absent one) to keep the focus on José Antonio and not the future of Falangist ideology.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 97-98.

⁴⁵ Jackson, *Concise History*, 112.

⁴⁶ Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 98.

⁴⁷ Preston, *Comrades!: Portraits from the Spanish Civil War*, 75-76.

Franco decided how José Antonio would be remembered, by suppressing some of his writings⁴⁸ and forcing many of the original Falangists out of the party's leadership.⁴⁹ Manuel Hedilla, who had been designated successor to José Antonio, was imprisoned and sentenced to death.⁵⁰ Thus, due to the death of José Antonio and subsequent maneuvering by Franco, the Falange lost its leadership and direction, abandoning all tenets that did not support Franco's ideals – the defense of the status quo, with a focus on military power and Catholic ideology.⁵¹

As the party changed, its membership changed too. From the time of its inception to the start of the war, the Falange was a very minor group. It was only with the outbreak of war that it came to have a much larger number of adherents. In February 1936, the party had only 10,000 members⁵² and received only 44,000 votes, or 0.7% of the votes cast; at the same time, Sweden and Norway's fascist parties received 2% of the vote, making them approximately "three times more fascist than Spain."⁵³ Part of this was because José Antonio, despite being attractive and well-liked, was not an orator for

⁴⁸ His works were also edited anachronistically. One, published in 1966, includes a section titled "The *Movimiento Nacional* According to José Antonio." The *Movimiento*, however, was only started in 1945; José Antonio had died nine years earlier, in 1936, so it is impossible that he ever referred to his party as the *Movimiento*. (The works claims to have been "condensed" not changed, but this anachronism seems to belie that. Furthermore, later in the text there is a use of the word "*fe*" (faith) that only makes sense if the term *Movimiento Nacional* is replaced with *Falange Española* or FE.) José Antonio Primo de Rivera and Hilario Lafuente, *José Antonio Primo de Rivera, su manera de ser en lo nacional y en lo universal: En el trigésimo aniversario de su muerte* (Buenos Aires: 1966), 3, 4, 13, 14.

⁴⁹ Of the other founders of the party, one was already dead and another was in jail (unlike José Antonio, Raimundo Fernández Cuesta would later be exchanged for another prisoner and freed). Jackson, *Concise History*, 112.

⁵⁰ The sentence was commuted after he had spent four years in prison. At this point, the public had become used to the Falange with Franco, and not a Falangist, as its leader and Hedilla was thus significantly less dangerous to Franco. Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 98, 106.

⁵¹ A Falangist fighting for the Nationalists says the following: "Every day at dusk, we said our rosary. Then we sang the Falangist anthem and shouted 'Franco, Franco, Franco.'" This shows the state of the Falange during and after the war – it defended the status quo, using symbols of the Falange, and ultimate loyalty was to Franco himself. Seidman, *Republic of egos*, 56.

⁵² Jackson, *Concise History*, 36.

⁵³ Unlike Sweden and Norway, however, Spain's fascist party was active in the streets. In the words of Cecil Eby, they had "an influence out of all proportion to its size." Eby, *Siege of the Alcázar*, 43, Payne, "La política," 240.

the masses. He was an elitist who was not committed to populist goals; in addition, his speeches were all either lengthy “theoretical disquisitions or defenses of his father,”⁵⁴ neither of which had mass appeal.⁵⁵ In the context of the breakdown of order after the 1936 elections, the party became more popular, but not so popular that the army went out of its way to gain their support for the upcoming coup.⁵⁶ After the war started, hundreds of thousands joined the ranks of the Falange, but these people were certainly not Falangists as José Antonio had intended. They were mostly right-wing, but even some centrists and leftists joined the party, in many cases for the protection it afforded in the Nationalist zones and, later, Franco’s state.⁵⁷ The blue shirt of the Falange was subsequently referred to as a *salvavida* (a life jacket).⁵⁸ While there were certainly Falangists who retained the original ideals of the party – the so-called “old shirts” because they had donned the Falange blue shirt before their fair-weather compatriots – they were a minority in the post-war period, and had influence in Spain proportional to their number.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Preston, *Comrades!: Portraits from the Spanish Civil War*, 87.

⁵⁵ Jackson, *Concise History*, 110.

⁵⁶ When Franco and José Antonio met before the coup, Franco failed to make any promises to José Antonio as to concessions that would be made to the Falange after the uprising. The only coup plotter with sympathies toward the Falange was Lieutenant Colonel Yagüe, who was, not coincidentally, a military leader rather than a civilian. Payne, “La política,” 240.

⁵⁷ Interestingly, one can see this change in pictures from the war. In 1936, few raised their arms in the fascist salute, even to welcome Nationalist troops. By April 1, 1939, when the victory parade was held in Madrid, hundreds of thousands were saluting with the arms raised, either due to true devotion or to fear of seeming Republican. Ibid., 244, Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 105, 113, 172.

⁵⁸ Jackson, *Concise History*, 79.

⁵⁹ They were also referred to as Hedillistas, for their support of Manuel Hedilla, the imprisoned Falangist who would have succeeded José Antonio. In 1976, on the fortieth anniversary of José Antonio’s death, they tried to hold a manifestation at the Alicante jail where José Antonio had died, and they were denied permission while the “legally authorized” Falangists were allowed to hold an event. The Hedillistas demonstrated anyway, singing the “*Cara al sol*” and waving red and black flags; the authorized Falangists held a mass, thus showing the difference between the original Falangists and the Francoists who were members of the Falange. “El día 20, en Alicante; La conmemoración de la muerte de José Antonio se celebró sin incidentes de importancia: Los grupos falangistas no autorizados protagonizaron diversos conatos de manifestación,” *ABC (Madrid)*, 22 November 1976, Payne, “La política,” 244.

Overall, the Spanish state was not “Falangist” in the strictest sense. The *Movimiento* may have been the only party in Spain, but by the end of the Spanish Civil War it had already distanced itself greatly from its origins. The party was no longer centered on José Antonio’s ideals; rather, it was a vehicle that Franco used for his own ends. The same can be seen in the monuments that were, at least in theory, dedicated to José Antonio.

“The Ninth Wonder”

Francisco Franco was, at least in popular myth, both the originator of the idea of the Valley of the Fallen, as a resting place for the dead of the war, and its principal designer. Daniel Suiero, in his book which gathers testimony from various individuals involved in the construction of the Valley of the Fallen alleges that, in fact, it was not originally Franco’s idea, but as Paloma Aguilar points out, it has become so much a part of the myth of the place that it is a moot point.⁶⁰ Either way, Franco picked the highly symbolic site⁶¹ for the monument in a mythic way, with the involvement of war heroes,⁶² and then participated, perhaps excessively,⁶³ in the construction of what would become a great, subterranean basilica. Thus, he is the person whose words one should turn to in order to fully understand the intentions of the monument. On the date of the start of

⁶⁰ Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 74.

⁶¹ The monument was planned at the center of Spain, near both Madrid and the Spanish Pantheon at El Escorial, to be accessible to the greatest number of Spaniards and to tie into the regal history of Spain. Katherine R. Halper, "Voices from the Valley: El Valle de los Caídos in History and Memory" (Wesleyan University, 2003), 6.

⁶² General Moscardó, the hero of the Alcázar, was present on the day that Franco picked the location that would become the Valley of the Fallen. Thus, Franco’s liberation of the Alcázar was tied to the Valley of the Fallen, making the site even more a symbol of Franco’s triumph rather than of the Nationalist triumph. Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 15.

⁶³ Sueiro, *Los secretos de la cripta franquista*, 124.

construction,⁶⁴ the first anniversary of the end of the war, April 1, 1940, Franco said that it was not enough to commemorate with:

The simple monuments that tend to be used to commemorate in villages and cities the salient events of our history and the glorious episodes of her children... The stones which are raised should have the grandeur of the ancient monuments which defy time and oblivion and constitute a place of meditation and rest in which future generations render a tribute of admiration to those who bequeathed to them a better Spain... This grandiose temple for our dead in which over the centuries they pray for those who fell in the path of God and motherland. Perennial site of pilgrimage in which the grandeur of nature puts a dignified mark on the countryside where the heroes and martyrs of the Crusade rest.⁶⁵

The goal was to create something universal and grand – even while it was still under construction, in 1957, it was referred to as “the ninth wonder” of the world.⁶⁶ One can see from this dedicating speech what imagery would be found in the monument – Christian imagery of heroes and martyrs relating to the “the Crusade.”

The entire monument is 300 meters tall, 150 meters from the entrance of the basilica to the base of the cross, and then the 150 meter tall cross – taller than the Eiffel Tower.⁶⁷ The cross is a Latin cross, but its two 46-meter-long arms (“wide enough for two average-sized motorcars to pass each other”⁶⁸) are three-dimensionally Greek crosses, so that even when viewing from the side, the onlooker cannot avoid knowing that it is a cross. At the base are the representations of the four cardinal virtues – prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance – and above the four cardinal virtues are

⁶⁴ The monument would be finally inaugurated on April 1, 1959, the 20th anniversary of Franco’s triumph. It was constructed using prison labor (a fact that has been greatly disputed). Over the course of its construction, as many as 20,000 may have been employed at the site, with an unknown number dying in the very dangerous working conditions. For more information on the construction of the site, see Katherine Halper’s thesis “Voices from the Valley,” which uses published sources and oral history to follow the construction process. Halper, “Voices from the Valley”, Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 170.

⁶⁵ Quoted in Méndez, *El Valle de los Caídos*, 12.

⁶⁶ Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 75.

⁶⁷ Halper, “Voices from the Valley”, 67.

⁶⁸ *National Monument*, 38.

statues of the four evangelists – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.⁶⁹ As the principal architect of the cross points out, it is impossible to ignore; everything about it is an order of magnitude greater than anything else even remotely comparable.⁷⁰ Visible throughout the entire valley, the cross is designed to be something very recognizable and easily understandable.⁷¹ Not only it is an unmistakably grandiose and Christian statement, it is engineered to “defy time and oblivion” – scientific studies were done to make sure that the cross would withstand the effects of weathering and last for centuries.⁷²

After the immense cross, the next most visible part of the site is the Pietà which adorns the entrance to the basilica. It is 12 meters long and 5 meters tall⁷³ and, as the official guidebook says, it is “enough to stir the emotions of even the most hardened unbeliever.”⁷⁴ Walking below the Pietà, one enters the basilica, which has a length of 262 meters, a maximum height at the crossing point of the vault of 41 meters, and a maximum width at the “great nave” of 22 meters.⁷⁵ Originally created as a crypt, it was designated a basilica by the Roman Catholic Church on the condition that a grating be placed in the atrium, separating the entrance from the basilica itself, because at 262 meters long, the Valley of the Fallen is technically larger than St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican.⁷⁶ Passing through the grating, one enters the basilica proper, which is hewn into

⁶⁹ These sculptures were the work of Juan de Ávalos, who also designed the sculpture outside of the Alcázar (see Chapter 1). Halper, “Voices from the Valley”, 88.

⁷⁰ Méndez, *El Valle de los Caídos*, 15.

⁷¹ Ibid., 174.

⁷² This was especially important to the Francoists, given the Republican attempts to destroy churches and religious monuments during the Second Republic and Spanish Civil War. Jackson, *Concise History*, 66, Sueiro, *Los secretos de la cripta franquista*, 131.

⁷³ Sueiro, *Los secretos de la cripta franquista*, 143.

⁷⁴ On the other hand, Gabriel Jackson considers the monument to be “built in the typically massive, unimaginative style of twentieth-century dictatorships.” *National Monument*, 40, Jackson, *Concise History*, 174.

⁷⁵ Sueiro, *Los secretos de la cripta franquista*, 124.

⁷⁶ Halper, “Voices from the Valley”, 67.

the mountain.⁷⁷ It has six chapels (three along each side), each paying homage to a different virgin – the patrons of the army, the marines, aviation, Africa, captives, and Aragón. Africa represents the beginning of the Crusade and Aragón represents its end, for the last battles of the war were fought there.⁷⁸

Along the walls, between the chapels, are tapestries. Intended to add color, the tapestries represent the Apocalypse according to the Gospel of John.⁷⁹ Originally, Franco had wanted bas-reliefs of Spanish soldiers marching along the wall, entering the basilica, but was convinced by Méndez, the architect, and numerous others that in time the figures would appear outdated,⁸⁰ so a more “eternal” image – the biblical accounts of the Apocalypse – was picked instead. In the process, Franco took irreplaceable treasures from the National Patrimony⁸¹ and, at the same time, neutralized his message to a general one of Christianity avoiding the specific context.

The Spanish context is much more apparent to an informed observer as one approaches the altar. Around the pews are hooded figures with swords which are supposed to represent the armed forces – the army, the navy, the air force, and the militias. Above the altar is the great dome, which pictures the “Eternal Father” in the middle. On his immediate right is the apostle Santiago with 42 “holy heroes” and to his

⁷⁷ In the words of Alberto Medina Domínguez, Franco was attempting to inhabit both the center and interior of Spain by placing his future tomb in the center of the country, inside a mountain. Alberto Medina Domínguez, *Exorcismos de la memoria: Políticas y poéticas de la melancolía en la España de la transición*, 1. ed. (Madrid: Ediciones Libertarias, 2001), 46.

⁷⁸ Or, as Diego Méndez says, “Aragón, in whose historic atmosphere the end of the crusade was decided...” Méndez, *El Valle de los Caídos*, 120.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 121.

⁸⁰ What had seemed like a good idea in the immediate postwar was considered inopportune by the end of the 1950s. Spain was no longer a country divided between victors and vanquished; rather, it was a country that needed to appear modern to maintain ties to the west, in order to maintain its economic status. Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 79.

⁸¹ The tapestries had been housed at El Escorial before Franco expropriated them for his use. Méndez, *El Valle de los Caídos*, 130-35.

immediate left is Saint Paul with 34 “holy martyrs.”⁸² On both sides, forming right angles with God in the center, are ascending Spanish heroes and martyrs; on the far side is the Virgin Mary surrounded by seraphim. These figures were chosen by Franco to refer specifically to Spain, with minor acknowledgement of the war.⁸³ To the left and right of the altar are the entrances to the chapels that are specifically dedicated to the thousands buried in the Valley of the Fallen – their tombs are located here and mass is performed in their honor in these small lateral chapels.

The chapel to the right, when facing the altar, is called the Chapel of the Descending; it is the location of some of the only words written anywhere in the Valley of the Fallen.⁸⁴ Over the door to the vault where the dead are buried, is written, “Caídos / Por Dios y España / 1936-1939 / RIP.”⁸⁵ These words are both illuminating and empty. They are the only explicit reference in the Valley of the Fallen to the years of the war, but an uninformed visitor might not know that, and furthermore, they are offset in a small chapel which is therefore easily missed. Who are the fallen? For what cause did they fall? How did their deaths help God and Spain? None of these questions are answered here. It is probable that under Francoism most visitors would have been sufficiently indoctrinated to understand the message that Franco was trying to convey here (the Crusade), yet the modern, un-indoctrinated visitor is left without any clear

⁸² Katherine Harper notes that two of the figures in the mosaic appear to be Franco (in white) and José Antonio (in blue). I have been unable to spot these figures for myself, but I have no reason to doubt that she is correct. Halper, “Voices from the Valley”, Méndez, *El Valle de los Caídos*, 140.

