

The Parables and Parabolas of the Spanish Civil War Exiles in Mexico

By

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In memory of my grandparents, Calvin and Mildred Forehand

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vi
Chapter	
I. Introduction.....	1
II. Building a Concrete Parabolic Site: Félix Candela.....	22
III. Publishing a Public Parabola: The Role of <i>España Peregrina</i> in Shaping the Public Sphere	51
IV. Painting an Acted and Visual Parable: Josep Renau and <i>España hacia América</i> .....	85
V. Writing the Parable of <i>Los niños españoles de Morelia: El exilio infantil en México</i> .....	120
VI. Conclusion.....	152
REFERENCES.....	155

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1: Exterior of Iglesia de la Medalla de la Virgen Milagrosa.....	37
2: Stained glass window in the archway of Iglesia de la Medalla de la Virgen Milagrosa.....	40
3: Pews and arched supports of Iglesia de la Medalla de la Virgen Milagrosa .....	41
4: Los Manantiales Restaurant.....	43
5: Casino de la Selva.....	46
6: Graph of a parabola.....	53
7: <i>España hacia América</i> first panel.....	98
8: <i>España hacia América</i> second panel.....	101
9: <i>España hacia América</i> third panel.....	102
10: <i>España hacia América</i> fourth panel.....	103
11: <i>España hacia América</i> fifth panel.....	105
12: <i>España hacia América</i> sixth panel.....	108
13: <i>España hacia América</i> seventh panel.....	113
14: <i>España hacia América</i> eighth panel.....	116
15: Sentiment-analysis graph.....	147

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2017, an earthquake of a 7.1 magnitude rocked central Mexico. The earthquake caused major damage to Puebla, Morelos, and Mexico City. Around this same time, I was planning a trip to Mexico City to visit the sites examined in this study. When I arrived in Mexico's capital a few months after the earthquake to begin the work of viewing Félix Candela's buildings, visiting the archives of the Ateneo Español de México, and photographing Josep Renau's mural in Cuernavaca, I was struck by these works' enduring quality. These works were enduring not only because they had withstood the natural disaster, but also because they remained impactful sites of cultural messaging. The great architect Sir Christopher Wren once declared that "architecture aims at Eternity," and it was apparent that week that, despite a major catastrophe, the architecture, periodicals, and paintings that I observed had an abiding quality that made them potent reminders of the contributions of the Spanish Civil War exile community. After several decades, their walls, pages, and brushstrokes continued to stand as compelling signs of a moral ideology. This study centers on the stories about exile and the *hispanismo* ideology contained within those walls, magazines, murals, and memoirs.

Art, architecture, and writing all function as forms of ideology by imagining, constructing, and detailing a set of societal values. As Fredric Jameson argues in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as Socially Symbolic Act*, texts implicitly broach and attempt to solve social problems; the power of cultural analysis resides in critics' ability not only to explain what texts mean, but how texts use form to address the sociopolitical issues underlying their production. Additionally, as Nadir Lahiji points out, Jameson limited his analysis, never

engaging with architecture or architectural criticism (2–3). Taking up this problem critically, I echo Lahiji in questioning: “What would be the implications of the thesis of ‘political unconscious’ for architecture and its function in ... society” (3–4). Moreover, how do architectural and literary-discursive forms operate in a parallel fashion to stake out the political agenda of the Republican exiles in Mexico? My project’s primary contribution is demonstrating how the parabolic form enabled and empowered Republican exiles to chart the *hispanismo* paradigm at the heart of their cultural productions. By their scale, form, style, type, location, and themes, these pieces all work in conjunction to visually, spatially, and intellectually define a system of beliefs for the public. To demonstrate how the pan-Hispanic aims of *hispanismo* took shape in Mexico, I examine a variety of manifestations of *parábolas*—a word in Spanish that means both parable and parabola. In rooflines and plot lines, I identify how the exiled community used parabolic stories to relate moral lessons about cooperation, knowledge, and progress.

Once the Spanish Civil War erupted in 1936 and after the fall of the Spanish Republic in 1939, artists, writers, academics, and members of the Republican government left Spain and went into exile. Many members of this community first sought refuge in France, living in crowded, under-resourced concentration camps. The Nazi occupation of France, however, forced the exiled Republicans to flee once again, and many departed to safer places such as Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Argentina, and Venezuela.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Exile is a polemical term, both in English and in Spanish. Unlike the distinction in Spanish between *exilio* and *exiliado*, in English exile can be a person or it can be a place. In Spanish, the absence of the term from the Real Academia Española dictionary prior to 1956, essentially erased this group of people (Cabrera Infante 36–37). To complicate the matter further, exile is often used interchangeably with other terms such as refugee, banished person, and expat. Exile may be defined as the state of being forced from one’s home country, the state of taking voluntary leave of one’s homeland, or someone who is banished, expelled, or exiled (Merriam-Webster *Definition of EXILE*). Within this definition, there is substantial overlap with the common use of the word refugee, or someone fleeing to a foreign country to avoid persecution (*Definition of Refugee*). Because the circumstances for leaving Spain were so



Rather than a homogeneous group, the exiles that made their way to Mexico were a diverse set representing various regions of Spain, various professions, and various age groups. In 1937, the first wave disembarked in Mexico. Known as the *niños de Morelia*, the first arrivals were a group of nearly five hundred Spanish children whose parents sent the children abroad for safety. On the heels of the successful settlement of the *niños de Morelia*, in 1939 Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas announced that Mexico would welcome all of the refugees that the Spanish Republic could transport (S. Faber, *Exile* 16). Upon his announcement, nearly thirty thousand Spanish exiles settled in Mexico.

According to the initial agreement between the Republican aid organizations and the Mexican government, the majority of these exiles were meant to work in agriculture in rural areas such as Puebla and Huasteca. The arrangement further specified that only a limited number of Republican intellectuals and elites would be permitted to reside in Mexico City (54–56).<sup>2</sup> Despite these restrictions, the exiles quickly abandoned their farms and flooded Mexico City. At the same time, the number of intellectuals and the fervor of their activism far exceeded the Mexican government's expectations.

The earliest group of intellectuals to relocate to Mexico had arrived at the invitation of the Mexican government before the civil war's conclusion. A fairly small cohort, these

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varied among those that went to live in Mexico, some sent away as children, others invited by the Mexican government, and many escaping a totalitarian regime that left little room for opposition, I have chosen to apply the term exile when referring to those who arrived in Mexico following the Spanish Civil War.

<sup>2</sup> Like individual Republican citizens, the Republican seat of government first relocated to France, and then moved to Mexico following the Nazi occupation of France. As part of this movement, both the offices of President and Prime Minister continued to operate in exile. Although their forces had been unsuccessful in defeating Franco during the Spanish Civil War, the Republicans had remained hopeful that the Allied Forces would depose the regime and that the Republican government would resume governing. To aid the exiles during this interim period, the Republican government established the Servicio de Evacuación de Refugiados Españoles (SERE) and the Junta de Auxilio a los Republicanos Españoles (JARE). Once in Mexico, SERE and JARE assisted the exiles with a variety of services including job placement, housing, and financial assistance.

intellectuals tended to be older and politically moderate. In contrast, the much larger cohort of intellectuals that reached Mexico after the war was younger and far more politically active and radical.

Despite their different backgrounds, as exiled philosopher María Zambrano noted, these exiles found a common cause in resisting and challenging Franco. Echoing Zambrano, Michael Ugarte observes with regard to the exile publication *España Peregrina*, "...the feature which stands out the most in these essays almost as a common bond among a monstrously dissimilar group of texts is the voice of a *nosotros*" (62). Regardless of age, affiliation, and arrival date, the intellectuals living in Mexico worked together and took their roles as the bearers of Spanish culture seriously. As the Junta de Cultura Española explained, they were, "aquellos españoles en los que concurra la doble calidad: de estar desterrados y de ser creadores o mantenedores de la cultura española" ("Estatutos de La Junta de Cultura Española" 2). Although not a thorough examination of all of the members of the exile community, this study brings together works from diverse contributors from the various waves of exiles: the *niños*, the invited artists, and the general group of exiles. This study largely favors intellectuals and professions, not to perpetuate the voices of cultural elites, but rather because of their outsized influence. Similar to Benedict Anderson's observations regarding the power of publishing and the development of vernacular language to produce the tools that diverse peoples required to imagine that they were part of a larger community of similar people, the texts from these producers provided the unifying imagery and vocabulary that articulated *hispanismo* ideology for the larger community (45).

This study enters into a dialog with existing research on both the macro and micro views of the exile experience and their cultural contributions. Patricia Fagen's *Exiles and citizens: Spanish Republicans in Mexico* has taken a macro-perspective, focusing on a broad treatment of

the exile community as it relates to issues such as Republican associations, ideology, *hispanismo*, and the relationship between exiles and Spain. She details the exile community's successes and struggles abroad, with particular emphasis on Spanish intellectuals' and professionals' efforts to maintain a sense of identity abroad, all while facing rural isolation, divided senses of loyalty, and nativists' challenges to their assimilation into Mexican society as worker-citizens. In addition to expansive studies of the Spanish Civil War exiles as a group, a significant body of research has detailed the contributions of individual refugees. In addressing Paulino Masip's struggle to define the new parameters of what it meant to be Spanish while living outside of Spain, Ana González Neira highlights the didactic importance of the exiled writer's *Cartas a un emigrado español* (1939). Using Masip's personal accounts of his experiences and his observations on Mexican food, people, and culture, González Neira's study engages the "dualidad España-América," or shared cultural attachments that characterized the exile community (216). Francie Cate-Arries's study of Manuel Altolaguirre's writings also centers on a single author, noting how one writer's individual experience in exile evolved from a sense of dislocation to a counter-exile sense of creative opportunity in a new land ("Coming to America," 137). Sebastian Faber's *Exile and Cultural Hegemony* blends these two approaches, focusing on individual accomplishments from well-known exiled intellectuals and the broader evolution of the exiles' ideology and their sense of nationalism from the time of their arrival in the 1930s to the end of Franco's rule in the 1970s.

While studies have surveyed the literary and cultural contributions of the exile community in Mexico, research has yet to turn a critical eye toward the role of the interrelated dynamics of narrative, public space, visual culture, and the exiles' ideology. Taking as a point of departure the Junta de Cultura Española's description of the exile condition, this study signals

the importance of acts of visual, public creation for establishing common ground for a diverse group of exiles and the broader transatlantic community. Although the civil war exiles shared a common language with their hosts, I argue that it was the power of story that cultivated community. In the polyphony of Republican political ideologies, their stories provided a frame for what it meant to belong across geographic and national borders. Their narratives not only explained a set of values, but they also allowed for these values to be shared through retelling and intergenerational transmission.

As cultural producers such as the Spanish Civil War intelligentsia have left their homelands in search of safety and free expression in another country, literary critics have sought to answer the question of whether there is a uniform set of characteristics that define exile literature. In discussing themes of exile, notions of space and time, and the cultural production of the Spanish Civil War exiles, this study draws from the works of Edward Said and Sophia McClennen, both of whom have noted that exile awareness occurs simultaneously in new and old environments, that it is an existence in two settings at the same time (Said 184, McClennen 34). My addition of the parabolic shape to their ideas of exile not only captures the simultaneous state of being in two places, but it also adds a reflective component that mirrors the comparative nature of their existential duality of their exile.<sup>3</sup> My theorizing of the parabolic shape offers a new perspective for studying both individual and community exile experiences in Mexico. In discussing his home country, renowned Mexican author Carlos Fuentes writes, “[i]n Mexico, all times are living, all pasts are present” (16). The parabola provides a reflective form for conceptualizing the aforementioned complexities of the Spanish Civil War exiles’ simultaneous

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<sup>3</sup> Because my current study engages with only a few examples of exile cultural production, all of which were created in the specific context of Mexico, this work considers the breadth of theories regarding exile literature without entering the debate of whether there exists a universal theory of exile literature.

attachments to the past and present, origin and destination, inner and outer exile, and presence and void. This non-linear and open shape provides a compelling physical manifestation of the movement away from the home culture and the absence that shift creates. Moreover, I argue that these *parábolas* unify the exile community, demonstrate collaboration with Latin America, and also invite those who engage with their works into their system of beliefs.

My framework challenges existing unidirectional theories of exile like those of Nicolás Guillén that suggest that cultural texts produced in exile move from exile toward the distinct destination of counter exile. In addition, this study pushes back against Guillén's notion that exiled writing exists either as a form focused on exile itself or as a counter exile form that transcends the attachments of one's origin to focus on universal ideas. With this study, I demonstrate how the cultural products of these Spanish Civil War exiles occupy both sides of Guillén's dyadic conceptualization. Specifically, I identify how this group discusses exile while also infusing their narrative with proposals for a universal morality.

As Paul Ilie observes, the exilic ethical discourse often insists upon the moral superiority of those living in exile (85-87). The exiled intellectuals living in Mexico adopted what Faber refers to as intellectual messianism, seeing themselves as the saviors and seers of their nation (*Exile* 29). The universal morality they articulated drew from nineteenth-century ideals of duty, service, and decency to identify the role of Spain in a future, universal civilization (5). This universal morality, known as *hispanismo*, elevated the Enlightenment, liberalism, and public education, and denounced colonialism and anti-Semitism (Diffie 457-58). An extension of an anti-colonialism stance, *hispanismo* promoted a unified, transatlantic relationship between Spain and Latin America. As explained by Francisco Carmona Nenclares, "sería hispanismo aquello que desde el punto de vista material o ético contribuyese a que los países iberoamericanos

alcanzaran el límite máximo de su nivel histórico propio” (44). Bringing together Guillén’s two poles, the group discussed their exile as part of contributing to the development of their Ibero-American countries and advocating for the former colonies to reach self-actualization and the highest point in their own histories (Krauel 213).

For the defeated Republican exiles, spreading their *hispanismo* ideals offered the hope of consolidating the Hispanic world in opposition to Francoist Spain and its *hispanidad* philosophy. As Francie Cate-Arries notes,

Within the context of the rhetorical battle of *las dos Españas* — the warring factions’ attempts to control the discourse about Spanish history and identity — the culturally specific keyword that emerged most significantly in post-war writing generally, was the politically-loaded term *hispanismo* or *hispanidad*. (“Re-Imagining” 121).

Despite occupying opposite sides of the ocean and diverging positions within ideological debates, Franco’s *hispanidad* and the Republicans’ *hispanismo* often drew from the same language and symbolism (S. Faber, *Exile* 48). For example, both sides engaged with the cultural and historical mythology surrounding the Catholic Kings, the “discovery” of the New World, and the prominence of their literary contributions. And while the two sides employed similar in their imagery and rhetoric, they differed drastically in how to interpret and apply those cultural signs.

Internally, Franco and the Nationalists rooted their ideology in Spanish historic and religious archetypes (Großmann 755). These archetypes revolved around three fundamental pillars. First, as exemplified in the slogan “España, una, grande y libre,” Spain was a nation that was both unique and unified. Second, Spain was a steadfastly Catholic nation. Lastly, Spain was meant to reclaim its former imperial position of the Golden Age (756). Following these

principles, the regime's cultural vision emphasized a homogenized identity to unite the country while suppressing regional languages, religious practices, and cultures. In pursuit of singular devotion to the Nationalist state, its ideology, and its symbols, Francoist nationalism justified the oppression of regional identities in Catalonia and the Basque Country and the elimination of organizations such as the freemasons and trade unions.

Although *hispanidad* had intellectual supporters like Ramiro de Maeztu and Rafael Calvo Serer, the ideology largely depended on hegemonic, state authority for definition and enforcement. Through the regime's institutional power, advocates of *hispanidad* ensured the consolidation and dissemination of their cultural discourse. Access to law-making power and authoritarian implementation meant that the Franco regime could establish both an official language and a set of actors to promote *hispanidad*. Acting through the *Ley de 2 de noviembre de 1940*, for example, the regime created the Consejo de la Hispanidad, a group of military officers, government officials, clergy, and intellectuals that worked in conjunction with the Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores to oversee the promotion of Spain's place as the spiritual axis of the Hispanic world.

Like *hispanidad*, the *hispanismo* movement was analogously based on, "the conviction that through the course of history Spaniards have developed a life style (sic) and culture, a set of characteristics, of traditions and value judgements that render them distinct from all other peoples" (Pike 1). From the liberal bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia to socialists and communists, Franco's opponents largely defined culture in opposition to fascism (S. Faber, "La Hora" 62). Whereas Franco's Falangists advocated for traditional values, Catholicism, and totalitarianism, the Republican forces emphasized Enlightenment principles. While their opponents consolidated social and religious hierarchies, *hispanismo* worked to dismantle

hierarchies through social justice activism, democracy, and the implementation of egalitarian structures. Republicans advocated through unity not by the deprivation of rights, but rather through the possibility of creating a larger force to defend liberty.

Education played a key role in distinguishing the cultural outlooks of the Republicans and Francoists, particularly with regard to modernity and its imposition from the outside by the Anglo-Saxon world (*Exile* 48). For the Francoists, modernity posed an existential threat because it promoted access to and the democratization of knowledge. As the proponent of *hispanidad*, María de Maeztu noted in declaring her hostility to modernity, “The Modern Age has wished to popularize culture, spread it, in order to put it within the reach of the people. This is impossible. Culture cannot be popular. Culture loses its essential value when placed within the reach of the weak” (M. Maeztu, *Cultura Europea* 37–38). Rather than democratizing the access to knowledge, Franco’s supporters perceived the expansion of literacy and science as a threat to the cultural, religious, and hierarchical foundations of Spanish society (Diffie 465). Instead of looking to the future, as regime supporter Ramiro de Maeztu suggested in his 1934 text *Defensa de la hispanidad*, it was paramount to conform to the nation’s values to the standards of the past and the order of the 15<sup>th</sup> century (R. Maeztu 186). To that end, the Catholic Church coordinated non-secular education and textbooks like *Manual de historia de España* emphasized the importance of eliminating foreigners and outside ideas (Boyd 264–65).

While the Francoists feared modernity because of its capacity to spread knowledge, *hispanismo* supporters largely rejected modernity for its exploitative pursuit of capitalist interests. Distinguishing their position on modernity from *hispanidad*, the Catalan author Ramón Xirau composed a point-by-point rebuttal of Maeztu’s *Defensa* in which he explained that the advocates of *hispanismo* did not fear the future. Instead, they simply had a different vision for it.



Most importantly, Xirau emphasized, *hispanismo* sought to supplant *hispanidad's* antiquated religious and social hierarchies with universal suffrage, social justice, and democratic rights (Krauel 215). Supporters of *hispanismo* viewed a future of mutual collaboration across gender, class, and nationalist as the antidote to a dehumanizing capitalism, while defenders of *hispanidad* appeared to fear the unbridled power of the masses.

On the international stage, each side also engaged with Spain's colonial past, specifically, the nation's unique capacity to impart a worldview and a desire to forge transoceanic communities because of its history of empire (212–13).<sup>4</sup> Like their ideological stances regarding national culture, the Republicans and the Nationalists diverged on their conceptualization of Spain's relationship with Latin America. Supporters of *hispanismo* saw transatlantic collaboration as a mutually beneficial means for advancement and transcendence. Spurred in part by Spain's loss in the Spanish-American War in 1898, *hispanismo* supporters believed that the collapse of the Spanish political empire was a necessary precondition for a broader spiritual union among the countries of the Spanish-speaking world (S. Faber, "La Hora" 67). In contrast, as Johannes Großmann has observed, *hispanidad* sought a return to Spain's colonial, economic, artistic, and spiritual "success," celebrating Spain's imperial past as a counter-narrative to the negative portrayal of Spain in the "Leyenda Negra"; through these undeniably colonial efforts, Spain would vitally intervene in improving the spiritual shortcomings in the Americas (Großmann 757). To those ends, in 1946, the Instituto de Cultura Hispánica (ICH) implemented an international *hispanidad* program. The program aimed, "to impose, in short, the order of culture, the essential ideas that have inspired our glorious movement, which combine the purest

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<sup>4</sup> While advocating for greater recognition of Spain's contributions to the countries of the former Spanish empire, the ideologies largely overlooked the contributions of traditionally marginalized populations on both sides of the ocean.

lessons of universal and Catholic tradition with the demands of modernity” (*Ley de 2 de noviembre de 1940*). As part of this program, Spain invited scholars from Latin America to study in Spain, hosting symposia, and running a publishing house (Großmann 759).

The international impact of *hispanismo* largely originated in the exile community living in Mexico. These ideological efforts, Patricia Fagen notes, underwent two phases in Mexico. Prior to 1942, intellectual works focused on a purely spiritual ideal of the Hispanic world and the future of Spain and America. After 1942, however, this theme changed character, emphasizing their capacity to productively work together (Fagen 159). Whether spiritual or productive in nature, through magazines and memoirs, large-scale public projects and public monuments, the Republicans shared their system of beliefs and their vision for Spain as a state and as a part of the global community.

Over the course of four chapters, I identify the recurring use of *parábolas* in public and literary spaces. Chapter Two, “Building a Concrete Parabolic Site: Félix Candela,” examines how the parabolic form of exiled architect Félix Candela’s buildings functions as an expression of an ideology based in transcendence and transatlantic collaboration. For this chapter, I discuss three of Candela’s most notable structures in Mexico: the Medalla Milagrosa church, Restaurante Manantiales, and the Casino de la Selva. In my analysis, I demonstrate how the parabolic shape of these structures tells the story of nation-building in Mexico and the ideology dissemination process in the exile community.

