

## Post-war scenarios. Culture in times of war, exile and repression, 1936-1951

Writing the foreword to this dossier has been no easy task. The Spanish Civil War and post-war period is not only an extremely complex subject, but also one whose historiographical tradition is possibly more fertile and prolific than any other in contemporary Spanish history. However, despite the vast number of studies that have examined these historical events, there still remain many areas to explore, question and analyse in greater depth, and so our intention here is to contribute something new to the discussion. We start from the idea that, as with any war, the Spanish Civil War entailed the suspension of socio-historical normality and corresponding mobilisation of the nation, not solely in the political and military spheres. The opposing sides first needed to convince themselves, and subsequently others, of the legitimacy and justice of their struggle. This is where the world of culture assumed enormous importance, as it could provide the arguments to underpin their respective doctrinal corpora.

The objectives of the cultural war were not substantially different from those of its military counterpart; in like fashion, the goal was to destroy the enemy, demonstrate the inhumanity of the other side and ensure that victory would bring with it the salvation of an authentic tradition. The post-war period was marked by a stark distinction between victors and vanquished, and this was accompanied by a transformation in the role that culture and ideology would have to play in acclaiming the justice of the former and reviling the crimes of the latter. Another fundamental element which must be added to complete this picture is that the Spanish Civil War interrupted the Silver Age of Spanish culture, a unique period which forged many of the components that would form part of the intellectual worldview of both sides.

This dossier brings together some of the most recent research on the consequences that the end of the Spanish Civil War and the beginning of the Franco dictatorship had in relation to various expressions of culture. The contributors include ten specialists from the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Spanish universities (Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona and Universidad Pablo de Olavide in Seville) and overseas universities (the University of Oslo, the Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo and the Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts); scholars of history, history of art, philology and the history of science. Their interconnected, intertwining and complementary essays on the turning point that 1939 represented in Spanish history and culture reveal a complex

map of cultural networks within and beyond Spain that linked writers, artists, scientists, politicians, teachers, critics, architects and activists.

Their contributions portray both the panorama inside Spain and the international backdrop that framed the consolidation of the Franco dictatorship; a Europe recovering from the Second World War and the height of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. This complex scenario is further interwoven with Republican exile, a topic of capital importance with a long historiographical tradition which nevertheless has yet to be fully incorporated into accounts of Spanish cultural history. The arrival of intellectuals and artists unquestionably spurred advances in science, art and literature in their respective host countries, and their work in the fields of university education, muralism and the novel has attracted new research attention. Here, we aim to explore some of the key aspects of this broad, polyphonic cultural field, while at the same time recognising the existence of nuances that call them into question. Of necessity, we have had to be selective, concentrating on the contributors' areas of expertise, and in the best of cases, offering some answers.

Recent decades have witnessed a proliferation of historiographical studies on the world of academia, science and culture in the first half of the 20th century in Spain, revealing the existence of an intellectual and cultural worldview that distinguished the unique Silver Age of Spanish culture and science. Its main protagonists began to occupy university professorships, but above all they were associated with the Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas [Council for the Extension of Studies and Scientific Research] (Spanish acronym JAE), an institution that marked a before and after in the history of science and culture in Spain. Despite some ups and downs, the JAE had maintained a scrupulous neutrality in all its activities that protected it from the political upheavals that shook the country at the end of the Restoration and during the dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera. The council's laboratories and seminars brought together scientists and scholars from the broadest political spectrum, who were united by a distinctive "ethos" regarding the need to exercise the profession of scientist in accordance with the precepts of modern science and thus collaborate decisively with other sectors of Spanish society in a bid for modernity.

Throughout the first third of the century, these elites had begun to monopolise positions in academia, and many had assumed political commitments. The proclama-

ation of the Second Republic created closer ties between the political regime and intellectuals, especially those with Krausist roots, as both the former and the latter shared the goal of political, economic, social and cultural modernisation. A paradigmatic example of this new situation was the commitment of no few university professors, especially those associated with the Institución Libre de Enseñanza [Free Educational Institution] and the push towards a *Republic of literature and science*. Not only did these seek to address Spain's immediate practical needs in matters of education and research, but they also embodied a liberal political tradition that was the polar opposite of the traditionalism to which more conservative circles were wedded. This division had its roots in the ideological rivalry that Krausists and Neo-Catholics had sustained with particular fervour during the second half of the 19th century. The same thing happened in the field of the arts; several painters, poets, musicians, architects and playwrights entered Republican structures.