⁸³ Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 82.

⁸⁴ At the entrance to the basilica, before going through the grating, is inscribed a message of dedication with the date of the opening of the monument, but this is a fairly empty inscription which only helps date the monument as having been opened on April 1, 1959; one would need prior knowledge to recognize that this was exactly 20 years after the end of the Civil War. During the dictatorship, there had been some explanation of the significance of the site at its entrance. Alberto Medina Domínguez references the presence of words like “crusade, *Caudillo*, empire, victory.” Medina Domínguez, *Exorcismos de la memoria*, 13-14.

⁸⁵ “Fallen / For God and Spain”

explanation. The only explanatory source provided to the visitor, the official audio guide claims that victims from both sides of the war are buried here. While this is a factual statement, it is very misleading, as the monument was designed to house the Nationalist victims and only a few Republicans were allowed to be buried there as an afterthought.⁸⁶ Furthermore, this information does not agree with the visible Crusade rhetoric.

Returning to the central altar, one sees what are clearly intended to be the most important parts of the basilica – the tombs of José Antonio Primo de Rivera and Francisco Franco. José Antonio's is right in front of the altar, and Franco's is immediately behind the altar, 180° away.⁸⁷ Each one has a slab of granite marking his tomb with just his name and a small cross carved on it. Both are kept adorned with flowers brought by adoring visitors and more officially by the Fundación Francisco Franco, which is administered by Franco's daughter and is responsible for the upkeep of the monument.⁸⁸ These two tombs are the most visible and most controversial part of the monument. Their creation and subsequent debate over the matter reflect the change in Spanish opinion about the site from the end of the war to the present.

⁸⁶ Because the site is inherently Catholic, only Catholics were allowed to be buried there. This effectively disqualified many Republicans. In addition, the families of Republicans were unlikely to agree to their relatives being buried there. The heirs of Federico García Lorca (see Chapter 3), were approached about having him buried there, but they did not want him to be interred with men who might have been responsible for his death. Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 77-78, Halper, "Voices from the Valley", 55.

⁸⁷ Originally, Méndez had three headstones created, intending that José Antonio be buried in front of the altar and that both Franco and his wife Carmen be buried behind it. When Franco was interred, however, his tomb was placed in the center behind the altar, leaving no space for Carmen to be buried there. It seems that while it might have been possible, in the 1950s, to bury the dictator's wife there, this was no longer an appropriate arrangement in 1975. Who decided this is unclear, but it might be a reflection of the Church's decreased patronage of Franco. Diego Méndez, "Entrevista con el arquitecto del Valle de los Caídos: '... y luego, aquí, yo'; Con estas palabras sugirió Franco el lugar en donde quería ser enterrado," *ABC (Madrid)*, 25 November 1975.

⁸⁸ In a large scandal in 2002, it was publicly revealed that the then rightist government of Spain was still giving funding to the foundation. Katherine Halper notes that in 2001 the Ministry of Culture paid the foundation €83,000 (10% of the ministry's annual budget). Halper, "Voices from the Valley", Elizabeth Kolbert, "Letter from Spain - Looking for Lorca: A Poet's Grave and a War's Buried Secrets," *New Yorker* 64, 136.

The Legacy of José Antonio?

In November 1940, José Antonio's body was exhumed and taken from Alicante to El Escorial. His body was carried on the shoulders of loyal Falangists, who believed that José Antonio deserved to be honored by being buried with Spain's greatest leaders – the kings interred in the Spanish Pantheon.⁸⁹ Nineteen years later, his body was moved again, once more carried by his followers; this time the move was the thirteen kilometers from El Escorial to the Valley of the Fallen.⁹⁰ José Antonio was, of course, the best known of the Nationalists who had died during the Spanish Civil War and, therefore, it was deemed appropriate for him to be buried with the fallen. In addition, José Antonio was Catholic and his family approved the move,⁹¹ so his entombment followed the rules that governed burial at the site. However, burying José Antonio at the Valley of the Fallen was not an uncontroversial decision. Some thought burying him there “politicized” the monument in an inappropriate way.⁹² These individuals might have approved a decision to bury José Antonio there as one of thousands of anonymous “fallen,” but not to give him an individual headstone in the center of the basilica.

More opposed to the move were the “old shirts” who did not like Franco's version of Falangism and believed that Franco was exploiting the memory of José Antonio.⁹³ Due to the censorship and repression exercised by Franco, these Falangists were unable to voice their disapproval, but their “silent opposition” has been noted.⁹⁴ The “old shirts” are correct; Franco's expropriation of the memory of José Antonio is

⁸⁹ Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 170.

⁹⁰ Halper, “Voices from the Valley”, 64.

⁹¹ Méndez, *El Valle de los Caídos*, 304-308.

⁹² Halper, “Voices from the Valley”, 66, 88.

⁹³ Daniel Sueiro, “El Valle de los Caídos: 'que construyan los que destruyeron con su rebelión',” *El País (Madrid)*, 21 November 1976.

⁹⁴ Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 83.

clear in the monument. José Antonio is buried in the temple to the church and the army, in front of the central altar, thus equating him with holiness.⁹⁵ José Antonio, who had favored the separation of church and state, was laid to rest in a glorification of the union of church and state under Franco.⁹⁶ His body is used to convince visitors that he and the Falange supported Franco, the church, and the army, which is not the case.

The Burial of Franco and Subsequent Commemorations

Franco, while not one of the martyrs of the Crusade, chose to be buried in the Valley of the Fallen to be forever attached to his project and his legacy. While it was never announced to the public, Franco knew from the 1950s that he would be buried in the basilica. When the granite slab was carved for José Antonio's tomb, a matching one was carved for Franco and then put into storage until his death more than 15 years later.⁹⁷ Franco, in the construction of the Valley of the Fallen, which he intended to be his gravesite, was creating a monument which he expected to last forever as a tribute to his regime and his accomplishments. His burial there would both stress his holiness⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Traditionally, saints were buried in the center of the church and the closer to the saints' body one was buried, the more saintly one was considered to be. Attempts to make José Antonio appear saintly were facilitated by his death at the age of 33, the same age that Jesus was when he died. This fact was emphasized by Franco to associate José Antonio with Francoist, Catholic imagery. In one book, José Antonio's death was summarized by the sentence "Only through Death can one come to Live," a clear reference to eternal life (salvation) through death. As Paul Preston notes, "This reached its tasteless apogee in a best-selling book entitled *Via cruce* (the Way of the Cross). Its chapter headings, each from a station of Jesus Christ's ascent of calvary [sic], recounted José Antonio Primo de Rivera's life as an echo of that of the Messiah." Borrás, *El Madrid de José Antonio*, 49, Preston, *Comrades!: Portraits from the Spanish Civil War*, 75, Michel Ragon, *The Space of Death: A Study of Funerary Architecture, Decoration, and Urbanism* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983), 20.

⁹⁶ In 1953, a guidebook to José Antonio's Madrid was published which successfully linked José Antonio with Franco's Crusade by, among other things, mentioning the crucifix in his childhood room. This is a deliberate exaggeration of the importance of religion in José Antonio's life, if not a complete fabrication. Borrás, *El Madrid de José Antonio*, 30.

⁹⁷ When the basilica was originally constructed, a hole was carved in the space in front of the altar for José Antonio's tomb, and Franco, seeing it, is said to have walked around the other side of the altar and then stated, "Méndez, yo, aquí" – "Méndez, I, here." Méndez, *El Valle de los Caídos*, 160.

⁹⁸ Ragon, *Space of Death*, 20.

and his legacy. Yet, ironically, it was his death which marked the beginning of the re-evaluation of his legacy. 1975 was both the year that Franco died and, according to the Catholic Church, the Holy Year of Reconciliation,⁹⁹ a year designed to reunite those who had been divided for so long, a year marking the end of the era of the “Crusade.” The moment that Franco was buried in the Valley of the Fallen, then, it immediately became anachronistic, a reminder of an earlier Spain.¹⁰⁰

This does not mean, however, that the people forgot the leader they had been taught to follow for so many years. Every year on the Saturday before November 20, the anniversary of Franco’s death,¹⁰¹ Spaniards still go to a mass in Franco’s honor at the Valley of the Fallen. Numbers have dropped off in recent years – while 100,000 people attended Franco’s funeral at the Valley of the Fallen in 1975, only a few thousand have gone to more recent masses.¹⁰² In addition, official, government-sponsored commemoration has only recently ceased at the site. In 2000, a Spaniard wrote an angry editorial about the fact that the Valley of the Fallen had been lit up on July 18, celebrating the old Francoist holiday marking the start of the military uprising which would become the Spanish Civil War.¹⁰³ And as recently as the mid-1990s, Paloma Aguilar remembers that the gift shop at the Valley of the Fallen still sold memorabilia

⁹⁹ Aguilar Fernández, "Collective Memory of the Spanish Civil War," 9.

¹⁰⁰ In an incredibly ironic gesture, the residents of Barcelona held an homage to Franco in both Castilian and Catalan, the language that Franco had tried to eradicate, on the day of his death. Thus, while it was not yet clear in 1975 what direction Spain would take after Franco, it was clear that the people were ready for a change. "En Barcelona, elogios en castellano y catalán a la figura histórica de Franco; Juan Antonio Samaranch: 'Se clausura una época y apunta otra en el horizonte'," *ABC (Madrid)*, 21 November 1975.

¹⁰¹ There is speculation that Franco was brain dead by November 19, but was kept alive until November 20 to coincide with the anniversary of José Antonio’s death. Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 61.

¹⁰² Halper, "Voices from the Valley", 89.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 107.

commemorating José Antonio and Franco.¹⁰⁴ (While this commemoration, both of July 18 and in postcard form, would have been under the initiative of the Fundación Francisco Franco, and not the government directly, one must remember that the federal government has been discovered to be paying money to the foundation.)

More recently, the site has become less a focus of commemoration and more an open-ended question. In 2006, only 4,000 attended the mass sponsored by the Fundación Francisco Franco on Sunday, November 19.¹⁰⁵ Another 4,000 people visited the site on November 20,¹⁰⁶ attending a mass to honor the memory of Franco and José Antonio.¹⁰⁷ In 2006, the Fundación Francisco Franco asked that the commemorations in honor of Franco and José Antonio be free of “political symbols,” an overly optimistic request. This request was made because the government ordered so; they apparently threatened to close down the Valley of the Fallen if individuals did not surrender their Francoist-era flags at the door. According to the “Law of Historical Memory,” passed in summer 2006, it is no longer allowed to hold “political acts” at the Valley of the Fallen nor may the site exalt the Spanish Civil War or its protagonists (Franco is mentioned specifically). In addition, the Catholic Church no longer wants to be associated with the ultra-right. On November 21, 2006 the abbot in charge of the site, Anselmo Álvarez

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 100.

¹⁰⁵ Pablo X. de Sandoval, "Conmemoración 'ultra' del 20-N," *El País (Madrid)*, 20 November 2006.

¹⁰⁶ Pablo X. de Sandoval, "El Valle de los Caídos quiere liberarse de los 'ultras': el abad de la basílica se opone a las exaltaciones franquistas del 20-N," *El País (Madrid)*, 21 November 2006.

¹⁰⁷ I was there that day; the majority of those present were either between 50 and 70, old enough to have admired Franco and José Antonio, but not old enough to remember the post-war repression, or 30 and under, so young that they were born after the end of the dictatorship. Most of the visitors were Spanish, with the exception of a few tourists and a few European skinheads, including a group of Germans with a banner that displayed the swastika and the yoke and arrows, symbolically linking the Nazis and the Falange. The younger visitors were the most demonstrably fascist – posing their toddlers in the fascist salute, taking pictures waving the Falange banner. Clearly, visiting the Valley of the Fallen on November 20 is no longer a chance to “remember” José Antonio, but an activity designed to signify one’s identification with an alternate version of Spain – either a stable dictatorship or a fascist state.

Navarette, announced that he would be willing to hold a mass at the Valley of the Fallen in honor of any person – even one who had been hated by Franco and the Nationalists. The abbot believes that the site should come to be what many have claimed – a site of reconciliation¹⁰⁸ – because the site is a Catholic¹⁰⁹ one, and “Before God there are neither winners nor losers.”¹¹⁰ The abbot still failed to accurately represent the history of the site – he refused to admit that it was constructed by prison labor – but this rejection of Francoist ideology by not only the federal government but also the Catholic Church implies that the Valley of the Fallen could finally be moving away from its Francoist origins.

Conclusions: Calculated Ambiguity

What is the overall impression that a visitor to the Valley of the Fallen receives? It is clearly a monument to Catholicism, an impressive burial place, and it references the armed forces and some event which happened between 1936 and 1939 in which some number of people “fell.” Were José Antonio Primo de Rivera and Francisco Franco two of those people? The monument is so open-ended that unless one has prior knowledge or some sort of guide book, one would never know. In fact, contrary to the intentions of its planners, to understand the monument as more than a Spanish basilica, one does have to go with “an open book and a guide to know that ‘this’ was constructed for ‘that.’” As

¹⁰⁸ King Juan Carlos, a symbol of reconciliation for many Spaniards, declared years earlier that he believed the site should be turned into a monument to all those who died in the Spanish Civil War. van Hensbergen, *Twentieth-Century Icon*, 324.

¹⁰⁹ The Catholic Church, of course, did not always view things this way. During the war, the church was on Franco’s side, in large part because they were scared of the sacrilegious nature of the Republicans. However, by late 1960s, the Church had come to view its role in the war with shame. In 1977, a Spanish prelates summed the situation up, saying, “The majority of the Spanish clergy today considers the attitude of the Church during the Civil War as a sort of sin to be washed away.” Herbert Rutledge Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica!: A Study of Journalism, Diplomacy, Propaganda, and History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 398.

¹¹⁰ de Sandoval, “El Valle de los Caídos quiere liberarse de los ‘ultras’.”

Paloma Aguilar notes, in Spain today there exist “ongoing doubts” about what the monument is supposed to represent. She says, “It is a monument infested with religious symbols, but lacking any evident political message in that the main tenets of the Movement do not even appear, nor any words penned by Franco or any other written text.”¹¹¹ The site is an example of “calculated ambiguity”¹¹² – it glorifies Franco and his state, without associating it to any one ideology. In 2001, 504,000 people visited the Valley of the Fallen¹¹³ – an impressive number given that it is a very difficult place to access. But these people could not have increased their knowledge of Spanish history, the Spanish Civil War, José Antonio or Franco by visiting the site. There is no message of the monument, no lesson that all visitors take from it, no universal experience at the site. It is a monument that links to the past without teaching about the past. The only lesson that can be seen to be taught by the monument is that Franco and José Antonio belong together in death, which is in itself a revision of history.

Very recently, some major attempts have been made to change the meaning of the site. *Izquierda Unida* (IU; United Left) asked that the Valley of the Fallen be officially removed from the “Imperial Route” and the socialists of the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE; Spanish Worker’s Socialist Party) agreed that this step should be taken. At the time that the request was made, the *Partido Popular* (PP; Popular Party) was in power and decided that the Valley of the Fallen should remain on the Imperial Route because it was the second most visited site in the community of Madrid;¹¹⁴ since then, the PSOE has come to power, giving some possibility that the status of the monument

¹¹¹ Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 81-83.