Candela built some of the first concrete, parabolic structures in Mexico, and in doing so, he literally cemented a moment of architectural, cultural, and personal transition. I suggest that the arches he erected in Mexico City and Cuernavaca may be understood to draw on the double meaning of the Spanish word *parábola* (parabola and parable). His structures are parabolic in

shape and they are also parabolic in the sense that they may be read as stories of the ups and downs of restarting his career in a new country, the exiles' belief in the possibility of transcending national borders and colonial histories, and the attempts to establish common ground between the Spanish and the Mexican people.

To study the parables contained within Candela's hyperbolic paraboloids, I have incorporated an interdisciplinary approach that brings together the history of the exiles in Mexico with affect theory and material culture. From material culture studies, I follow Jules David Prown's assessment taxonomy for cultural objects: description, substantial analysis, content, formal analysis, and deduction. This method begins with an analysis of the artifact's physical characteristics and a description of the object's subject matter. From there, David Prown suggests studying the artifact's formal character. In the deduction stage, the critic then analyzes the sensory, intellectual, and emotional effects of the piece. Finally, the process concludes with a review of the evidence at hand to develop a hypothesis about the social and cultural impact of the object of study (1–10). Working with this taxonomy enables me to apply a standardized method for hypothesizing about the buildings' visceral, utilitarian, social, and cultural impacts.

My framework also draws from affect theory. There is no single, unified affect theory and no taxonomy for its application. For that reason, I combine cognitive-science-based affect theory with Prown's framework for assessing material culture to elucidate how the shape, materials, and settings of Félix Candela's buildings impact the public's reception of messages regarding both exile and a universal moral lesson.

I contend that spaces shape our behavior. This approach begins by assessing the physical characteristics, purpose, and form of Candela's structures. I demonstrate how concrete adds layers of meaning to places with clearly defined uses such as churches, restaurants, and hotels.

Of additional interest for these observations is how the style, decoration, and emotional content of these spaces impact the viewer. From tradition-defying churches and character-filled hotels to soaring ceilings and custom lighting fixtures, I show how Candela's buildings have the power to communicate *hispanismo*-based messages and leave an indelible impact on the viewer.

Chapter Three, "Publishing a Public Parabola: The Role of *España Peregrina* in Shaping the Public Sphere" details how the exile magazine *España Peregrina* transmuted the ancestral Spanish periodical form to create a transatlantic public sphere, or more appropriately, a public parabola in Mexico.<sup>5</sup> This chapter enters into a dialogue with the work of Jürgen Habermas, who has described the public sphere as consisting of private citizens coming together to form a public and engage in critical debate. As Habermas explains, the formation of a public sphere entails three elements: a disregard for social status, a common concern, and an inclusive nature (*Structural* 36). Habermas' work centers on the societal shifts in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, a period during which aristocratic representation gave way to a bourgeois public sphere. Prior to this turn, the ruler was *the* public and people occupied their place in the feudal hierarchy. The transition to a bourgeois society impersonalized the state and created space for public social institutions like cafés, journals, and newspapers, which were available to private citizens regardless of status. Through this access to knowledge, citizens were free to exchange ideas, which in turn created public opinion. This democratic conceptualization of the public not only broadened the public to include an array of individuals, but it also resulted in the public demanding information about state activities, leading the public to comment upon and critique state policies.

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<sup>5</sup> This term is the product of a conversation with Professor Andrés Zamora. My thanks to him for his contributions to this project.

Habermas suggests that even though the general public remained a somewhat elite group of members of the middle class and titled gentry, there was a pervasive understanding that the public was open to all. Although the idea of a fully inclusive public may not have been realized in actuality, it did exist as an ideal toward which to work (*Structural* 36). We might, therefore, think of the public sphere as a Kuhnian concept, or an object that is imprecise, but that can be further and more precisely articulated (Kuhn 23).

Nancy Fraser has been one of the many scholars that have taken up the challenge of more fully articulating the public sphere. In her research, Fraser suggests that, in order to account for the multiplicity of competing publics, we should speak of ‘a’ public sphere, rather than ‘the’ public sphere (64). My parabolic conceptualization continues the expansion of Habermas’ conceptualization. This study takes a broad definition of the public sphere that extends beyond a single nation’s borders. I detail how the periodical provided the open discursive space for individuals to come together to debate social and political issues as part of a transnational public parabola. Rather than characterizing this relationship as a spherical shape, I suggest that the resulting community was parabolic in form. From a geometric standpoint, when we describe the discourse community as a sphere, we imply a sense of completeness and closure. If we want to suggest that there is space for the inclusion of disparate perspectives, we need an open shape. With the framework of a parabola, we are able to accommodate both the openness of the community and also its incomplete nature.

While the Spanish *Maquis* focused the majority of their sabotage missions, assassination plots, and guerrilla attacks on the interior of Francoist Spain, former Republicans living in Mexico concentrated on a consolidating international opposition from abroad. My analysis of the advertisements, photographs, and articles of events from *España Peregrina* demonstrates the

transformation of the exile community into a united public sphere. Rather than a close reading of each individual issue, I consider the magazine as one cultural text. By viewing the periodical in its entirety, I consider broad questions regarding debate, conflicting interests among contributors, information that runs contrary to the principals of civic discourse, and the emergence of a unified cultural identity.

In Chapter Four, “Painting an Acted and Visual Parable: Josep Renau and *España hacia América*,” I study exiled artist Josep Renau’s mural *España hacia América* as an example of both acted and visual parables. I demonstrate how, as a parabolic story told in paint and collaborative effort, Renau’s piece communicates a moral message about knowledge, transatlantic relationships, and imperial violence. The work not only invites the viewer to turn a critical eye toward the Franco regime’s use of Spanish historical figures, but also encourages its observer to embrace a relationship based on complicated understandings of transculturality and universality rooted in the experience of exile.

Central to my analysis is the concept of acted parables. A term that originates in biblical studies, the acted parable illustrates a moral lesson by modeling behavior rather than explaining it (Jeremias, *Parables* 227). Drawing from the studies of parables by theologians such as Joachim Jeremias and Robert Farrar Capon, I argue that what would otherwise be unbound signs within the mural find an *hispanismo* context through Renau’s moral example of joining the Mexican artistic community.

Joachim Jeremias, a scholar of New Testament Studies, worked primarily on parables and the language of the New Testament. In studying biblical texts, Jeremias applied formal analysis, seeking to discover the original parables free from interpretations. As part of his studies on

parables, his work identified parabolic messages in the actions of Jesus Christ. In his analysis of the Book of Luke, for example, Jeremias writes,

In the East, even today, to invite a man to a meal was an honor. It was an offer of *peace, trust, brotherhood, and forgiveness*; in short, sharing a table meant sharing life. In Judaism in particular, table-fellowship means fellowship before God, for the eating of a piece of broken bread by everyone who shares in a meal brings out the fact that they all have a share in the blessing which the master of the house had spoken over the unbroken bread. Thus, Jesus' meals with the publicans and sinners, too, are not only events on a social level, not only an expression of his unusual humanity and social generosity and his sympathy with those who were despised, but had an even deeper significance. They are an expression of the *mission and message* of Jesus, eschatological meals, anticipatory celebrations of the feast in the end-time, in which the community of the saints is already being represented. The inclusion of sinners in the community of salvation, achieved in table-fellowship, is the most meaningful expression of the message of the redeeming love of God. (*New Testament* 115–16)

Echoing Jeremias, Episcopal priest Robert Farrar Capon has characterized Jesus' kerygmatic actions as acted parables. From the cleansing of the temple to the cursing of the fig tree, Farrar Capon reads the accounts as demonstrating moral action (426–28).

In addition to arguing that the mural is an acted parable, Renau's work renegotiates *hispanidad's* presentation of the historical discourse surrounding Spain. In assessing how this visual artifact uses imagery to relate its message, I apply a combination of semiotics and structuring of imagery. Semiotics, as conceived by linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, examines the interaction of the sign, signifier, and the signified (15–17). Because of the density of signs and

the complexity of the visual narrative in Renau's mural, I also interpret it using the framework of Tony Schirato and Jen Webb. They argue that we must rely on a structuring principle to make sense of what would otherwise be the "anarchy of polysemy" (Schirato and Webb 104). I argue that the combination of images, visual storytelling, and the shape of the building result in a discursive system that provided the viewer with the context and sequencing necessary to communicate a moral message about Spain and exile.

Chapter Five, "Writing the Parable of the *Los niños españoles de Morelia: El exilio infantil en México*" examines Emeterio Payá Valera's history of the Republican children sent to live in Mexico during the Spanish Civil War. While it may seem anachronistic to include a text from 1985 as part of a study of the formation of the Spanish exile community, I have chosen to incorporate this book precisely because of its later publication date. The reflections of Payá Valera offer insights not only into the unique circumstances that shaped the exile community of *niños*, but also into the lessons they have carried with them over the fifty years they have lived in exile. Moreover, the book shows the continuities and shifts in discussions of the Spanish exile during Spain's democratic era.

*Los niños españoles de Morelia* is substantially longer than a traditional parable. I characterize the book as a long-form parable because of its form and the centrality of its moral lesson. In conformity with traditional parables, Payá Valera presents a protagonist that faces a major obstacle, suffers a substantial decline in fortune, and recovers by learning a significant life lesson. The author achieves this structure by narrating his life before departing for Mexico and then comparing it to the stories of how he and the children of Morelia experienced abuse, hunger, and disorientation once in the Americas. When the children reunite with their parents, the narrative offers a broader lesson. As the author writes of his own experience, "El sacrificio de la



separación había sido inútil. Los pocos meses que se creía que duraría la guerra, que finalmente se había perdido, se convirtieron en años destructores de afecto” (Payá Valera 230). At this point, he learns the great moral lesson of his life, specifically, the long-term psychological pain of valuing politics over family unity.

Literary parables traditionally employ a simple narrative style marked by a main character at a moral impasse with a conflict that is resolved in order to communicate a universal truth. It may not be immediately evident, but the parable’s narrative structure is in fact parabolic. I complement a close reading of *Los niños españoles de Morelia* with a computer analysis of changes in the text’s sentiment as the plot progresses. A pre-digital idea that we may trace to Kurt Vonnegut, sentiment analysis suggests that the emotional arcs of texts fall into a set number of patterns. Without the aid of computer-generated data, Vonnegut graphed the sentiment trajectory of a variety of texts by plotting time progression along the x-axis and the positive or negative fortune of the protagonist along the y-axis. His results identified remarkable similarities between the plots of a variety of texts, including the Old Testament and Cinderella. After graphing Cinderella’s stair-step shaped rise from a place of woe, followed by a steep decline in her fortune and a final increase in her esteem at the end of the story, Vonnegut wrote,

The steps you see, are all the presents the fairy godmother gave to Cinderella... The sudden drop is the stroke of midnight at the ball.... But then the prince finds her and marries her, and she is infinitely happy ever after. She gets all the stuff back, and *then* some. A lot of people think the story is trash, and, on graph paper, it certainly looks like trash. But then I said to myself, wait a minute—those steps at the beginning look like the creation myth of virtually every society on earth. And then I saw that the stroke of midnight looked exactly like the unique creation myth in the Old Testament. And then

I saw that the rise to bliss at the end was identical with the expectation of redemption as expressed in primitive Christianity. The tales were identical. (quoted in Leeds 147)

Digital humanities scholars such as Matthew Jockers have confirmed Vonnegut's observations using a sentiment-analysis package written for the statistical computing program R Studio.

Building on Vonnegut's idea, Jockers has identified seven story types: comedy, tragedy, coming of age, rebirth, voyage, and return, the quest, and man-in-a-hole (Archer and Jockers 98–104).

Although not without controversy in regards to his algorithmic calculations, Jockers' basic premise of archetypal plot shapes remains an interesting point of departure for studying narrative structure. Stories lie at the core of culture and social behavior, and the ability to identify patterns in their emotional arcs speaks to how we learn to structure our own lived experiences.

Specifically of interest for this study, Jockers describes man-in-a-hole as, “a hero and a bad guy where there is some threat to a person or a culture that must be eliminated. The threat might be a dragon or a disease, a situation or a system, but the main character is forced to take it on and then change his or her fortunes back to good” (104). Using the same sentiment analysis reasoning of Vonnegut and the R Studio program pivotal to Jockers, I have identified a parabolic, “man in a hole” shaped plot trajectory in Payá Valera's account. In conducting a sentiment analysis of the text, I argue that the emotional arc of his account reveals the internalized social systems deep in his narrative's structure. When the children arrived in Mexico, President Cárdenas declared, “El Estado mexicano toma bajo su custodia a estos niños, rodeándolos de cariño e instrucción, para que mañana sean dignos defensores del idea de su patria” (Payá Valera 44). My reading suggests that Payá Valera internalized *hispanismo* ideals and that they became the building blocks of his life story.

In the conclusion, I discuss how these primary works tell a common story, albeit employing different narrative forms and articulating their narratives from different vantage points. While each building, magazine, mural, and memoir exists as a rich artistic creation, another layer of meaning can be extracted when these works are examined as part of the *hispanismo* movement to establish transatlantic ties. Although Spanish Civil War exiles have been the central focus of this study, I conclude by offering insights into the ways that future studies might analyze parables in space as a concept that may be applied to other social and national contexts.

## CHAPTER 2

### BUILDING A CONCRETE PARABOLIC SITE: FÉLIX CANDELA

Colin Faber’s biographical study of the exiled Spanish architect Félix Candela begins with a poignant observation. Faber’s first paragraph posits, “The structures which have brought fame to Félix Candela could have been created only in our time, and perhaps only in Mexico, or a country with similar social conditions and climate” (C. Faber 7). His assertion is more than descriptive, it is also contemplative. He asks his reader to consider the unique set of circumstances that generated such significant architectural originality. Phrased another way, Faber is asking the public to look at the buildings as stories. They tell a story about a unique architect, a specific moment in history, and the post-revolutionary country that received him.

In this chapter, I take up Faber’s invitation to contemplate the stories contained within Félix Candela’s work. These stories, I suggest, take the form of a *parábola*, by which I mean both the hyperbolic parabola—Candela’s favored roofline—and a moral parable. I focus on the stories contained within the walls of three of Candela’s best-known sites: The Casino de la Selva, la Iglesia de la Medalla de la Virgen Milagrosa, and the Manantiales Restaurant. The innovative shapes of these buildings tell the story of nation-building in a post-revolutionary society. Architecture, by its very nature, occupies space. And whether a building exists in an urban or rural setting, it sits in dialogue with its surroundings and with a set of agendas and ideologies. An architect’s work responds to, fits in with, or defies pre-existing cultural, educational, and urban designs. Within these structures’ parabolic forms, we also discover how an environment of simultaneous innovation and restriction shaped Candela’s style. Through a combination of physics, laws, and artistry, Candela expresses his exile condition in Mexico, notions of

transatlantic collaboration, and the bases of the *hispanismo* ideology. Furthermore, when researched through the lens of affect theory, I demonstrate how these built spaces influence the stories of those who visit.

Throughout the 1910s, the decade-long Mexican Revolution had diverted resources away from new architectural projects and had significantly damaged existing structures. The post-war era witnessed a need for new construction projects that would gesture toward the nation's new sociopolitical identity aesthetically. The pre-war Porfiriato period (1876-1911) had favored a markedly European architecture, with buildings explicitly designed to make Mexico's largest city the Paris of the Americas.<sup>6</sup> As part of this urban development plan, the Porfiriato government funded expansive infrastructure projects including the construction of schools, bridges, and roadways. At the same time, the government carved wide boulevards like the Paseo de la Reforma through Mexico City and crafted elaborate gardens as ornamentation for ornate buildings like the Palacio de Bellas Artes (1904) (Toca 144).

At the end of the Revolution, a shift in architectural preferences accompanied the shift in governance. As much a project of constructing identity as it was a project for constructing buildings, the architecture of the post-revolutionary period focused on the forgotten classes of the Porfiriato. Because Mexico's revolutionary goals were largely unconsolidated, the time following the Revolution presented an opportunity for artists and writers to explore the social potential of art to shape Mexican society. Art was not the sole medium available for establishing a new series of signs of national identity; architectural projects offered a similar opportunity for visual signification and cultural narration within public spaces.

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<sup>6</sup> The unfinished manuscript *The Arcades Project* theorizes about the distinctive architecture of nineteenth-century Paris helped create the flaneur experience; this project influenced media, visual, and urban studies, offering insights into the ways that the arcades allegorize Paris's cultural heritage and societal shifts from 1850 onwards (Benjamin).

The need to rebuild and the desire to construct a distinct national image created abundant opportunities for a new generation of architects. Unlike the traditionally trained architects that had overseen the projects of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this new crop of post-revolutionary designers drew influence from a variety of international sources and theories (Carranza 7). While the Porfiriato period drew from French neoclassical designs to signal Mexico's place on the global stage alongside developed countries, the post-Revolution projects took a more ambiguous direction, drawing inspiration from a mixture of socialism, nationalism, and the avant-garde (3). While some projects worked to subvert the means of production and improve the living conditions of the working classes, others highlighted the culture of pre-Columbian Mexico or questioned the relationship between art and life.

Whether buildings represented the country's indigenous heritage or the working class, construction in Mexico City prioritized elevating the city's position as the center of government and foregrounding the diverse and divergent cultures existing within it. La Ciudad de México, or Distrito Federal as it was known prior to 2016, is the capital city of Mexico.<sup>7</sup> When the exiles arrived in Mexico, the federal district had a population of 1,757,530 people, with an additional 1,146,034 living in the surrounding state of Edomex (*Sexto Censo de Población 1940*). At the time Lázaro Cárdenas offered to receive the Spanish Civil War exiles, the city had not yet grown into the mega-metropolis that it is today.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> After nearly 200 years, the city acquired a new status in 2016 that reduced federal control over the city's public finances and security. The new categorization will allow the area to function as a federal state, with a governor and municipal mayors, although the city's status still falls short of Mexico's 31 regular states. From the colonial era, this region has served as the administrative, cultural, and economic center of the country.

<sup>8</sup> Of the 1.7 million residents, the 1940 census indicates that 47,983 people were foreign-born (2.7% of the total population) (*Sexto Censo de Población 1940*). This number had remained stable during the previous ten years, with only 885 fewer foreign nationals residing in Mexico City in 1930 (*Quinto Censo de Población 1930*).

More than a mere shift in population numbers, the arrival of the exiles from Spain also contributed to a major turning point in the consolidation of state authority. Under President Cárdenas's original plan, the exiles were meant to help populate rural farming areas of Mexico and to contribute to the advancement and improvement of the rural school system (San Pedro 7, 104). Building upon the work of Marxist philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre, Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden observe that a state derives its sovereignty not only through constitutional articles, but also through "the land or soil that it inhabits, owns, controls and exploits" (362). Issues of rural infrastructure, agrarian development, and land reform played a central role in establishing the nation-state's authority, and the exile community provided the post-revolutionary state with the workforce necessary to carry out their national agenda of rural development and domination of the national territory. The exile presence both promoted a benevolent image of the Mexican state to the international community while also mobilizing the reform projects necessary to signal the state's control of national territory.

To qualify for exile status under this system, many of the Spanish applicants lied about their professional backgrounds (Fagen 47). Of the approximately 20,000 to 30,000 Spaniards that arrived in Mexico, most of the exiles were middle-class, urban professionals who had worked as teachers, lawyers, artists, intellectuals, and architects (Hancock n.p.). Upon their arrival, the Mexican government and aid groups like the Junta de Auxilio a los Republicanos Españoles (JARE) and the Servicio de Evacuación de Refugiados Españoles (SERE) screened the exiles and assigned them to live and work in an area that would benefit from their skillset (Fagen 47). This initial group of Spaniards had little agricultural knowledge or experience; hence, they quickly gravitated toward living in Mexico City instead of staying in the rural resettlement areas to which they had initially been assigned (San Pedro 100).

Between 1939 and 1942, dozens of celebrated architects arrived on Mexican shores from Spain. Three generations of architects arrived as part of this movement. The first group included older architects such as Francisco Azorín (1885-1975), Cayetano de la Jara y Ramón (1888-1960), Bernardo Giner de los Ríos García (1888-1970), Tomás Bilbao (1890-1954), and Roberto Fernández Balbuena (1890-1960). A second, younger group of Spanish architects born between 1897 and 1903, also sought exile in Mexico. This second generation, which included figures such as Emili Blanch I Roig (1897-1996), José Luis Benlliure (1898-1981), Jesús Martí Martín (1899-1975), and Juan de Madariaga Astigarraga (1901-1995), studied during the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (1923-1930) and entered into the profession, only to have their careers cut short by war. The last and youngest group of exiles, born between 1906 and 1911, included José Caridad Mateo (1906-1996), Jaime Ramonell Gimeno (1906-1991), Arturo Sáenz de la Calzada Gorostiza (1907-2003), Francisco Detrell Tarradell (1908-1990), and Enrique Segarra Tomás (1908-1988). Although they had earned their degrees during the Republican era, this group arrived in Mexico without having actually entered the field of architecture.

Part of this last generation, Félix Candela (1910-1997) began studying architecture at La escuela de arquitectura de Madrid in 1929. With a natural talent for mathematics, Candela showed an aptitude for creating forms that required detailed calculations. During his sixth year of study, Candela discovered the architectural profile that would shape his future work. One day, after leaving the university, he looked on as Eduardo Torroja built a thin shell concrete vault. It was at that moment that the architecture student began the mathematical calculations for what would become his most famous form: the concrete parabolic shell. With his aesthetic inspiration taking shape, Candela completed his degree in 1935. However, because he couldn't afford to pay for his diploma, Candela failed to obtain his professional title.



During this same period, Félix joined the Republican troops with his brother. As a captain, Candela fought in the Battle of the Ebro and was later interned in the Saint-Cyprien concentration camp in Perpignan (Cueto Ruiz Funes 40). After four months in the camp, Candela was selected to travel to Mexico aboard the *Sinaia* (C. Faber 12).

