

SOCORS ROIG DE CATALUNYA

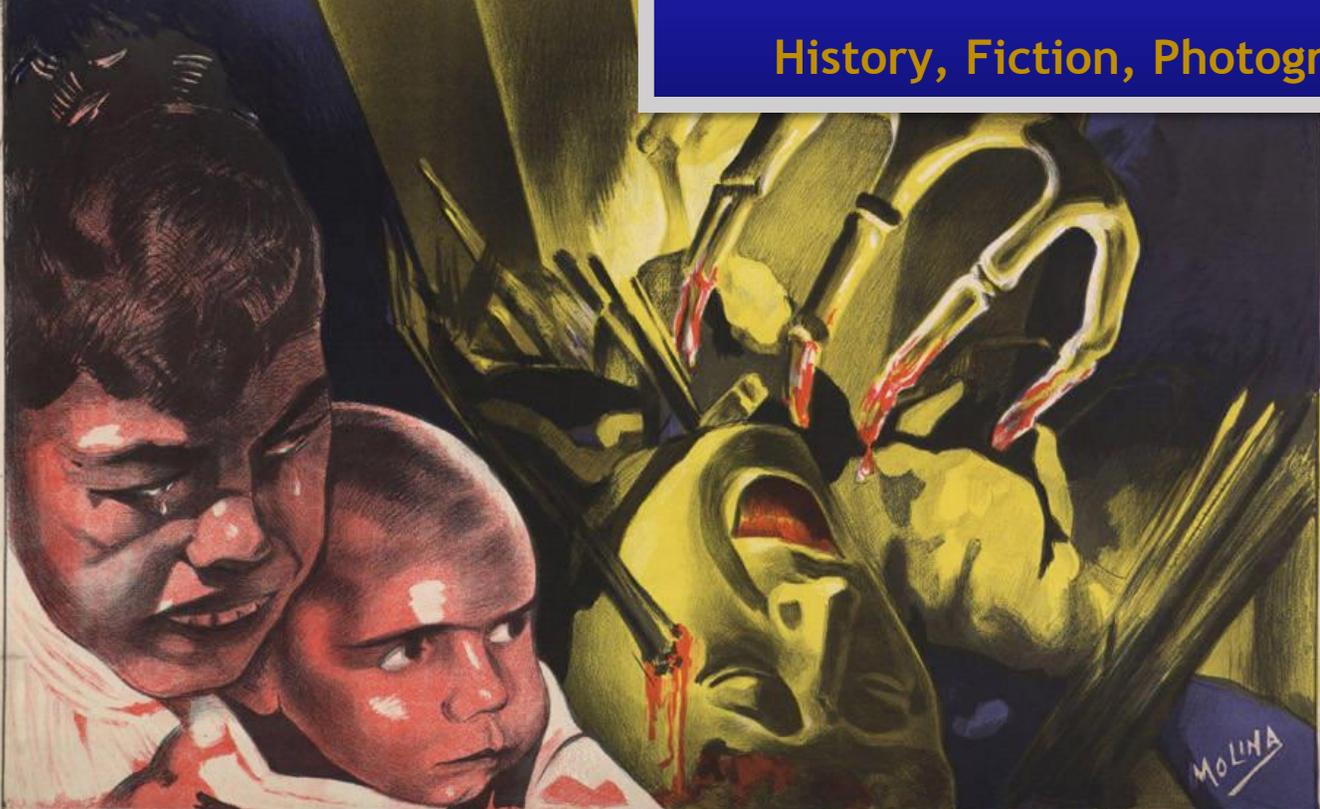
S. R. I.

ICRIM!