¹¹² José Luis de la Granja Sainz and José Angel Echániz, *Gernika y la Guerra Civil: symposium, 60 aniversario del bombardeo de Gernika (1997), Gernikazarra bilduma; 1* (Gernika-Lumo, Spain: Gernikazarra Historia Taldea, 1998), 134.

¹¹³ Halper, “Voices from the Valley”, 99.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 128-30.

may change. This is clearly indicated in the official changes at the Valley of the Fallen, symbolized by the restrictions introduced in 2006. Many on the left have asked that a visitor's center be added, to help explain the site, in a consistent way, to visitors.¹¹⁵ It is clear, therefore, that the Valley of the Fallen has the potential to change its meaning, moving away from its Francoist origins. However, for the time being, the site remains an ambiguous one, with no clear message to the visitor.

¹¹⁵ de Sandoval, "El Valle de los Caídos quiere liberarse de los 'ultras'."

Figure 2.2³⁶¹
José Antonio, with arm outstretched
in the fascist salute and the red and
black Falange flag, which displays
the yolk and arrows



Figure 2.3³⁶²
On the way to El Escorial, José Antonio's casket is carried on the shoulders
of Falangists, through the ruins of Madrid's University City

³⁶¹ Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War, 1936-39*, 1st Grove Press ed. (New York: Grove Press, 1986), 26.

³⁶² Tomás Borrás, *El Madrid de José Antonio* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Madrileños, 1953), 47.



Figure 2.4
The front entrance
to the Valley
of the Fallen

Figure 2.5³⁶³

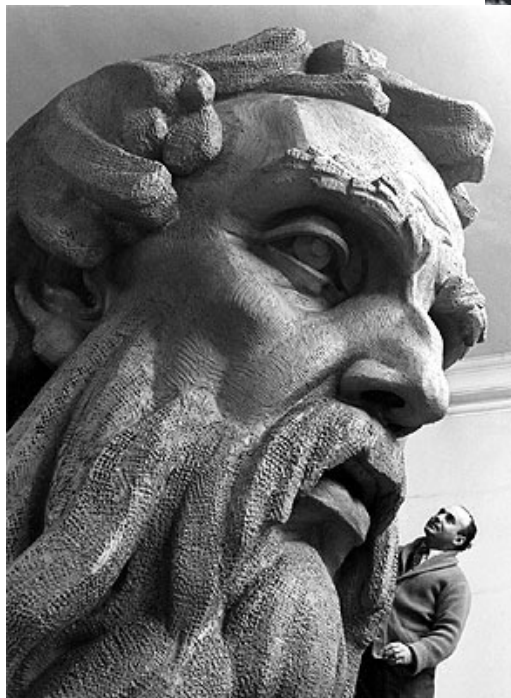


Figure 2.6³⁶⁴
Juan de Ávalos with one
of the four evangelicals

³⁶³ *Monumento nacional de Santa Cruz del Valle de los Caídos: guía turística*, 12, corr. y aum. ed. (Madrid: Editorial Patrimonio Nacional, 1977).

³⁶⁴ Diego Méndez, *El Valle de los Caídos: idea, proyecto y construcción*, 1a ed. ([Spain]: Fundación de la Santa Cruz del Valle de los Caídos, 1982).

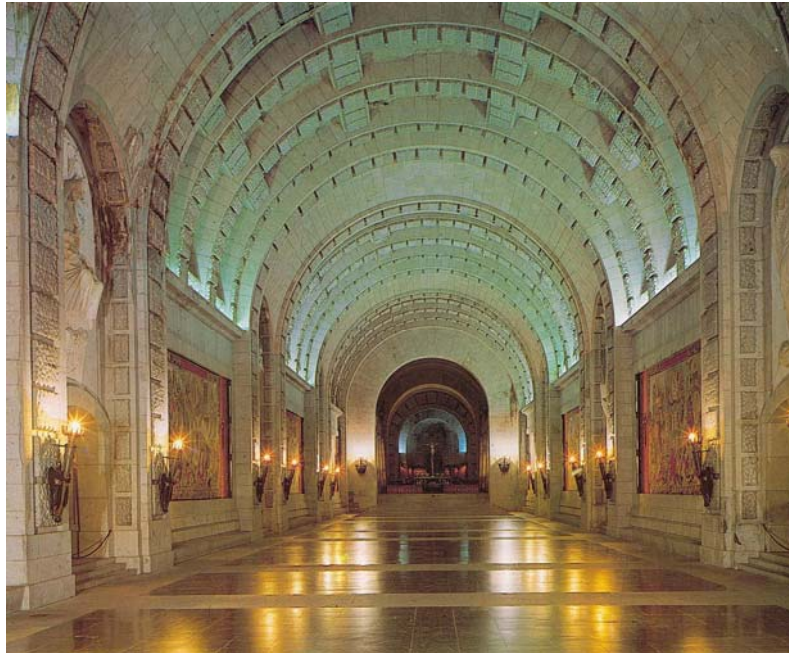


Figure 2.7³⁶⁵
The main nave of
the basilica



Figure 2.8
One of six chapels in
central nave
This one is dedicated to
the patroness of the army

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 118.



Figure 2.9³⁶⁶
The bas-relief that Franco had intended for the central nave



Figure 2.10³⁶⁷
One of the tapestries that was installed instead

³⁶⁶ Ibid., 130.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 135.



Figure 2.11³⁶⁸
The central dome



F

Figure 2.12
The “Chapel of the Descending” with the only text on site
“Fallen / For God and Spain/ 1936-1939”

³⁶⁸ Ibid., 143.

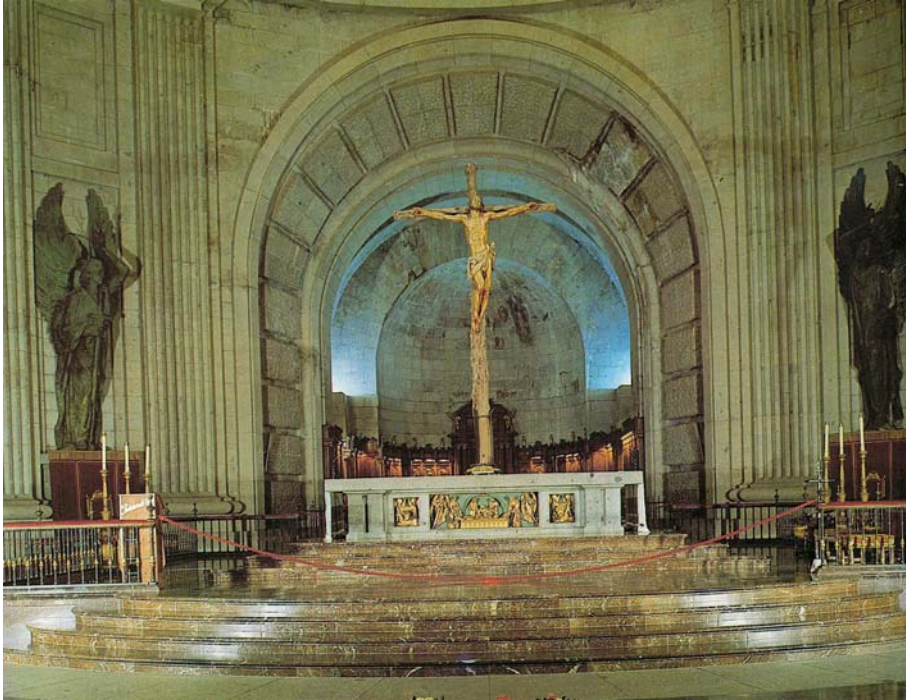


Figure 2.13³⁶⁹

The front of the central altar

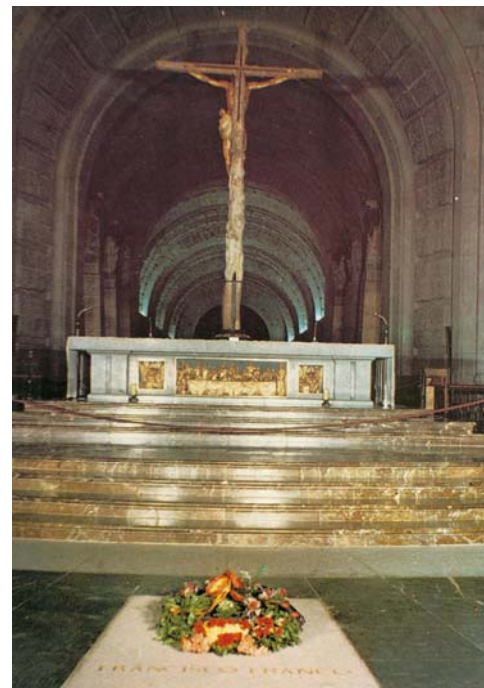
The flowers on top of José Antonio Primo de Rivera's grave can just be seen in the foreground

Figure 2.14³⁷⁰

Franco's tomb behind the central altar

Both images come from Diego Méndez's architect guide to the monument, published in 1982

It is no coincidence that Franco's tomb is depicted, while José Antonio's is only alluded at; rather, this is yet another indication of the marginalization of José Antonio in the Valley of the Fallen as in Spanish politics during the dictatorship



³⁶⁹ Ibid., 154.

³⁷⁰ Ibid., 155.



Figure 2.15³⁷¹
The Valley of the Fallen on
November 20, 2005

Figure 2.16³⁷²



Figure 2.17
Note the Spanish
flag with
Franco's seal; at
least in theory,
this flag was not
allowed on site
in 2006

³⁷¹ José Asenjo, "Seguimiento escaso de los actos: El aniversario de la muerte de Francisco Franco ha estado más presente en los medios que en la calle," *El Mundo (Madrid)*, 21 November 2005.

³⁷² Ibid.

Memory of Federico García Lorca in Granada: *La ruta lorquiana*

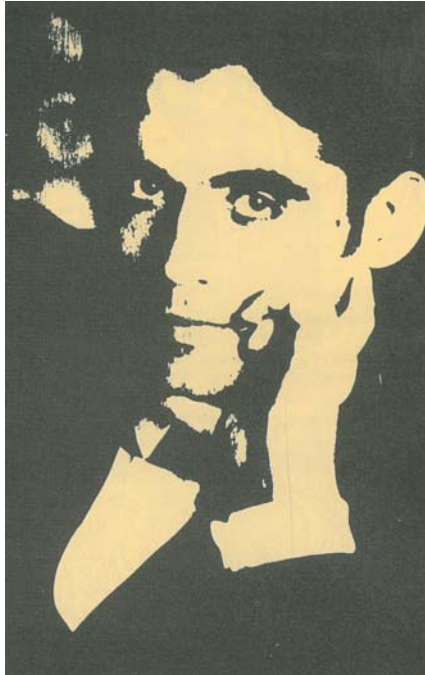


Figure 3.1¹

“When the pure shapes sank
under the chirping of daisies,
I knew they had murdered me.
They combed the cafés, graveyards, and churches for me,
pried open casks and cabinets,
destroyed three skeletons in order to rip out their gold teeth.
But they couldn’t find me anymore.
They couldn’t find me?
No. They couldn’t find me.
But they discovered the sixth moon had fled against the torrent,
and the sea – suddenly! – remembered
the names of all its drowned.” – Excerpt from “Fable of Three Friends to Be Sung in
Rounds” by Federico García Lorca²

¹ Antonio Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros* (Fuente Vaqueros, Spain: Casa-Museo Federico García Lorca, 1998), 48-49.

² This is the last stanza of the poem, which was published in the volume *Poeta en Nueva York* (Poet in New York). The volume *Collected Poems* seems to have a typo in their printing – in the Spanish version of the poem, the 5th to last line is “¿No me encontraron?” clearly denoting the sentence as a question. In the English version of the poem, which is published beside the Spanish version, the question mark has been removed. I have decided to include the question mark as it was in the Spanish text. Federico García Lorca, Christopher Maurer, and Catherine Brown, *Collected Poems* (New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2002), 647.

Federico García Lorca was a Spanish poet, playwright, and intellectual; he is perhaps the best known Spanish author of the contemporary period, both in Spain and around the world. During the Second Republic, he associated himself with the republican ideals, though he was not a politician. As a result of this, and his tenuous relationship with the Granadine elite, Lorca was taken from Granada into the countryside on either August 18 or August 19, 1936 (one month after the start of the war) and summarily executed, as were many other Spaniards at the time. His name and works were taboo for much of the Francoist period, and it was only with the death of Franco that it became possible to talk about the circumstances surrounding his death. Even then, however, because of the atmosphere of the Transition, there was never an attempt by any official body to fully resolve the situation. His literary importance, especially in Granada, led a number of small groups (intellectuals, local government officials) to work to create monuments and museums to Lorca in the places where he was born, lived, and died, but these works are products of the Transition and thus tend to fail to really delve into Lorca's complex identity and the contentious issues surrounding his death. The only exception to this rule is the town of Fuente Vaqueros, which has a different political perspective and thus a different view of Lorca. The three sites of the *Ruta lorquiana* (Lorca Route) – the Huerta de San Vicente, Fuente Vaqueros, and the García Lorca Park in Alfacar – have each dealt with Lorca's legacy as it suits the directors of these organizations, creating a representation of Lorca in these sites of memory that is historically accurate, but inconsistent and incomplete.

“I Knew They Had Murdered Me”

In the summer of 1936, Lorca left Madrid and went home to Granada.¹ Unfortunately for Lorca, a few days later the Spanish Civil War broke out and Granada was taken by the Nationalists. The results were “daily executions of left-wing prisoners” and “assassination squads [that] acted with impunity, butchering and torturing and reducing the population to a state of absolute panic.”² The insurgents who had taken control of the city wanted to strengthen their control, so they killed any who they thought posed a threat, like Lorca.³ He moved in with friends of his, the Rosales brothers, who were members of the Falange, hoping that this would protect him. However, a few days later, in mid-August 1936, a warrant was signed (perhaps only metaphorically) for Lorca’s arrest, either on the initiative of the governor of the province of Granada, Juan Valdés Leal, or according to the orders of military command in Sevilla, the brutal Gonzalo Queipo de Llano y Sierra, or that of Commandant José Valdés Leal, the first Civil Governor of Granada in July 1936.⁴

After his detention, there is no written record of what happened to Lorca, but based on testimony and what is known about similar cases at the same time, the following seems to be true. Lorca was probably taken, from Granada to nearby Víznar, in the middle of the night of August 17-18 and killed, along the highway between Víznar and neighboring Alfacar, in the early morning of August 18, but it is just as possible that Lorca was killed the next day.⁵ He was then buried nearby, either in a ravine (in Víznar)

¹ Eduardo Castro, *Muerte en Granada: la tragedia de Federico García Lorca* (Madrid: Akal, 1975), 39.

² Ian Gibson, *Federico García Lorca: A Life*, 1st American ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989), 450.

³ Castro, *Muerte en Granada*, 78.

⁴ Gibson, *Federico García Lorca: A Life*, 462. Ian Gibson, *Lorca's Granada: A Practical Guide* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), 29.