Like many young exiles, when Candela arrived in Veracruz at the age of 29, he had little professional experience. He was initially given a position as an assistant on a construction site in Chihuahua; and by 1948, he had sufficiently honed his craft to start his own architectural firm, Cubiertas Ala in Mexico City (Garlock and Billington 63). The company revolutionized construction by introducing a building technique first developed by Candela that used thin layers of concrete to form parabolic structures. Within ten years of arriving in Mexico, Candela began to stand out for his parabolic projects; and by 1957, Candela had altered the urban landscape of Mexico City with umbrella-like structures at a rate of 25,000 square feet per week. By the 1960s, Candela had become one of the stars of the American architectural world; and in 1971, he joined the University of Illinois as a professor (Cueto Ruiz Funes 40).

Upon reflecting on his career in a speech he made at the Ateneo Español de México during a celebration held in his honor, Candela noted the impact of his dual experiences in Spain and Mexico accordingly,

Se ha vuelto muy difícil para nosotros saber lo que somos. Por una especie de rutina nos seguimos creyendo españoles, pero llevamos a México metido en el alma... Pasamos súbitamente de la guerra entre hermanos a la fraterna paz de México... no solamente pasamos de un país a otro, de una querida patria de nacimiento a otra no menos querida patria de adopción, sino que nos trasladamos de un continente a otro. De lo viejo a lo

joven. De lo quieto a lo dinámico. De Europa a América. Del desarrollo contenido a la explosión del desarrollo.... (Candela n.p.)

Candela's comments illustrate an important nuance regarding ideas of exile. Exiled Palestinian scholar Edward Said, for example, has observed that the exile experience is predicated on an unwelcome loss of one's native place. Said's exiled figure asks, "What would you save of them (the experiences), what would you give up, what would you recover?" (*Culture and Imperialism* 332). Similarly, author of *The New Nomads*, Eva Hoffman, referring to the work of Czech exile Milan Kundera, writes that the modern exiled subject exists in liminal spaces, potentially "unanchored in any place or structure" (Hoffman n.p.). Paradoxically for the exile Candela represents, loss does not result in a void or a sense of untethering. The loss he describes is additive, compounding his experiences and complicating his quotidian existence.

Unlike the exile Hoffman describes, Candela's training in his homeland finds anchorage in building new structures in his adopted country. In contextualizing literary production in exile, Michael Ugarte writes, "Exile...is a catalyst for writing" (4). Similarly, exile brought together divergent experiences and served as a catalyst for Candela's experimental architectural creations. Speaking to this point, Candela noted that upon being given the opportunity to build his parabolic buildings in Mexico, he felt "as though all the previous events of my life began to make sense and to have meaning. [He] began to feel in form" (qtd. in C. Faber 12). This form was the hyperbolic paraboloid.

The hyperbolic paraboloid, or parabola, is a U shape with mirror symmetry centered on the vertex point. The sides of the parabola are identical images that are held at a distance, such that the points in space on one side find a corresponding point on the opposite side. Although usually associated with the world of geometry, the parabola is also a useful shape for mapping

the duality of exiled space and time. As is evident from Candela's reflections on his life's work, an examination of his experiences and his architecture requires a focus beyond a single space or point in time.

In discussing the power of architecture in society, famed Swiss architect Le Corbusier once declared that he viewed members of his field as "architects of the world" that shaped "human relations by defining them, by creating their environment and décor" (qtd. in Lefebvre 98). The architect's task of defining human relations entails inscribing a series of ideological, hierarchical, and socio-spatial values into space. As popularized by Lefebvre's extensive writings on cities, identifying how space is constructed as an ideological stance requires accounting for a broad array of factors including form, function, structures, signifiers, and institutions (111). To interpret Candela's influence as an "architect of the world," or at least an architect of the world of exile in Mexico, my study applies an interdisciplinary approach that brings together affect studies, symbolic content, material culture, and environmental psychology. This approach, I suggest, permits a more nuanced understanding of Candela's materials, the impact of his architectural designs, and his contributions to the formation of a transatlantic community.

Affect, as Nigel Thrift explains it, is "a sense of push in the world," urging us to think, feel, or act (64). Similarly, Ben Anderson emphasizes space's impact on feelings, referring to affect as the "proprioceptive and visceral shifts in the background habits, and postures of a body that are commonly described as feelings" (736). While affect theorists agree on the environment's influence, they differ in whether the emotional response operates apart from our beliefs and ideologies. New affect theorists like Brian Massumi, Eric Shouse, and Nigel Thrift hold that "affects are only contingently related to objects in the world; our basic emotions

operate blindly because they have no inherent knowledge of, or relation to, the objects or situations that trigger them” (Leys 437). In contrast, theorists taking psychoanalytic approaches consider our emotions to be intentional states that depend on our beliefs.

Even if affect functions apart from our ideological beliefs, spaces include additional symbolic content that more explicitly directs how we feel. The notion of symbolic content depends largely on the field of semiotics, or the study of signs and how they mediate behavior. As applied to architecture, semiotics explores the explicit and implicit symbols that encode a structure or space with meaning. These symbols take a broad range of forms from color choices for walls and the brightness of a space’s lighting, to the ritualized uses of a place and the institutionalized power a building connotes.

A building’s shape is a particularly potent source of meaning creation. Common architectural features such as domes, towers, stairs, doorways, and colonnades serve functions well beyond structural support, signaling a set of prescriptive values for the viewing public. As Nathaniel Cortland Curtis notes, churches and government buildings often incorporate domes because they, “imply ideas of power, dominance or centralization” (5). Towers and spires, have a similar effect, imposing power and strength through their grand scale (Betsky n.p.).

Just as a building’s exterior scale and shape impart symbolic influence on the viewer, so too do a space’s interior elements. Hallways, as Curtis notes, are not only functional, but also signal spatial transitions and the significance of the space to which they lead. In much the same way, doors and doorways symbolize the division between realms and gateways to new experiences (Curtis 153).

From the mundane and the extraordinary, from domes and doors to candleholders and colonnades, objects contribute to our reactions and understandings of the world. As material

culture studies analysts posit, our social reality is grounded in objects, their creation, their uses, and how they inform rituals and norms. When we encounter and interact objects, these objects signal how to, “survive, define social relationships, [and] represent facets of identity...” (Deetz 241). Material culture scholar Jules David Prown details how to approach this process of meaning-creation, explaining that the first step in assessing an artifact is examining its physical characteristics, its subject matter, and its form. From there, Prown suggests analyzing the object’s sensory, intellectual, and emotional content to hypothesize about the piece’s impact on society (1–10).

Decorative and structural elements do more than adorn, they activate collective memories and entrenched customs. Material culture and symbolic content do not exist in isolation, however, nor are they atemporal concepts. Instead, semiotics acts through recollections of past experiences to produce the affect of a space or thing in the present (Newell 5). By incorporating features from the shared symbols and narratives integral to culture, architects cultivate an entire history of prior interactions and contribute to the ideological field.

What is more, the impact of these structures’ cultural values endures well past the time individuals spend under a space’s roof. As psychoanalyst Cosimo Schinaia observes, “We live inside architectural structures... at the same time, they live inside our minds” (xxiv). For researchers such as Sarah Williams Goldhagen, the physical environment in which an event took place significantly impacts the consolidation of memories and the way in which experiences are framed in the memory (83). Rather than having exclusive sovereignty over our cognitive processes, our memories actually entail a three-fold interaction between our minds, our bodies, and our environments. More than serving as the backdrop of our lives, places shape our personal narratives along with broader historical narratives and national identity.

I begin this examination of personal, national, and historical narratives with a concrete analysis. During the tumultuous era of the Mexican Revolution and World War I, Le Corbusier began an in-depth study of how to use reinforced concrete for construction. He published his findings alongside a discussion of new techniques and materials in the field, noting, “Reinforced concrete provided me with incredible resources, and a variety, and a passionate plasticity...” (Choay 10–11). Influenced by Le Corbusier’s study, architects and engineers such as Pier Luigi Nervi, Eduardo Catalano, and Félix Candela began exploring the possibilities of concrete to realize new expressions of shape, structure, and aesthetics. From this point forward, concrete was elevated from utility-based material to a thing of beauty (Savorra and Fabbrocino 253).

Because it was cheap, modern, and easy to produce, concrete became a vital ingredient for rebuilding the war-torn areas of Mexico and for signaling its place as a revitalized, modern country. Concrete had long been a common foundational element in Mexican construction, but it had most often been covered with a façade made of marble or stone. With the advent of modernism, however, exposed concrete became a legitimate, stand-alone material. It was transformed into a sign of industrialization and a symbol of post-revolutionary progress (Toca 41).

The role of concrete in revitalizing Mexico makes it a particularly interesting point of entry for a semiotic, material culture analysis. Historian Adrian Forty explains that as a sign, concrete is often associated with death or stupidity. He notes, for example, that in German a stubborn political group is “Beton-Kopf,” or concrete head; and in the novel *The Idea of Perfection* by Kate Grenville, other characters would declare the dullness of the protagonist by yelling “Concrete” at him during parties (Forty 9). The associations with concrete as a building material are equally negative. An English journalist once wrote, “There is an undoubted

prejudice against the look and even the feel” of concrete (10). Despite these well-known connotations, the Mexican context interpreted concrete as a symbol of modernism and efficiency. Rather than death, concrete brought the new vision of Mexico to life. Rather than dullness, concrete exemplified clever innovation.

And while most builders used the material in the form of cinderblocks, Félix Candela envisioned a radical new application for humble concrete. For his buildings, Candela used thin sheets of concrete to build structures with graceful, curving ceilings. While these innovations in size and shape challenged the material’s dominant connotations in the construction world, they also opened new spaces upon which to inscribe personal and ideological meaning. In his study of concrete, Forty notes that the material has “a tendency to ‘double,’ to be two opposite things at once” (11). In both form and texture, it is evident that concrete refuses facile categorization. It is a substance begins as a liquid, but quickly turns into solid. Concrete has a texture that straddles the line between smooth and coarse. With these considerations in mind, the sensory and emotional effects of the concrete come into stark relief. Continuing with a material-culture based analysis, I argue that Candela’s use of concrete speaks to the duality of his exile condition. The textural duality of concrete captures the rough patches and the accomplishments of living in exile and starting a career in a new country. In the same way, concrete’s shift from liquid to solid speaks to Candela’s experience of having to consolidate his place as an architect in Mexico and finding structure in the combination of his past training and his present opportunities. The dual nature of concrete also ensures an enduring message about the exile, disseminating in perpetuity the ways in which exile touches and shapes individual existence. Concrete awakens the affective response in the viewer by generating textural awareness and distinction. Its qualities channel the body toward haptic-based memories and connotations linked to the sense of touch. Concrete’s

texture is one of disruption and discomfort that infuses the buildings' semiotic capacity with a sensorial replication of the rough patches, flexibility, and duality of living in exile.

Candela's constructions invite the viewer to engage with the exile condition at a fundamental level, within a paradigm in which form also communicates his personal experience. Concrete held the possibility of reaching new heights. It allowed architects to create inexpensive, large-scale buildings and to introduce new shapes into their designs. The curved shape of Candela's buildings, unlike forms dependent on straight lines, allowed the roof span to extend to great heights without intermediating supports and to absorb stress and shock within its curvature. The parabolic shape, which is known for its ability to withstand strain, mirrors the exiles' own embodiment of resilience in an environment of shock. Each archway stands as evidence of the group's self-reliance, artistic collaboration, and professional support. This tendency is particularly notable in the case of Constructora Vías y Obras, founded by Spanish architect Jesús Martí, and Cubiertas ALA, the architectural firm of Félix Candela. It was imperative that individuals and the cause remain unified for the reformation of the Republic, but this goal was not easily achieved when the exiles were away from the familiar comforts of family and were starting over in a new country. Imbued in the arches, we find the struggle of starting over on Mexican soil with little, if any support. Carving out a profession in a new country proved difficult for the Spanish transplants like Candela because Spanish ex-pats already living in Mexico feared the influx of Republican *rojos* and were reluctant to accept them into their social circles. At the same time, the exiles faced a wave of xenophobia and discrimination from many Mexicans who worried about professional competition. These already difficult circumstances were further exacerbated by the fact that, even though President Lázaro Cárdenas had guaranteed



the recognition of their professional titles, few exiles had thought to pack their degrees for the journey.

As Sarah Williams Goldhagen has suggested in her book *Welcome to Your World*, built environments may be read as metaphors because they use concrete places to communicate abstract or symbolic meaning (75). When Candela spoke of Mexico making him feel in form, he was signaling the impact of the totality of his circumstances in exile on his professional work. The combination of rapid urban growth, an environment of material and structural innovation, a series of initial credentialing limitations, and a team of skilled, exiled architects all worked together to make his experiments with hyperbolic paraboloids successful. When we read the parabolic form as a representation of their exile experience, we may take the arched shape of the parabola to signify a broader message: the highs and lows of exile life and the lack of support Félix Candela had found from the outside world.

Up to this point, I have spoken of concrete as a noun, referencing a stone-like building material. We may also use concrete in its adjective form, to express that something is real and tangible. To describe Candela's buildings as concrete sites brings these two forms together, joining the material used for the construction with the buildings' material realities as something more than mere abstractions. It is at this juncture of material culture, semiotics, and Marxism that the constituting element of concrete grounds Candela's parabolic message in reality. As Jameson and Laiji have posited, specific values are "cemented" in the construction. What is more, the durability of this material has practical and symbolic implications for the spaces that it shapes. In this theoretical context, I suggest that Candela's buildings stand as concrete sites of *hispanismo* ideology.

At the core of this ideology, the exiled Republicans emphasized transatlantic progress and the potential for Latin American self-actualization rather than the imposition of the antiquated, colonial power structures. In contrast, the competing ideology of *hispanidad* favored unity, order, and Catholicism. As regime supporter Ramiro de Maeztu wrote in his 1934 text *Defensa de la hispanidad*, the future of the Spanish nation depended on its conformity to the values of the past. As this advocate for *hispanidad* explained, it was their mission, “to extend, to expand our great Hispanic, Latin Christian culture and our political grandmastership (maestrazgo político), especially over those American countries of Hispanic-Iberian soul and language” (qtd. in Diffie 473). In pursuit of that mission, *hispanidad* emphasized the Catholic religious order of the fifteenth century and rejected Enlightenment appeals to reason (R. Maeztu 186).

Shaping Mexican society from the inside proved difficult for the exiles. Article 33 of the Mexican Constitution prohibited foreigners from participating in Mexican politics specifically because Mexico feared the potential for turmoil from external influences. This was particularly true of the recently arrived Spanish exiles. As Sebastian Faber notes, there was a general sense that “Spaniards were radical leftists who would destabilize the Mexican political *landscape*...” (*Exile and Hegemony* 22; my emphasis). With the national political sphere largely unavailable to their community, the Spanish exiles had to broaden their focus in order to spread their ideas.

Creative expression became a potent source for shaping the landscape of Mexico and the larger transatlantic community. Architecture provided Spanish exiles with a site that could symbolize the *hispanismo* ideology and that would plant those ideals firmly within the public’s gaze. In line with David Prown’s approach to material culture, we may discern the social impact of his structures by looking at their physical characteristics, subject matter, and form along with their sensory and intellectual content.

Perhaps one of the clearest manifestations of Candela's parabolic *hispanismo* aesthetic is the architect's 1953 design for the Iglesia de la Medalla de la Virgen Milagrosa (fig. 1).



Figure 1 Exterior of Iglesia de la Medalla de la Virgen Milagrosa, personal photograph

Located on the corner of Ixcateopan Street in the Mexico City neighborhood of Vértiz Narvarte, the parish stands in an area that was developed in the 1940s. The area experienced a construction boom in the 1950s as migrant families joined the growing Mexican population. At the time of the temple's construction, much of the neighborhood's architecture was functionalist in style, with a landscape dominated by tall, practical apartment buildings. For the neighborhood house of worship, the church community originally requested a traditional Gothic cathedral. Candela, however, reimagined the Gothic style so as to prominently feature a more modern, parabolic design.

According to interviews with Candela, he had been particularly interested in the opportunity to construct the church because he could build ceilings of great heights and create an open interior in a one-story structure. By virtue of scale and religious subject matter, Candela saw the potential for the space to surpass its mundane function and “encourage something transcendent with [its] form” (Garlock and Billington 116). To create this transcendent space, the architect used four intersecting parabolic arches that measured twenty meters in height. He repeated the parabolic form in the secondary chapel, which he formed by joining eight smaller parabolic arches measuring 8.5 meters each. The result was a site in which *parábolas* were etched into the very foundation of the building and in which society passed through the *parábolas* in the course of its daily activities.

Although architecture may at first seem to be an ambiguous source for the transmission of ideologies and cultural values, architectural scholars have noted that clear communication is possible through a site’s symbolic significance. Critical theorist Andreas Huyssen theorizes the role of statues and monuments in his book *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. Huyssen explicitly theorizes monuments as a byproduct of nationalist mythmaking, noting, “the search for national monuments first created the deep national past that differentiated a given culture from both its European and its non-European others... the monument came to guarantee origin and stability as well as depth of time and of space in a rapidly changing world that was experienced as transitory, uprooting, and unstable” (41). The specific uses and importance of buildings such as monuments contribute a sense of permanence, solemnity, historical commemoration, and community.

Churches are particularly potent sources for symbolic messaging because they have well-known uses, established rituals, and consistent users. For users and observers alike, a house of

worship stands as a sign of religiosity and community. When we apply the fundamental tenets of material culture, we see that the church's features are influential rather than inert. The form and the function of the house of worship's interior may, therefore, be read as symbolic content. For this study, we may divide this content into three categories: religion-based morality, *hispanismo* morality, and the parabolic attachments of the Spanish Civil War exiles. Like the building's purpose, the interior features of the church reinforce religiosity and contemplation. High ceilings and ornate lighting invite the gaze upwards and reinforce religious concepts the heavens. In Candela's design, the sets of pews closest to the center aisle sit below the highest point of the parabolic ceiling, creating a feeling of elevation. The detailed nature of the lighting fixtures works in tandem with these high ceilings, inviting parishioners to lift their eyes. By lifting your field of vision, cognitive neuroscientist Vittorio Gallese notes, you activate a neural sense of space, comfort, and contemplation (Senthilingam n.p.). A clever bit of architectural design, Candela's columns not only support the soaring roofline, but they also form natural alcoves for windows, chapels, and areas for displaying religious relics. Above the alcoves formed by the legs of the parabolas, Candela and his team took advantage of the triangular shape of the space to insert a stained-glass window (fig. 2).



Figure 2 Stained glass window in the archway of Iglesia de la Medalla de la Virgen Milagrosa, personal photograph

The triangular windows create a natural spotlight that highlights the height of the temple while providing a geometric reference to the Holy Trinity. As the light enters, the resulting effect for worshipers sitting in the pews is not unlike light breaking through the clouds of the heavens. Taken together, the purpose of the building, its high ceilings, and the illumination created by the parabolic shape all generate a mystical tone that reflects the function of the temple.

By examining the location, shape, and spatial organization of elements like pews, lighting fixtures, and windows, we may identify similar semiotic meaning in the church's interior beyond

its pragmatic use. The interior of the church consists of a triangular-shaped forward apse, a shorter transept, and a nave with a central aisle running between four sets of pews (fig. 3).



Figure 3 Pews and arched supports of Iglesia de la Medalla de la Virgen Milagrosa, personal photograph

Although architects are usually not involved in the interior design of their buildings, Candela collaborated with his fellow Spanish exiles José Luis Benlliure and Antonio Ballester to create the stained-glass windows, lighting fixtures, and artwork for the church (Cabañas Bravo et al. 44). The result was a design in which every element seemed to depend on the parabolic shape. For the overhead lighting, they designed chandeliers formed by a ring of six parabolas. To light the aisle ways, the designers added a series of single parabola sconces. They even incorporated parabolas into the pews. While at first glance the pews appear to be traditional benches, upon

closer examination, it is clear that Candela and his collaborators cut the end of each bench so that the legs form an arch.

These elements work together to transform the Iglesia de la Medalla de la Virgen Milagrosa into a site of *hispanismo* culture. At the time of the temple's construction, Mexico's population identified as 98.2% Catholic (*Séptimo Censo de Población 1950*). By working in a Mexican neighborhood and at a site of traditional Mexican culture, Candela contributed to, rather than reigning over, the Latin American space. And while the Catholic church might not seem like an obvious choice for the largely secular Republican movement, the building's use and form dovetail with *hispanismo*'s progressive view of spirituality. In his writings, *Hispanismo* advocate Ramón Xirau explicitly rejected the Catholic foundations of Spanish culture and history. In particular, he took issue with *hispanidad*'s antiquated religious and social hierarchies. Instead, he and his fellow Republicans envisioned a form of humanism that elevated universal suffrage, social justice, and democratic rights (Krauel 215). By disregarding the traditional cathedral shape, Candela's design signaled a new direction for the church. Rather than a straight-walled sanctuary in which bricks were stacked on top of one another, Candela's design suggested a grassroots organization. As architectural analyst Laura Ainscough observes, "Part of what makes Candela's designs so remarkable is that the roof extends from the ground" (n.p.). In this way, the church's foundations lie in the community rather than in a hierarchical structure. What is more, by working within rather than attempting to replace the existing, older configurations of power and culture, Candela's designs inserted their principles and values into the extant socio-cultural order.

