

Spain's 1939 Exiles
in the Americas and Maryland.
Eighty Years: *Alive*
in our Hearts

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*In memoriam José Ramón Marra López, Graciela Palau-Nemes,
Gonzalo Sobejano, María Elena Zelaya, all seeds of the 1939 Spanish
Exile Hispanism in the USA and Maryland*

Exile is a global, plural, and protean phenomenon that has touched every people and nation at one particular juncture of their history. Contemporaneously, it is identified by political forms of exclusion that banish *sine die* large groups of opponents, e.g., from the modern nation-states created after the liberal bourgeois revolutions. Exiles and diasporas are politically motivated, as well as humanly disastrous, and keep displacing millions of souls on every continent, coined as *refugees* by international conventions since 1922. These modern political banishments affected liberal democracies particularly during the rise

of 20th-century totalitarianisms that led, among other conflicts, to the 1936-39 War in Spain that vanquished the democratic Second Spanish Republic¹. A cataclysm in which modern historiography has unveiled its local and international military Italian Fascist and Nazi plotting roots, as well as the dismal Non-Intervention League of Nations policies and the USA arms embargo. In fact, the conflict anticipated the Second World Clash and other civil strifes that plagued most of the rest of the century, leaving over 50 million refugees.

While Mexico's open arms for about 30,000 Spanish refugees, contradicted its long standing closed immigration policies, USA administrations were particularly restrictive about the influx of Spanish exiles or other refugees, until the slight improvement through the cumbersome Displaced Persons Act of 1948. For Spanish refugees, among their half a million diaspora, USA numbers were marginal, somehow in line with earlier lesser immigration numbers from Spain, but this time, mostly representing academics, thinkers, artists, and professionals, backed by personal and institutional affidavits of support that could also circumvent the fluctuating 230 yearly Spanish entry quotas to the USA, set in 1930. Furthermore, ideologically left leanings backlashes undermined the exiles in the USA. For example, the Cold War type official crackdowns against those in favor of the Spanish Loyalists, or the chasms between Liberals and Stalinists versus the closed ranks among conservative pro-defenders of the Francoist usurpers. The rhetorical and physical repatriation to the USA of the *ad hoc* aid to Spain through the surviving volunteers of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade (1936-1938), or the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy's offspring, the American Medical Bureau, was another spark that ignited pre McCarthyism against Spanish Republican proselites. The subsequent 1942 Joint Antifascist Refugee Committee, eventually fell prey to prison sentences in 1950 through the Committee for Un-American Activities and the *red scare* for refusing to surrender their records of support to Spanish refugee in France,

1 A plural conflict, I have coined, *Guerra de las Españas*: civil and regional clashes, an international war, and a conflict of classes...

among them, survivors from Nazi extermination camps at the Walter B. Cannon Varsovie Hospital in Toulouse. Later, Dominican Republic dictator Rafael Trujillo's sponsored disappearance of Basque politician Jesús de Galíndez in 1956, an FBI informant among his fellow refugees, the cover up of the affair, or the financing of *the Congress for Cultural Freedom*, were clear signs of the USA stand against any of the exiles' liberating hopes.

Nevertheless, several noted Feminists, and Human Rights advocates from progressive Spain, who had come to the forefront of public affairs in the wake of the 1933 universal voting rights, like former parliament deputy Victoria Kent, or journalists Constanca de la Mora and Isabel de Palencia, were examples of the exiles' attempts to sway USA public opinion to support the removal of the dictatorship through the recently created Organization of United Nations. But a parallel diplomacy was taking place in which France's more expeditious moves (border closure from March of 1946 to February of 1948) were systematically countered by Great Britain's long standing Non-Intervention, and the United States' lukewarm opposition to the Franco dictatorship. *The Leader of the Free World* systematically resisted intervening in what it considered a domestic matter where any Soviet influence could not be risked, while tempering its stand-off policies: it eventually facilitated financial aid to the Franco regime, the lifting of the 1946 UN resolution boycotting the regime, the reinstatement of an ambassador in Spain (1950), and the signing of the Madrid accords on September 26, 1953 for the establishments of four USA military bases—one of them still open at Rota (Cádiz). These successive setbacks, corroborated by the admittance of Franco's Spain to the UNESCO in 1953, and to the UN in 1955, or the visit of president Eisenhower to Madrid in 1959, forced the Spanish exiles to wait for the passing of the dictatorship and the return of liberties to Spain in 1977.