HISP 357 | Spring 2019 | Sebastiaan Faber

**MEMORY BATTLES OF THE
SPANISH CIVIL WAR**

History, Fiction, Photography



FOTOLITOGRAFIA BARGUÑO E.C. BARCELONA

HISP 357 | Spring 2019

Memory Battles of the Spanish Civil War:

History, Fiction, Photography

Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:00 am - 12:15 pm, StudiOC

Prof. S. Faber, sfaber@oberlin.edu, x58189, 404 Peters

Office hours: Tues 2-3p, Wed 11a-12p, Thurs 1:30-2:30p

Course Description

On November 29th, 2017, the same day that the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague concluded its proceedings after 25 years of work, an Argentine criminal court sentenced 29 former army personnel and government officials to life in prison for their involvement in human rights abuses during the country's "Dirty War" (1976-1983). Both events were widely celebrated as milestones in the fight for transitional justice—the term used to describe the broad process whereby democratic societies come to terms with legacies of mass human-rights violations, especially those carried out by the state on its own citizens.

In Spain, too, many celebrated the news from Argentina. Yet they couldn't help feel some envy. More than forty years after the death of dictator Francisco Franco, who ruled the country from 1939 until 1975, not a single representative of his regime has yet been tried, let alone convicted; unlike Argentina's full-stop law, which was repealed in 2003, the amnesty law that Spain adopted in 1977 as part of its transition to democracy is still in effect. Still, in 2007 the Spanish Parliament passed a so-called Law of Historical Memory that, among other things, called for a removal of celebrations of the Franco regime and its representatives—including statues, plaques, or street names—from the country's public spaces. And curiously, in the week following the Argentine verdicts, the leader of Spain's socialist party called for an overhaul of the memory law, including the possible institution of a Truth Commission.

Spain and Argentina are among many countries in the world today struggling to come to terms with the legacies of mass violence. The United States, too, has faced challenges that fall under the rubric of transitional justice, from the Black Lives Matter movement to the conflict

over Confederate statues in the US South and the long-standing discussion over reparations for slavery. And the United States, too, has seen truth commissions—albeit sporadic and unofficial—while public intellectuals and activists like Bryan Stevenson and Ta-Nehisi Coates explicitly invoke international examples as models for the US to follow.

In fact, the complicated processes whereby societies come to terms with the legacies of civil or state violence have attracted increasing worldwide attention in the past three decades, following a broad wave of democratic transitions in Latin America, Africa, and Eastern Europe that have helped set off what Kathryn Sikkink calls a "justice cascade." Yet these processes are by no means limited to the courtroom. Rather, they deeply involve all segments of civil society. After all, they touch on historical



memory in public spaces or the educational system; on historical narratives as foundations for collective identities; and on persisting forms of injustice.

How does a country remember a recent history of civil war and dictatorship? How does a national community incorporate the memory of state and civil violence into its collective narrative? What is the role in this process of the state and civil society? What contribution can academic historians make? And what are the potential contributions of other groups or entities, including other academics, journalists, fiction writers, photographers, and citizen activists? Understanding these questions from a scholarly perspective requires a broad interdisciplinary approach that includes not just law, political science and history, but also the arts and humanities. Not only because novelists, poets, artists, and

filmmakers often help us understand the past, but also because coming to terms with the past is itself a *question of narrative* that cannot be properly understood without the humanist's toolkit, including concepts such as voice, plot, trope, or genre. [Adapted from: Romano, Mani, Faber, "StudiOC proposal."]

How has democratic Spain dealt with the legacy of the civil war, the Franco dictatorship, and the Transition? And how have academics, writers, filmmakers, photographers, and journalists in Spain and elsewhere engaged with a collective process that is central to the country's future as a unified, functioning democracy? How have history, fiction, and photography shaped Spanish memory? These are the three main questions that inform this course. They are also questions that have unleashed a spirited series of battles in the Spanish public sphere, particularly since the emergence around the year 2000 of what is often referred to as "the memory movement" or, more disparagingly, *la moda de la memoria*: the memory fad. The connotations this last word conjures up—a trivial and passing obsession—are misplaced. In fact, Spain's memory battles helped prepare the ground for the convulsive changes that have reshaped the country's political landscape in the wake of the Great Recession, the 2011 rise of the *indignados* movement (known in Spain as *el 15-M*), and the creation of Podemos, a new political party, in 2014.