⁵ Gibson, *Federico García Lorca: A Life*, 464.

or next to an olive tree (in Alfacar),⁶ depending on whose story one should believe.⁷ Lorca's death was never recorded in 1936, and was only confirmed by rumors.⁸ In 1940, after years of inquiry on the part of Lorca's friends and acquaintances, the Spanish authorities finally issued a death certificate for Lorca, which said that he had died "in the month of August 1936 as a result of wounds produced by an act of war" and that his body "was found on the 20th day of that month on the highway between Víznar and Alfacar."⁹ As with most of the deaths of those who were on the losing side of the war, the winning side deliberately obfuscated facts in an attempt to lay blame elsewhere.

During the dictatorship, books and articles published in Spain on the subject of Lorca's death were censored and "Lorca's writings were banned until 1954, when Franco authorized the publication of a new edition of what was called, misleadingly, 'Obras Completas,' [Complete Works] but even then the circumstances of his death remained off-limits."¹⁰ In 1966, to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Lorca's death, La Casa de América en Granada, a publishing company, compiled a short pamphlet with original poems written by five Granadine poets.¹¹ Two editions of this pamphlet were created. The first stated that the motive of publication was to recognize the anniversary of the death of Lorca. This version was censored. The second version, authorized by the state,

⁶ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 44.

⁷ While Lorca is certainly the best known person to have been killed at Víznar, "It was not only the poet Federico García Lorca who had been shot in Granada, but thousands of others too." Just like Franco, Lorca's grave site is the grave site of many others. But, as the common people are not generally monumentalized or written about, many forget this. Like Lorca, these people were killed for their political sympathies, or perhaps for more petty reasons. These killings happened on both sides of the war, of course, but were hardest on the Republican side because the families of the dead were never able to mourn or commemorate their loved ones." Richards, *A time of silence*, 40.

⁸ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 25.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁰ Kolbert, "Looking for Lorca."

¹¹ Although my source does not explicitly state why they chose the work of poets to celebrate Lorca, despite the fact that the content of the poems seems to have little to do with Lorca, it can be presumed that the goal was to recognize other poets from Granada.

did not include this explanation of why the pamphlet was being published; the objective of the book – commemorating the death of Lorca – was silenced.¹² In general, the problematic (leftist, homosexual, etc.) aspects of Lorca were off-limits during the dictatorship, while the Lorca of flamenco was allowed, because this was good for tourism, as it portrayed Granada as a romantic destination and hid the more humble realities of the city.¹³

Between Lorca's death in 1936 and the end of Franco's dictatorship in 1975, a number of books would be published about Lorca's death and burial, but due to censorship and the lack of a free exchange of ideas, the information that would reach the Spanish public was either incomplete or misleading. The first book published that made reference to the death of Lorca and the site of his burial was *The Face of Spain*, written by Gerald Brenan and published, only in English, in 1950.¹⁴ The first Spanish language book on the subject was written by Lorca's Irish biographer, Ian Gibson; while written in Spanish, it was published in France and readers in Spain only had access to it if they could successfully smuggle it into the country. Despite the publication of books in Spanish about the death of Lorca, the works of Brenan, Gibson, and Marie Lafranque (the French authority on the death of Lorca) remained outlawed in Spain while Franco lived.¹⁵

There were books on the subject published in Spain, but they tended to be far less accurate. One version of Lorca's death, published in a Spanish newspaper in 1972, said that the blame could not be placed on the Falange, because the Falangists "far from

¹² Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 56.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹⁴ Castro, *Muerte en Granada*, 10-11.

¹⁵ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 68.

killing Federico, hid him,”¹⁶ which confuses the Rosales brothers, three Falangists who did hide Lorca, with the Falangists as an organization, who, along with the military leaders, were in charge of the province and were responsible for carrying out many of the mass executions at the time. A book which similarly favors the Falangists is *García Lorca, asesinado: toda la verdad* (*García Lorca, Assassinated: The Complete Truth*). Published in 1975 by José Luis Vila-San-Juan, the book may not have been accurate, but it was the first time in which the title page of a book mentioned the assassination of Lorca.¹⁷ The first Spaniard to publish a more accurate book on the subject seems to have been Eduardo Castro, whose *Muerte en Granada* (*Death in Granada*) was also published in 1975, as Franco was dying. In the introduction to his book, Castro gives the justification that this book needed to be published to combat “the general ignorance in Spain regarding the death of Federico García Lorca.”¹⁸ Castro claims that, regarding the question as to how Lorca died, “it is still not known in Spain the exact answer, a question which is still without solution, official or unofficial, even after 39 years since it was first asked in that confusing and jumbled land where brothers kill brothers without knowing why”¹⁹ and that some Spaniards continued to believe that Lorca’s death was accidental.²⁰

It is, therefore, hardly surprising given the dictatorship that few Spaniards knew about the circumstances of Lorca’s death through 1975, but this has changed significantly since the Transition. Foreign books on the death of Lorca are now published in Spain, newspapers write about the topic without fear of censorship, and

¹⁶ Castro, *Muerte en Granada*, 13.

¹⁷ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 68-69.

¹⁸ Castro, *Muerte en Granada*, 7.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 97.

multiple documentaries and movies have been produced on the subject.²¹ However, it is unclear how much of this was available, or talked about, in the years of the Transition – from 1975 to the mid-1980s. During these years, Lorca was seen as a cultural figure,²² the icon of the new Spanish intelligentsia, and it was widely claimed that he had not been political, despite his clear ties to the Second Republic's performing arts and education initiatives.²³ At the same time, local groups decided that, either due to moral imperative or the desire to attract tourism, it was time to memorialize Lorca in the sites associated with his life and death. As a result, the *Ruta lorquiana* strongly reflects the “Pact of Silence” and other associated characteristics of the Transition. The ignorance about Lorca that existed during Franco's dictatorship has certainly disappeared, but it has been replaced with an almost exclusively literary view of Lorca.

La Huerta de San Vicente: Lorca's Summer Home

Lorca's summer home, once on the outskirts of Granada, since swallowed by the city, is one potential starting point of the *Ruta lorquiana*.²⁴ As Ian Gibson says in his book *Lorca's Granada*, a collection of Lorca related walking tours in and around Granada,

²¹ The most well-known the documentary *Lorca: muerte de un poeta* (Lorca: Death of a Poet), produced for Spanish television, and *The Disappearance of García Lorca*, a movie produced in the 1990s, starring a number of very popular actors. Juan Antonio Bardem, *Lorca: muerte de un poeta* (Madrid: Suevia Films, 1990), Videorecording, Marcos Zurinaga, *The Disappearance of García Lorca* (Culver City, CA: Columbia TriStar Home Video, 1997), Videorecording.

²² The same has happened with other Spanish writers. Alfonso R. Castelao, one of the great Galician writers of the 20th century was forced into exile after the civil war. After his death, Galician nationalist leaders embraced him as a literary and non-political figure, enabling them to use his memory without tackling his politics. Xosé Manoel Núñez Seixas, "History and Collective Memories of Migration in a Land of Migrants: The Case of Iberian Galicia," *History & Memory* 14, no. 1/2, 249.

²³ de Andrés and Cuéllar, *Atlas ilustrado*, 55, Preston, *Spanish Civil War*, 55.

²⁴ In addition to the sites that will be described – the Huerta de San Vicente in Granada, the Museo Casa Natal in Fuente Vaqueros and the Parque García Lorca in Alfacar – one could also include the reconstructed Lorca house in Valderrubio (once known as Asquerosa), where Lorca lived the second part of his childhood. But this site is a minor one, it does not receive nearly as many visitors as the first two and it is not as symbolic as the park, so I have left it of my discussion of the Lorca-related sites of memory that have had an influence in how Spaniards see their history.

“While the opening tour could have been designed to take us there [to Lorca’s birthplace], on the principle of first things first, it seems to me that most visitors will want to get their bearings in Granada before exploring the poet’s childhood paradise.”²⁵ In 1917, Lorca’s family moved to Granada where they rented an apartment to serve as their winter house, keeping a home in the town of Asquerosa²⁶ as a summer house.²⁷ Nine years later, in 1926, they decided that traveling to Asquerosa, now renamed Valderrubio,²⁸ was too much to do each summer, so they bought the Huerta de San Vicente, which would become the family’s summer home.²⁹ After the war, the García Lorca family left Granada, moving to Madrid and then away from Spain altogether, but the house continued to belong to them. During the years of the dictatorship, it was maintained by caretakers employed by the family.³⁰ In 1975, the *Ayuntamiento* (Town Hall) of Granada started to put into place a plan to build a six-lane bypass that would have separated the Huerta from the rest of the city of Granada.³¹ Outraged, Francisco García Lorca, Federico’s younger brother, led a campaign against the plan saying that, “The Huerta de San Vicente belongs to the city’s spiritual heritage.”³² As a result of this

²⁵ Gibson, *Lorca's Granada*, 1.

²⁶ The house in Asquerosa has also been turned into a museum, and thus can also be included on the *Ruta lorquiana*. However, it does not have the same symbolic charge as the three sites examined here – Lorca was not born there, he did not write his influential works there, and he is not buried there – so I have chosen not to include Asquerosa.

²⁷ Ian Gibson, “Los últimos días de García Lorca en Granada: La Huerta de San Vicente,” *El País* (Madrid), 17 August 1986, 22.

²⁸ The word *asquerosa* literally means “disgusting.” The name was later changed to Valderrubio.

²⁹ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 68.

³⁰ Docent-led tour of the Huerta de San Vicente, tape recorded, 16 June 2006. It should be pointed out that this reference to what happened during the dictatorship was made only after I explicitly asked the tour guide about that period.

³¹ Gibson, *Lorca's Granada*, 57-58, Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 67-68.

³² Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 68.

popular pressure, the plan was changed and the city decided to respond to popular interest in the site by acquiring it and turning it into a city-run museum.³³

In 1984, the *Ayuntamiento* bought the Huerta from the García Lorca family, and started to turn it into a “conventional memorial park.”³⁴ The house itself and the immediately surrounding grounds were preserved as they would have been in the years 1926-1936 when Lorca lived there, including, for example, the cypress trees planted by Lorca and his younger brother Francisco.³⁵ In sharp contrast with this preservation, the surrounding grounds were torn apart. The local plants were removed and replaced with a French garden, which lacks the shade needed to stay cool in the Andalusian heat.³⁶ Claude Couffon, one of Lorca’s French biographers, says of the changes made that “they have ruined the environment of the Huerta de San Vicente.”³⁷ Isabel García Lorca, one of Federico’s two sisters said that the “damaged” park was better than the plan for the highway, but that in general the *Ayuntamiento*’s plans showed faulty logic.³⁸ The house was opened as a museum in 1995, and with the exception of rotating temporary exhibitions in the upstairs rooms, the basic content has remained the same since then.³⁹

To enter the Huerta de San Vicente, one must go on a guided tour. There are three guides (all employees of the *Ayuntamiento*) who work at the Huerta. They speak Castilian, Catalan, English, and French and will offer multilingual tours to accommodate the needs of the visitors; they claim not to change the content of the tour when it is

³³ The city did not, however, respond to popular interest by preserving other Lorca-related sites in Granada. Every other house that he lived in has been torn down. *Ibid.*, 267.

³⁴ Gibson, *Lorca's Granada*, 85-86.

³⁵ When the monarchs Juan Carlo and Sofia came to visit the Huerta in 1998, they planted another tree next to the ones planted by the Lorca brothers in 1927. *Ibid.*, 89, Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 295.

³⁶ Docent-led tour of the Huerta de San Vicente, tape recorded, 16 June 2006.

³⁷ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 267.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 27.

³⁹ Docent-led tour of the Huerta de San Vicente, tape recorded, 16 June 2006.

offered in a language other than Spanish.⁴⁰ The Huerta also gives more targeted tours: for children's groups, school groups, groups of retirees, women from marginalized neighborhoods, and even prison inmates. Not counting these adapted tours, the Huerta receives 30,000 visitors every year, about half of whom are Spaniards.⁴¹ The tour of the house leaves every forty-five minutes and lasts half an hour; it is a rapidly paced tour and does not leave time for any individual to contemplate any of the objects at length.

The tour of the Huerta goes through a house which has been filled with artifacts related to Lorca. There is original furniture (including one of two pianos owned by Lorca), one original rug, and much artwork on the walls –drawings by Lorca and paintings by his friends (including Rafael Alberti and Salvador Dalí), dedicated to Lorca. There are also framed copies of Lorca's letters, especially letters that make reference to the Huerta. In Lorca's bedroom (the center of this site) there are two pieces of furniture – a bed (covered with a crocheted throw made by his mother) and a desk, which the guide claimed is the same desk at which Lorca sat to finalize such works as *Llanto por la muerte de Ignacio Sánchez Mejías*, *Bodas de sangre*, *Yerma*, and *El público*. Among other small pictures, on the wall is a large poster from La Barraca, the touring theater group that Lorca led during the years of the Second Republic.⁴² This room, with its balcony, is also very interesting because it is almost certainly the room about which Lorca was writing

⁴⁰ When I took the tour of the Huerta, there was one American who spoke no Spanish in the group, so I was lucky enough to be able to hear the tour in both languages. In general, the tour guide gave the exact same information to both audiences, but when her commentaries varied slightly when giving background information. She, for example, explained more about the Spanish Civil War in English than she did in Spanish, presumably because she assumed that an American would know little about the subject, while a Spaniard would be fully informed. However, given the general comments I have heard in Spain to the contrary, that Spanish schools tend not to teach about the Civil War, this is yet another indication of Spaniards going to sites of memory and not receiving the full story related to the site. Even in English, however, the guide did not mention Lorca's death – when the Spanish Civil War was mentioned, she was talking about Manuel Ángeles Ortiz, a friend of Lorca's who had to go into exile after the war.

⁴¹ Interview with the bookstore employee, José Luis, tape recorded, 16 June 2006.

⁴² The guide, of course, did not mention the words Second Republic when pointing out the poster.

when he wrote the poem “Despedida” (Farewell) in the collection *Canciones*,⁴³ the most famous line of which is, “If I die, leave the balcony open!”

After going through the ground floor (living rooms and kitchen) and Lorca’s bedroom upstairs, the tour ends in the other bedrooms on the second floor which are being used for temporary exhibitions. The temporary exhibitions, like the permanent artwork and letters displayed on the walls around the house, tend to focus on the literary and artistic work of Lorca and his friends. According to the website of the Huerta,⁴⁴ since 1995 there have been expositions on the following topics, among others: Lorca’s gardens (the inaugural exhibition); representations of guitars in the vanguard; Francisco García Lorca; and artists contemporary to Lorca, including such names as Dalí, Jean Cocteau, and Joaquín Peinado, none of whom relate to Lorca in any political sense. The past three exhibitions (from fall 2005 to fall 2006)⁴⁵ have been illustrations of Lorca’s epic poem *Llanto por la muerte de Ignacio Sánchez Mejías*, a homage by Francisco Goyes to Lorca, consisting of art inspired by Lorca’s poems, and a collection of original Lorca drawings and manuscripts, on loan from the Fundación Federico García Lorca in Madrid.⁴⁶

Like most sites of memory, there are some public events held at the Huerta de San Vicente. However, rather than referencing Lorca specifically, they seem to invoke the spirit of the performances held in the 1920s and 1930s at the Huerta de San Vicente, organized by Lorca and his siblings, designed to entertain family and friends. The

⁴³ Gibson, *Lorca's Granada*, 87.