Thus, the first five years of the 1930s witnessed enormous involvement in and huge development of an influential cultural movement that achieved great success in science, education, art, music, theatre and dance. Projects such as Misiones Pedagógicas [Teaching Missions], the La Barraca University Theatre, the National Council for Music and Opera, the various Book Fairs and the revival of the Sociedad de Artistas Ibéricos' [Society of Iberian Artists] exhibition and publishing policy comprise just some examples of the commitment of intellectuals and artists to the goals of the new regime. The existence of an inherited cultural legacy, respect for popular culture and the coexistence of this with the creative vanguard were all features common to these 1930s projects. The influence of culture on the Republican regime would later have its corollary during the Spanish Civil War and in exile, when tradition and vanguard alike placed themselves in the service of domestic and foreign propaganda.

From the outset, the July 1936 coup had been led by members of the military leadership, who in doing so had risked their lives and professional careers and were thus highly unlikely to accept interference in control of the movement. Political unification of the rebels was achieved in April 1937 and consolidated the supreme authority of the military chiefs. The conflict demanded ideological uniformity of war propaganda and discourse. This was achieved earlier and better in the Franco ranks by allying the pro-fascist militarism of the rebels with the fundamentalist Catholicism of the Falangists and traditionalist Carlists, contenders to lead the political action. The rebels accepted the ideological project that ultraconservative circles had been incubating for decades. These latter led the fight against the corruption of the true Spanish tradition and those who encouraged such debasement; the intellectuals and political parties that the Second Republic, with its spirit of modernity, seemed to have placed on pedestals. Although its splendour of yesteryear had faded, the most recalcitrant Catholic right wing had regrouped forces and now denounced the poorly understood "intellectuals" as enemies of the State, together with the *Reds*,

masons, nationalists and liberals. Although somewhat vague, the term "intellectuals" was understood to mean representatives of modern secular thought, above all those associated with the Institución Libre de Enseñanza.

Members of the Church hierarchy aligned almost seamlessly with the leaders of the coup, lending vital ideological support for the movement, which the Church legitimised by casting the war as a *reconquest* and *crusade*. The Catholic intelligentsia concocted an ultraconservative discourse that merged various elements of 19th century and contemporary Spanish traditionalist thinking. National Catholicism had forged a nationalism founded upon various heroic episodes in Spanish history and the indissoluble Catholic identity of the Spanish nation. The reign of the Catholic monarchs, the architects of national unity, and the most momentous event, the spiritual triumph of the Council of Trent, featured among the highlights of National Catholicism discourse. These two historic episodes had between them erected an ideal of the Christian knight, all deviations from which had led to disastrous consequences; the decline of the Empire and moral corruption of the homeland. The result was a ferocious *anti-modernism* and a complementary *anti-liberalism*, which nourished the ultramontane mindset and attitudes of the intellectual elites of the post-war regime. The solution lay in a military victory, equated to a *reconquest* that would restore the national unity sanctified by the Catholic monarchs, and in a Church that laboured in parallel with the goal of ensuring the re-Christianisation of Spain, a Herculean task that would be consolidated during the post-war period. The dictatorship gave them control over the Ministries of Education and Justice, key institutions from which to rip out the roots of evil from professorships, laboratories and educational establishments.

In the months following the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War and the dissolution of the Republican State, committed intellectuals and artists became involved in running the loyalist zone and also served as its agents abroad, mainly through embassies and cultural missions. On the Republican side, profound differences between the main political factions (anarchists, communists, socialists and republican liberals) on everything except the task of stopping fascism and winning the war led them to compete ferociously to assert their points of view. This state of affairs persisted long after the war, under the harsh conditions of defeat, which did nothing to promote a rapprochement in exile. In his essay for this dossier, Jorge de Hoyos Puente introduces us to the projects to return that were formulated within the political cultures of Republican exile, the various plans and the discord that persisted during forty years of opposition to the Franco regime, primarily a result of the diversity of political discourses and mindsets that informed the Spanish left throughout its long exile.

Nevertheless, even in the midst of war, the Republican Government never disdained the propaganda value of its cultural and scientific elites. Within Spain, the House of Culture in Valencia and the precarious continuity of scientific and cultural activities within the framework of

the JAE linked the Republic with the survival of the Silver Age, the fundaments of modernity and political and intellectual liberalism. In contrast, results in the field of science were modest. The war demolished the still fragile infrastructures and fabric of scientific endeavour that had cost the JAE so much to construct in previous decades. To mitigate the effects of rebel propaganda, which warned of the red terror and Marxist hordes, attempts were made to sustain the tempo of the most important projects, but lack of means, paper shortages and the war foiled many of those initiatives.