All things considered, the vast network of USA institutions benefited from selective but solid group of exiles that upgraded, in the coattails of USA pan-Americanism, the prestige of Spanish language, literature and culture, and the Modernist Iberian and American legacies (Jiménez *El modernismo*). Some, like Francisco Ayala, had re-

emigrated from Latin America, particularly from the intellectual hub at the University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras, which later attracted other émigrés from Spain like Aurora de Albornoz or Ricardo Gullón. Overall, the prestige of this unique but non-exhaustive crop of *Silver Age* and younger intellectuals thrived and mingled on USA campuses, such as the Summer Spanish School at Middlebury, as well as film, scientific or artistic institutions. These supported them across the vast USA territories, away from the fascist transnational perils, besides the paradoxical official contradictions toward their democratic hopes.

Journals such as *Ibérica: for a Free Spain* (1953-1974), edited by Victoria Kent and Louise Crane, which also supported a relief organization for Spanish exiles in France, Nancy Mc Donald's *Spanish Refugee Aid* (1953-1977), and *España libre* (1939-1977) of the *Sociedades Hispanas Confederadas*, also displayed consistently their antidictatorial barrage of ideas. The latter, regrouped in 1937 over two hundred popular Spanish antifascist diaspora cultural and mutual societies, gathered over 60,000 members, its working class authors and artists agitated the readers with articles, books, cartoons and/or plays, while more than \$2,000,000 were collected for the support of Republican refugees, political prisoners and clandestine resistance in Spain. And Eliseo Torres & Sons was a referent as a Spanish bookstore and publisher.

Meanwhile, other exiles contributed through the arts and letters, thanks to pre-war established educational contacts between Spain and the USA (Fuentes "Exiliados" 52-53). Notably, 1956 Literature Nobel recipient, Juan Ramón Jiménez, back from Cuba to Florida in 1939, after having acted, in 1936, as "honorary cultural attaché" in the USA, alongside his feminist companion, Zenobia Camprubí. In the Maryland area, they kept up their *Political Poetics*, from Washington D.C. to the University of Maryland [UMD] (1942-1951), while nurturing all along a relationship with progressive USA Vice President (1941-1945) and 1948 Third Party Presidential Candidate, Henry Wallace. Filmmaker Luis Buñuel was present at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) and Hollywood; Luis Quintanilla's drawings were prefaced by Ernest Hemingway; Surrealist artist Eugenio F. Granell, later celebrated for his paintings

in postdictatorial Spain, taught literature; philosopher José Ferrater Mora was selected by Bryn Mawr College in the stream of the peace activist, Bertrand Russell; cellist Pau Casals was a frequent guest at the White House; or Josep Lluís Sert, one of the designers of the Republican pavilion for the 1937 Paris World Fair, became Dean of the Harvard School of Architecture. In Paris, a great many antifascist artists had displayed their aesthetic commitment to the Spanish Republic: from Alexander Calder's *Mercury Fountain*, Eduardo Vicente's *Men in the Trenches*, or other exiles like later U.S.S.R. refugee Alberto's *Spanish People Have a Road Leading to a Star*, and Joan Miró, a key referent for the USA post war abstract expressionism, with his homage, *The Reaper*. These last two pieces vanished, as a potent metaphor for that exile. While ambassador Fernando de los Ríos vacated Spain's legacy in Washington D.C., and joined the NYC New School, enriched by other European exiled intelligentsia, Picasso's *Guernica*, also firstly exhibited in Paris, was brought over in 1939 by Spanish Prime Minister Juan Negrín, to lobby for the loyalist cause through the MOMA. It eventually remained there until its final journey to Madrid in 1981, as an emblem of the return of a handful of exiles and democracy to Spain.