⁴⁴ As of December 2006, this can be accessed at www.huertadesanvicente.com.

⁴⁵ As of March 2007, no information has been posted about exhibitions for the current year.

⁴⁶ This foundation, currently in Madrid, is planning a move to Granada. It is unclear exactly how the two Lorca sites in the city of Granada, the Huerta and the foundation’s headquarters, will relate, but it seems possible that the foundation will take over administration of the Huerta. It seems unlikely, however, that this will change the content of the museum significantly, as the museum was designed in conjunction with Lorca’s extended family who set up the foundation and continue to have a role in its affairs. Docent-led tour of the Huerta de San Vicente, tape recorded, 16 June 2006.

majority of the public events are poetry readings and concerts.⁴⁷ Over the years, the Huerta has sponsored more than eighteen lectures, ranging from original poetry to commentary on Lorca's work. The first concert held at the Huerta was in July 1996, and featured very well-known Spanish artists, all of major importance in their respective genres, ranging from Enrique Morente (flamenco) to Tomatito (rap) to Carlos Núñez (Spanish Celtic). Since then, many more Spanish musicians have performed at the Huerta. In addition, the Huerta sponsors Granada's Jazz Festival and has also sponsored such artists as Bob Dylan and Sting who, due to the large crowds involved, did not perform at the Huerta itself, but rather in larger venues in Granada. The Huerta has also sponsored the production of five plays, two of which were performed at the Huerta; the others were performed elsewhere in Granada (one was a theatrical version of the poem *Llanto por la muerte de Ignacio Sánchez Mejías*).

Generally speaking, the Huerta de San Vicente remains fairly unconnected with the death of Lorca. In 1995, Laura de los Ríos, Lorca's niece and the first director of the Huerta, attended the annual August 18th commemoration of the death of Lorca at the supposed site of his burial,⁴⁸ but this seems to be an exception related more to the importance of 1995 as the "Year of the Reconciliation" and de los Ríos' position as a relative of Lorca, rather than to the importance of representatives of the Huerta going to the García Lorca Park. When asked whether she ever talks about the death of Lorca during the tour, one of the docents said:

If people ask about his death, I answer... This house is a house of life, of course. This is house in which the family lived from 1926 to 1936. This is a house of life. This is a house for the family where there were celebrations, dinners with families; this is a house of life, and therefore I only speak of this period. I only

⁴⁷ Previous visitors to the Huerta are listed on site's website: www.huertadesanvicente.com.

⁴⁸ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 271.

... speak about life. But, if someone asks me, I answer. But only if someone asks me. And if not, no, because this is a house of life.⁴⁹

While it may be true that the Huerta de San Vicente is a house of life, and therefore has nothing to do with Lorca's death, it is also true that Lorca was living in the Huerta at the start of the Spanish Civil War, until someone came looking for him and he went into hiding. The Huerta has a place in the story of Lorca's death, as Ian Gibson accurately points out in his book *Lorca's Granada*. Therefore, the tour guide's unwillingness to talk about Lorca's death seems to imply that, for some reason, the directors of Huerta de San Vicente have made a concerted choice to be associated with Lorca only as a literary figure, as can be seen in the exhibitions, concerts, poetry readings, and the general unwillingness of the employees of the site to talk about the politics of Lorca.⁵⁰

It is hard to ascertain what the average visitor to the Huerta expects, why he or she chooses to visit. In 1986, Ian Gibson claimed that 50 years after Lorca's death, the site had become a place of "pilgrimage for lovers of the work and admirers of the life of the Granadine genius."⁵¹ This is an unusual statement, given that in 1986 the Huerta had just been purchased by the city of Granada, which was in the process of turning it into a museum open to the public. In fact, a reporter for one of Spain's major newspapers, *El País*, based out of Madrid, stated that:

The Huerta de San Vicente, where the Lorca family lived until the war, is unknown to the majority of Granadines, even more so now that it is literally covered by the modern buildings along the Camino de Ronda.⁵² There are no

⁴⁹ Docent-led tour of the Huerta de San Vicente, tape recorded, 16 June 2006.

⁵⁰ I asked the bookstore employee what the Huerta thought about the potential exhumation of Lorca. He said that the Huerta had no opinion. When I asked him what his personal opinion was, he would not answer my question. Interview with the bookstore employee, José Luis, tape recorded, 16 June 2006.

⁵¹ Gibson, "Últimos días de García Lorca en Granada," 22.

⁵² The Camino de Ronda is a street which adjoins the park surrounding the Huerta. Traditionally, any street named Camino de Ronda (the round road, or the patrolling road) designated the walls that either literally or figuratively marked the edge of a city. Under Franco, enormous, ugly apartment

cultural or artistic guides to the city that recall its presence. That which in the 1930s was a part of the fruitful Granadine *vega*⁵³ is now asphalt, and it is hard for the traveler to imagine that between the tall blocks of apartments, 100 meters away, is the beginning of the farm land, and that just in this limit between the rural and the urban can be found that mythic home.⁵⁴

This does not, of course, disprove what Gibson has to say, but it does create a very different picture than Gibson relates. Twenty years ago, it would seem, the Huerta, not yet open to the public, was hidden from public view. The only visitors were Lorca aficionados, who had to have done a good deal of independent research to locate the Huerta. Visitors were not learning anything, rather they were taking a sort of pilgrimage to be closer to Lorca and his works. The profile of the average visitor to the Huerta has certainly changed, but the information they receive from visiting has not changed significantly. As one of the tour guides pointed out, there is a range of visitors on any given tour: "There's you, and it interests you, or there's these women who just left who weren't interested in anything. They just want to see the furniture and that's enough,"⁵⁵ and she has to make sure that the tour is appropriate for both types and those in between, who know a little about Lorca and are interested in more than just the furniture. However, in trying to create a tour that will satisfy the many types of visitors, the Huerta has stopped at the lowest common denominator. Whether foreign or local, it is probable that the majority of visitors already know that Lorca was a literary figure, and

blocks were constructed there, blocking the view from the Huerta to the older, more attractive parts of Granada up the hill.

⁵³ Fertile plain

⁵⁴ "La huerta de San Vicente, donde los Lorca vivieron hasta la guerra es desconocida por la mayoría de los granadinos, todavía más ahora al estar literalmente tapiada por los edificios modernos del camino de Ronda. Ninguna guía cultural o artística de la ciudad recordaba su existencia. Lo que en los años treinta era una porción de la feraz vega granadina es hoy asfalto y al viajero le cuesta imaginar que entro los altos bloques de pisos, a un centenar de metros, pueda comenzar la tierra de labor y que justo en el límite de lo rural y lo urbano se halle la mítica vivienda." Alejandro V. García, "Granada recuerda la última madrugada de García Lorca: El autor de 'Romancero gitano' fue asesinado hace 50 años en el límite entre Víznar y Alfacar," *El País (Madrid)*, 19 August 1986.

⁵⁵ Docent-led tour of the Huerta de San Vicente, tape recorded, 16 June 2006.

that he associated with some of the most well-known and fashionable artists of his time period, the only subjects covered in the temporary exhibitions and articles sold in the bookstore. Beyond this, the visitor experiences Lorca's belongings and little else, other than perhaps a sense of inspiration from being at the site where Lorca lived and worked. There is no intent to educate the visitor,⁵⁶ nor is there any particular agenda to the site, other than perhaps an aversion to the more controversial aspects of Lorca's life and works. Despite its claims to be a "historical and literary site of memory,"⁵⁷ The Huerta de San Vicente, therefore, is a void of historical memory, and while it is certainly deserving of a spot on the *Ruta lorquiana*, it does seem to merit the term "site of memory."

"As Stratford is For Shakespeare:" Fuente Vaqueros and Lorca

Federico García Lorca was born on June 5, 1898 in Fuente Vaqueros, a small town just 18 miles east of Granada. He lived there, in two different houses, until 1909, when the family moved to nearby Asquerosa (later renamed Valderrubio).⁵⁸ Of the two houses in which Lorca lived, only one remains – the house at Calle de la Trinidad, number 4.⁵⁹ This house belonged to Lorca's father's first wife – Matilde. She died barren, leaving the house to her husband, Federico García Rodríguez, who lived there with his second wife, Vicenta Lorca, Federico García Lorca's mother.⁶⁰ Both Federico

⁵⁶ This may, of course, be different in the specialized group visits, as prior knowledge for the entire group can be assumed and built upon. However, in all cases, I am focusing on what the individual visitor receives from the experience of attending these sites of memory, not what they might learn if they went in a group designed to encourage education.

⁵⁷ "Huerta de San Vicente" brochure, acquired 16 June 2006.

⁵⁸ Gibson, *Lorca's Granada*, ix.

⁵⁹ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 79.

⁶⁰ This information, supplied by Lorca's most prolific biographer, does not agree with what the docent at the Huerta de San Vicente had to say. She emphatically claimed that the house belonged to Lorca's father's first wife, and that the Lorca family never lived there, saying "The house in Fuente

and his younger brother, Francisco, were born in this first house; his sisters, both younger, were born after the family moved a house on Calle de la Iglesia, where they would live from 1902 to 1909.⁶¹ Even after moving away, Lorca would return to the town, as his father kept houses in the country for retreats.⁶²

Fuente Vaqueros, while more off the beaten path, seems for many reasons to be a more important site of memory than the Huerta de San Vicente. There are many potential reasons for this, like the numerous Lorca-related attractions of the town, and the fact that Fuente Vaqueros realized years before Granada the importance of opening Lorca's sites of memory to the public. But perhaps the most important reasons that Fuente Vaqueros' Lorca house receives more visitors than the Huerta de San Vicente⁶³

Vaqueros doesn't belong to the Lorca family. It has never belonged to the Lorca family... This house belonged to the first wife of Federico's father. When he remarried, the inheritance passed on to the nephews and nieces of this woman. So, they had to leave this house. This house does not belong, has never belonged, to the García Lorca family. Never. It has belonged to the other wife of Federico's father" (translation by the author). I cannot reconcile this emphatic negation with what Gibson has to say, other than to surmise that perhaps when Federico García Rodríguez died, the house passed to his first wife's family and not to his, thus creating a situation that Ian Gibson interpreted one way and the staff of the Huerta de San Vicente interpreted another. It is also possible, given the fact that the Huerta and the Museo Casa Natal in Fuente Vaqueros "compete" for visitors, that the Huerta intentionally exaggerates the facts to discredit the legitimacy of Fuente Vaqueros as a site of memory, but I have no further proof of this than the seemingly incorrect assertions made by one employee of the Huerta de San Vicente. Gibson, *Lorca's Granada*, 131.

⁶¹ Ibid., 135.

⁶² The guide at the Museo Casa Natal claimed that although Concha and Isabel, the younger sisters, never lived in the house on Calle de la Trinidad, that they had visited it and were thus familiar with its contents. This is a strange statement, as all the information available makes it seem as if this house was replaced by the second Fuente Vaqueros house, and it seems illogical to retain possession of two houses in the same town. Concha and Isabel's familiarity with the house could perhaps be explained by assuming that it did revert to the family of their father's first wife, but one might think that it would be unusual for children to spend time in their father's first wife's family's house when on vacation. Unfortunately, Ian Gibson, the only professional historian who has written about the history of the house has nothing to say as to whether Concha or Isabel are likely to have been familiar with the house in which their older brothers were born.

⁶³ Despite the fact that the Huerta de San Vicente, walking distance from the center of Granada, is much more accessible than the Museo Casa Natal in Fuente Vaqueros is, the Museo Casa Natal is the second most visited site in the province of Granada (after the world-renowned Alhambra), with the Huerta de San Vicente third. In fact, the Museo Casa Natal receives, on average, 100 visitors more per day than the Huerta de San Vicente. This statistic is from 1997, only two years after the Huerta opened, so that may have changed. However, since the Museo Casa Natal has been open longer and received more visitors, it remains true that more people have received the version of Lorca presented

are the commemorations of Lorca that have taken place in Fuente Vaqueros. Starting in 1931, the town has paid homage to the poet, recognizing him as an important citizen. As Ian Gibson notes,

When the Republic came in 1931, a Socialist council was elected in the village. One of the first things they did was to give the poet's name to Calle de la Iglesia, where he had lived from the age of four. (When the rebels took Fuente Vaqueros at the beginning of the Civil War, the street reverted to its old name.)⁶⁴

Interestingly, in this case, the town choose to commemorate Lorca not at the site of his birth home, but at the site of the home in which he lived a greater part of his life. After this 1931 tribute, Lorca would not be officially recognized again in his hometown until the death of Franco permitted greater freedom of expression.

In October of 1975, sensing that the end of the dictatorship was at hand,⁶⁵ and that, therefore, censorship had become less stringent, the neighborhood Peña de El Realejo in Granada decided to hold a tribute to Lorca. However, the dying regime was not disposed to such actions and the planner, Professor Juan Antonio Rivas, was fined 50,000 pesetas. With the death of Franco on November 20, Rivas and the other planners of this small tribute decided to expand their efforts into a larger public commemoration, planning “the largest homage to Lorca since his tragic death.”⁶⁶ Thirty-three intellectuals showed up to the second planning meeting – they would become the Commission of 33.⁶⁷ Aware of the delicate political situation, the Commission picked the date of Lorca's

by the Museo Casa Natal than the version presented at the Huerta. Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 280.

⁶⁴ Gibson, *Lorca's Granada*, 135.

⁶⁵ Franco suffered the first of three heart attacks on October 15, 1975 and then retired to his sickbed, where he remained until his death on November 20. Tusell, *Dictadura franquista y democracia, 1939-2004*, 268.

⁶⁶ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 73.

⁶⁷ Eduardo Castro was one of the 33; so was Antonio Ramos Espejo, whose investigative journalism and history of “el 5 a las 5” is the basis for *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros* – the only book on this subject. The other members were poets, sculptors, painters, journalists, humorists, editors, lawyers, professors, and students. *Ibid.*, 74.

birth, rather than that of his death, assuming that this would lead to better cooperation from the authorities, but they would not shy away from the issue of Lorca's death. Thus, the hour 5 PM was chosen, the same time that the famous bullfighter Ignacio Sánchez Mejías died; 5 o'clock on the dot, as Lorca noted in his legendary poem *Llanto por la muerte de Ignacio Sánchez Mejías*.⁶⁸ The organizers decided, therefore, to hold their tribute on the 5th (of June) at 5 PM (thus called, in Spanish, "el 5 a las 5") in the central plaza of Lorca's hometown – Fuente Vaqueros – physically separating the commemoration from the site of Lorca's death, but still symbolically linking it with death. The Commission then wrote a summons explaining the homage, in the hopes of attracting the "greatest number of political, cultural, and social personalities," both Spanish and foreign.⁶⁹ In total, 10,000 people, including Rafael Alberti, Lorca's friend and world-renowned poet, who had lived in exile in Argentina since the end of the Spanish Civil War, signed the summons, supporting the commemoration.⁷⁰ On May 12, the Commission submitted their plan to Manuel Fraga Iribarne, the Minister of the Interior, who had held that cabinet post under Franco as well. Luckily, even in the context of June 1976, the government conceded to the Commission of 33 the right to "one half-hour of supervised liberty"⁷¹ in which to honor Lorca as they chose.⁷²

⁶⁸ This is not the only time that the death of Ignacio Sánchez Mejías has been used as a parallel to Lorca's own death. In the 1997 movie, *The Disappearance of García Lorca*, Andy García, playing Federico García Lorca, recites the poem with increasing desperation, and throughout the movie, as the circumstances surrounding the death of Lorca are recreated, the image of a clock striking 5 recurs, reminding the audience of Lorca's impending death. Zurinaga, *The Disappearance of García Lorca*.