The same occurred in the field of the arts, where since the early 1930s propaganda had begun to account for a much greater proportion of artistic production. Cultural activists sought to use art as a vehicle for ideology, and committed artists spawned a golden age in forms such as the poster and drama. Political photomontages -imported from Germany- and agitprop theatre and dance were some of the most popular resources. This burning desire for art to serve as propaganda spurred debate on the use of aesthetic languages: influenced by the Soviet Union, many artists began to espouse socialist realism -vehemently promoted since 1934- while others contended that the avant-garde was compatible with works evidencing a commitment to the revolution. In many of the places to which the exiled artists fled, this controversy persisted after the war, merging with their respective local contexts that in one way or another influenced their various directions.

The post-war period offered a bleak outlook for the vanquished who remained in Spain. This important shared cultural heritage, now controlled by the Franco regime, was employed to design part of the daily system of repression, as evidenced by the uses made of the reconstruction of places devastated by war, or the ideological control of cultural expression and shared signs of identity. The anti-modern, anti-liberal stance of those in power imposed a cultural imaginary that resignified the endeavours and achievements of historical and literary figures, appropriating culture to create an "imagined community" -to use the concept coined by Benedict Anderson- by perpetuating and leveraging the memory of the war and the distinction between victors and vanquished. The essay by Gutmaro Gómez Bravo, the product of wider comparative research on post-war Europe, examines the testimonies written by political prisoners and their families, those vanquished and ostracised by the Franco regime. Through these letters, Gómez Bravo plunges us into the daily life of prison and social control that can only be explained in the context of the development of the prison system under the Franco regime, especially as regards serving sentences and the design of a programme to deal with the overcrowding and degradation of Spanish prisons in the 1940s. The concept of "resilience", which in recent years has gained increasing visibility in research, publications and exhibitions from across the humanities, seems ideal here to explain the enforced adaptation to and survival of adverse circumstances through various modes of artistic and cultural expression during the post-war period. Thus,

a panorama opens out that far from being a cultural wasteland, exhibits a profound complexity that was not without paradox and contradiction on occasion, and which calls for new readings and interpretations.

The contribution of culture and science to the ideological rearmament of the Republican side had to wait until the end of the war and the start of a post-war period marked by forced emigration. University students and staff who went into exile in America began to identify themselves as representatives of a Spain that was rooted in the old liberal, progressive traditions of a bygone era. In the eyes of the expatriate elite, Republican science, art and culture in general formed part of the legacy of the free education movement, and especially of its tireless quest for a *true Spanish cultural tradition*. The first long decade of the post-war period contained echoes of this cultural battle. On one side stood Catholic and imperial science, which had legitimised the process of purging and expelling professors and secondary and primary school teachers, but which also formed the origins of the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. On the other were ranged the emigrants who advocated the practice of modern science founded on a liberalism that denounced the purges in Spain.

The exiles also promoted initiatives in the spheres of art and literature, organising exhibitions, founding publishing houses and periodicals, opening galleries and staging plays that claimed to embody a living Spanish culture, the culture of the *real Spain*, beyond formal borders. Similarly, they created the Unión de Intelectuales Españoles [Union of Spanish Intellectuals] and founded important institutions which brought together exiled figures of Spanish culture, including La Casa de España [The House of Spain] (now El Colegio de México), the Círculo de Bellas Artes [Circle of Fine Arts] of Mexico and the Club Español [Spanish Club] in Moscow. On significant dates, the emigrant Republican community sought to join forces to commemorate figures -Don Quixote, Francisco de Goya, Santiago Ramón y Cajal- who formed part of the imaginary of this loyal Spain that waited day after day for the fall of the dictator.

Such was their response to the Franco regime's ideological construction of the idea of Spain and the Spanish. The concept of the nation promulgated by the dictatorship was so narrow and exclusive that it only left room for a national reality based on a perverse dichotomy in which expatriate Republicans were attributed the role of being *anti-Spain*. The ideological battle that had begun with the war required twice as much effort in exile, in order to create social circles, organisations and cultural associations that would help the Republicans in this task. Culture represented their best hope in the construction of an alternative discourse to the ideological narrowness of Francoism. The scientific ethos reinforced demands for political change in Spain, appealing to liberal and democratic values shared with the victorious powers of fascism. The scientific and ethical discourse of exile sought to raise the awareness of the international powers as regards the Spanish question. Science and its values highlighted



the harsh terror and lack of scruples of the Franco dictatorship. In his essay, Francisco Javier Dosil illustrates how Spanish science in exile operated as a network of networks via a dynamic that today sheds light on the important influence exerted by emigrant Spanish scientists throughout the diaspora of exiles. This dynamic was fundamentally characterised by attempts to maintain ties from before the war, while at the same time forging new alliances with a multitude of actors who helped legitimise the presence of the exiles in their respective host countries, integrate their work into each nation's own scientific programmes and gain permission for them to resume some of their research.