As a vivid example for this Republican saga, Negrín's disciple, Severo Ochoa, was the 1959 Nobel Prize Laureate in Physiology, while NYU hired historian Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz, the son of one of Negrín's successors at the Republican helm: Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz (1962-1971). Ironically, Nicolás had fled from the Cuelgamuros concentration camp, set up to build the standing mausoleum (the Valley of the Fallen) I have coined *The Un-Civil Mountain (Entre alambradas y exilio 363)*. The dictator, through his family's conniving, defied until the second day of our meeting (Oct 24, 2019), and almost *eternally*, his exhumation, as a liberating moment for the memory rightfully sought, and owed, to all of these exiles and other victims: "an admirable wandering *Numancia* which prefers to fade away than accept defeat" (Luis Araquistain [qtd. in *El exilio español 235*]).

This Symposium at UMD (Oct 23-24, 2019) was preceded by *El exilio de las Españas de 1939 en las Américas: "¿Adónde fue la canción?"* [Spain's 1939 Exile in the Americas: Where Did the Song Go?] (Oct.

18-20, 1989), which had coincided then with a more balanced diplomatic accord on the USA military bases in Spain. It was followed by “Los exilios de las Españas de 1939: Por sendas de la memoria” [1939 Exiles from Spain: Memory Seeds] (Oct 21, 1999). Finally, the present one bore the dictator’s remains transfer. Thus, these 1936-1939 displacements have kept an endless shining flame among a half a million potential hi-stories, some of which we have strived to highlight throughout the last three decades at UMD: a shelter to this most relevant Spanish diasporic presence in the Americas, the USA and Maryland.

The Symposium and this Volume

The texts edited here and presented at the meeting were accompanied by a film series during the Fall of 2019 (Sept. 10-Nov. 19, 2019) at the Cultural Services of the Embassy of France, the Mexican Cultural Institute and Spain’s Cultural Office in Washington D.C.² Both the film series and symposium were directed to the broadest possible audience across all the UMD College of Arts and Humanities and Graduate School (UG, Graduate students, faculty) as well as the general public. The Symposium could not have been possible without the decisive contributions by the UMD College of Arts and Humanities and Dean Bonnie Thornton-Hill, the Graduate School and Dean Steve Fetter, the Miller Center for Historical Studies and Dr. Karin

2 *La nueve. Los olvidados de la victoria* (2010) Alberto Marquardt; *La guerre est finie* (1966) Alain Resnais; *El misterio Galíndez* (2003) Gerardo Herrero; *En el balcón vacío* (1962) José Miguel García Ascot-María Luisa Elío; *Refuge / Un peuple attend* (1939) Jean-Paul Dreyfus / Jean-Paul Le Chanois; *Beltenebros* (1991) Pilar Miró; *Visa al paraíso* (2010) Lillian Lieberman; *Soldados de Salamina* (2003) David Trueba; *Le Vernet d’Ariège: Photographies d’un camp* (1996) Linda Ferrer-Roca. Many thanks to Dr. Nélica Devesa-Gómez (U of Maryland), Dr. Kathryn Taylor (Towson U), Lillian Lieberman, Anaïs Naharro-Murphy, and my colleagues Profs. Joseph Bami, Pierre Verdaguer and Juan Uriagereka (U of Maryland) for the introductions and/or discussions about the films.