⁶⁹ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 75.

⁷⁰ Karmentxu Marin, "Seis mil personas en el homenaje a García Lorca: A las cinco de la tarde y en Fuentevaqueros," *El País (Madrid)*, 6 June 1976.

⁷¹ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 83.

⁷² The Commission also organized an information meeting to be held in Granada city after the tribute in Fuente Vaqueros; the meeting would take place in the School of Sciences at the University of Granada and the Royal Hospital and would cover such topics as La Barraca, the death of Lorca (this talk was given by Eduardo Castro), "Forty Years Later," and "Lorca and other Liberties." Thousands of people, "elderly and children, students and workers" would go to the Royal Hospital to see the

In response to this planned commemoration, the civil governor and leaders of the *Movimiento* planned a counter-homage, to be held on May 27 – the Catholic holiday Day of the Ascension – in an attempt to sanctify their commemoration, and not that of June 5. In response, the Lorca family, which had helped the Commission of 33 to plan “el 5 a las 5,” made a statement supporting the Commission’s homage as a “genuine and truly felt initiative” that they had helped to plan, thus implying that the counter-tribute was false and insincere.⁷³ In the counter-homage, which its planners referred to as the “official homage,” the speakers tried to discredit the Commission of 33 for being too intellectual and for reaching out to “illustrious persons” for their tribute. They claimed that “serenity and peace” in the village of Fuente Vaqueros was being replaced with the “hatred” brought by these outsiders “with their ideas.” Thus, the outsiders had interrupted something holy, with Christian sentiment as is appropriate for the Day of the Ascension; the outsiders’ imposition implied that they thought that residents of Fuente Vaqueros were not capable of planning a tribute on their own. In the words of the mayor,⁷⁴ José López Espigares, “Although I may then have grey hairs and not live to see it, time will come to show which of the convocations is cleaner and higher in its aim, which is more authentic and more heartfelt.”⁷⁵ This speech was followed by the renaming of the street on which Lorca had been born, Trinidad, to García Lorca. A plaque was also placed at his birth home, number 4, which said, “From the *Ayuntamiento* and the neighbors of Fuente Vaqueros to the illustrious poet Federico García Lorca,

accompanying exhibition, and a thundering applause greeted the surviving members of La Barraca who were able to attend. Ibid., 79-80.

⁷³ Ibid., 77-78.

⁷⁴ A Francoist mayor – the first elections after the death of Franco had not yet been held.

⁷⁵ Ironically, while López Espigares was trying to claim that the counter-homage would be validated in history, it can now be seen as a desperate attempt of the political elite to maintain control of public discourse as the world around them changed and the tribute planned by the Commission of 33 became an annual tradition. Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 78-79.

glory of Spanish letters, who was born in this house whose painful loss is felt by the children of town.” Or, as Antonio Ramos Espejo points out, the town feels the “painful loss” of the house.⁷⁶ This ambiguous language in the plaque, combined with the reference in Espigares’ speech to the “tragic disappearance” of Lorca are prime examples of the kind of void of memory that might have existed in Fuente Vaqueros if the democratic process had not worked, allowing other voices to give other depictions of what actually happened to Lorca.⁷⁷

Despite the attempts of the government of Fuente Vaqueros to damage the reputation of the Commission of 33, “el 5 a las 5” was a huge success. The plaza at Fuente Vaqueros was filled with 6,000 people from all over Spain,⁷⁸ many holding balloons painted with the word “Amnesty.”⁷⁹ The first words of the homage were pronounced by Pepe García Ladrón de Guevara, on behalf of the Commission:

Federico García Lorca died, executed in the ravine at Víznar. A poet has to be killed twice, once with death and once with forgetting. Therefore, and because we think the moment has arrived to remember his death and the death of countless others who died then in the same circumstance, we now call this assembly, as lovers of justice and liberty, and render them public homage in the same place and date that [Lorca] was born, 78 years ago. In the plaza on Fuente Vaqueros, today, on the 5th of June at 5 PM, it is our intention to break, here and forever, a forced silence, proclaiming, with the force of solidarity the manifesto of reconciliation, which will permit us to construct a Spain of and for all Spaniards.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Ibid., 79.

⁷⁷ It is clear that despite the attempts of the government of Fuente Vaqueros to discredit the efforts of the Commission of 33 that the increased openness in Spain by the spring of 1976 was allowing citizens to speak their minds. The Francoist mayor may have avoided mentioning the manner in which Lorca died, but, at the same time, the government-controlled publication *Cifra* even included the word “shot” in the notice about the tribute. Ibid.

⁷⁸ Marin, “Seis mil personas en el homenaje a García Lorca.”

⁷⁹ Amnesty was intended for those who fought on the losing side in the Spanish Civil War or had been members of left-wing parties at any point after 1934, both of which were considered criminal offenses. Liberty could have referred to any number of things, including freedom of expression and releasing political prisoners from jail, which would happen along with any true amnesty. A partial political amnesty was granted to Spaniards in July 1976; full amnesty was granted in May 1977.

⁸⁰ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 83.

Far from the meddling outsiders full of hatred and ideas portrayed by the mayor of Fuente Vaqueros, the goal of the Commission was to be able to tell the story of the death of Lorca and of so many others who suffered repression at the hands of Franco's government and allied groups, during and after the Spanish Civil War. Poetry was recited, written to honor Lorca, but also some of Lorca's own poetry, including, of course, *Llanto por la muerte de Ignacio Sánchez Mejías*. This and a number of speeches took up the entire thirty minutes. At this point, the microphones were cut, but Juan Antonio Rivas decided to keep talking, to summarize the content of the commemoration. He said, among other things, that

Federico García Lorca was assassinated in Granada in 1936 by the fascist forces who gave way to the current political regime... Despite the reformist declarations, systematic repression of popular culture continues... For many years, Lorca was proscribed in the official Francoist culture. Now, we observe a crude attempt to appropriate Lorca, trying to separate his literary work from his political projection, using, for this manipulation, all of the most important means of social communication, which continue to be controlled by the current officials, who share their goals with those of the Francoist state.⁸¹

Shortly thereafter, Rivas finished speaking and the first “el 5 a las 5” ended,⁸² peacefully (despite the fears of the government, which had imported hundreds of policemen and Civil Guards for the occasion⁸³). This showed that, despite the fears of many Spaniards, publicly talking about the past would not necessarily lead to another civil war; “opening the wounds” of the past did not inherently lead to instability. In fact, the only thing that the first “el 5 a las 5” led to was a larger public space for discussion of Lorca and more celebrations of “el 5 a las 5” – it has occurred every year since 1978 and the tribute is no longer limited to one half-hour; the planners of the commemoration are now able to

⁸¹ Ibid., 90.

⁸² For exceeding the allotted half-hour, three participants would be fined a total of 400,000 pesetas. Another speaker, Juan de Loxa, would be fined 10,000 pesetas for his speech at the talks held in Granada city after the commemoration in Fuente Vaqueros. Ibid., 92-93.

⁸³ Ibid., 81.

plan an entire day dedicated to the memory of Lorca.⁸⁴ June 5th has since been designated an official holiday in Fuente Vaqueros – officially, the day is called Freedom (Liberty) and Culture Day,⁸⁵ showing the importance of these two aspects of Lorca to the town of Fuente Vaqueros. Lorca is not just a cultural figure, he has political symbolism as well.

The other references to Lorca in Fuente Vaqueros seem to have followed from the success of the “5 a las 5.” Either through genuine interest in Lorca, or in an attempt to bring more people to Fuente Vaqueros, or, more probably, due to both, the town has expended a lot of energy into creating a fitting environment for admirers and students of Lorca looking to experience his life and work in his hometown. The first step in the process was the acquisition of the house at Calle de la Trinidad, renamed Calle Poeta García Lorca (Street of the Poet García Lorca), and the reopening of that house as a museum.

The house in which Lorca was born was bought by the *Diputación de Granada* (the Granada County Council)⁸⁶ and restored into a museum, which opened on July 29, 1986, in time for the 50th anniversary of Lorca’s death.⁸⁷ The Museo Casa Natal Federico García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros⁸⁸ is a large structure – the house itself has two stories,

⁸⁴ The commemoration was not held in 1977 because of the first national elections of the Transition, which were held on June 15. However, that December there was an exhibition in Granada commemorating 1976’s “el 5 a las 5.” In 1980, June 5 was the date of Corpus Christi, the most important Catholic holiday for Granadines, and, thus, “el 5 a las 5” was held the following Saturday, June 7. Ibid., 94, 95, 104, 149.

⁸⁵ According to www.andalucia.org, the Official Tourism Website of Andalucía. Accessed 26 November 2006.

⁸⁶ As a small town, the *Ayuntamiento* of Fuente Vaqueros did not have sufficient funds to handle this enterprise. Therefore, they requested that the *Diputación* handle the process of turning the house into a museum. The *Diputación* in turn created the *Patronato García Lorca* (the García Lorca Heritage Foundation) to oversee the operations of the museum. Docent-led tour of the Museo Casa Natal, tape recorded, 17 June 2006.

⁸⁷ Gibson, *Lorca's Granada*, 132.

⁸⁸ The museum is sometimes referred to as the Museo Casa Natal Federico García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros (Federico García Lorca Birth House Museum in Fuente Vaqueros) and sometimes as the Casa-Museo Federico García Lorca (The Federico García Lorca House and Museum). I have decided

a patio, and a smaller house on the other side of the patio.⁸⁹ The first floor of the main house is set up with original furniture and other original objects – photos, drawings, and documents relating to Lorca but, as the tour guide noted, the house is lacking “things, furniture, and details.”⁹⁰ The first floor includes sitting rooms, a kitchen, the room which belonged to Lorca’s parents, the bed in which he was born, and his crib in the adjoining room. Unlike the Huerta de San Vicente, however, the furniture is not the main focus of the museum.

More central to the memory of Lorca are the contents of the second floor and the adjoining house. The second floor, originally a storeroom, has been turned into a space for temporary exhibitions. Unlike the Huerta de San Vicente, there is no readily available comprehensive list of past exhibitions at the Museo Casa Natal, but the website and information gleaned on site gives some indication of the kind of expositions that have been held. These include many exhibitions similar to those at the Huerta de San Vicente, themed around the work of Lorca and of his contemporaries. However, there are some differences in the style of expositions at each museum. First of all, the Museo Casa Natal is not limited to Lorca’s artistic friends – past exhibitions have focused on Fernando de los Ríos (a Granadine academic, who was Lorca’s mentor and later served as a Minister of Education during the Second Republic, and Ambassador to the United States, exiled after Franco came to power)⁹¹ and Miguel Hernández (a poet contemporary to Lorca who died in a Francoist prison in 1942). These are intellectuals, of course, but political intellectuals who, like Lorca, suffered greatly for their support of

to use the term Museo Casa Natal because it is what the official website uses (<http://www.museogarcialorca.org/> Accessed 29 November 2006).

⁸⁹ As this second house opens onto a different street, it was presumably a separate house originally, which was purchased to expand the size of the museum.

⁹⁰ Docent-led tour of the Museo Casa Natal, tape recorded, 17 June 2006.

⁹¹ Martin, *Picasso's War*, 150.

the Second Republic, which would presumably need to be a key element in any exposition on their lives. The first temporary exhibition was about the first 10 years of “el 5 a las 5.”⁹² Secondly, the Museo Casa Natal does not avoid the death of Lorca in the same way that the Huerta de San Vicente does – in the summer of 2006, the entire upstairs floor was devoted to the theme of Lorca’s death in the context of the accompanying general repression in Granada in the summer of 1936. Using Ian Gibson’s personal archives,⁹³ the collection included testimonies, pictures, maps, and newspaper articles explaining how Lorca and many other others were executed at that time.⁹⁴ Finally, the Museo Casa Natal has two exhibition spaces, meaning that one can be used for something political, while the other can be used for something more “typical” of Lorca,⁹⁵ as was the case in the summer of 2006, when the adjoining house featured a temporary exhibit on the life and death Ignacio Sánchez Mejías. In sum, while the Museo Casa Natal may, on the surface, have similar exhibitions to those at the Huerta de San Vicente, it takes a different approach to the presentation of the material. Rather than shying away from the death of Lorca and his more political aspects, they seem to realize that Fuente Vaqueros has played an important part in the commemoration of the death

⁹² Subsequent exhibitions have also referenced “el 5 a las 5,” creating exhibitions to coincide with the special guests each year, as in 1989 when Rafael Alberti spoke at “el 5 a las 5” and at the same time Alberti was the subject of the Museo Casa Natal’s exhibition. Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 213, 240.

⁹³ Ian Gibson is a good friend of the Museo Casa Natal. When I was there in June 2006, he called the office to make plans for that summer’s commemoration of Lorca’s death.

⁹⁴ I was there in June and at that time the docent said that the curator had not yet decided how long the exhibition would stay up. He said that while it would be logical to keep it in place through August 2006 – the 70th anniversary of Lorca’s death – other concerns, primarily the importance of “pleasing” foreign tourists who tend to come during the summer, would mean that the exhibition might have been changed earlier than August. (Docent-led tour of the Museo Casa Natal, tape recorded, 17 June 2006.) I can find no information online to determine when the presentation was changed. However, whenever it ended, given the number of visitors to the museum, thousands of people did see this exhibition. And even if a large percentage of those visitors were, in fact, only interested in the furniture, they were at least led to the exposition by the tour guide and told to look around for a few moments. Therefore, even the most detached visitor would be likely to glean at least a small amount of information before moving on with the tour group.

⁹⁵ “Typical” of Lorca seems to mean typical of Lorca’s works.

of Lorca, and the average visitor to Fuente Vaqueros, therefore, may be interested in learning more about not just intellectual and artistic history but also political history.⁹⁶ Alternately, this may not be the profile of the average visitor; he or she may only be interested in furniture, but the Museo Casa Natal has made a conscious decision to not accept this disinterested visitor as the lowest common denominator in designing exhibitions. Therefore, whether disinterested, uninformed, or an aficionado looking to learn more, it is much more likely that the visitor to Fuente Vaqueros will learn something new than would be the case for the visitor to Granada.