Between the late 1990s and Spain's devastating economic crisis of 2009, the country witnessed the birth and rapid growth of a grassroots network of citizens' associations that formulated a broad set of social and political demands. It called for the identification of thousands of mass graves dating from the Civil War, but also demanded more attention to the rights of victims of right-wing repression since 1936, and a revision of the terms under which Spain transitioned to democracy after the death of Francisco Franco in 1975. Throughout the first decade of the twenty-first century, this grassroots phenomenon spawned a broad set of initiatives ranging from political rallies to volunteer-led exhumation projects, court cases, and formal appeals to the United Nations. In its wake rose a tidal wave of media productions about the Civil War and Francoism: novels, documentaries, history books, photography exhibits, feature films, soap operas, drama series, and thousands of articles in newspapers and magazines.

Difficult questions have been at stake in this process. How does one properly represent Spain's violent twentieth-century past? How do we know what happened, how do we tell that story, and who should tell it? How should today's Spaniards relate to that past? Do they owe it a moral debt? Should the present be judging the past, or might the past be judging us? Should these judgments take place in a court of law? And how does a commitment to historical memory inform political change in the present? Thanks to the groundswell of citizen activism, Spain doesn't think and speak about its conflictive history like it did 20 years ago. The debate has moved from the private and academic into the public, political, and judicial spheres. Journalists, victims and their family members have been displacing historians and other intellectuals as the main sources of public discourse about the past. And in this discourse there is a new focus on notions of judgment, honor, and shame; an emphasis on personal or collective experiences; and an explicit attempt to read the Spanish case in connection with World War II, the Cold War, the dictatorships of the Southern Cone, and recent developments in international law. [Adapted from: Faber, *Memory Battles*, pp. 1-2]

Related Courses

This course is part of the StudiOC Learning Community **Forms of Justice: Democracy, Historical Memory, and the Legacies of Violence**, along with POLT 244 (Politics of Transitional Justice), taught by Prof. Kristina Mani, and HIST 493 (Repairing the Past: Readings in Historical Justice), taught by Prof. Renee Romano. Students who are enrolled in the Learning Community are expected to attend a Wednesday evening session. Students not enrolled in the Learning Community are invited to attend those Wednesday evening sessions that include a visiting speaker or film screening.

Students with Spanish proficiency (advanced or higher) are invited to concurrently enroll in **HISP 358**, a half-course (2-credit) **Languages-across-the-Curriculum** section that accompanies this course. In the LxC section, which is **taught in Spanish**, we will read the course's novels in the original, closely monitor Spanish current events related to the course topic, and further discuss their implications.

Course Objectives

Knowledge

- To understand how Spain, a plurinational state, has been **coming to terms** with its twentieth-century past—particularly the Civil War and Francoism—and what’s at stake in this process;
- To understand the dynamics of Spanish historical memory in an **international, comparative context**;
- To understand the role **different social actors** have played in this process;
- To understand how scholars from **different disciplines**—including history, anthropology, political science, and cultural studies—have theorized this process;
- To understand, in particular, the role that **narrative fiction and photography** may play in individual and collective representation of a fraught collective past.

Skills

- To **analyze** scholarly studies, literary texts, and photographic images in their historical context, using an appropriate methodological toolkit;
- To leverage this analysis in support of a sustained, original **argument** about specific aspects of Spanish historical memory;
- To engage in a nuanced, informed **discussion**—both written and oral—about Spanish historical memory in an international, comparative context;
- To explain to a **lay audience** the main features of Spain’s “memory battles,” making clear what is at stake in them.

Dispositions

- To appreciate the distinctive contribution of different **disciplinary outlooks** when it comes to understanding complex social and historical processes.
- To appreciate the indeterminate, **open-ended nature** of artistic and literary expression.
- To hear, understand, and appreciate **points of view** different from our own.
- To understand and appreciate **historicity**: the idea the values and assumptions of the present are not always sufficient or appropriate for understanding the past.

Books (required)

These books will be on reserve. Anyone enrolled in the HISP 358 LxC section should purchase the four novels books in the Spanish original rather than in translation. All other readings will be on Blackboard.