These new alliances were decisive in enabling many exiles to embark on new activities or areas of work that would otherwise have been impossible. The essay by Consuelo Naranjo and Miguel Ángel Puig-Samper on the figure of Fernando de los Ríos at the University of Puerto Rico examines a singular case to illustrate the dynamic common to some Republican intellectuals who, thanks to the networks created in many American countries in the years prior to exile, found themselves welcomed into American cultural and higher education institutions. The University of Puerto Rico was a fundamental lynchpin for these networks, and Fernando de los Ríos, a good example of how they functioned and the activities their protagonists undertook.

This is one of the regions of the Caribbean that promises to yield new and copious results in light of recent research on mapping exile from 1939. The relatively provisional residence of exiles in the Caribbean -the way in which the exiles wandered throughout this region in the 1940s- has seriously hampered attempts to reconstruct their different paths. In this respect, the re-evaluation of the artist José Vela Zanetti's work in the Dominican Republic proposed by Antonio J. Canela-Ruano serves as example of the research still pending in order to restore great forgotten names to Spanish history. With good reason, Zanetti's murals mark him as one of the greatest 20th century exponents of this art form, one that paradoxically, he also used to portray the dictator of the Dominican Republic, Rafael Leónidas Trujillo.

Spanning the ocean, Republican exiles in France and Mexico are the most well known so far; however, perspectives that combine a little of both, such as that which Dolores Fernández Martínez brings to her reading of Josep Torres Campalans, are of enormous interest. Written during his exile in Mexico, Max Aub's novel about this fictitious painter reveals the central elements of the artistic ideology of Republican exile in 1939, while simultaneously evidencing a deep understanding of the historiography and criticism of Spanish and French art of the times.

By the end of the 1940s, the "Spanish question" had faded from the international agenda. This dashed the exiles' hopes, and they were obliged to resign themselves to the fact that their exile might last for many more years. Some of the essays in this dossier explore this international perspective. Helge Øystein Pharo analyses the

case of Norway, one of the small states that initially opposed the Franco regime: Norway was the last Western European nation to accept Spain's entry into the United Nations and maintained a veto on Spanish membership of The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) until the end, an opposition that was more the exception than the rule.

Meanwhile, Manuel Aznar Soler and Olga Glondys address different aspects of the cultural Cold War in relation to Spanish Republican exile. Both start from the confrontation between the concept of "peace", used in Soviet propaganda in the fight against capitalism, and "freedom", employed in US propaganda against communism, to respectively discuss the case of the World Congress of Intellectuals for Peace, held in Wrocław in 1948, and the Congress for Cultural Freedom (1950-1967) in Latin America. Aznar Soler highlights the deep interest shown in the Spanish question at the Polish event, where agreement was reached -subsequently fruitless- to put pressure on the United Nations to work towards the dissolution of the Franco dictatorship. For her part, Glondys has sought to highlight the changing goals governing the activities of exiles in Latin America involved in the Congress for Cultural Freedom at the beginning of the sixties.

The failure of the "Spanish question" also involved changes in the strategy deployed until then by intellectual and scientific circles in exile. Although they did not stop denouncing academic outrages in Spain, they largely redirected their efforts in the 1950s towards providing ethical and legitimist support for Republican political protest, and began trying to regain contact with the scientific and intellectual world of Spain and revitalise the "liberal culture" ousted by National Catholicism but missed by those who were willing to stray from the official line. The discourse that laid emphasis on the defence of liberal culture by those in exile was maintained; what changed was the target, the recipients of the message. This about-turn was essential for the survival of exiles, who sought new partners in Spain in order to show them that both at home and abroad, there existed a cultural and scientific tradition and liberal models with lives and works which deserved to be remembered.

In sum, the essays that comprise this present dossier on the complex time encompassing the Spanish Civil War and post-war years within and beyond Spain are intended to shed new light on the cultural constructions of this absorbing period based on new readings, nuances and discoveries. Our final task is to acknowledge the projects and people that have made this publication possible. First of all, the two R&D&I projects of which this research forms part: *Madrid 1936-1939: Capital, frente, retaguardia y ciudad en guerra* [Madrid 1936-1939: Capital, battlefront, rearguard and city at war] (ref. HAR2014-52065-P) and *50 años de arte en el Siglo de Plata español (1931-1981)* [50 years of art in the Spanish Silver Age (1931-1981)] (ref. HAR2014-53871-P). Secondly, we are enormously grateful to the authors, for supporting our initiative with their rigorous studies and for placing their trust in us.

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