In addition to the Museo Casa Natal, Fuente Vaqueros is also the home to the Centro de Estudios Lorquianos and a central plaza which also honors Lorca's life and work. The Centro de Estudios Lorquianos was opened by the *Ayuntamiento* of Fuente Vaqueros, in conjunction with the Patronato García Lorca, in 1998 to celebrate the centenary of Lorca's birth. The old Town Hall and the schoolhouse (where Lorca's mother taught), both around the corner from the Museo Casa Natal, were purchased and turned into a complex which includes a theater with 400 seats, designed primarily to show Lorca's works, a residence for those who study Lorca, and an archive with all the equipment necessary to enable use of the materials in the archive; the whole construction cost around 6 billion pesetas.⁹⁷ Before 1996, the Museo Casa Natal already had in its collection more than 3,000 documents relating to Lorca; its collection was increased by

⁹⁶ The official brochure of the Museo Casa Natal starts with the sentence, "Fifty years had to pass from the execution of Federico García Lorca to the opening of" this museum, clearly linking the poet's birth and death. A book published by the Centro de Estudios Lorquianos and sold in the Museo Casa Natal bookstore makes the point that had Lorca not died, he would have written more and that, therefore, his literary career and his death are inextricably linked. The Huerta de San Vicente seems to have missed this connection; the Museo Casa Natal clearly has not. "Museo Casa Natal" brochure, acquired 17 June 2006, Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 92.

⁹⁷ At the time of conversion in 2002, €1 was equal to 166.386 Spanish pesetas; 6 billion Spanish pesetas is thus approximately €36 million, although this has not been adjusted for inflation.

the donation of Ian Gibson's entire Lorca archive.⁹⁸ Thus, the Centro de Estudios Lorquianos has one of the most influential collections of material related to Lorca in the world. As the Spanish newspaper *El Mundo* stated, the project was "attempting to turn Fuente Vaqueros into the 'Town of Lorca,' as Stratford is for Shakespeare. From the inauguration of the complex, knowledge about García Lorca will inevitably pass through Fuente Vaqueros."⁹⁹

As another part of this effort, the town modified the central plaza, which played host to "el 5 a las 5" for so many years, into a plaza honoring Lorca.¹⁰⁰ The plaza starts at the town hall (next to the bus stop¹⁰¹) and extends about four blocks to the street Calle Poeta García Lorca, site of the Museo Casa Natal. Along the way, one walks past six boulders, each with a plaque which relates a statement of Lorca's about himself, his work, or his hometown.¹⁰² Two of the six are statements made about Fuente Vaqueros, including the text of Lorca's speech in 1931 on the occasion of having a street named after him in the town. Two are about his work – one each about poetry and theater. One is a statement in which Lorca says that he will always support the poor and the last is a reflection on the monstrosity of wars. Thus, the selection of quotations creates a

⁹⁸ Agustín Martínez, "Fuente vaqueros será el principal centro de estudios lorquianos," *El Mundo*, 28 February 1996.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ The statue itself was erected in 1980, but I cannot find any information that suggests whether the other parts of the plaza were created at the same time or later. The guide at the Museo Casa Natal supposes that the plaza was completed sometime in the mid-1990s, but that is purely speculation on his part. Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, facing page 208.

¹⁰¹ The bus stops directly in front of an enormous and quite ugly red sign with a large picture of Lorca and a map of Fuente Vaqueros, complete with icons of the Lorca related sites in the town pointing to their locations on the map. It is a rather unsightly way to greet tourists, but also a clear indicator of the importance of Lorca to the town of Fuente Vaqueros (or at least to its administration).

¹⁰² Images of these plaques can be found at the end of the chapter.

representative sample of who Lorca was,¹⁰³ without placing excessive emphasis on the Lorca for tourists – the gypsy Lorca. At the end of the plaza is a statue of Lorca with a fountain at its base. The statue, designed by Cayetano Aníbal,¹⁰⁴ is one of very few three-dimensional representations of Lorca in public.¹⁰⁵ The statue shows him in agony – his naked body emerges from rough stone and his head is cast down. It is a very clear reminder of the tragic end to Lorca’s life. Under the water cascading down the waterfall-like fountain are the words, “El pueblo a F. García Lorca” – marking this as the tribute of both the people and the town to Federico García Lorca.¹⁰⁶

The combination of sites of memory dedicated to Lorca in Fuente Vaqueros makes this a very impressive town in terms of the version of history it portrays. The casual visitor, in reading the plaques in the plaza and attending the Museo Casa Natal, would receive at least a basic understanding of who Lorca was and what he did. But with the combination of “el 5 a las 5,” the statue, and the willingness of the Museo Casa Natal to speak about Lorca’s death, it is more likely that a visitor to Fuente Vaqueros would learn about how Lorca died in the context of the mass killings during the Spanish Civil War. Education about Lorca’s death may not be the primary function of the sites in Fuente Vaqueros but it is certainly a part of the visitor’s experience. As Antonio Ramos

¹⁰³ Perhaps the only thing not represented by this sampling is Lorca’s personal life, but it is unlikely that Lorca said much about his sexual preferences in public, and, even if he did, this would hardly be appropriate in the context of a tribute to Lorca by his hometown.

¹⁰⁴ Gibson, *Lorca's Granada*, 132.

¹⁰⁵ I only know of only two other three-dimensional representations of Lorca in Spain – a bust of Lorca in the Museo Casa Natal and a statue of Lorca walking in the Plaza de Santa Ana in Madrid. This makes Cayetano Aníbal’s Lorca in agony even more remarkable, as the other two are much more conventional depictions.

¹⁰⁶ The word *pueblo* in Spanish means both town and people.

Espejo puts it: “Although the birth house is the origin of life, the fountain of creation, the place of death is not forgotten. It is not possible to forget it.”¹⁰⁷

El Parque García Lorca: The Burial Site?

When he published his book on the last days of Lorca, Castro considered calling it, “How to Win Yourself a Tomb without a Cross in an Unidentified Site”¹⁰⁸ and Lorca’s “tomb”¹⁰⁹ is still in an unidentified site without a cross.¹¹⁰ Unpublished research done by Spanish-born Agustín Penón (living in exile in the United States) in the 1950s¹¹¹ reveals that even the well-informed, Lorca’s own family, are unsure as to the specific location of his grave. In the book which would be published after Penón’s death, he is taken by Lorca’s niece to at least four different locations near Víznar that could be the burial site of Lorca.¹¹² The two most commonly cited sites are a ravine and a specific olive tree. The

¹⁰⁷ “Aunque la casa del nacimiento es el origen de la vida, la fuente de la creación, no se olvida el lugar de la muerte. No es posible olvidarlo.” Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 217.

¹⁰⁸ Castro, *Muerte en Granada*, 15.

¹⁰⁹ Possible definitions of the term “tomb” include a) a place of internment and b) a house, chamber, or vault for the dead. A pit into which a body has been thrown hardly counts as a “house, chamber, or vault,” and thus, Lorca’s burial site only qualifies for the term “tomb” in the most general sense.

¹¹⁰ For those Spaniards originally buried in mass graves, the cross seems to be the most key element in reburial under more appropriate conditions. Consider, for example, the massive cross atop the Valley of the Fallen, or the miles of orderly crosses at Paracuellos de Jarama, the site of one of the largest mass executions of Nationalist political prisoners by Republicans during the Spanish Civil War. Thus, while Lorca himself may not have wanted a cross atop his tomb, and his family seems disinclined to change the status quo by placing a cross at the site, the continued lack of a cross at Lorca’s burial site seems to preclude the perception of the site as a tomb.

¹¹¹ While I have not been able to find any published sources to corroborate this, Agustín Penón seems like a clear inspiration for the main character in the 1997 movie, *The Disappearance of García Lorca*, in which Ricardo Fernández, Spanish-born, living in exile in Puerto Rico in 1954, decides to go back to Spain to investigate the death of Lorca. The movie itself thanks Ian Gibson and states that it is based on his work, but the character is so similar to Agustín Penón that one cannot help notice the parallels. Zurinaga, *The Disappearance of García Lorca*.

¹¹² Agustín Penón and Marta Osorio, *Miedo, olvido y fantasía: Crónica de la investigación de Agustín Penón sobre Federico García Lorca, Granada-Madrid, 1955-1956, Serie Granada* (Albolote, Spain: Editorial Comares, 2001).

ravine was the site of many of the executions and burials of prisoners from Granada,¹¹³ and this site is still believed by some locals to be where Lorca was buried.¹¹⁴ But, according to a man who claimed to have buried Lorca, his grave is beside an olive tree further along the road. Agreeing with this “insider information,” Penón, Castro, and Gibson all come to the conclusion that this is, in fact, the site where Lorca was buried, but they all admit that they cannot know for sure.¹¹⁵ What is known, based on the testimony of those who were there the day Lorca died, is that he was buried with three other men – two anarchist bullfighters who had been involved in the street fighting in Granada and a Republican schoolteacher who was killed for his ties to the previous political order.¹¹⁶ The four are buried in pairs – Lorca with the schoolteacher and the two bullfighters together.¹¹⁷

With the end of the dictatorship, it was finally possible for there to be commemorations of Lorca at the site of his presumed burial.¹¹⁸ However, it was not until 1983 that a commemoration was organized by any government body. The local leaders, including the mayors of Alfacar, Víznar, and Fuente Vaqueros, organized a commemoration to be held during the night between August 18 and August 19, 1983. The commemoration seems to have entailed little more than a candlelit vigil at the presumed site of Lorca’s burial, near the olive tree, in Alfacar.¹¹⁹ It was certainly

¹¹³ There are perhaps 4,000 people buried along the highway between Alfacar and Víznar. Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 171.

¹¹⁴ Carmen Moreno-Nuño, interview with the author, Middletown, CT, 3 April 2006.

¹¹⁵ Castro, *Muerte en Granada*, 85. Gibson, *Federico García Lorca: A Life*, 467.

¹¹⁶ Gibson, *Federico García Lorca: A Life*, 466.

¹¹⁷ Castro, *Muerte en Granada*, 85.

¹¹⁸ Gerald Brenan had trouble getting to the site; his taxi driver was a Franco supporter and refused to help him find the site. In 1965, Claude Couffon found the presumed site of Lorca’s burial and published its location in his book. When the Spanish authorities found out, they planted pine trees to hide the mounds that marked the graves. Clearly, the regime was working very hard to make it hard for individuals to find Lorca’s gravesite. Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 45, 266.

¹¹⁹ García, “Granada recuerda la última madrugada de García Lorca.”

dangerous to be seen visiting the ravine and olive tree during the dictatorship, as those who were seen visiting there could only have been there because their loved ones were Franco's presumed enemies. Having a commemoration at the site attended by three local politicians seems to have helped in making the site less dangerous; however, it remained a controversial site through the mid-1980s. In fact, three years later, days before the 50th anniversary of Lorca's death, a number of ultra-rightists shot at the plaque which had been put up that spring to designate the site as the Parque Federico García Lorca, shattering it.¹²⁰ So while steps had been taken to restore legitimacy to Lorca's burial site, making it less politically and physically dangerous to visit, it remained a contentious site.

The 50th anniversary of Lorca's death and the first such major anniversary in the post-dictatorship period, should have been a major one for those who wished to commemorate Lorca at the site of his burial. In the spring of 1986, the local government opened the García Lorca Park in Alfacar – a park which includes the olive tree marked by Penón, Castro, and Gibson as the spot of the burial of Lorca. Then, on August 19, 1986, locals gathered at the site in what was the first major posthumous commemoration of Lorca at his gravesite. This commemoration, however, was not an organized one, and it was certainly not sponsored by any part of the federal government. The national commission which had been designed to pay homage to Lorca did nothing at the site, and while the local town governments of Fuente Vaqueros (where Lorca was born) and of Víznar¹²¹ organized events for the evening, they did not plan anything at the García

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Víznar, the town where Lorca was held overnight, has consistently shown itself to be more willing to address the Spanish Civil War than Alfacar, the town where Lorca is buried. Víznar allowed crosses to be placed at the mass graves where most of the executed are buried. In addition, in an almost ironic act, Víznar renamed the road leading from the center of town to the mass graves "*Avenida de los mártires*" (Avenue of the Martyrs), thus taking the language of Franco's Crusade and re-appropriating it for the innocents who died at the hands of the Nationalists. At the same time the old

Lorca Park. The attendees at these commemorations were allowed to add their own reflections about the circumstances of Lorca's death and the current state of ignorance surrounding the event, but the only planned commemorations were a choir performance and a small work of theater in Lorca's honor.¹²² These commemorations, then, did not focus on Lorca's death, but on his works. While it is certainly possible that this focus comes from a desire to contemplate what Lorca left behind, it seems fairly clear that this is a reflection of the priorities of the Transition, during which the goal was to reconcile and move forward, avoiding any situations which might have created the potential for instability. This lack of planning on the part of local authorities disappointed many visitors, who had been hoping for something more, but this fact was only reported in one newspaper, the left-leaning *El País*.¹²³ The more right-of-center publication, *ABC*, merely noted, in a five-line article, that a commemoration had been held.¹²⁴

The García Lorca Park, like the commemorations that took place in Lorca's honor on August 19, 1986, shows this unwillingness to confront the demons of the past.¹²⁵ The park itself is accessed from the highway from Alfácar to Víznar. One climbs a set of steps, passing a plaque which reads simply that the park that one is about to enter is "Dedicated to the memory of Federico García Lorca and of all the victims of the Civil War." This is hardly a clear reference to the purpose of the park, why it was placed at this site and not some other. In fact, there is no reference anywhere in the park that

"*Calle General Franco*" (General Franco Street) was renamed "*Calle Federico García Lorca*." Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 113, 171-72.

¹²² Alejandro V. García, "La memoria viva del poeta asesinado," *El País*, 19 August 1986, in ElPais.es, accessed April 20, 2006.

¹²³ Alejandro V. García, "Emoción y desconcierto en el homenaje a Lorca," *El País (Madrid)*, 19 August 1986.

¹²⁴ "Viznar rindió homenaje a Lorca," *ABC (Madrid)*, 19 August 1986.

¹²⁵ Ian Gibson says of the park that it was "created to preserve the spot where Lorca and his fellow-victims were shot and, at the same time, a generous gesture, to honour the memory of all those who died in the Civil War." I think that he is being far too generous to those who originated the project. Gibson, *Lorca's Granada*, 119.

asserts that Lorca is buried on site. A larger sign has been added below the steps, but this is a municipal sign designed to link the park to other locations along some local trail for hikers, and talks only about the “tranquility of the site” and the importance of “cascading water” in the park.

Passing through the gate at the top of the steps, one encounters an oblong plaza. Around the plaza are benches, with verses of Lorca’s poetry¹²⁶ hung in tile form above the benches, along a stone wall. Eight of Lorca’s poems are represented, and while it would be hard to guess why these poems, and not eight other poems, were included, there are some very interesting trends to note in the selection of poetry. First of all, Lorca published eight volumes of poetry during his life¹²⁷ – *Libro de poemas* (Book of Poems, 1918-1920), *Poema del Cante Jondo* (Poem of the Deep Song, November 1921), *Primeras canciones* (First Songs, 1922), *Canciones* (Songs, 1921-1924), *Romancero gitano* (Gypsy Ballad, 1923-1927), *Poeta en Nueva York* (Poet in New York, 1929-1930), *Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías* (Weeping for Ignacio Sánchez Mejías, 1934), and *Diván del Tamarit* (Tamarit¹²⁸ Divan, 1932-1936).¹²⁹ While one might assume that eight books and eight volumes of published poetry would lead to the selection of one poem from each volume, this is not the case. In fact, fully four of the eight come from the volume

¹²⁶ Only referencing Lorca’s poetry limits the visitor’s understanding of who Lorca was – he is also well known for his theater and considered himself to be a musician. However, it makes sense that when trying to select words to place on small tiles, it is easiest to stick with poetry.