1. Dulce Chacón. *The Sleeping Voice*. Transl. Nick Caistor. Random House, 2006. 272 pp. Spanish edition: *La voz dormida*. Alfaguara, 2002.
2. Alberto Méndez. *The Blind Sunflowers*. Transl. Nick Caistor. 110 pp. Spanish edition: *Los girasoles ciegos*. Seix Barral.
3. Javier Cercas. *The Impostor: A True Story*. Transl. Frank Wynne. 364 pp. Knopf. Spanish edition: *El impostor*. Random House, 2014.
4. Almudena Grandes. *The Frozen Heart*. Transl. Frank Wynne. 800pp. Spanish edition: *El corazón helado*. Tusquets, 2007.
5. Sebastiaan Faber. *Memory Battles of the Spanish Civil War: History, Fiction, Photography*. Vanderbilt University Press, 2018.
6. Helen Graham. *The Spanish Civil War: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2005.

Course Requirements

- Attend all class sessions. (Following Department policy, any unexcused absence over 3 will lower the final class grade with 1%. Students are expected to be on time and to remain for the entire class. Unexcused tardiness or early departure will be regarded as an absence. Students who are absent during any part of the class are responsible for acquiring the information missed. Please do not leave the classroom while the class is in session unless absolutely necessary.)
- Have read or viewed the assigned texts or films by the day indicated on the syllabus. (Reading assignments will range from 40-100 pages per class. Be sure to **manage your time** to allow for the readings.)
- Be prepared actively to participate in class discussion.
- Five **Response Papers** (out of 6 prompts) of around 500 words (2 double-spaced pages) each, to be brought to class in hard copy.
- One **Midterm Paper** of about 1,500 words (6 pp.), in two drafts, to be submitted by email.

- *For students who are not in the StudiOC Learning Community:* One **Final Paper** of about 2,500 words (10 pp.), in two drafts, to be submitted by email.
- *For learning community students:* For the final assignment for the Forms of Justice cluster, students will work in groups of three or four to do an **original and creative project** that draws on the material from different courses in the cluster. The project will count for the final grade in both History 493 and for this course. Groups have a good deal of freedom to define what they would like to explore; the only requirements are that: 1) all projects must include some kind of written component and some kind of creative component; 2) all groups must include at least one student who is enrolled in POLT 244 and one student who is enrolled in HISP 357; and 3) all projects must be approved by all three course cluster instructors. Groups should think creatively and boldly because the possibilities are many. Your group could choose an instance of historical injustice and redesign (or design) a museum exhibit with the goal of fostering repair or reconciliation; you could assess existing efforts at repair in a specific instance and write a proposal suggesting other possibilities that should be considered; you might choose to do a podcast or documentary that compares different initiatives by universities to address the history of slavery; you might decide to do a policy brief that proposes or critiques a particular type of redress or that outlines steps countries should take when they grappling with historical injustice. You could do a project that seeks to document the effect of historical trauma on a particular group. The project will require lots of research, lots of collaboration, and lots of creativity. There are several Wednesday evening sessions set aside specifically for group work and there will be lots of opportunities for feedback and discussion along the way

Assessment

- Attendance and participation: 20%
- Response Papers: 25%
- Midterm paper: 20%
- Final project: 35%

Honor Code

Every student is expected to adhere to the honor code. This means in very general terms that you only submit work that is yours. More specifically, it means that you will not plagiarize; that is, you will not appropriate the work or ideas of someone else—whether written or not—without acknowledgement, using the conventionally agreed-on scholarly practices for quoting and citation), and that you will not cheat, fabricate, collaborate on a project that is meant to be done individually, or submit the same work for multiple classes or assignments without the prior approval of all instructors involved. While you are allowed and encouraged to ask advice and help from the instructor, librarians, or official writing tutors, you are, in the end, to submit work produced by you. Some assignments may be collaborative in nature; those will be clearly identified as such. Everyone in the campus community is required to report all suspected violations of the honor code to the student honors committee. Following college-wide policy, you will include a signed statement on every assignment to certify that you adhered to the honor code.