We may apply the same study of materials, form, subject matter, and sensory content to Candela's later works. Although Candela continued to use the same forms and materials in his



later buildings, their distinct contexts mean that their impact on the user is radically different. When analyzing an institution like a church, the established culture of the organization played an influential role in how the user perceived the space. In contrast, buildings meant for secular life draw their influence from distinct sets of priorities and sensory experiences.

Among Candela's most significant contributions to the leisure sphere was his 1957 creation, the Los Manantiales restaurant in the Xochimilco area of southeast Mexico City (fig. 4).



Figure 4 Los manantiales restaurante, Dge - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=50230832>

Designated a World Heritage site, Xochimilco is known for its canal system and artificial islands called *chinampas*. This part of the city is famous for its pre-Hispanic history and the canals served as the primary form of transportation prior to Spanish colonization. In the Pre-Hispanic era, the Xochimilco people occupied the area until they were conquered by Tenochtitlan in 1430.

As part of this Aztec expansion, the emperor Itzcoatl oversaw the extension of the region's canals, building a causeway to connect Xochimilco with Tenochtitlan. The area remained under Aztec control until April of 1521, when Hernán Cortés sent his army to subdue Xochimilco before later conquering Tenochtitlan.

Rather than a second *conquista*, I suggest that the introduction of Candela's Spanish-designed building into this historically contested space constituted a step toward unity and creative synergy. As Patricia Fagen notes, the successful contributions of the exiles in Mexico generated a multitude of unifying goodwill (149). For the exiled community and the Mexican public, Candela's structures evidence the creativity that comes from harmonious coexistence and transatlantic collaboration. For the rest of the world, the message was even broader. Like the media coverage of the *niños de Morelia*, these structures generated extensive, far-reaching positive publicity. As the premier restaurant of the area, Los Manantiales has stood as a prime example of the former Republicans' social and artistic contributions, even after the press for the restaurant's initial opening waned. The area was, and remains, an important destination for tourists and residents of Mexico City alike that are looking to explore the canals via gondola-style boats called *trajineras*. Whether visiting for a special event, a family outing, or a specific tour, Candela's building greets thousands of people as an example of the Republican thriving in exile.

During this phase of his career, Candela's designs took much of their structural organization from natural forms such as flowers, leaves, and shells (Savorra and Fabbrocino 257). The restaurant, which is located alongside the waterways of Xochimilco's floating gardens, blends in with its natural surroundings. For this particular design, Candela seemed to have taken inspiration for the structure from the word Xochimilco itself, an indigenous term that means field

of flowers. When viewed from above, the symmetry of the building's design creates a lotus flower (Garlock and Billington 142). To create the flower, Candela organized four sets of parabolas around the circumference of a circle, with each parabola made of inch-and-a-half thick concrete spanning 139 feet in diameter ("AD Classics").

When Francisco Carmona Nenclares wrote of *hispanismo*, he specified that rather than an imposition from the outside, their ideology would allow, "...países iberoamericanos *alcanzaran el límite máximo* de su nivel histórico propio" (italics mine) (44). Candela's design hid reinforced V-beams at the intersections of the hypars such that the rest of the structure requires little reinforcement and the interior of the restaurant is unobstructed by supports. Because the edges of the flower are free from support beams, viewers are able to admire both the dramatic height of the structure and also admire the remarkable thinness of the shell ("AD Classics").

The choice may not have been explicitly tied to the *hispanismo* ideology, but the result aligns with their overall goal: the space of Los Manantiales restaurant reaches the maximum expression of collaboration and history. Candela's forms were neither arbitrary nor entirely calculation-based. Instead, the Spanish exile followed his intuition beyond the limits of the rational and conscious mind. For Candela, creation, imagination, and invention were unconscious human activities that revealed the hidden aspects that we carry inside of ourselves (Savorra and Fabbrocino 259). Candela suggested that through creativity we might express ideas that subvert our existing framework or convey feelings that would ordinarily be constrained by our conscious experiences. In drawing inspiration from nature, the parabolas' soaring heights reclaimed a piece of the Mexican landscape from the Spanish style of architecture. Through his imagination, Candela reconceptualized the social landscape of a Latin America that Spain had once subjugated to Baroque and Neoclassical colonial designs.

Like the Iglesia de la Medalla de la Virgen Milagrosa, the subject matter, form, and sensory content largely dictate the social impact of my final object of study in this chapter, the Casino de la Selva (fig. 5).<sup>9</sup>



Figure 5 Casino de la selva, Vanesaguilmsa - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11233466>

The Casino de la Selva (1931), located in the city of Cuernavaca, an hour's drive from Mexico City, was a popular destination for tourists, artists, writers, and politicians. In the early 1930s, the hotel was a microcosm of the country's post-revolutionary politics and culture. With the support of President Abelardo Rodríguez, the hotel and gambling house became a hideaway for Mexico City's political elite. As historian Julián Manuel Salazar Cruz explains,

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<sup>9</sup> During the 1980s, the resort was in decline and it was purchased by the transnational corporation Costco in 2001. The Casino's buildings were torn down to build the shopping center, but its enduring impression on the city is notable by the fact that the bus station is called "la terminal Casino de la Selva." In addition, Costco funded the construction of replicas of the parabolic buildings that serve as a museum/gallery for the salvaged murals that had once adorned the site (Alarcón Azuela 72).

In the 1930s, a great problem appears in Mexico City. It was a very small city then, and the great politicians were immediately recognized wherever they went. They became known for their attire, their bodyguards and of course for their romantic affairs. Because of this, President Rodríguez gave permission for a casino to be established in nearby Cuernavaca where he and other notables could come to gamble, drink daiquiries (sic) and be anonymous. (Rosen and Ortiz n.p.)

The hotel's place as the epicenter for vice was short-lived, however. After the government passed a national prohibition on gambling in 1934, the Casino de la Selva assumed tremendous debt and was sold to its main creditor, a Spanish immigrant named Manuel Suárez.

Although still well known, the hotel's reputation for wealth and opulence quickly deteriorated. As described by Malcom Lowry in his 1938 novel *Under the Volcano*,

The Hotel Casino de la Selva stands on a slightly higher hill just outside the town, near the railway station. It is built far back from the main highway and surrounded by gardens and terraces which command a spacious view in every direction. Palatial, a certain air of desolate splendour pervades it. For it is no longer a Casino. You may not even dice for drinks in the bar. The ghosts of ruined gamblers haunt it. No one ever seems to swim in the magnificent Olympic pool. The spring-boards stand empty and mournful. Its jai-alai courts are grass-grown and deserted. Two tennis courts only are kept up in the season.

(23–24)

With the property falling further into disrepair, Suárez decided to close the Casino de la Selva for expansions and renovations in 1946.

These renovations transformed this site of post-revolutionary politics and aesthetics into one that captured the transatlantic identity the Spanish exiles brought to the Americas. Suárez

contracted Félix Candela's firm to construct his signature parabolic arches to renovate the aging hotel (Alarcón Azuela 70). As part of these renovations, Candela added a number of buildings to the property: the Salón de los Relojes dining room, thirty bungalows, a grand entryway, and the Mambo discotheque. As I will discuss later in this project, as part of this same project, Suárez also hired exiled artist Josep Renau to create artwork for an interior space that would later be known as the Salón de los Murales (71).

Much of the Casino de la Selva's affective impact originates from how the space challenges ideas of non-places. Non-places like hotels and holiday clubs, Marc Augé explains, are spaces of anonymity and transience (77–78). Designed to be inoffensive, these places favor generic décor and repetitive designs. As Steven Kurutz observes with regard to hotels, “Everything about the guest experience... is designed to create a veneer of contentment and belonging” (n.p.). While the predictable design ensures visitors of these spaces are able to move through them with little to no friction, the sense of belonging is illusory. Individuals pass through these non-places without sustained social interactions as temporary occupants and interchangeable visitors.

The monotony of these places takes an unanticipated toll on visitors both physically and psychologically. The hippocampus, the part of the brain that processes both memory and location, suffers from the disorienting blandness (Joinson n.p.). In stark juxtaposition with the generic design of non-place hotels, the Casino had a unique aesthetic that primed the hippocampus to pay closer attention. When Candela finished the renovations, parabolic buildings dotted the entire Casino de la Selva's landscape, from the grand lobby entrance to the parabola-shaped ventilation vents on the roofs of the property's bungalows. By using the recurring design of arches throughout the property, Candela foregrounded the parabolic form.

Rather than an architectural backdrop, the property's design connected experience, space, ideology, and memory through parabolic stimuli. Having seen how form, subject matter, and physical characteristics work together to attract the attention of the user, at this juncture I explain how the sensory content of the space creates a social impact. Félix Candela's high parabolic ceilings provided a larger-than-life canvas upon which to paint a new vision of Spanish history. When we view Candela's design in dialogue with Renau's mural *España hacia América* (discussed in detail in chapter 3), we see how the space functioned as a site of communication, meant to heighten the impact of the room's narrative. The room's shape leads visitors through a story of the consequences of bellicose, imperial societies and the beauty that comes with peace. At the same time, the parabolic arch of the room emphasizes the centrality of liberty and the contributions to knowledge that characterize Spain's Golden Age. The combination of the mural and the space is a message that is physically imposing in its grandeur and impact. It leaves an indelible memory for the viewer of a society based in art, knowledge, and the Edenic nature of Latin America. By bringing together exiled artists and architects for the project, the Casino offered the possibility of changing the historical narrative away from the Spanish as ruthless conquerors and toward the Spanish Civil War exiles as cultural collaborators as Mexico re-envisioned itself in the post-revolutionary period.

In this chapter, I have scrutinized the material, cultural, and symbolic elements of exile architecture. More than a mere building material, concrete served as a metaphorical conduit for capturing the difficulties, innovations, and nostalgia of the exiles' experiences. At the same time, parabolas functioned as a central form for exilic expression. The parabola captured Candela's past experiences and provided the framework for his present. Their symmetry engendered the exiles' transatlantic connections across oceans and borders. Candela's parabolic buildings show

the traces of his complicated history with his homeland, drawing from his training in Spain and also challenging the narrative of *hispanidad* integral to Franco's regime.



## CHAPTER 3

### PUBLISHING A PUBLIC PARABOLA: THE ROLE OF *ESPAÑA PEREGRINA* IN SHAPING THE PUBLIC SPHERE

“Travel, migration and movement,” writes Iain Chambers, “invariably bring us up against the limits of our inheritance” (115). When the Republican community made its way across the Atlantic to Mexico, the journey not only brought them up against the boundaries of their inherited notions of Spanishness, but also presented them with the opportunity to reconsider the margins in which exiles traditionally reside.<sup>10</sup> As captured in the pages of their publication, *España Peregrina*, the community political exiles residing in Mexico evidence how their migration confronted ideas of governance and the historical legacy of Spain’s involvement in Latin America. It was a process that resonates with Judith Butler’s call “not to stay marginal, but to participate in whatever network of marginal zones is spawned from other disciplinary centers and which, together, constitute a multiple displacement of those authorities” (xiii). Through their publication of *España Peregrina*, they joined the marginalized voices of Republican forces and the previously colonized peoples to populate the marginal zone with words, ideas, and advocates. As a consequence of their migration, they were, in Chambers’ terms, “undoing the ties and directions that once held [them] to a particular centre” (115). The people of the margins,

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<sup>10</sup> See David Herzberger, “Spanishness and Identity Formation from the Civil War to the Present: Exploring the Residue of Time.” As Herzberger notes, ethnocultural elements undergirded Francoist ideas of Spanishness in the post-civil war era. Spanishness was a singular, static identity that ossified Spain’s history of heroic deeds and great men as an anchor for the nation. Whereas civic affiliation “projects a temporal time that is always forward looking... ethno-cultural definitions suggest a static and exclusionary understanding of identity, and they inevitably point to heritage” (13).

united through shared texts and experiences, came to form a public sphere around ideas of democracy and transatlantic cooperation.

It was a process that worked to displace both Franco's place of authority and the inherited cultural practices upon which it was built. Beginning in 1939, the Franco regime began shutting down the public sphere through a combination of social coercion, laws, and propaganda. In an article titled "El público no existe" for the Francoist daily newspaper *Arriba*, Falangist writer Samuel Ros wrote that the public is an element of liberal society and that it had been replaced by the "nuevo orden" (Sevillano 214).

In this chapter, I suggest that what lay beyond Falange's hegemonic core and its established beliefs, values, and heroes was a public sphere, or more appropriately a public parabola. The exiled authors' choice to explore what existed on the other side of a dictated, mythic order shifted power away from a singular center and toward a more transnational perspective. Like the mathematical parabola ( $y=x^2$ ) (fig. 6), the contours of this discursive community maintained points on both sides of the ocean with linguistic and cultural elements symmetrically reflected. I argue that the exile community's contributions to the textual landscape manifested themselves in a parabola-shaped network because confronting the boundaries of their inheritance meant reflecting on opposite points of their experiences: beginnings and endings, tradition and opposition, Europe and the Americas, war and peace, and abandonment and assimilation.

## Graph for $x^2$

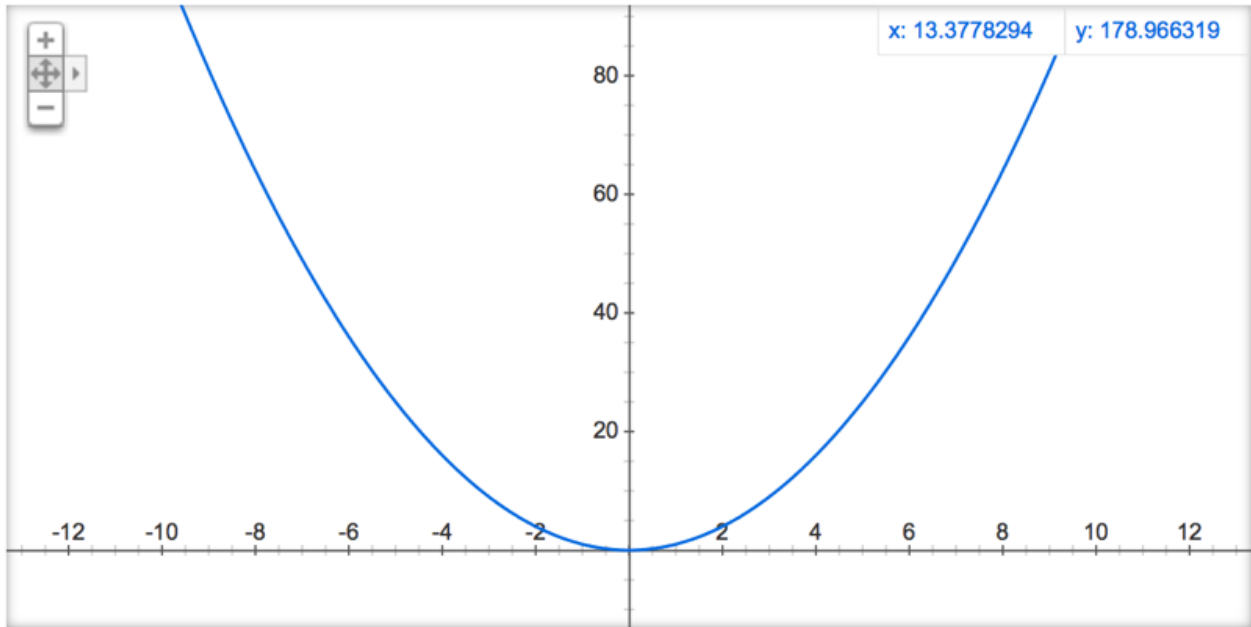


Figure 6 Graph of a parabola, generated by google.com

Although dominant structures dictated that action occupy one place, in moving beyond their inherited boundaries, exiles discovered that human agency and praxis have the capacity to reinterpret and reconstitute ideas of time and space. Throughout the magazine, the Spanish exile's temporal and geographic existence is presented as parabolic, or as existing at multiple, distinct points. From their preference for a periodical format to the literary selections featured in their magazine, the writers' positions in Mexico in the present repeatedly expressed themselves in spatial, temporal, and formal symmetry with the traditions from the Spain of the past.

Time is the foundational element of the exile experience. It is a unit that, although traditionally measured based on continuity, becomes less stable in exile. Józef Wittlin, for example, has suggested that exiles exist atemporally. He posits that if in Spanish "...there is a word for describing an exile, the word *destierro*, a man who has been deprived of his time,"

exiles may, by extension, adopt a second term, “*destiempo*, a man who has been deprived of his time” (quoted in McClennen 58). Claudio Guillén similarly connects exile and time, suggesting that exiles live predominantly in the past, dwelling nostalgically for what has been lost, as a result of having been banished from the present and future (275). To this discussion, I would add that the writers in *España Peregrina* manifest a parabolic relationship to time, bending linear history to bring it to the present time with the result that they exist in multiple temporal categories. Their writing evokes entrenched Spanish traditions even as it imagines a reorganization of cultural and power structures.

Conventional frameworks for space delimit our life experiences based on the set of values of a single milieu and anchor our social identities to a single locale. This restriction on the concept of space, in turn, influences the relationship between human experience and place, a concept known as spatial hermeneutics (Cloke et al. 90). The geographic displacement inherent in exile estranges the subject from uncompounded notions of spatial hermeneutics. Unlike Said’s observation that “Because exile, unlike nationalism, is fundamentally a discontinuous state of being, exiles are cut off from their roots, their land, their past...Exiles feel, therefore, an urgent need to reconstitute their broken lives, usually by choosing to see themselves as part of a triumphant ideology or a restored people,” the writers here repeatedly graft their old and new roots together (*Reflections on Exile* 360). Their writing, residence, and affiliations in Mexican society maintain their attachments to their home while also accepting a place in a new country. In much the same way, their absence and their opposition occupy definite literary, political, and ideological space in both Spain and Mexico. In the works of *España Peregrina*, we observe that the space of exile is an attachment that is not deterritorialized or reterritorialized, but rather

multi-territorialized. Even when looking forward to their future, their vision is partially backward-facing, always looking to past references to define their new world.

As Paul Ilie notes, “Newspapers, mass literature, advertising, and other communications media together play a vital role in reifying the inchoate institutions of individual alienation” (161). Exile magazines like *España Peregrina* not only impacted the individual, but also the collective. In addition to coping with individual isolation, these magazines disseminated a common language upon which to build a community. Benedict Anderson provides a fundamental model for studying modern nation-building in his text, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin of Nationalism*. In his analysis, Anderson highlights the key role of newspapers, books, and writing in fomenting a sense of common community among large groups of people. Although people dispersed across society were unlikely to meet in person, new technologies disseminated cultural narratives that facilitated connections between individuals (Benedict Anderson 49). By reading the same stories, these individuals came to identify with a society that extended far beyond their backyards.

With its broad network of distribution, *España Peregrina* gave form to a unified body. The magazine served as more than a nation-creating chronicle of news and events, for in the act of relating events, it disseminated a common language of resistance and transmitted common values. The writers’ choices of which literary works to celebrate and which crises to cover exerted a shaping influence over ideas of identity and nation. As Homi Bhabha describes it, “To encounter the nation as it is written displays a temporality of culture and social consciousness...” (307). In this context, the language of *España Peregrina* invites us to view national identity as an expression of common ideals from a particular moment in time and of a specific community joined in defense against threats from a common enemy. Through the use of common language,

attached to both the Old and New world, they linguistically span time and space, persistently recalling the past as they narrate their present.

Journalism in Spain as a form of news distribution began in 1661 with the State-sponsored periodical, *Gaceta de Madrid*. This form of journalism continued through 1789, when State press gave way to the business press. The dissemination of information via periodical thrived in the 1930s with *El Mono Azul, Madrid*, and *Revista de Occidente*. Even as the civil war broke out and the Falange began seizing competing news outlets, artistic outlets and urban printing presses continued to grow, establishing new forms of communication such as political murals and posters (Alted 159). These nascent forms of resistance continued to thrive after the war's end and became a conduit for communicating ideas of Spanishness in exile. Once in Mexico, artists like Josep Renau adapted muralism to construct an alternative imaginary that opposed the historic hegemony of Spain. At the same time, exiled authors published writings in periodicals to challenge Franco's hold over Spanish identity, information, and ideology. During the 1940s, periodicals like *Romance*, *Ciencia* and *España Peregrina* allowed the newly exiled community to mirror the relatively inexpensive, frequent dissemination of news and information. Beyond mirroring the press tradition, these communal publishing projects served as an essential means of expression for connection and created a shared resolve against an authoritative center.

In line with the research of Mieczyslaw Porębski, the composition of *España Peregrina* served as a vital form for expanding and populating the margins. In Porębski's "On the Plurality of Space," the author notes that the literary constitutes a space and that literature exists in three spatial forms: extratextual, or the place where we store these materials, intertextual, or the space of literary conventions and traditions, and intratextual, or the space created in readers' minds as they engage with the narrative (23). In contrast to Amy K. Kaminsky's assertion that exile "is a

removal in space as well as spirit,” these magazines challenged the permanency of exile as a spatial and spiritual removal (40). For as the writers filled the bookshelves of Mexico, the international community, and to a lesser degree Spain, they reintroduced themselves into the extratextual space.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, by tapping into the intertextual space of traditional periodical publications and the intratextual landscape of their readership, the exiled authors expanded both the form and their ideals beyond the border of Spain where they had previously resided.

It is also worth noting that the unique goals of each magazine contoured how those periodicals occupied space. The popular culture magazine *Romance*, published from 1940 to 1941, set as its aim to disseminate and popularize Spanish culture in the Americas. In contrast to the popular audience of *Romance*, *Ciencia* focused on scientific research. Under the leadership of entomologist Ignacio Bolívar, from 1940 to 1967 the magazine provided a forum for publishing research and created a transatlantic conversation between Spanish and Latin American scientists (Caudet 59). At the same time that *Ciencia* was building a communally constituted space for scientific discussion, *España Peregrina* broadened the concept of shared territory, expanding the space of collaboration between Spain and Latin America.