¹²⁷ This does not include one volume of unedited poetry from Lorca’s youth, which was first published in its entirety, by his family, in 1994. Of the 155 poems included in this book, some have been published before, but as I am considering the poems that the creators of the García Lorca Park would have had access to, I am not counting this volume. Federico García Lorca and Christian de Paepe, *Poesía inédita de juventud, Letras hispánicas* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1994).

¹²⁸ Tamarit is a town in Spain.

¹²⁹ The works seem best organized in chronological order, as some of the volumes were published within a year of being composed, while others waited more than a decade, as much as 13 years in one case, before they were available to the public. Federico García Lorca, Allen Josephs, and Juan Caballero, *Poema del cante jondo y Romancero gitano*, 16 ed., Letras hispánicas; 66 (Madrid: Cátedra, 1994), 13-14.

Romancero gitano, with one poem each from four other volumes, *Poeta en Nueva York*, *Canciones*, *Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías*, and *Libro de poemas*.

It is, of course, true that *Romancero gitano* is one of Lorca's most famous works, and it is therefore possible that four poems were chosen from this volume to represent Lorca's best works. However, in 18 years worth of poetry, there are many great and well-known poems, certainly more than eight of them. Some selection had to occur, and the choice to focus on *Romancero gitano* can only have been intentional. Therefore, the Lorca that is being represented is the gypsy Lorca,¹³⁰ the Andalusian Lorca that was accepted during the dictatorship.¹³¹ Furthermore, that means that the earlier part of Lorca's career is overrepresented, which does not seem to accurately relate to the park as a burial site. In fact, many of Lorca's poems contain references to death, and some of these poems have been included in the park, like "*Canción otoñal*" ("Fall Song") which asks what will remain of poets when they die and "1910" which states that the narrative voice was much more innocent in 1910, before his eyes had to see the dead buried. However, there are other lost opportunities to relate Lorca's poetry and his death. The selection from *Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías*, for example, does not include the reference to the clock striking at 5, demarcating the death of Ignacio Sánchez Mejías, which is a verse that has given inspiration to those trying to remember Lorca's work and death, as with the Commission of the 33 and the movie *The Disappearance of García Lorca*. And the poem that is most often linked to the death of Lorca, "*Fábula y rueda de los tres amigos*" ("Fable of

¹³⁰ As Lorca matured, he distanced himself from the gypsy influences of his youth, because Andalucía was viewed as being backwards, not cosmopolitan. This focus on the gypsy Lorca is, therefore, an example of representing Lorca contrary to his view of himself. Ibid., 87.

¹³¹ Andalucía was similarly emphasized in many aspects of Spanish culture. In Spanish film created for foreign audiences, Spain was portrayed as Andalucía, ignoring the many other aspects of Spanish identity; the public was saturated with images of Andalusian folklore. Fusi Aizpurúa, "La cultura," 186.

Three Friends to Be Sung in Rounds”) has been passed-over. The poem ends with a hauntingly prescient vision of the search for the dead man’s body, which cannot be found anywhere, a search that parallels the search for Lorca’s body. The search for Lorca’s body, of course, seems to have ended with the creation of the García Lorca Park, yet the poem is not quoted at the site.¹³² It is hard to guess exactly how the eight poems were selected, it is hard to find any particular agenda in the poems that have been utilized, thus missing a chance to really give meaning to the site.

Past the main plaza is a smaller, unpaved plaza which leads to a gravel path, at the end of which is a small granite marker at the olive tree¹³³ where Lorca was presumably buried. This marker, and the nearby olive tree, are the most important part of this site of memory, yet they are off to the side of the central esplanade, along a gravel path which looks more like an access road than a trail to anything important. It is therefore quite possible that a visitor who has not studied the site before arriving would not know to look for the olive tree.¹³⁴ And even if most visitors know enough about the site to look for the olive tree, it remains the case that the failure to adequately signal its location shows an unwillingness to center the park around this key location. Ian Gibson says about the García Lorca Park,

There are things about the park that you almost certainly won’t like, such as the monumental entrance and the awful fountain just inside it, on the right. But at least the olive tree beside which the poet was shot has been carefully preserved and the ground around it left almost exactly in its original state. It is at the end of the park, to the left of the entrance, beside the other gate.

¹³² The last stanza of the poem is quoted on the title page to this chapter.

¹³³ Originally, the site was an olive grove. Only two olive trees remain. Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 113.

¹³⁴ I had researched the park before I saw it for the first time, had even seen an image of the olive tree and the stone marker beside it, and I still had trouble finding the tree.

In response to this, one might ask two questions. Firstly, why does Gibson need to tell the visitor where to find the olive tree? (Perhaps, because it is not easily found by the uninformed visitor?) Secondly, what does the preservation of the olive tree mean?

The plaque beside the olive tree reads, “To the Memory of Federico García Lorca and of All the Victims of the Civil War / 1936-1939.” This plaque is little better than the comparable inscriptions at the Valley of the Fallen. At least the plaque to Lorca seems to state that he was a victim of a Civil War which was fought from 1936-1939. Yet this is no tombstone, like the one afforded to Franco. There is no indication to the uninformed observer as to why the plaque has been placed here, at this olive tree, nor who Lorca was (although there are snippets of his poetry elsewhere in the park), nor the dates of his birth or death, as one would expect to find on a tombstone. Writing specifically about the graves of poets, Samantha Matthews writes that the essential elements of a grave marker in a “memorial context” are a name, epitaph, and the dates of birth and death.¹³⁵ Lorca has received only a name. He remains, even in the park dedicated to him, a man without a tomb. According to the same hierarchy that Michel Ragon claims to equate Franco with a Saint, Lorca’s burial without a tomb gives him the social rank of a commoner buried in a ditch.¹³⁶ Specifically comparing the site with the Valley of the Fallen, Professor Carmen Moreno-Nuño, whose grandparents are from Víznar, says, “It’s not pretty; it’s not a great monument... As there is no tomb, there is no central place. The tomb of Franco is central, emblematic. At the García Lorca Park there is no emblematic site.”¹³⁷ The marker, which could have been the most impressive

¹³⁵ Samantha Matthews, *Poetical Remains: Poets' Graves, Bodies, and Books in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 5.

¹³⁶ Ragon, *Space of Death*, 21.

¹³⁷ Carmen Moreno-Nuño (Professor of Spanish Literature at Wesleyan University), interview with the author, Middletown, CT, 3 April 2006.

part of the park, ends up being the least informative, and thus the least effective in turning the park into a site of memory. The park, as a whole, does nothing to honor Lorca or reference his death in the way that one would expect from the burial site of a major figure.

Despite the fact that the park could have become a major site of pilgrimage, the García Lorca Park does not attract a large number of visitors.¹³⁸ Partly, this is because it is an unimpressive site from an artistic point of view. In addition, the García Lorca Park, due to its location in an obscure small town with very little to see, is off the beaten path for tourists, and is practically inaccessible from the city of Granada, despite the short distance separating the two locations. Buses run infrequently, and no one at the tourist office is familiar enough with the site to tell a visitor traveling via public transportation where to get off the bus. The mayor of Alfacar and the staff at the *Ayuntamiento* do not want to talk about the park, and refer all questions to the Patronato whose office is miles away in Fuente Vaqueros, which does use the park for commemorations every August. However, it is the Alfacar *Ayuntamiento's* responsibility to clean the park (a responsibility which it seems to exercise infrequently),¹³⁹ so the Mayor's refusal to talk about the park is not because it is not his jurisdiction, but rather because he does not want to talk about

¹³⁸ There is no entrance fee, nor any guard standing watch, so it may be impossible to ever accurately count the number of visitors to the park. On the Monday that I was there, I was the only visitor at the site. As I left town, I passed two tourists who got off the bus near the park, so I can assume that they were headed to the site, but since it was the last bus of the day it is unlikely that there were any more visitors than the three of us. Whether three visitors a day is representative or not, no one knows, but if it is representative (fewer than 5 people most days of the year), the park receives very few visitors, except in August and when the odd tour bus stops on the way through the *Ruta lorquiana*.

¹³⁹ When I was in the park on June 19, 2006 the garbage cans were overflowing, the benches were cracked, the paths were overgrown, and the fountains, talked of with such praise on the sign at the entrance, were not running; the whole place had a deserted air that I find to be unfitting for a park memorializing the death of one of Spain's greatest contemporary poets. When I went to Fuente Vaqueros the next day, I was told by the staff at the Centro de Estudios Lorquianos that this was an ongoing problem – the Alfacar *Ayuntamiento* tends to only clean the park enough for it to be presentable for the annual August commemorations, letting it lie abandoned during the rest of the year.

the death of Lorca. Given both the lack of an “emblematic site” for admirers to, for example, leave a wreath of flowers and the inaccessibility of the site, it is not surprising that the García Lorca Park, despite its importance as the presumed burial site of Lorca, is not part of the tourist itinerary.

Those who are concerned by the state of things at the García Lorca Park say that one way to change this would be to resolve once and for all the location of Lorca’s burial, place his body in a tomb, and mark it with a headstone. Given that there is currently an association dedicated to exhuming mass graves all over Spain, this could be done, and, in fact, the descendants of two of the men buried with Lorca have asked to exhume their bodies. Despite the fact that Lorca’s descendants are not interested in exhuming his remains – they want to leave the past alone, in the spirit of the Transition – the process was given the go ahead to dig up the other two bodies.¹⁴⁰ While it would be unethical to identify the body of Lorca if his descendants are against it, locating the remains of those buried with Lorca would at least give a definitive answer to the debate as to whether he and the three others were buried in the ravine or near the olive tree, or in some other site entirely,¹⁴¹ since it is known for certain that he was buried with the school teacher and the two bullfighters. But since 2003, when the exhumation was announced, the process has been put on hold, for some unknown reason. There is no indication that the exhumation will happen any time soon. Until an exhumation takes place, if ever, the only official document that references Lorca’s death is a certificate, issued in 1940. Nearly four years after his death, Lorca’s family campaigned to get it included in the Civil Register, and the result is a document which says that Lorca died

¹⁴⁰ Kolbert, "Looking for Lorca."

¹⁴¹ Giles Tremlett, “Here lies the body of . . . Federico Garcia Lorca?” *The Irish Times*, 11 August 2004, in *LEXIS/NEXIS* [database on-line], accessed April 20, 2006.

“in the month of August 1936 from war wounds.” As Ian Gibson points out, this document makes it sound “for all the world as if the poet had been the unfortunate victim of a stray bullet.”¹⁴²

Conclusions

Overall, the three locations on the *Ruta lorquiana* show great variety in terms of their interpretations of what elements of Lorca should be included in any representation. This is hardly surprising, given that each municipality acted independently to create their respective sites and that, as the country was no longer under a dictatorship, there was no over-arching board enforcing uniformity upon the sites. In fact, the democratic process seems to be the force that best explains the differences in monumentalization at the three sites. It is hard to find election details for small towns in Spain, but the following facts shed some light on voting patterns during the Transition. In 1977, the first elections held after Franco’s death, the UCD (center) won elections in Granada, Alfacar, and Víznar, with the PSOE (socialist) coming in second. In Fuente Vaqueros, the PSOE won the elections with the PCA (communist) having the second largest number of votes.¹⁴³ Two years later, the election results were repeated in Granada, Alfacar, and Fuente Vaqueros. However, in Víznar the PSOE won the election with the UCD second.¹⁴⁴ Considering these facts and extrapolating forward,¹⁴⁵ these election results seem to explain the directions that each town has taken. Fuente Vaqueros is solidly left of center, and therefore has no association with Franco’s regime. As a result, the town is

¹⁴² Gibson, *Federico García Lorca: A Life*, 470.

¹⁴³ Ramos Espejo, *García Lorca en Fuente Vaqueros*, 94-95.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 105.

¹⁴⁵ In 1981 and 1982, all four towns voted for PSOE, but this seems to indicate the lack of appeal for a centrist party like the UCD, which dissolved shortly thereafter. Ibid., 160, 163.

willing to delve into the more difficult aspects of its past. Or, as Antonio Ramos Espejo puts it, Fuente Vaqueros never forgot the Second Republic.¹⁴⁶ Vízcar is slightly left of center, willing to replace the street named after Franco with one named for Lorca, but not significantly leftist to make a big deal out of the mass graves in its municipality. Granada and Alfacar, meanwhile, are right of center and do not want to address their respective pasts. Alfacar does this by not maintaining the García Lorca Park, even though it is their job. In 1995, the PP (rightist) mayor of Granada cemented over the mass graves in Granada's cemetery,¹⁴⁷ physically preventing inquiry into the problematic aspects of the Spanish Civil War. This is the same process that has manifested itself in the operations of the Huerta de San Vicente and its unwillingness to represent anything related to the war.¹⁴⁸ Granada does not experience Lorca with the same authenticity one feels in the smaller towns; rather, they use Lorca as a tourist attraction and will eventually create the "García Lorca Hotel."¹⁴⁹ This is not to claim that the PSOE is the salvation for historical memory of the Spanish Civil War in Spain, but it is the case that, as Carlos Cano, a Puerto Rican singer, says "The right cannot love Lorca. He was a revolutionary poet and I think that it is incompatible to have a rightist mentality and love Lorca."¹⁵⁰ The left has used the post-Franco freedoms to attempt to reframe how Spaniards see their past; this is not as monolithic an attempt as the project of monumentalization undertaken by Franco, because the democratic left is both heterogeneous and cautious, attempting to avoid "re-opening the wounds," as so many Spaniards fear. Thus the

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 227.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 271-72.

¹⁴⁸ At the 60th anniversary of Lorca's death, no official representative of the PP came to the August commemoration at the García Lorca Park. Ibid., 277.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 238.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 285.

differences between the different sites in the *Ruta lorquiana* show the varied responses to the past that come apart from divergences in political opinions. As Paloma Aguilar notes,

On occasions, when numerous kinds of memory openly contradict one another during a critical period in which there is a particular need for consensus and equilibrium (such as the Spanish Transition) what may happen is that, in view of a possible confrontation of memories, either a search is carried out within history itself (sometimes *inventing* an adequate memory, should one not exist) for an official memory which satisfies everyone (this memory tends to be evaluative, as in ‘we were all to blame,’ and not factual, given that it is more difficult to achieve a consensus about specific episodes) or all references to the event in question are silenced in order to avoid controversy as far as possible.¹⁵¹

This can be seen in the *Ruta lorquiana*. In Granada and Alfacar, where the governments did not want to address the controversial aspects of Lorca – how he was killed, by whom, and why – a official memory has been selected for the Huerta de San Vicente and the García Lorca Park; rather than focusing on the facts of Lorca’s life and death, the sites focus on his artistic genius. On the other hand, Fuente Vaqueros’ commemoration of Lorca is born out of the controversial “el 5 a las 5”; this is a signal of the town’s willingness to tackle the controversy surrounding Lorca and his death. Thus, the more conservative Granada and Alfacar follow the formula of the Transition into the 1990s, while Fuente Vaqueros breaks from this mold, transforming the town into a site of memory dedicated to all the aspects of Lorca.

¹⁵¹ Aguilar Fernández, *Memory and Amnesia*, 2.