Educational Access

If any aspects of the instruction or design of the course result in dis/ability-related barriers to your participation, please let me know. If you receive any specific accommodations, please provide documentation from the Disability Service Office

Classroom Climate

This course seeks to create a space where ideas can be freely developed, exchanged, argued, and questioned—in Spanish. As your teacher, I will work hard to create an environment in which people feel it's okay to take risks. To achieve this, "safety" is less of a goal than mutual trust, good faith, and generosity of interpretation. I hope we can work together to build an atmosphere in which everyone trusts each other enough on a personal level to leave their comfort zone on an intellectual level. The goal of the class is to generate understanding, meaning, sense—not necessarily in order to formulate answers, but certainly the sharpest possible questions about issues that matter. I strongly believe that this process is creative and collective. Ideas are to share—and

to challenge. All positions are tentative. Mistakes are allowed; in fact, they are inevitable and necessary. This is why it's helpful to assume good faith and be generous with granting the benefit of the doubt. Reading, too, can be an exercise in critique *and* generosity; historicizing—understanding works in their own context—means

seeking a balance between the two. Generally, it is good to ask questions before assuming an interpretation that may prompt a visceral reaction, be it admiration or offense. We can only learn if we are not afraid to be wrong. Jumping to conclusions, on the other hand, tends to block the learning process.

TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR

Tuesday, February 5 – Introduction(s)

- Faber & Seguí, "[Spaniards Confront the Legacy of Civil War and Dictatorship](#)" *The Nation*, 18 July 2016.

[Cluster Wednesday: Intro]

Thursday, February 7: Key concepts and Questions

- Paloma Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia* (selection) [30 pp.]
- Faber, *Memory Battles*, pp. 1-9. [10 pp.]
- Reyes Mate, "From History and Memory - and Back: Factuality, Knowledge, and Morality" *The Holocaust in Spanish Memory*, pp. 15-30. [16 pp.]
- Graham, *VSI*, ch. 7, pp. 138-150 [13 pp.]

Tuesday, February 12: Polemics on History & Memory

- David Rieff, "[The Cult of Memory: When History Does More Harm than Good](#)," *The Guardian*, March 2, 2016 [5 pp]
- Graham, *VSI*, ch. 1-2, pp. 1-36 [37 pp.], ch. 6, pp. 115-137 [23 pp.]
- Faber, *Memory Battles*, ch 3 & 4, "Usted qué sabe", "Memory and the Law" pp. 57-88. [32 pp.]
- >> **Response Paper 1**

[Cluster Wednesday screening: *The Memory of Justice*]

Thursday, February 14: The Role of Historians & Others

- Faber, *Memory Battles*, ch. 5 & 6, "The Thirst to Understand," "In Search of Spain's Disappeared," pp. 89-126. [38 pp.]
- Tony Judt, *Postwar*, epilogue, "From the House of the Dead," pp. 803-831. [29 pp.]
- Tomasa Cuevas, *Prison of Women*, ch. 5 (pp. 45-49), ch. 10 (pp. 85-92) [12 pp.]

Tuesday, February 19: *The Sleeping Voice* (1)

- Chacón, *The Sleeping Voice/La voz dormida*, pp. 1-100. [101 pp.]
- >> **Response Paper 2**

Thursday, February 21: *The Sleeping Voice* (2)

- Chacón, *The Sleeping Voice/La voz dormida*, pp. 101-180. [80 pp.]

Tuesday, February 26: : *The Sleeping Voice* (3)

- Chacón, *The Sleeping Voice/La voz dormida*, pp.181-270 [90 pp.]
- >> **Response Paper 3**

[Cluster Wednesday screening: *The Silence of Others*]

Thursday, February 28 Mass Graves & Memory

Skype session with Francisco Ferrándiz

- Francisco Ferrándiz, "Unburials, Generals, and Phantom Militarism: Engaging with the Spanish Civil War Legacy." *Current Anthropology* Vol. 60, Suppl. 19, February 2019.