Although dedicated to a variety of literary forms, including poetry, news articles, and social announcements, the essay became a dominant form of expression within the pages of *España Peregrina*. Perhaps most closely associated with the Generation of 1898, the essay became a prolific genre at the end of the nineteenth century. Because of its flexibility in both form and content, the essay allowed famed writers from that generation such as Unamuno, Maeztu, and Azorín to transmit their ideas on a variety of subjects, ranging from death and destiny to religion and the future of Spain.

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<sup>11</sup> Paul Ilie notes that by 1940, issues of *España Peregrina* circulated in Spain (16-17).

Like their predecessors in Spain, adopting the essay allowed the exile contributors to test provisional ideas and to use personal experience as evidence. Because of their limited access to books and bibliographies after the war, many exiled writers turned to this shorter, less formal means of expression. The essay also encapsulated the exile community's expanding perspectives and reinforced their attachments to the well-established Spanish intellectual custom.

First published in Mexico City in February of 1940, *España Peregrina* lasted just one year and only published ten issues. The first culture-centered magazine published by exiled Spanish intellectuals, the periodical brought together exiled scholars and Latin American contributors that were sympathetic to the Republican cause. From Eugenio Ímaz's description of bringing forth a clear and cheerful spring to León Felipe's call to march forward with new faith and hope, contributors signaled that their writing was ascending from the painful loss of the civil war and was building a new Spain.

As they explained in the first issue,

La Junta de Cultura Española se constituyó en París el 13 de marzo de 1939, casi en la víspera de la caída de Madrid, cuando ya los campos de concentración del mediodía de Francia estaban llenos de refugiados españoles. Surgió...con el decidido propósito de salvar del desastre la propia fisonomía espiritual de nuestra cultura y de mantener entre los intelectuales emigrados la unión, el sentido de responsabilidad y la continuidad de su obra, que el destierro ponía en grave riesgo de alterar o suspender...("Actividades de La Junta de Cultura Española" 42).

Their senses of place and purpose were tied together through the explicit mention of *continuidad*, or continuity, such that the magazine stood in opposition to the exile-as-removal framework. Rather than abandoning their lives' work, theirs was an attempt to replicate their spiritual and



professional contributions on the other side of the ocean. There may have been a geographical distance between those living in Spain and those in Mexico, but the group's use of *nuestra* indicates a continued sense of ownership and participation in Iberian culture.

For this literary project, the periodical's director José Bergamín chose the name *España Peregrina*. As the adjective modifier to its name implies, the periodical advocated for a new Spain, distinct from the established sign *España*. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, Spain had fashioned itself as a modern nation-state by establishing "a uniform model of bourgeois culture" (Labanyi, *Constructing Identity in Contemporary Spain* 2). This uniform model of culture included promoting Castilian as both the official administrative language and as the language of Spanish history and the Spanish literary canon (*Constructing Identity in Contemporary Spain* 4). Print materials and literature of the time not only cohered around one language, but they also excluded others, specifically, texts written in Basque, Catalan, and Galician.

The disruptive duality of the title expanded Spain as a nation-state beyond "one race, one language, one culture" (*Constructing Identity in Contemporary Spain* 4). Instead, they offered an alternative, a second conceptualization of the Spanish nation that built off of existing, long-held notions of *dos Españas*, or two Spains (Gies 3–4). A common expression of the duality of the Spanish nation, the *dos Españas* concept has persistently marked divisions within Spain's society, from the liberals versus the Napoleonic forces to the outward-facing Generation of 1898 versus the isolationist-favoring traditionalists (Figueiredo and Serra 158). It is a division that Ortega y Gasset described as two Spains that, in his estimation, "viven juntas y que son perfectamente extrañas" (273). The evocation of *España Peregrina* in the title perpetuated the notion of two forms for the country. It served as a reminder to the reader that a more inclusive,

diverse notion of Spain, one which valued the contributions of regional identities, was in fact possible. The modifier *Peregrina* not only suggests an alternate conceptualization of Spain, but it also conjures a hopeful mission for the publication. As preeminent pilgrimage scholar George Greenia explains, pilgrimage journeys come “‘pre-loaded’ with imagery that gave them an inner trajectory toward their lofty peak (8). The publishers of the magazine presented exile as a state that, while painful and isolating, was also a state for overcoming. Implicit in their chosen vocabulary is a movement both toward a distant place and movement upwards toward improved circumstances. Just as the parabola rises from its lowest point, so too did the title put forth ascension from their post-war shambles as its goal.

Throughout the ten issues of *España Peregrina*, it is the process of repeated comparison against a distant opposite that plots the topography and identity of the exiled Spain. By making explicit the exiled body’s ties to Spain, the magazine repackages old cultural signs so as to resonate with their mission to create a unified, evolved body. Writing, publishing, and reading the periodical become a three-fold form for constructing the nation. Rather than erasing their history with Spain, their project acknowledges the informational and cultural exchanges that continue to play a significant role in the exiles’ memories. There is not an end to their story with the end of the Republic. Instead, through opposition, the community traces a transnational site of memory. The characterizations of this section function on an ideological and linguistic level to transmit their political message wrapped up in denigration of the opposition as self-definition.

Geography lies implicitly at the core of the discussion of an alternative version of Spain and so it should come as little surprise that Bergamín would raise the question of where the Republic exists. It is a question he attempted to answer with a parabolic conceptualization in the third issue of *España Peregrina*. In acknowledging that exilic place may occupy more than one

space, his rhetorical question provides the location when it asks, “¿Cuántos saben que la República no se fué (sic) ni vino, que está donde estuvo, en la esperanza revolucionaria de todos los pueblos de España, dentro y fuera de ella...?” (Bergamín 101). According to Bergamín, the Republic was as present in Mexico as it was in Spain as the Republic was more than a geographic reality, but an ideal for progressive Spaniards. He mapped the exiled nation as coterminous points that coexisted in Spain and Mexico as part of the same plane.

While Bergamín offered the geopolitical grounds for parabolic reflection, Ímaz identified similar traces of this mirrored divide on the exiled mind and body. At times, the expressions of exile appeared as a literally divided persona, a subject split by the violence of war. As Ímaz writes, “La espada divide en dos el mundo humano, moral, nacional en que vivimos: tajantemente en dos...” (“Partibus” 15). The violent division of their world and their morality by an instrument of war reflected a parabolic conception of the exile. Although painful, the editorial board explains in “Por un orden consciente” that there is a benefit to their fragmented subjectivity. The division, they explain, has created two planes, one political and one cultural. The unanticipated consequence of the divisions sown by the civil war, the article continues, has been to render a purified form of the Spanish body politic, a half that is free of corrupting political influences, where universal principles to circulate unfettered (“Orden” 148). Within this half exists, “la instauración de una superior conciencia... Su misión es adquirir y difundir conciencia, abrir horizontes, polarizar voluntades...forjarse la civilización verdadera”(149). It follows from these declarations that the exiles’ sense of divided subjectivity produced both unity and also a step toward the universal, higher moral state.

In issue three, Ímaz’s article “Pensamiento desterrado” describes the impact of divided subjectivity on the group’s thinking and mental function. In particular, he notes the cognitive

dissonance that he and his fellow exiles felt upon witnessing the Falange's propaganda machine from the outside. Under Franco's control, he notes that signifiers and their signified had been divorced from the logical pairing. In the place of logical semiotic relationships, the authoritarian regime used language to such an absurd effect that: "Dice orden y quiere decir todo lo contrario; patriota y quiere decir todo lo contrario; espiritualismo, y todo lo contrario; civilización y todo lo contrario, paz, y todo lo contrario..." (Ímaz, "Pensamiento Desterrado" 107). Through the mirroring effect of parabolic exile, Ímaz revealed the fallacy of Franco's rhetoric and also his purported values. By setting these images in contrast and describing the contradiction found in the Falange's most fundamental values, Ímaz dismantles the illusion of the regime and offers an example of how the Republicans could define themselves in opposition to the rhetoric of their challengers.

The parabolic body politic is perhaps best exemplified by José Bergamín in "Iris de paz: españoles infra-rojos y ultra-violetas," an essay about the Spanish identity in a post-war context. In the article, Bergamín characterizes their exiled life as an "iris de paz" and as an "arco simbólico de la paz." The arch serves as his preferred visualization of their condition. It is an image that he is able to use to great effect to convey a tone of moral authority, regime condemnation, and a sustained attachment to their opponents. He writes, "...aquél arco iris de paz que, tras la tormenta española, aparece...Arco tendido como puente a plateados fugitivos, a más o menos enemigos" (Bergamín, "Españoles Infra-rojos y Ultra-violetas" 13). Displaced but still connected to his homeland, he turns to nature to define the relationship. Through the figure of an arch, Bergamín creates an atmosphere that is deeply critical of the regime and its values, while still fostering an attachment to the country he once inhabited.

In the same way that a storm presents the possibility of a rainbow, Bergamín recognizes that war and exile may produce unexpected benefits. Among these possibilities, Bergamín identifies the potential for a “recuperación umbilical” with the mother culture (“Españoles Infra-rojos y Ultra-violetas” 13). His choice to link the rainbow imagery with the umbilical cord reinforces not only his preference for inspirational natural imagery but also for connection.

His use of the maternal connection and pregnancy is particularly evocative in the context of a discussion of the relationship between citizen and mother country. As Anderson notes, the use of kinship idioms denotes a natural connection (143). By invoking this biological relationship in the realm of governance, Bergamín’s metaphor anticipated the biopolitical writings of later theorists such as Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben, who conceptualized state control of the individual citizen through an intersectional examination of human biology and political systems (Foucault *Society Must Be Defended* 243; Agamben 107).

Even more specific to the case at hand, Bergamín’s notion of the *recuperación umbilical* directly dialogues with Roberto Esposito’s biopolitical analysis. In the texts *Bios* and *Immunitas*, Esposito applies an immunological paradigm to biopolitical discourse. Esposito situates the politics of life within the framework of the human body’s immunological system and his theory considers multiple forms of immunity. Having identified that one form of immunity entails the body attacking a detected threat with the result that the body develops immunity and becomes more robust, Esposito reminds the reader that another form of immuno-response exists. During pregnancy, he notes that a mother’s immune system recognizes the presence of a foreign object and self regulates its response. More specifically, the mother’s body limits its reaction so as to protect both the mother and the fetus. As applied to political stability, he suggests that “a community emerges out of an immunization that successfully immunizes itself against attacking

what is other” (Campbell in Esposito xxxii). Esposito thus suggests that by recognizing dissidence but foregoing an attack, the body politic is strengthened as a community.

The “recuperación umbilical” of which Bergamín writes speaks to such a relationship with Spain. It is, at once, yet another expression of the exiles’ persistent attachment to Spain and their desire to return to a nurturing, maternal relationship. At the same time, it is a declaration of the benefits of a diversity of opinions. Whereas Francoist Spain depended on the eradication of pluralism in order to create “one, great, and free” nation, the Republican Spain saw strength in heterogeneity (Graham and Labanyi 169). Rather than attacking the Republicans as a harmful other within the body politic, the mother country should allow them to exist within the system and limit its resistance to their dissidence.

The biopolitical rhetoric seen in Bergamín’s article also functions to justify the ultimate legitimacy of their version of Spain. As the first article of the magazine declares:

No era España, madre de naciones, una entidad política o territorial nacida de las conveniencias circunstanciales de un tratado de paz...Era España un pequeño universo aparte, clave y semilla de universalidad... Castellanos, catalanes, vascos, gallegos, andaluces, componentes variados de su pequeño universo... (“España Peregrina” 3-4).

Beginning with these first words in the periodical, “Mother Spain” supplies the point of departure for the epistemic principles of *hispanismo* that run through the text. Like Bergamín’s piece, this article emphasizes transculturality and universality. Whereas the alternative, “false” vision of Spain requires explicit treaties and contracts, theirs is a nation that exists under Natural Law. It is an appeal that echoes back to Sir William Blackstone’s assertion that “The law of nature... is of course superior to any other... No human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this...” (Blackstone Section 2). By virtue of its universality, the present-tense Spain attempts to

displace any claims to legitimacy from its past-tense alternative. What is more, by attaching the cultural values of their version of Spain to Natural Law, their assertion elevates the diversity of languages, cultures, and forms of national identity as first-order principles that are also inherently legitimate.

Despite their shared advocacy for Spanish culture, the two Spains diverged significantly on their rationales and their definitions of authentic Hispanic values. The Falange advocated for an ideology known as *hispanidad* through which Spain could accomplish three things: bring their colonial economic, artistic, and spiritual success to the fore, present a positive counter-narrative against the negative portrayal of Spain in the “Leyenda Negra,” and improve the perceived spiritual shortcomings in the Americas (Großmann 757). Latin America, they explained, lacked spiritualism and was devoid of a universal sense of transcendence. As a result, the region had come to occupy an inferior role on the world’s stage. In contrast, *hispanismo* defined the relationship between Latin America and Spain to promote a space of international collaboration. For the defeated Republican exiles, their ideology of *hispanismo* offered the hope of consolidating the Hispanic world in opposition to Francoist Spain. They may have lost the battle on the Iberian Peninsula, but they still saw the potential for winning the war against the Nationalists on an international level. In framing this development within the international sphere, the *hispanismo* epistemology also took on questions of agency over historical discourse.

By working together, the exile community and the people of Latin America could form an open discourse community to reconceptualize the narrative about Spanish colonialism and culture. Discourse communities, writes linguist John Swales, are groups that have shared goals, a means of communicating about those goals, mechanisms for providing information, and a marked use of specialized terminology (24–27). These communities may be open or closed,

depending on the degree of control over the mechanisms of discourse and the degree of equity in accessing information. In reconfiguring their fight as a transnational venture, the *España Peregrina* acknowledged the historical positioning of Latin America in the margins and readily welcomed contributions from their American counterparts as central to their cause. Their journal was an intervention in a competing cultural campaign that signaled the power that could result from including Latin America in an open discourse community. Through their writing and cultural framework, they were establishing a common goal, reinforcing the marginal zone, and strengthening the fringes of society against the authoritarian center in Spain. Theirs was a borderland that spanned both history and the Atlantic. It was a frontier characterized not as a limit, but rather as a shared horizon:

Muy en particular nos dirigimos a vosotros, pueblos de América, incorporados materialmente a la universalidad por el esfuerzo creador de España... La época universal que abre en la historia el holocausto de la Madre España, señala sin duda el tiempo de vuestra madurez en que habéis de desarrollar lo que os es peculiar y definitivo, la esencia de Nuevo Mundo...Aquí está nuestra voz, nuestra verdad, nuestro horizonte. Llevamos un mismo camino. ¡Ojalá nos hermanemos en una sola marcha! ("España Peregrina" 6)

As this initial declaration made clear, the collaboration of Spain and Latin America would yield transcendent results. At the heart of *hispanismo* was a form of Republican humanism that emphasized a search for justice, truth, respect, and a moral imperative of knowledge (Cate-Arries, "Re-Imagining" 124). By working together, the writers indicate that they could reach beyond the current horizon, where there existed the possibility of truth and a voice for the disempowered.



In a multi-part series titled “Introducción a un mundo nuevo,” poet, archivist, and archeologist Juan Larrea outlines the key ideals of this broader moral mission. Larrea arrived in Mexico City in November of 1939, where he rose to the office of copresident of the Junta (S. Faber, *Exile* 122). As a regular contributor to the periodical, his articles viewed both the Spanish Civil War and the exiles’ arrival in Mexico as part of a larger, divine plan. As Sebastiaan Faber explains, “Drawing on, among other things, Gnosticism and the cabbala, Larrea claimed that the Spanish Civil War, the Republicans’ exile, and the Second World War... inaugurated a new phase in history in which the cultural hegemony of Europe would be replaced by that of the Americas” (*Exile* 131).

Larrea’s belief in social progress manifested itself in a concept he described as “un más allá,” a place in which humans would have the capacity to transform their consciousness. According to his theory, the relationship between Spain and Mexico was critical to society’s evolution, for Spain had the unique capacity to reach to this “civilización verdadera” and the colonization of the Americas was an integral step in advancing toward the promised land (“Introducción a un Mundo Nuevo” 21). As Larrea understood it, “El descubrimiento de América constituyó, pues... el primer paso efectivo hacia la verificación del más allá” (“Introducción a un Mundo Nuevo” 22). Although this seemingly celebratory stance toward colonization may seem a bit counterintuitive for a writer that so closely identified with the *hispanismo* cause, in Larrea’s estimation, colonization represented a necessary step for revealing the deteriorating legacy of the Golden Age. While Europe depends on “viejas instituciones,” across the ocean, “[g]erminan en el mundo nuevos ideales políticas, sociales, económicos, abriendo ventanas” (“Introducción a un Mundo Nuevo” 22). After the colonial era, the new

world continued to advance, and it was this forward-looking world that allowed Larrea to hold up a mirror to Spain and reveal its current state of decline.

Within Larrea's idea of progress, there is a clear critique of the outdated nature of both Franco's laudatory stance toward the Golden Age and the broader implications of European ontology. As Joseba Gabilondo observes in his study of Spanish nationalism, to preserve the established cultural frameworks was to legitimize the "masculine and hysterical performance of the nation as a way to repress and dominate" (30). By allowing the Old World and its cultural practices to dissolve into antiquity, a new space would open for the great beyond to materialize in the New World.

Although colonization was integral to realizing the idea of the *más allá*, Larrea explains in the second issue of *España Peregrina* that their mission actually began much earlier in three sacred European cities: Rome, Jerusalem, and Compostela. The author concedes that each of these cities has contributed to society's Christian advancement, but he firmly asserts that it is Spain's unique geographic and political position that makes it the Iberian country's destiny to reach *más allá*. From Spain's proximity to North America, Larrea divines that it is Spain's duty to continue the world's moral progression. From Spain's purported distinct morality, Larrea identifies their singular dedication to democracy and equality. Even in the face of the Republic's recent ruin, Larrea does not find evidence of failure, but rather further proof of Spain's pursuit of the highest moral expression ("Introducción II" 55).

After identifying the properties that make Spain the appropriate vessel for reaching the great beyond, Larrea turns to why Rome was unqualified to fulfill this mission. Surprisingly, his reasoning finds its foundations as much in linguistics, as it does in history and politics. From a linguistic standpoint, he notes that *Roma* derives from the Greek word for force. As an inherently

forceful body, it followed that Rome could not be trusted lead the way to the great beyond. Perhaps realizing that word origins might not win the battle alone, Larrea offers historical evidence against Rome and the Catholic Church based on their legacy of institutional stagnancy. To retain its omnipotence, Larrea argues that the Church has unwaveringly discouraged change. The Romans, for example, promoted the idea that there was nothing more beyond Spain, while Spanish-led exploration dared to prove that a vast world existed beyond the peninsula. What is more, their proclivity for stagnation protected the elites of powerful institutions such as the clergy, nobility, and the military. It is this preference for the status quo, in Larrea's estimation, that ensured that places like Spain would remain weaker before inevitably growing, evolving, and developing the skills necessary to reach the highest expression of being.

While Larrea's article is advocating for societal evolution, his challenge to Rome as the true site for moral leadership is also indicative of a larger struggle against the Francoist dictatorship. The Italian capital city had long stood as the hegemonic site of Roman Catholicism. Because the regime emphasized Spain's Catholic roots as a central tenet of the *hispanidad* ideology, subverting Rome's authority was also subverting the religious foundations of the Falange.

In the third edition of his series, Larrea presents his culminating argument, which states that love is a precondition for the universal kingdom of the great beyond and that Rome cannot occupy that role politically or linguistically. For Larrea, it is not a coincidence that, "la palabra ROMA, ciudad de la fuerza, es la inversión expresa del AMOR" ("Introducción III" 115). This inversion, which places Rome as the literal opposite of love, works on the level of language to demonstrate the mirror-imagining effect of the exile's parabolic lens. While it may seem reductive to divide the world into thesis and antithesis according to form and letter, for Larrea

the fact that this duality exists on such a base level is key. Following Larrea's logic, if we define the world in terms of language and words, in turn, then reconfiguring our language can reconfigure our reality.

If mirror opposite words reflect mirror opposite worlds, then language urges parabolic reflection on this most fundamental level. As evolved subjects, our idea of the self depends on reflexivity. When we are exposed to new perspectives, we develop an enlarged thought or mentality (Kant n.p.). The publication demonstrates how exposure to difference and critical reflection on dominant institutions and models of power transcend not only the political, but also the existential ("Entereza Española" 245). The geographic and epistemological distance that exile afforded were not only constituting elements of the supposed process of societal evolution, they were also the parabolic elements that the exile community and the magazine's readership needed for reconsidering ideas national attachment. The inherent cosmopolitanism of exile allowed the community to reflect on the world as a whole rather than on a singular locality (Calhoun 210). At the heart of cosmopolitanism is a sense of transcendence over "the given, the accepted, the familiar, or the weight of circumstance" (Abouafia n.p.). Although they retained their sense of national origin, the exiled writers transcended their fixation on the former Spanish identity in order to promote a more universal, *hispanismo*-based national identity.

From the head of state to the head of the family, the Franco regime instituted stability through a rigid patriarchal order. The Fuero de Trabajo (1938) was one of the Seven Fundamental Laws of the Regime. It purportedly liberated women from the workshop and the factory and return them to their God-given roles as wives, mothers, and caretakers of the home ("Boletín Oficial Del Estado- 10 marzo 1938" 6178-81). By imposing traditional, subordinate gender roles on women, the regime not only reinforced their power structure, but also

counteracted both the socially liberal policies of the Republicans and the broader rapid socioeconomic change sweeping Europe of the early twentieth century. During this period, in addition to discouraging married women from working, the State used middle-class women as a proxy police force to monitor the behavior of the urban and rural poor. Rather than an egalitarian public sphere, these practices blurred the divisions between the public and private with the effect of reproducing social hierarchy and reinforcing authoritarian power (Graham 184–86).