Rosenblatt, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese (SPAP) and its head Dr. Eyda Merediz, within the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures and its Director Prof. Fatemeh Keshavarz, Spain's Cultural Office in Washington D.C. through its Counselor María Álvarez de Toledo, and the Mexican Cultural Institute in Washington D.C., through its Director Beatriz Nava. And last but not least, this edition is possible thanks to the generous contribution of Spain's Cultural Office of the Spanish Embassy in Washington D.C., presently headed by Miguel Alberó, the UMD College of Arts and Humanities and SPAP.

Special thanks are due to my colleagues: Prof. Juan Uriagereka who coordinated Institute Professor Emeritus, MIT and Laureate Professor U. of Arizona Noam Chomsky's intervention; Distinguished University Prof. Steven Mansbach, whose introduction to Francesc Torres's paper is also included; Prof. Joseph Brami, Dr. Daniela Bulanksy, Dr. Nélica Devesa-Gómez, Dr. Rachel Linville, Dr. Mehl Penrose, Dr. Mariana Reyes, Dr. Kathryn Taylor and Dr. Ricardo F. Vivancos-Pérez for chairing different sessions, as well as ABDs Cecilia Batauz and Sofía Maurette. ABD Juan Díaz handled the publicity, and Janel Brennan, our Language Instructional Technology Specialist, ensured our videoconferencing and taping, along with Dr. Nélica Devesa Gómez, who has also co-translated Prof. Fuentes's contribution and co-transcribed Prof. Chomsky's dialogue. And a special remembrance for our colleague, who unfortunately left us in 2021, Prof Michael Long, who chaired Dr. Feu's session, and in line with Orwell's ideas, lived in admiration of anarchism, particularly the kind that flourished in Republican Spain during those key years.

In this volume, readers will find a group of academic texts from Section 2 through 4: *Transnational Spanish Exiles in Maryland and the Americas: From Zenobia Camprubí, Juan Ramón Jiménez, and Pedro Salinas to the Present; Getting There: United States Contradictions, Mexico, and Popular Resistance*; and *France: A Stepping Stone toward the Americas*. Meanwhile, Section 5 is devoted to texts dealing with *Film, Poetry and Music around the 1939 Spanish Refugees* presented during a filmic and musical homage. And, finally, the last section, *Eyewitnesses*

of Spain's 1939 Exile in the Americas: The Privilege of Time and our Heartful Debt, features the voices of various witnesses and interpreters of the 1939 Spanish exiles' legacies in the Americas. Finally, I want to thank for their contributions the sizeable group of participants affiliated with the Asociación para el Estudio de las Migraciones y Exilios Ibéricos Contemporáneos [AEMIC.org], and María Pizarro for her patient editing.

Transnational Spanish Exiles in Maryland and the Americas: From Zenobia Camprubí, Juan Ramón Jiménez and Pedro Salinas to the Present

The Symposium addressed transatlantic and transnational implications and debts of some Spanish exiles in the Americas, as some of them transitioned from France and its ominous concentration camps across the Atlantic to eventually land in the USA, with many journeying through the Southern cone, the Caribbean and/or Mexico. This is further proof of the necessity to diversify our approaches and points of view on such a plural and unseizable corpus that exile refracts as an even more fractured cultural manifestation that problematizes the nation, gender and identity, generations, any canon, telos ... Former UMD students, now faculty at several USA universities and colleges, displayed at our campus the impact and repercussions of some of these plural legacies in the Americas and Maryland, particularly during the Centennial of the UMD Graduate School. These researchers carry this Spanish exiles' torch of excellence, seeded from our first landmark Symposium on the subject held at UMD more than thirty years ago.

And, particularly, we highlighted exiled tradition in the state of Maryland, where eminent voices of Spanish literature such as Juan Ramón Jiménez with his companion, Zenobia Camprubí, and Pedro Salinas taught in area institutions during the 1940s. As faculty at the University of Maryland and Johns Hopkins respectively, their example was continued, in the case of the 1956 Literature Nobel awardee, by his disciple, Gracia Palau-Nemes, a key name in seeking that award,