Tuesday, March 5 Photography & Historical Memory

- Faber, *Memory Battles*, ch 1 & 2, pp. 11-56. [45 pp.]
- View: *The Mexican Suitcase* (Trisha Ziff)
- Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, ch. 1-2 (pp. 3-39) [37 pp.]
- John Berger, "Uses of Photography" [1978], in *About Looking* (New York, Vintage, 1991), pp. 52-67. [16 pp]
- >> **Response Paper 4**

Optional:

- Zervigón, Andrés Mario. 2010. "Persuading with the Unseen? *Die Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung*, Photography, and German Communism's Iconophobia." *Visual Resources* 26.2: 147-164.
- Dell, Simon. 2010. "Mediation and Immediacy: The Press, the Popular Front in France, and the Spanish Civil War." *The Mexican Suitcase. Vol. 1. The History*. Ed. Cynthia Young. New York: ICP/Steidl. 37-49.

[Cluster Wednesday screening: *Dodging Bullets*]

Thursday, March 7 Photography & Postmemory

- Hirsch, Marianne. 2008. "The Generation of Postmemory." *Poetics Today* 29.1: 103-28. [23 pp.]
- Faber, ch 11, "Postmemory and Other Premises," pp. 171-179. [9 pp.]
- >> **Plan for Paper 1**

Optional:

- Portela, Edurne. 2007. "Hijos del silencio: Intertextualidad, paratextualidad y postmemoria en *La voz dormida* de Dulce Chacón." *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos* 41: 51-71.

Tuesday, March 12 Peer edit first paper

- >> **Paper 1 first draft due, 5 pages.**

[Cluster Wednesday talk: Alicia D'Addario]

Thursday, March 14: *The Blind Sunflowers* (1)

- *Blind Sunflowers*, pp. 1-60

Tuesday, March 19 *The Blind Sunflowers* (2)

- *Blind Sunflowers*, pp. 61-110.

[Returned: Midterm Paper, draft 1]

[Cluster Wednesday: group work]

Thursday, March 21 Paper peer editing

>> **FRIDAY Midterm Paper second draft due**

**** **SPRING BREAK** ****

Tuesday, April 2 Javier Cercas's "true novel"

- *The Impostor/El impostor*, whole

[Wednesday: Manuela Nilsson]

Thursday, April 4 *The Impostor*, debate

- Faber, *Memory Battles*, ch 13, 192-206.
- Brenneis & others on *The Impostor*.
- >> **Response Paper 5**

Tuesday, April 9 *The Frozen Heart* (1)

- Grandes, *El corazón helado*, sel. 1

[Wednesday: group work]

Thursday, April 11 Truth Commissions & Trials

- Onur Bakiner, "Promoting Historical Justice through Truth Commissions: An Uneasy Relationship" in *Historical Justice and Memory* (2015), 146-165.
- Reading on Spain's Memory Law (TBD).

Tuesday, April 16 *The Frozen Heart* (2)

- Grandes, *El corazón helado*, sel. 2
- >> **Response Paper 6**

[Wednesday: Hank Klibanoff]

Thursday, April 18 *The Frozen Heart* (3)

- Grandes, *El corazón helado*, sel. 3

Tuesday, April 23 *SCW through Fiction*

- Faber, ch 10, Novel of the SCW, pp. 155-170.
- >> **Plan for final paper**

[Cluster Wednesday screening: *Granito*, with K. Doyle]

Thursday, April 25 *The Frozen Heart* (wrap up)

- Grandes, *El corazón helado*, sel. 4

Tuesday, April 30: Museums and Monuments

- Cheryl Jimenez Frei, "Towards Memory, Against Oblivion: A Comparative Perspective on Public Memory, Monuments, and Confronting a Painful Past in the United States and Argentina," *The Public Historian* (2017)
- Reading on commemorations in Spain.

[Cluster Wednesday: group work]

Thursday, May 2: Museums and Monuments cont.)

- >> **First draft Final Paper due**

Saturday May 4 Field Trip

Tuesday, May 7 Work on Final project

[Cluster Wednesday: group work]

Thursday, May 9 Wrap-up & Evaluations

[Returned: Final Paper, draft 1]

>> **Final Paper Due: Wed., May 15, 4pm** (non-learning-community)

>> **Final Project Due: Sat., May 18, 9pm** (learning community)