The public sphere, as Jürgen Habermas has theorized it, encompasses an area of social life in which citizens are freely engaged in critical debate, educated discussion, and political discourse related to issues of societal importance. Societal configurations prior to the eighteenth century had relegated political authority to a closed sphere of nobles, clergy, and police. In opposition to this political structure centered on traditional feudal powers, Habermas identifies a moment in which the bourgeoisie emerged as a distinct source of input for public policy. An integral part of this shift, according to Habermas, was the rise of literary activity separate and apart from the state and the official economy.

While the newspapers and literary works meant to inform the public were necessary, they were not necessarily sufficient for a quality public sphere. To his initial model, Habermas adds six fundamental elements of impartial communication that are required for the public sphere. Public sphere debates should be based on written and oral arguments that, according to his paradigm, justify their positions, are respectful of alternative points of view, allow for the participation of others, are truthful, frame arguments around the common good, and work toward consensus (Habermas, “Public” 136). Although not inherently tied to a specific place, Habermas identified areas of society where people often gather for these debates, including coffee houses and salons.

In stark contrast to the hierarchical Spanish societal arrangement, *España Peregrina* invited its readership to participate in an open group where public debate emphasized interconnectedness. From its distribution network and readership to its recurring themes and cultural events, the magazine reaffirmed the connections between Spain and the Americas. And while studies of the European public sphere have discarded pan-European conceptualizations as failing to account for differences in language, experience, and memories, I argue that exile fostered a common cause upon which to build a public sphere (de Vreese 8).

This is not to say, however, that the magazine appealed to all levels of society equally. The seemingly inclusive stance of both the magazine and the *hispanismo* ideology more generally raises broader issues of elitism and cosmopolitanism. As both Ernest Gellner and Pierre Bourdieu have noted, these transnational dissemination patterns tend to supplant provincial culture in favor of high culture (Gellner 57; Bourdieu 133–39). To the extent that we associate the exiles' transatlantic efforts with cosmopolitanism and progress, we must also recognize that the elevation of high culture over provincial life privileges the experiences and perspectives of a well-educated elite (Calhoun 233). Both the contributors and public of *España Peregrina* came from an educated class of elites interested in international politics and literature. As cultural elites, this group had the power and access to media to form and perpetuate an ideology. These resources allowed them to create texts and events that served as points of reference for how the broader group identified themselves.

In describing these kinds of issue-specific communicative spaces, sociologist Klaus Eder has coined the term segmented, transnational public spheres (177–78). Borrowing from Eder's work, we may think of the exiles' publication as forming a segmented, transatlantic public sphere. Through collaboration with local residents and the incorporation of existing texts from

Latin American writers such as César Vallejo, they created a continuous network that joined together multiple literary and cultural communities.

This configuration of the public sphere challenged the limited reach of traditional Habermasian boundaries that define the politics of discourse, exchange, and national identity, establishing in its place a transnational conversation. The participants in this public were not isolated to a single identity or nationality, but rather belonged to a variety of local groups. In stark contrast to the increasingly closed space of communication in Francoist Spain, the Estatutos de la Junta de Cultura Española worked to foment “efectivas amistades y apoyos a la cultura española en el extranjero” (“Estatutos de La Junta de Cultura Española” 2).

As Anderson argues, the idea of a nation as a cohesive group is a cultural phenomenon. The printing press cultivated a large readership of non-religious texts and the development of a common language. Because readers could engage with the same texts, they began to imagine themselves as a group. In addition to providing the language necessary to create a cohesive community, their subscriber network engaged Spanish-speaking readers in a conversation that fomented public debate. Although the magazine had a circulation that did not surpass 2,000 subscribers (Caudet 63), there was a clear effort on the part of the editors and contributors to tap into the power of the print medium and a common language to expand its reach beyond the exile community.

The contributors to the magazine largely forged these connections by writing trauma. In contrast to writing *about* trauma, which implies reconstructing the historiography with a high degree of objectivity, writing trauma allows authors to remove their own involvement in the implicated events. As Dominick LaCapra notes, the act of writing trauma is an aftereffect of a “shattering break,” a collapse of one’s referential planes related to a catastrophic event, not

unlike the rupture exiles experienced upon losing the war, losing their sense of home, and losing the social markers of Spanish identity (186).

In the case of *España Peregrina*, the Republican defeat and its wide-spread consequences became a founding trauma that contributors mythologized to create a unified identity. In the place of what we might approximate as an “impartial” history, the magazine writes trauma subjectively, declaring,

CONSUMADA la tragedia que ha padecido el pueblo español, aventados por el mundo en buena parte sus defensores, perseguidos, encarcelados, condenados a muerte muchos otros, ultrajados todos por haber defendido hasta el fin la sagrada voluntad de España, cumple a quienes podemos levantar la voz libremente dar expresión al contenido profundo de la causa por la que libremente se inmolaron tantos miles de compatriotas, manifestar nuestra actitud en este angustioso trance en que los fundamentos de la civilización conocen las más graves conmociones. (“España Peregrina” 3)

Their narrative originates in the events of the civil war, but quickly moves beyond mere facts of the conflict. It consists of rhetorical elements through which those events define the recipients of traumatic damage. By writing trauma rather than history, the exile community places ownership for the painful consequences of the civil war exclusively on the Falange. In encoding the Falangistas as the source of trauma against the deterritorialized *pueblo español*, the exiled contributors expanded their trauma to a space beyond the geography of Spain. They create a space for articulating their losses related to their home country, but also a discursive space for “todos los países que, consumada la tragedia, se han abierto a los luchadores republicanos” (No Title 14).



Pierre Mabile's article, "México y España: Testimonios ajenos," similarly draws from geography and trauma to outline the parabolic shape of their public sphere. He begins his article, "La guerra de España constituye el acontecimiento sensacional que servirá de test para apreciar los diversos componentes de la realidad colectiva de hoy y de mañana" (Mabile 75). This immediate evocation of the war is telling. He explicitly evokes the national conflict as the connective thread that will unite what would otherwise be *ajeno* or unconnected spaces. His discourse connects both sides of the ocean through a single event fixed in the minds of both the Spanish and the Mexicans.

Trauma as a shared foundation for a transatlantic public sphere finds an even stronger basis in their shared history of Western imperialism. Mabile maps the lives of his fellow exiles and the Mexican people in a relationship of shared resistance, where Spain and Mexico are points on the same plane. During colonization, the conquistadores replicated Spanish city names for many places in Latin America such as Guadalajara, Córdoba, and Medellín. The author draws on the power of shared names when he notes, "Los vencidos van a llevar a ciudades de nombres idénticos a las de su patria el peso inmenso de su dolor y la fuerza contagiosa de su rebeldía" (75). With this observation, he establishes an implicit parabolic line of symmetry in which old Spanish cities reflect their counterpart sites of power in the New World. This reflective vision of the world provided the basis for a public sphere in Mexico based not only on a struggle against Franco's dictatorship, but also a fight against the imposition of power more generally. He concludes, "Entre los Estados Unidos, filial del imperialismo anglosajón, y México, se renovarían las luchas y los canjes que dieron razón de ser a nuestro occidente cristiano" (75). In Mabile's representation of history, the Spanish's colonial legacy is not ignored, but it has undergone a transformation. He frames Spain's "más rudos asaltos" on Mexico as part of *hispanismo's* "la

obra renovadora” and “la misión suprema” and the return of the Spanish to Mexico as preparation and a continuation of the fight for freedom.

In tracing moments of trauma, the open form of the parábola facilitates the expression of Mexico’s own polemical relationship with Spain. On October 12, 1940, the editors of *España Peregrina* published a double issue. The publication date, which coincided with the anniversary of Columbus’s voyage to the Americas, cemented the periodical’s mission to redefine transatlantic relationships and subvert the Franco regime. The title and content of the first article in the collection, “Doce de octubre, fiesta del nuevo mundo,” made clear that the anniversary should be attributed to the New World rather than the traditional attribution of the date to Christopher Columbus. The contributors’ capacity to write discursively about a topic entailed categorizing and establishing a common vocabulary that facilitated the interpretation of actions and events (Foucault *Archeology* 48–49). Within this process, the re-naming “fiesta del nuevo mundo” is particularly powerful as it has the potential to persuade, dominate, and establish a new interpretive lens on a longstanding historical narrative.

In denying Spain the power to assign a name to October 12, known officially as the *Día de la Hispanidad*, the text undermined Spanish power and the foundational myth of the *hispanidad* ideology. The losses of 1898 and the decline of the once-great Spanish empire had left scars upon the culture. Franco’s rhetoric addressed this sense of loss by returning to the historical myths of discovery and empire that had made Spain a world power. At the same time, his regime attempted to draw a clear connection between the country’s loss and what they perceived to be growing societal chaos. To return to Spain’s glory days of discovery and conquest, the authoritarian forces attempted to persuade the populace that it was necessary to eliminate unstable elements such as liberal democracy, intellectual freedom, and union

participation (Blinkhorn 20). By recognizing the American character of the date, the magazine plots Latin America as the mirror opposite of the “arrogancia de descubridores y conquistadores” (“Doce de Octubre, Fiesta Del Nuevo Mundo” 51). Rather than perpetuate the myth of imperial influence, the periodical’s choice to refer to the anniversary as “Día de la raza” and “Doce de Octubre (sic), Gran fiesta para el pueblo libre de España” acknowledges the agency and contributions of the Pre-Colombian societies and the formerly colonized to the lands they inhabited.

The issue not only reconsiders the power to name, but it also reassesses the power of space. For this commemorative issue, the editors cede the space of its initial pages to writers from the Americas such as Mexican author Alfonso Reyes, Peruvian historian Luis E. Valcárcel, Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, American novelist Waldo Frank, Argentine writer Leopoldo Lugones, and Chilean Nobel-Prize winner Gabriela Mistral. While the *hispanidad* ideology narrowed the acceptable class of transcendent contributors, the magazine provided a platform for Latin American cultural actors to display their cultural sensibilities on a global scale. In featuring their works, the publication was providing counterevidence of how these writers transcended a purely national market. More than a paternalistic act, this spatial affordance aligns with a self-fulfilling activity. In addition, this decision mirrors the examples of acted parables such as Renau’s adoption of muralism that we find throughout the exiles’ works. For exiles that purported to espouse the ideology of *hispanismo*, it was necessary to manifest internationally collaboration. The privileged placement of Latin American voices in the magazine functions as just such an acted parable, for it signals the importance of a transatlantic community.

The Latin American writers’ cosmopolitan contributions are not at odds with their own notions of cultural self-determination. Instead, their global perspective and expressions of

diversity coincide with their advocacy for democratic ideals and the self-determination of others. From Waldo Frank's declaration that *España Peregrina* is the spiritual force for citizens of the Americas and the world to Leopoldo Lugones distinction between "la España española" and the "España fanática, absolutista y germanófila," the works of this issue shared a commitment to a unified, moral alternative to authoritarian Spain (Frank 61, Lugones 62).

The arrival of the publication in Spain reinforced this parabolic configuration. Within the first months of its printing, the publication had made its way to Spain, where the Falange press read and critiqued its content. Had their work gone unnoticed in Spain, both *hispanismo* and the Republican fight would have remained within an echo chamber. The exile community knew from letters that the publication had been well received in Latin America, but an explicit critique in the Spanish press provided them with clear evidence that they had penetrated the Spanish zeitgeist.

In response to Nationalist Spain's unfavorable coverage in *España Peregrina*, on August 3, 1940, Franco supporter Gonzalo Torrente Ballester published an article titled "Presencia en América de la España fugitiva" in the Madrid-based periodical *Tajo*. As part of his commentary, Torrente Ballester explicitly advocates for actions that could "delimitar los campos, desenmascarar a los falsos valores..." ("Falange y España Peregrina" 30). His response reveals the obverse of Iain Chambers' discussion of the philosophical impact of immigration. While the exile community challenged the established boundaries of Spanish identity, Falange loyalists worked to reinforce the limits of acceptable behaviors and values.

Although the ostensible objective of Torrente Ballester's criticism was to demoralize the exiles' cause, the exiles masterfully inverted the signification of his attendant message across the ocean. *España Peregrina's* editor celebrated that "ninguna nos haya producido satisfacción

comparable a la que nos proporciona la lectura del artículo...de la revista madrileña y falangista.” The editor’s note emphasizes that the “confesiones que se le escapan, son la mejor prueba de lo certeramente que *España Peregrina* ha dado en el blanco. Cunde la inquietud” (“Falange y España Peregrina” 29). Rather than weakening the exiles’ cause, the Falange’s cultural forces had the effect of reinforcing the resistance to the regime and define the values of those living abroad.

In addition to highlighting the Spanish press’ criticism as evidence of their success, the editors also reprinted articles from Spain as evidence of the regime’s propaganda machine. By 1940, the Falange appointed all newspaper and magazine editors and any coverage from foreign outlets was subject to approval (Graham and Labanyi 209). The editors of *España Peregrina* excerpted Spanish-produced stories to demonstrate the capacity of Franco’s administrative bodies such as Press and Propaganda Delegation and edicts such as the 1938 Press Law to have the press “at the service of the state” (Labanyi, “Censorship or the Fear of Mass Culture” 208). When the exiled press seized upon quotes articles from Spanish newspapers such as “civilizar al nuevo continente,” the regime’s carefully crafted narrative took on ironic and imperial tones (“Memorias de Ultratumba” 45). At the same time, the exiles’ lens transformed nationalist quotes such as “Para lograr este ejército hay que dotarlo de armas para el combate y sembrar entre sus componentes la interior satisfacción que les permita ir hacia la muerte con alegría” to show how information, left unquestioned, could become weaponized for citizen manipulation (“Memorias de Ultratumba” 90).

Social gatherings played an equally important part in creating a public parabola founded upon the Republican ideology. Within the pages of *España Peregrina*, the Junta de Cultura Española invited the community to the Casa de la Cultura Española for temporary art exhibits,

concerts, theater, and special courses. As the first issue explained, the center was a “local amplío que aspira a servir de centro de reunión habitual a los intelectuales españoles residentes en México y a todos sus amigos” (“Casa de La Cultura Española” 43). The inclusive nature of the invitation, which they extended to both Spanish intellectuals and all their friends, added emphasis to the open shape of the exiles’ public sphere. The fact that the group welcomed outsiders to the Spanish community does not undermine their efforts to create a discourse group. Instead, it draws into relief their broader attempts not only to preserve the cultural patterns of their homeland, but also the universalizing mission of *hispanismo*.

The presentation of both Spanish dances and plays alongside Mexican folkloric ballets obviated the common roots of their artistic expressions and provided a unifying act through which the community could renew their shared cultural bonds. Just as their literary publications constructed a shared language of exile, so too did these events provide a space in which to perform this identity. According to *España Peregrina*, the first event held at the Junta de Cultura Española was a tribute to the Spanish poet Antonio Machado. Held on the one-year anniversary of his death, the homage not only honored their fallen friend, but also inaugurated their discourse community. From Alfonso Reyes to José Bergamín, the periodical commemorates this foundational moment of the public parabola in which, “Mexicanos y españoles se sucedieron en el uso de la palabra, con igual felicísima inspiración” (“Homenaje a Antonio Machado” 64). Even as the ultimate fate of the Republic remained unknown, their knowable exile reality was taking shape, reflecting the dichotomies of Spain and Mexico, democracy and authoritarianism, and life and death. Two complementary impulses were at work in the public parabola: the desire to realize a scholarly community in Mexico and the impulse to maintain familiar forms in an

idealized shape abroad. In the place of fleeting expressions of solidarity, these events solidified the permanence of their community. As the final part of the Machado article explains,

Esta reunión será, por ello, la mayor introducción a la vida intelectual que queremos hacer en esta casa, españoles y mexicanos juntos. Todos los que aquí estamos reunidos hoy en nombre del poeta, hemos sentido esta emoción fraternal. Yo os invito a los que aquí estáis, a continuar en esta conversación permanente que es para nosotros esta casa (69).

At the same time that they promulgate the cultural vocabulary of the community via Machado, both José Bergamín and Alfonso Reyes' speeches refer specifically to the cultural center's "grandes patios y jardines...una visión constante en el espíritu de Machado" (66). While their memories of Machado served as the shared and recognizable material for symbolically creating a community, concrete replicas of Spain provided the public parabola's transatlantic grounding. Just as Machado's poetic voice describes a chance interaction among the "[v]erdes jardinillos,/claras plazoletas," the designers of the Casa de la Cultura explain in the first issue that they have arranged large rooms and an ample garden for literary and cultural activities ("Homenaje" 47) ("Casa de La Cultura Española" 43). A reflection of Machado's world, the natural, transatlantic space establishes common ground that reduces the barrier between the communities.

To reach a broad public, the publishers priced the magazine at the accessible price of one peso for a single issue or ten pesos for an annual subscription. To offset the low price, each issue included supplemental advertising. Through the ads, the publication not only promoted goods, but also "sold" readers ideas about the Spanish exile community and worked to define Spanish identity in the Mexican context. As a persuasive process, advertising focuses on the subject who

receives its message. In relation to advertisement-as-identity discourse, businesses are known to target the geographic and social contexts in which they are advertising. For the exiles living in Mexico, ads focused on encouraged consumption of culturally-valued materials and the community's long-held belief in education as a tool for democracy.

The Republicans had long exalted the democratic ideals of the French Revolution and had identified education as the best vehicle for disseminating those ideals. Under the Second Republic's education program, guided in large part by the ideals of Institución Libre de Enseñanza, reforms centered on creating a secular, democratic pedagogy (Montero and Cobb 134–35). As Montero and Cobb note, “it was understood that, without educational reforms and cultural change, it would be impossible to transform—that is, modernize—Spanish society” (137). Throughout the Republic's short life, teacher shortages and severe economic problems plagued the educational system and the reforms were never completed. *España Peregrina's* numerous advertisements for private schools seem to signal the community's realization that their exile presented them with a second chance for cultivating a culture ripe for democratic governance.

By addressing the consumer's desire to educate their children, the ads compelled a transference from educational institutions to political group coherence. As Ernest Gellner explains, in industrialized societies, education is perhaps the most important institution. The education system ensures the possibility of economic mobility and social advancement (Gellner 34–38). Private schools such as Academia Hispano Mexicana and Instituto Luis Vives Colegio Español de México regularly advertised in the periodical that they were offering courses for students of all ages. In these examples, the explicit discourse is that these schools are offering educational opportunities. In addition to this explicit message, there was another layer of



meaning. The advertisement also suggests a desire to institutionalize the Spanish-Mexican discourse community. These schools allowed families to buy into the community and to feel a sense of belonging. Furthermore, to purchase their educational product was to buy into a set of cultural values that would be perpetuated in the next generation.

In addition to schools, *España Peregrina* heavily advertised fellow exile-produced publications. Ads for magazines such as *España día a día: Cuadernos mensuales de información española* and *Romance* responded to the dearth of information the group received from their home country and sustained the community's emphasis on a transatlantic perspective of the world. At the same time, advertisements for *Taller*, a magazine from renowned Mexican author Octavio Paz and exiled Spanish writer Juan Gil-Albert, promoted cultural exchange as the model of the ideal. As Habermas has noted, reading and discussing texts are profoundly unifying acts that undergird the formation of a discourse community. Hence, the more reading materials the exiles consumed and debated, the stronger their associational ties. Promoting the consumption of educational products and periodicals meant more than encouraging a consumer good; it also meant supporting a political movement and expanding participation to every level of society.

In spite of the editors' ambitions for the publication, the magazine had a very limited run. The Junta de Cultura published the final issue of the magazine in 1941. A year had passed since their prior edition and issue number 10 marked their last entry. Although they were discontinuing *España Peregrina*, this issue introduced a new phase in *hispanismo*. As the article "Despedida y tránsito" explained, with their roots firmly planted in Mexico, the publishers hoped to move beyond a Spain-focused magazine and focus instead on Hispano-American community (3). As their final send-off declares, "No está España en el pasado sino en el porvenir... Ni tampoco está ya España en la península ibérica, sino en el ancho mundo" (4). In outlining the parameters of

their new publication, *Cuadernos Americanos*, the magazine's original goal of universal morality reappears, having undergone a transformation under transatlantic contact. As Mexican-Spanish scholars, they now shared a common identity that was broader than what *España Peregrina* had encompassed. A culturally-diverse discourse community extended beyond the bounds of the original magazine and Spain itself.

## CHAPTER 4

### PAINTING AN ACTED AND VISUAL PARABLE: JOSEP RENAU AND *ESPAÑA HACIA AMÉRICA*

Muralism as an art form dates back to the French cave paintings of the paleolithic period from 30,000 BCE, and has been found in ancient Egypt, Pompeii, the pre-Hispanic Mesoamerican Olmec society, and the temples of Kerala India. Unlike many other forms of painting, murals are unique in that they are inherently connected to the architectural form. Whether artists choose to work in tempera, fresco, or oil application, they must always be mindful of how to adjust their vision to the scale and structure of the selected space.

Although mural painting in Mexico predates the arrival of the Spanish in the Americas, the modern muralist movement began during the first half of the 1900s. During the presidential administration of Álvaro Obregón (1920-1924), the Mexican government elevated education as a social good and Secretary of Public Education, José Vasconcelos, oversaw a country-wide plan to transform society through public artwork (Oles 235). Grounded in Nietzschean and Pythagorean philosophy, as well as his unique understanding of Natural Law, Vasconcelos believed that with proper education Mexican society could surpass a basic state of existence to become an evolved, unified nation. In a country in which the learned *letrados* had created a space built upon hierarchy and exclusion (Rama and Chasteen 3), Vasconcelos's construction of a cohesive Mexican national identity required reimagining the signs of identity within shared social spaces. To that end, he defined a semiotic system based on a set of shared symbols. In describing the role of muralism in this process, Mary Coffey writes, "Just as education could

redeem Mexico's popular classes, public art could assimilate the people into an enlightened, modern, and mestizo body politic" (6-7). With the support of government patronage, murals came to adorn public spaces, disseminating images of Mexican history, politics, and national identity to the general populace.

From 1920 to 1970, the Mexican government and cultural organizations commissioned murals for a variety of public spaces throughout the country such as the Jesuit Colegio San Ildefonso, the Palacio de Bellas Artes, the Universidad de Guadalajara, and the Hospicio Cabañas (51). The best known of these murals were completed by "the big three:" Diego Rivera, José Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueiros. Although working in the same medium, these artists had different styles and emphasized different social themes (Oles 234). While Rivera's works highlighted the achievements of the Revolution and his vision for a utopian society, Orozco's works tended to convey a more pessimistic, tragic tone. The youngest and most political of the big three muralists, David Siqueiros focused his works on condemning capitalism and fascism and elevating the contributions of the worker (Mainero del Castillo n.p.).

While the "big three" receive the majority of the credit for Mexican muralism, it is worth noting that they were not working alone. To realize these large-scale projects, these artists assembled a group of apprentices to fill in their designs. And while native-born artists composed most of these teams, creating the murals was not an entirely homegrown effort. The movement also benefited from the participation of foreign-born collaborators, most notably for this study, the exiled, Valencian-born artist Josep Renau.

Renau was born in Valencia, Spain in 1907 where he studied drawing, painting, and poster making at Escuela de Bellas Artes de San Carlos de Valencia. In addition to cultivating his talent for artistic production, Renau also proved to be a dedicated student of the

transformative potential of art. After reading the Idealist philosophies of German thinkers like Hegel and Schelling, Renau became a fervent advocate for the power of art to provide the foundations for a new and better world (Bjerström 18–20). In 1929, he outlined this mission in his “Yellow Pamphlet” (15). Like the ideals of Vasconcelos and the *hispanismo* ideology, his writing advocated for the role of art in producing an evolved society. Later that same year, he further refined his viewpoint during a walk through a working-class neighborhood. Renau ultimately concluded that his attention should lie not on *why* he painted, but rather *for whom*. From that point forward, Renau concentrated his efforts on reaching a broader public, with particular attention paid to members of the working classes (24).

During the 1930s, Renau’s work increasingly engaged questions of politics and the Republican cause. Renau served as the Director of Bellas Artes for the Second Republic and provided the Republic’s official welcome to David Alfaro Siqueiros when he arrived on the Iberian Peninsula to fight alongside the Republicans. The artists quickly found common ground and together they organized a lecture titled, “El arte como herramienta de lucha,” delivered at the University of Valencia in 1937 (Ramírez Sánchez 518).

During his speech, Siqueiros expounded on the potential of muralism to break down societal walls. He recognized a mural’s public-facing, concrete canvas held the power to create a space for broader representation within the established order. Speaking to that power, he declared, “un mural es un discurso permanente dedicado a ser leído,” “la pintura debe expresar la conciencia del hombre, su drama y su tragedia,” and “lo importante es que la pintura hable a las masas, que exprese sus sentimientos más profundos” (Siqueiros n.p.). Siqueiros implored his fellow artists to harness the unique capacity of muralism to offer a “discurso permanente,”

signaling to those in the audience that once painted onto a wall, a mural provided a message that endured long after papers had been thrown away and calls for equality had ceased to reverberate.

Muralism, as Siqueiros's language implied, generates political power by visually narrating topics such as human tragedies and the lives of everyday people that are often excluded from high art. As Jacques Rancière reminds us, art and politics share in the struggle over what is visible and what is permissible to say (13). What Siqueiros's speech made clear was muralism's egalitarian impact on the masses and its capacity to challenge elitism and hierarchal control. It is perhaps, for this reason, that the Mexican artist concluded his speech by stating, "no hay más pintura que la mural" (n.p.).

Renau's connection to Siqueiros would prove to be pivotal in his life. As a prominent supporter of the Republican cause, Renau realized the danger of continuing his life in Spain after the Civil War. After a brief time in the internment camp Argelès-sur-Mer on France's coast, Renau fled Europe to live as an exile in the unfamiliar land of Mexico.

Despite his reputation as a prolific artist in Spain, Renau's work was not widely known in Mexico. Like other exiled artists, he faced the professional obstacle of trying to adapt his artwork to new trends and to a new public across the ocean (Fagen 68). Rather than ending his career, however, Renau experienced the same kind of liberation and broadening of perspective that Claudio Guillén has attributed to exiled authors (280).

For Renau, this creative opening manifested itself artistically in a renewed interest in political art projects and inspired him to take up muralism as a new medium of expression (Bjerström 160). Shortly after arriving in Mexico as a Spanish Civil War exile, Josep Renau joined Siqueiros' team of assistants working on the 1939 mural "Portrait of the Bourgeoisie" for the Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas building. Together, the two artists designed a mural that

focused on the themes of fascism, war, and the energy sector and generated new ways of connecting images and architectural features. The result of their collaboration was a piece that art historian James Oles has described as using, “cinematic strategies, envisioning the work as a multi-screened projection of complicated montages, which defied the limits of the architecture” (293). After completing his apprenticeship, Renau undertook his first independent mural project, *España hacia América*, for the interior of the Casino de la Selva, a now-defunct resort in Cuernavaca, Mexico. This piece built on the skills he had learned under Siqueiros, and broadened how space, storytelling, art, and architecture worked together to form an impactful message.

Drawing from his training from Siqueiros, Renau expanded the possibilities of the parabolic form. Renau combined the spatial, the narrative, and the aesthetic to orient bodies in space and provide guiding imagery that moved viewers toward the exiles’ perspective. As a form of public art, the mural offered an accessible mode of criticism that raised awareness of the violence, oppression, and imperialism associated with notions of *hispanidad* backed by the Franco regime. A concrete example of how art and politics engaged in the struggle over the image of a nation and the parameters of permissible speech, the casino’s hall and the artwork promoted an alternative identity that furthered the Republican’s counterculture and built local support of the *hispanismo* cause.

The Casino de la Selva, located in the city of Cuernavaca, was a popular destination for tourists, artists, writers, and politicians. In many ways, the casino symbolized post-revolutionary Mexican culture. Like Fuentes’s vision of post-revolutionary society in *La muerte de Artemio Cruz*, in which the government and the opportunists institutionalized the disparity between the classes, the hotel stood as a concrete reminder of secret affairs, powerful politicians, and

booming economic growth among Mexico's elite. The casino's time as a secret hideaway was short-lived, however. As mentioned in the previous chapter, after the government passed a national prohibition on gambling in 1934, the Cuernavaca hideaway for gaming and socializing fell deeply into debt and were forced to sell the property.

That year, Spanish immigrant Manuel Suárez acquired the building and continued to operate it as a hotel. Suárez himself had not been involved in the Spanish Civil War, having immigrated to Mexico from Spain in 1911, at the age of 15. Despite only having distant ties to Spain, Suárez did lend his support to the exiled Spanish community when they arrived in their adopted homeland. When he temporarily closed the casino in 1946 for renovations, Suárez chose to collaborate with exiled architects Jesús Martí Martín and Félix Candela to construct parabolic arches throughout the property's buildings and to oversee additional architectural updates to the aging hotel (Alarcón Azuela 70). While Martí oversaw the expansion of the hotel's rooms and bowling alley, Candela concentrated his efforts on the casino's Mambo discotheque and the main dining room (Ramírez Sánchez 521).

As Candela's team worked on the casino's exterior, Spanish exile artist Josep Renau, began adorning the casino's interior walls with a mural of Spanish and Mexican history. During the renovations, Suárez not only allowed Renau and his family to stay on-site for free, but he also hosted Renau's social circle of exiled authors, artists, and architects. These gatherings, which debated Spanish politics and culture, included renowned Spaniards, such as Ángel Gaos, Max Aub, Manuel Altolaguirre, Luis Buñuel, and Antonio Ballester (522). The casino offered a place for the group to discuss their hopes for the fate of their homeland and a place to create communal bonds. In describing these proceedings, Ballester recalled, "La vida transcurre sin sobresaltos, con los pies en México y la cabeza en España, comentando las últimas noticias y



rumores esperanzados sobre la inminente caída del régimen...” (69–89). Ballester’s explicit characterization of divided subjects with their heads in Spain and their feet in Mexico speaks to the parabolic existence of these exiled subjects. Theirs was a kind of two-sided attachment in which their lives and conversations curved toward a reflective, multipolar mixture of experiences.

For Renau’s part, his efforts concentrated on producing artwork that recontextualized the classic Spanish imagery used to promote Francoism, while inviting the diverse population of hotel guests into a dialog about the transcendental possibilities of *hispanismo*. As Renau explained the project,

El primer muro desarrolla una síntesis de la historia de España, hasta la Conquista de México, subrayando el carácter fundamental de un impulso histórico hacia América. El segundo muro (frente al primero) expresará el dramático sentido cósmico-mitológico de las civilizaciones mexicanas, describiendo muy particularmente la historia y la cosmografía azteca, en contraste con el camino místico racional de la civilización clásica española. La composición de estos dos muros, desarrollándose paralelamente y en la misma dirección, vendrá a determinar en el tercer muro (que los une) *el violento choque de dos corrientes históricas distintas entre sí*, consumándose el hecho de la Conquista, de la consubstancia física y espiritual entre los dos pueblos. El cuarto muro representará el México actual, los valores de su nacionalidad y de su independencia, mirando a un porvenir de progreso y superación. (qtd. in Ramírez Sánchez 521)

Renau only partially completed this narrative of Spanish and Mexican history. As he finished his work on the first of the four murals, rumors began to swirl regarding Suárez’s insolvency, and by 1950, the project was suspended entirely (523).

To forge the transatlantic bonds at the heart of the *hispanismo* ideology, Spanish intellectuals like socialist philosophers José Gaos and María Zambrano, the poet Juan Larrea, and the artist Josep Renau used their works to raise awareness of the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War and what they perceived as the crisis of Western modernity. However grave the situation might have been, this group offered a clear solution to this crisis. Their words and images shared a common argument that Spanish culture could reorient the world away from dehumanized rationality (S. Faber, *Exile* 44).<sup>12</sup> As seen in the writings of Zambrano and Larrea, there was a pervasive belief that it was Spain's duty to spread the seeds of poetic reason and reorient human organization (Zambrano 26; Larrea, "Orden" 149).

Despite these efforts to spread Spain's humanist seed, Patricia Fagen notes that the Mexican public had a marked preference for Revolutionary and nationalist themes, often to the exclusion of the Spanish exile community. At the same time, their shared language was often such a liability that, "Spaniards and Mexicans failed to realize the extent to which they misunderstood or were being misunderstood" (Fagen 69). Through the artistic exploration of ideas of social justice, capitalist exploitation, spiritual detachment, and resistance, however, the exiled community managed to overcome these obstacles and build international support for their cause.

Renau found artistic traction for his message of social justice in the form of a double parable. On a narrative level, his piece related a visual parable of Spanish history. At the same time, the artist also produced an acted parable through the creation of the mural itself.

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<sup>12</sup> In using the seemingly homogenizing term "Spanish culture," I defer to Sebastiaan Faber, who explains, "...few of the leading Republican and Francoist ideologues really questioned the existence of a Spanish character or national essence-historically determined or not- nor the need to defend its value" (*Exile* 45).

Acted parables, as the term suggests, entail showing moral acts rather than simply telling. Perhaps the clearest examples of acted parables come from Jesus's actions in the New Testament. As Theologian Joachim Jeremias explains, "Jesus did not confine himself to spoken parables, but also performed parabolic actions" (Jeremias, *Parables* 227). His deeds, such as extending hospitality to outcasts in Luke chapter nineteen and cleansing the temple of merchants in Matthew chapter twenty-one, demonstrated essential biblical principles for a broad public and represented the values of the Kingdom of God (*The Bible* Lk. 19:5; Matt 21:12-13). When asked in the Gospel of Matthew about the utility of parables, Jesus replied, "The reason I speak to them in parables is that they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding" (13:13). The parable, he suggests, reaches an audience on a profound level that refocuses their attention.

Renau's use of acted parables, by extension, drew attention to the Republican's situation and their ideology. At the core of *hispanismo* was a desire to impart a unifying worldview, and *España hacia América* stands as a permanent example of how a Spanish artist worked alongside the masters of Mexican muralism to learn his craft. By working with Mexican artists, the production of Renau's images modeled *hispanismo's* claims to transatlantic cooperation for the Mexican public. Renau embraced an art form that was the predominant means of painting in his adopted country and he actively participated in the public spaces in Latin America. If Vasconcelos believed that murals could effectuate a kind of aesthetic eugenics (Coffey 6), it would seem that Renau believed that public art held the potential for aesthetic persuasion capable of supplanting the *hispanidad* ideology with one of *hispanismo*.

The Falange's philosophical foundations stood at the center of *hispanidad* and they largely attributed Spain's decline to the lack of aristocratic leadership. This stance, which drew from German and Italian totalitarianism, found support from prominent philosophers and writers

such as Serrano Suñer, Ramiro de Maeztu, María de Maeztu, and José Pemartín (Diffie 459). For this group, democracy, equality, and public education were evil notions of the modern age (464). As María de Maeztu opined, “God has created the people to work ... the clergy for the ministration of the Faith . . . the nobility to assure virtue and administer justice” (57). The only remedy for ills of democracy and egalitarianism was a return to a rigidly hierarchical society.

Whereas *hispanidad* sought to limit access to information to an elite group, Renau’s artwork drew on the public nature of muralism to declare an egalitarian stance toward sharing ideas and knowledge. His images intersected with his lived experience to produce a layered, discursive parable about celebrating international collaboration and culture. Both his artwork and his role as creator underscored art’s capacity to communicate the collective ethos for a universal moral accord and his concrete actions worked toward reestablishing a transatlantic relationship.

Once the paint had dried on the casino’s walls, the images Renau created had an enduring legacy. In addition to creating meaning via the mural-as-acted-parable dynamic, the piece also created a visual parable through the semiotics of its imagery. As developed by the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, semiotics examines the interaction of the sign, signifier, and the signified. Signs, according to Saussure, take the form of words, sounds, actions, and images (15–17). Through the comingling of codes, knowledge, and culture, the receiver of the sign attributes a meaning that may or may not align with those intended by the sign’s creator. In studying the murals of Diego Rivera, art historian Leonard Folgarait has observed that to communicate the meaning of signs within history-themed works, it is necessary to provide an external, discursive logic for the viewer. According to Folgarait, the result of this external guidance is, “the viewer is forced into the role of the narrator... and the painted images are positioned by a determinedly verbal and discursive process” (25). Tony Schirato and Jen Webb echo his observations, arguing

that the complexity of visual narratives means that they must rely on a structuring principle to make sense of what would otherwise be the “anarchy of polysemy” (104). It is my contention that Renau took advantage of the principle of structural guidance to renegotiate *hispanidad*'s presentation of Spanish historical discourse. Through the visual parable of Renau's storytelling and the parabolic shape of the building, the artist established a discursive system that provided the viewer with the context and sequencing necessary to communicate a moral message about Spain and exile.

In ordering the spatial consumption of the imagery down a reception hall, the mural's creator made an impactful choice about how to relate history, how to organize its reception, and how to condition the public's viewing. Because the mural occupies a long, corridor-like room, visitors engaged with the piece from a determined starting place, namely the doorway, and then made their way toward the back of the room. This progression reinforced the sequencing and ultimately the message of the visual parable.

Rather than an instance of aberrant decoding, or an interpretation that is vastly different from the intended message, Renau's otherwise unbound signs derived meaning and guidance from the predominant cultural values of its viewers (Eco 103–21). Post-revolutionary Mexico embraced a fervent sense of nationalism and cultural figures such as José Vasconcelos elevated the mestizo national identity as a key component of national progress (Carranza 6). As outlined in *La raza cósmica*, Vasconcelos argued that once the world's cultures and races had mixed, humanity would have “the moral and material basis for the union of all men into a fifth universal race, the fruit of all the previous ones and amelioration of everything past” (Vasconcelos 44). Like the exiles' pursuit of a utopian society, Mexican national discourse also evidenced the construction of a utopian space, mediated by their unique contributions to reaching the highest

expression of being. The mural's evocation of Spanish philosophical, artistic, and literary excellence entered into a dialogue with the dominant cultural discourse of Mexico and reinforced the contemporary notions of an emerging, transcendent, and aesthetic state. Renau invited the viewer to turn a critical eye toward established connotations of historical moments—such as the arrival of the Spanish in the New World—and to consider Mexico's relationship with Spain through the lens of collaboration rather than conquest.

Given Renau's support for the Republic and the *hispanismo* paradigm, it may seem paradoxical that the artist made extensive use of the same imagery as his fascist opponents (S. Faber, *Exile* 48). Both sides commonly invoked imagery of the Catholic Kings, the "discovery" of the New World, and the prominence of Spain's Golden Age literary contributions, all of which were seen as symbols of Spain's unchanging national character and its glorious past (*Exile* 44). In a modern world, characterized by reason, utility, power, and secularism, these historic moments served as evidence of Spain's exceptionalism and justified their divine mission to disseminate spiritual ideals around the world (*Exile* 136). While the Anglo-Saxon modernity relied on material consumption, both the Republicans and the Francoists offered up Hispanic spirituality as the "only authentically human form of civilization" (*Exile* 137).

While *hispanismo* and *hispanidad* shared a desire to spread a moral vision of Spain's national ideologies, implicit in their conceptualizing was a divergent understanding of Spain's relationship to the rest of the world. For Francisco Carmona Nenclares, *hispanismo* contributed materially and ethically to the Ibero-American countries reaching the highest point in their own histories, while *hispanidad* was the concession of Ibero-America to Spain and a return to pre-1800 times (qtd. in Krauel 213). These two understandings of Spain's place in the world also gesture toward the fundamental difference between their approaches to governance.

*Hispanismo*'s horizontalist preference for transnational collaboration was an extension of a broader Republican inclination for democratic input and participation. Based on a parliamentary system, the Second Republic had held competitive, democratic elections and had extended political and civil rights, introduced public education, and granted suffrage to women. On the other end of the spectrum, the verticality of *hispanidad*'s conceptualization mirrored the configuration of their domestic institutions. Although the Nationalists might have initially conceived of Francisco Franco as a first among equals, he quickly drew from his military authority and personal power to obtain sweeping, centralized authority. Once in power, he consolidated existing political parties and ideologies into a *partido único* known as the Falange Española Tradicionalista (FET). Within this apparatus, Franco became the “archetype of the Spanish fatherland” and the “savior of Western civilization” (Payne and Palacios 171).

The same structural forces that allowed Renau to guide the Mexican public toward his moral message also facilitated his reimagining key elements of traditional Francoist imagery. As Hayden White has observed, history is not a replication of moments, but rather it is a form of narrative discourse that inherently entails prioritizing certain events over others and arranging those events into a narrative sequence (274). What is more, this process of assembling of historical events into a narrative, known as emplotment, strongly aligns with specific ideological ends. While comedy emplotments tend to favor conservative ideology, tragedy emplotments are most commonly associated with radical ideals.

Renau's version of history is no exception. He chose a series of events, he chose their presentation, and he shaped the historical narrative through his choices. In the place of a comedic portrayal of historical events meant to conserve values against the threat of disruption, Renau shifted the narrative to the tragic mode of historical storytelling, a form of historical narrative

that establishes a cause-and-effect relationship between historical phenomena (Hillard n.p.). This shift toward the tragic functioned as a structural force that guided the mural's audience toward considering the moral consequences of traditionally celebrated moments in Spanish history.

Renau combines the space's architectural form and function with images of well-known historical events and their aftermath to create this tragic telling of Spanish history. As viewers progress through the corridor, the room imparts a linear progression of Spanish history in 53 vignettes, starting with the cave paintings of Altamira and working chronologically toward the conquest of the Americas. As soon as visitors cross the threshold, they encounter a blue sky over a cave with a large animal skull (fig. 7).



Figure 7 *España hacia América* first panel, personal photograph

The seemingly bright and sunny portrayal of Spain's cultural legacy rapidly shifts to a foreboding tone in the space of just a few meters. As if signaling to viewers that Spanish history



had turned a corner when it embraced subjugation, Renau uses the room's corner to transition from his initial portrayal of blue skies to a menacing portrayal of grey clouds, raging flames, and fierce ocean waves. The angry seas carry ships of curious explorers toward new lands, but rather than smooth sailing, what follows are painful moments of armed conflict that engulf the voyaging Spaniards in flames. In much the same way, at the other extreme of the mural, the flames reemerge, stoked by a sword-carrying hand of a conquistador. The Spanish conquest makes its way to the Americas as a spreading fire that threatens the tranquil, aqua waters of the Americas. The peaceful indigenous landscape reinforces the destructive and imposing force of the Spanish explorers. The result is a tragedy-based history of Spain's exploration and expansion where imperial glory joins up with an atmosphere of menacing pathos.

For both a Spanish and Mexican audience, Renau's use of fire most surely evoked the familiar images of Inquisition. Known as the Tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición, the operation worked to maintain Catholicism as the dominant religion against heretics, Jews, and Muslims. From the moment the first *auto-da-fé* burned six people alive in 1481, the Inquisition was closely associated with fire. Even though the Inquisition ended in the 1800s, the legacy of state-sanctioned violence continued well into the twentieth century. As Paul Preston observes, the Spanish Civil War was a return to the philosophical fight to establish a singular, hegemonic power structure. The Francoist rhetoric of the period justified a kind of national cleansing, with leading generals such as General Queipo de Llano calling for, "the purification of the Spanish people" and General Mola justifying the use of terror as a means "to eliminate without scruples or hesitation all who do not think as we do" (Preston, *The Spanish Civil War* n.p.). Just as the Oficio de la Inquisición targeted threats to their social order, Franco's regime directed the removal of those who epitomized cultural change. Franco's *hispanidad* ideology entailed, "... a

return of the whole Hispanic world to the Hispanic tradition and ideals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which means largely getting rid of the liberal, masonic, democratic, and Communistic ideas” (Bristol 313). By placing the trajectory of Spanish history from the Romans to the New World within natural borders made of fire, the mural illuminated the loss and destruction entailed in imposing a homogenizing set of values on the other.

The artist turns to the traits of nature and natural phenomena in order to affect the mood and elicit emotion from the viewer. The combination of pathetic fallacy with spatial divisions serves to delineate Spain’s origins from the subsequent darkness of Spain’s imperial history. With such a physical and tonal transition, Renau seems to recall Picasso’s declaration, “Después de Altamira, todo es decadencia.” By marking the beginnings of imperial violence with this moment of nature at variance, the viewer is primed to interpret the signifiers that follow in a negative light.

The fire burning at this stage of the mural first engulfs the Romans. Rather than emphasizing the Roman’s contributions to language, government, culture, and religion, Renau re-signifies the Roman arrival in Spain as the foundation of a society based on fire and blood. The scene shows the Roman emperor Augustus holding his famous edict and a golden staff while dead and dying women and children lie at his feet. The image in the mural corresponds specifically to the third trip of Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus (63 BCE-14 CE) to the Hispania region between the years 16 and 13 BCE. Upon completion of his conquest of Hispania, Augustus chose to reward the people who had remained faithful to Rome during the Cantabrian wars. His declaration, known as the Edict of Bierzo, reads in part: “The emperor Caesar Augustus, son of The Divine, says: ...the inhabitants of the Paemeiobrigensian hillfort, belonging to the people of the Susarri, had remained faithful, while the rest became dissidents.

Therefore, I bestow them a permanent immunity and the possession of their land” (Rodger 266). Although the actual text of the edict is not included in the mural, Renau managed to invoke the figure of the majestic emperor to great symbolic effect. The mural juxtaposes victorious Augustus with his opponents, which Renau chose to represent with women and children (figs. 8 and 9).



Figure 8 *España hacia América* second panel, personal photograph



Figure 9 *España hacia América* third panel, personal photograph

In recalling the first major conflict to establish a relationship between the subjugators and the subjugated, the artist clearly paints the picture of the effects the policy has on history's "defeated." This use of innocent civilians as his victims signals the unjust nature of this conflict and its aftermath. When used in combination with the well-known historical edict, these images demonstrate how those in opposition during a war forfeit not only their lives, but also their land, their culture, and their language.

There are clear parallels between this moment and the Spanish Civil War, an artistic presentation that solicits empathy by activating both cognitive and aesthetic processing. The empathetic resonance of the images originates in the common experience of bodily pain. Renau's detailed portrayal of the bodily posture and facial expressions of women and children as they lie dead or dying on the battlefield is of critical significance for the empathetic response. This

combination of emotion and struggle encodes Renau's imagery with the sensory and affective elements of loss. Primed by this representation of pain, the work elicits empathetic projection for similarly situated persons such as the Republicans and the regional groups that suffered similar losses at the hands of the Franco regime.

As viewers make their way past the scene of Augustus, they encounter the raging battles of the Reconquista. Renau's image depicts the Christians' fight to reclaim Iberian territory with sword-wielding Spanish soldiers standing in opposition to the Moors fighting under the green flag of Islam (fig. 10).



Figure 10 *España hacia América* fourth panel, personal photograph

The image immediately conjures not only the Reconquista, but also the gravity of the year 1492 for Spanish culture. As Susan Martin-Márquez notes in *Disorientations*, the year 1492 plays a central role in the process of Spanish nation-building. From the final Reconquest of Granada and

the conversion of the Jews to Spain's arrival in the Americas and the publication of the first Castilian grammar, the events of 1492 became foundational elements of the traditional, "Spanish" identity. Together they contributed to a national narrative built largely on the idea of exclusion, the exclusion of different religions, of different languages, and especially the exclusions of the racialized "other" (Martin-Márquez 12–13). As Michael Ugarte points out,

...one could argue that political unity of Spain in 1492 was based on exile. The Moors had finally lost their only remaining *taifa* at Grenada, the kingdoms of Aragon and Castile lost their national boundaries, and most important, Spanish Jews were given choice of conversion or expulsion, both of which gave rise to a particular brand of exile.

(8)

In the place of the hegemonic narrative of Reconquista victory over the Moors as the peak expression of the Spanish cultural nationalism, Renau's work foregrounds the conflict behind the so-called victory. His choice to feature the moments of battle rather than the moments of "glory" draws attention to the undercurrent of exclusion at the heart of the traditional historical narrative. Whereas the Franco dictatorship celebrated the Reconquista, the Catholic Monarchs, and Spain's unique place as a Catholic nation within Europe, Renau reminds viewers that Spain's heritage is more diverse and that opponents have a voice in history alongside the victors. At the same time, the scene evokes the very forms of violence implicated in civil war—a violent act against oneself as a nation, a violent expulsion of those no longer considered welcome, and a violent homogenizing of the culture by authoritarian or imperial forces. His use of the Moorish fighters presents the viewer with the human faces of the soldiers that died, the peoples that were displaced, and the events that had to transpire in order to construct a history and identity based on a sense of homogeneity. As Bal and Veltkamp argue, to be transformative, the viewer must



experience the narrative world as real (n.p.). Renau's narrative conjures empathetic emotions and potentially converts the understanding of those who behold the scene by tapping into the power of realistic representation of the Reconquest. Such a reappraisal of the historical record not only invites the viewer to reconsider the events of 1492, but also to consider the legacy of exile in Spanish culture.

From the Reconquista, Renau's historical narrative leads the viewer to the center of the mural, a collective representation of Spain's most renowned literary and cultural contributors, including El Cid, Miguel de Cervantes, Seneca, Santa Teresa, and Alfonso "El Sabio" (fig. 11), all placed under the protective arms of the allegory of Liberty.



Figure 11 *España hacia América* fifth panel, personal photograph

At this point in the mural, Renau paints a stark contrast to the previous scenes of violence and conquest. The flames have faded away, and in their place, Renau has created a positive

environment and a moment for an affirmative moral example. The moral message is modulated by the overall pictorial space of the mural. In this space of positive examples, the relative placement of the central affective image determines the viewers' perceptions. The muralist creates a presentational context for the image of Liberty that occupies the top one-third of the mural and spans nearly the entire length of the wall. Through this use of space, Renau guides patterns of attention and responses to the work. This interpretative framework elevates the value of liberty to a first-order value for society. Moreover, by pairing liberty with a group of intellectuals, Renau signals that liberty and community are not mutually exclusive, but rather can generate thriving, peaceful communities.

This facet of the mural stands in direct opposition to Franco's Consejo de la Hispanidad, which advocated for unity through community rather than liberty. As the commission's founding charge declared,

La desunión de espíritu de los pueblos hispánicos hace que el mundo por ellos constituido viva sin un ideal de valor y transcendencia universales. Y, sin embargo, la Hispanidad como concepto político que ha de germinar en frutos indudable e imperecederos, posee y detenta esa idea absoluta y salvadora. El espíritu de la Hispanidad, que no es el de una tierra sola, ni el de una raza determinada, radica en la identidad entre su ser y su fin, en la conciencia plena de su unidad: condición de vida inexcusable, ya que para vivir los pueblos han de unirse siempre, no en la libertad, sino en la comunidad. ("Ley de 2 de noviembre de 1940")

The Consejo, which included military officers, government officials, clergy, and intellectuals, worked in conjunction with the Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores to oversee the promotion of Spain's place as the spiritual axis of the Hispanic world. As explained in a 1943 issue of *Foreign*



*Affairs* magazine, the Consejo's ultimate goal would be to form a supranational body that would work together to "defend their sovereignty and common civilization from outside enemies" (Bristol 312). Although seemingly embracing a cooperative, transnational agenda, the Consejo made no secret of Spain's place at the apex of this plan. Rather than equal partners, they saw themselves as spiritual leaders for Latin American countries, which they perceived to lack spiritualism and which they deemed devoid of a universal sense of transcendence ("Ley de 2 de noviembre de 1940").

As the Consejo's law clearly states, *hispanidad* offered unity "no en la libertad, sino en la comunidad" ("Ley de 2 de noviembre de 1940"). While the Consejo focused on a supposed unity predicated on Spain's dominance of the globe as the foundation of transcendence, the Republican cause emphasized the fight for liberty. Given the fact that unbound signs are interpretively ambiguous, it was incumbent on Renau to guide the viewer toward these values. To that end, this section of the composition enacted a loaded interrelationship between theme, imagery, and space. On a thematic level, Renau juxtaposed war and the production of knowledge to depict a dynamic contrast between these pursuits for the viewer. On a pictorial level, there is a similar rupture generated via color and textural contrasts between the armor-clad soldiers and the earth-toned garb of the intellectuals. Lastly, there is the spatial effect of this panel, which separates and centers this group of figures in order to ensure direct engagement by the public.

Their positioning at the center of the mural and their ease of identification made these culturally salient figures strong attractors to the mural's message. Renau employed archetypal characters such as El Cid that came with the affordance of well-established cultural associations (fig. 12). Renau inserts the figure of El Cid standing with his sword in hand at the point of transition between the Reconquista and the group of famous cultural contributors.



Figure 12 *España hacia América* sixth panel, personal photograph

A prime example of how signs find distinct signification depending on context and viewer, El Cid's mythic status and epic place in history stood for both the values of honor, tradition, and Catholic nationalism and also for liberty and exile. Within Franco's *hispanidad* value system, El Cid played a central role as the forefather of Spanish Catholic nationalism and as an ideal, a sign in opposition to corruption and moral decay. During a speech to inaugurate a statue of the famous medieval warrior, Franco lauded El Cid as:

el espíritu de España. Suele ser en la estrechez y no en la opulencia cuando surgen estas grandes figuras... Lanzada una nación por la pendiente del egoísmo y la comodidad forzosamente tenía que caer en el envilecimiento... El gran miedo a que el Cid de su

tumba y encarnarse en las nuevas generaciones... Este ha sido el gran servicio de nuestra Cruzada, la virtud de nuestro movimiento: el haber despertado en las nuevas generaciones la conciencia de lo que fuimos, de lo que somos y de lo que podemos ser. (Franco).

Unsurprisingly, perhaps, Franco would later have Arturo Reque Meruvia portray him in the image of El Cid for the painting, *Alegoría de Franco y la Cruzada* (1948). As portrayed in Reque Meruvia's images, Franco's image melds with that of the legendary warrior. While on a cognitive level the painting activates cultural recognition of El Cid, on an aesthetic level, the merger of the two figures triggers emotional associations that imbued Franco with a sense of military glory and timeless Christian identity. Meruvia intensified the immersion into the historical legacy through his use of positioning and surroundings. The painter places Franco in a dominant position in the center panel of the work and surrounds him with soldiers and clergy that look upon him adoringly. At the same time, a sword-bearing angel riding a horse through the heavens hovers above the caudillo. By creating this spatial context, Meruvia provided a top-down influence that lent an air of heavenly power to the authoritarian leader and signaled his capacity to provide salvation.

Whereas Franco utilized El Cid extensively as a symbol of the ideal Spaniard, the Republican community employed the literary figure as an archetypal representation of exile. To know the tale of El Cid was to know the tale of his unjust banishment from the kingdom of King Alfonso despite his devotion to the realm, and so this character was often used as a sort of shorthand in *hispanismo* for the pain of exile (McClennen 87). Through the single image of El Cid, Renau captured both the loss of involuntary expulsion from one's homeland and the dignity of struggle against unjust powers. The figure's inherent associations elicit an empathetic reaction

in the viewer. By extension, the figure provides a subtle reminder of the injustices of the Franco regime, whose oppressive policies led to the execution of thousands of his opponents and thousands more who were forced to seek exile abroad.

Also, among Renau's group of intellectuals is Miguel de Cervantes. Like El Cid, Cervantes and his works are notoriously flexible signs that have been interpreted and reinterpreted to support a variety of ideologies. Carroll Johnson notes that Republican forces performed Cervantes's play *La Numancia* in 1937 to rally against Franco, and the regime performed the same piece nearly twenty years later in 1956 to commemorate the Falange's victory (11). After the Spanish Civil War, Cervantes, along with figures such as San Ignacio de Loyola, Felipe II, and Don Juan, became part of Franco's national iconography, which he used to stress Spain's legacy of cultural contributions. The famed Spanish novelist became a symbol of Spain's artistic achievement, cultural hegemony, and its global proliferation, while *Don Quijote* became a metonym for Spain and the Spanish language.

In contrast, reinterpreted from the perspective of the civil war exiles, Cervantes stood as a standard-bearer for displaced peoples and the *hispanismo* cause. As seen in José Bergamín's article about the parallels between the man from La Mancha and the exiles in the magazine *El Pasajero* and José M. Gallegos Rocafull's writings on how the passage of time and the idealism of the exile community corresponded to Quijote in *Las Españas*, the exile community frequently interpolated Cervantes and his most famous work into their works. Fiction is known to aid readers in comprehending the world and making sense of interpersonal interactions (Mar et al. 408). Cervantes's world intersected with that of the exiles and the novel provided an object around which to form a common emotional attachment. For Franco's opponents, Don Quijote became a sign of hope and something of a secular saint (Cabañas Bravo 25). Renau drew on the

exiles' sense of embodied simulation, or an experience-derived understanding of imagery, for this section of the mural. For the exiles, Cervantes functioned as a unifying figure for intra-group solidarity and a collective identity. For the broader public, the author stood as a device to generate empathy for those experiencing the pain of a long absence from their homelands.

Seated alongside Cervantes, Santa Teresa de Ávila completes this historical-cultural collective.<sup>13</sup> Like Cervantes, both sides identified Santa Teresa with their cause. During the Franco regime, Santa Teresa became a key example of prized religious, familial, and feminine characteristics. The fascists widely regarded women as the cornerstone of the dictatorship's social order and they regularly reinforced women's sacred position of passivity, submission, and domesticity through a well-defined series of images (Nielfa 66). Among the most potent signs of correct female virtue was Santa Teresa, whose character was regarded as so exemplary that she was chosen as the patron of Sección Femenina, a government agency that ensured women remained in the domestic sphere and that they dedicated themselves to the roles of wife and mother (Richards 55). For example, in 1937, the Francoists submitted Josep Maria Sert's painting *La intercesión de Santa Teresa en la Guerra Civil* for inclusion in the Paris World's Fair. This painting linked the image of Santa Teresa to Franco's place as the defender of Catholicism and used religious rhetoric to legitimize the fascist coup against the Republic (Basilio n.p.). So strong was the connection between Franco and Santa Teresa, it is even said that Franco captured Santa Teresa's hand from the Republican troops and kept it as a relic until his death.

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<sup>13</sup> Born in 1515, Teresa Sánchez de Cepeda y Ahumada, or Santa Teresa, is a well-known Spanish religious and literary figure. During her time in the cloister, it is said that the nun became so frustrated by visitors' constant interruptions to her solemn contemplation and prayer that she decided to establish a Carmelite convent that emphasized poverty and pious seclusion. In recognition of her piety, Pope Gregory XV canonized the nun in 1622 and the Cortes named her patroness of Spain in 1627.

Renau's placement of the nun at the center of the mural reclaimed the saint from the fascist sphere of influence. Her placement alongside Cervantes and El Cid provided recognition of women's activism and acknowledged the cultural contributions of women beyond domesticity. Renau's arrangement negates the paternal discourse that Santa Teresa might otherwise connote by leading the viewer to focus on the religious figure as part of an intellectual, humanist collective rather than as a sign of subservience. Renau's strategy for structural and pictorial guidance follows a larger trend identified by Francie Cate-Arries in her study of exile rhetoric. In her study, Cate-Arries observes that the exile community,

celebrated the rich intellectual and spiritual legacy of sixteenth-century Spanish humanism, a cultural heritage with which they could proudly identify as they distanced themselves from the rhetoric of Empire and bellicose imperial destiny. ("Re-Imagining" 120)

Similarly, Michael Seidel notes that the ideologically exiled person often claims "...to possess the values of his native place, as it were, in proxy—he is the truer version of the place from which he is barred" (9). By physically and rhetorically centering the mural's iconography on the humanist underpinnings of Spain, Renau delineated the *hispanismo* ideal of Spain from imperial violence and signaled that the foundations of the nation's "true" character lay in cultural inspiration.

As the viewer follows the outreached arm of Liberty, her hand guides the eye to José de Acosta's book, *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1590) (fig. 13).



Figure 13 *España hacia América* seventh panel, personal photograph

Acosta became a Jesuit in 1553 and at the age of 32, traveled from Spain to Latin America as a missionary. He first accompanied his Jesuit brothers to Panama and later embarked to the territory of Peru. During his time in Peru, Acosta traveled extensively, observing the flora and fauna of the region and studying the native languages. In 1582, he served as the historian for the Third Council of Lima, the Roman Catholic Church's meeting that advocated for the evangelization and education of the indigenous populations of the New World, the use of indigenous languages for catechism, and the prohibition of enslaving native peoples (Mills 135). After some fifteen years in Peru, Acosta relocated to Mexico, where he learned about the Aztec religion, indigenous products, and festivals from locals. In 1587, Acosta returned to Spain and he published his *Natural and Moral History* the following year.

At the time of Acosta's departure for the Americas, the prevailing European belief was

that the indigenous peoples of the Americas were incapable of being civilized, that they lacked the natural intellectual capacity to govern themselves, and that they were incapable of being free vassals of the Spanish (Shepherd and Acosta ii). Acosta's text challenged those notions by portraying the indigenous populations as rational, cultured beings with the ability to exercise free will and by reminding his readers that the indigenous were the descendants of Adam and Eve. The page featured in the mural is taken from the first chapter of Acosta's collection, titled "De la opinión que algunos autores tuvieron, que el cielo no se extendía al nuevo mundo." The quote reads, "Estuvieron tan lejos los antiguos de pensar que hubiese gentes en este nuevo mundo, que muchos de ellos no quisieron creer que había tierra de esta parte; y lo que es más de maravillar, no faltó quien también negase haber acá este cielo que vemos" (4). It was Acosta's hope that from a place of common ground, the missionaries could adapt their methods and more successfully convert the native groups.

The Republican exiles generally shared Acosta's belief in a transatlantic discourse based on the similarities between Spain and Latin America. At the heart of both Acosta's text and Renau's mural is the belief in a transcendental, humanistic, moral imperative. Renau's representation of Acosta's work is a reminder to the viewer that what was meant to be a pastoral mission founded in the Enlightenment was superseded by physical and cultural violence. As portrayed in the mural, a disembodied, sword-wielding hand has covered Acosta's book and displaced his moral imperative. Instead of taking steps toward evangelization, Renau portrayed the conquistadors as taking violent aim at Latin America with their cannons, crosses, and cavalry (fig. 13). The scene encodes the conquest with a sense of fear and violence that produces a visceral reaction in the viewer. This resulting empathetic response would likely have reinforced the American perspective of the conquest and would have invited the exiled viewer to reconsider



conquest.

The conquest was a particularly potent point of reference for the members of the exile community who were aware that their exile status presented an inversion of the colonial relationship (Cate-Arries, “Conquering” 223–42). As the editors of *España Peregrina* declared:

Nos dirigimos a vosotros, pueblos de América, incorporados materialmente a la universalidad por el esfuerzo creador de España. Bajo el signo de un Nuevo Mundo a ella nacisteis y en ella habéis ido creciendo desprendidos de Europa. La época universal que abre en la historia el holocausto de la Madre España, señala sin duda el tiempo de vuestra madurez en que habéis de desarrollar lo que os es peculiar y definitivo, la esencia de Nuevo Mundo que continentalmente os diferencia y caracteriza. Entre vosotros nos hallamos movidos por un mismo designio histórico, consagrados a una empresa similar de mundo nuevo... Llevamos un mismo camino. (“España Peregrina” 6)

Images like those used by Renau aided in this reframing of the exiles’ situation by promoting their presence in Latin America as a sign of their common progress.

Following a parable’s traditional narrative structure, Renau’s portrayal of imperial violence leads his protagonists to their lowest point. Like a literary parable, the mural narrates the protagonists’ error in judgment and reveals the unintended consequences of those actions. Rather than recalling a golden age of exploration, Renau’s account of the conquest harkened back to the rampant corruption of political institutions, the extensive epidemics caused the death of countless indigenous people, and violence that imposed Spanish rule.

To symbolize these consequences, Renau painted a set of fallen columns that demarcated the violent scenes of Spanish explorers and conquistadores from the tranquil images of Latin America (fig. 14).



Figure 14 *España hacia América* eighth panel, personal photograph

Renau's columns replicate the Pillars of Hercules that once stood at the entrance to the Strait of Gibraltar. Like their historical equivalents, the mural's pillars bear the original engraving *non plus ultra* (go no further), a warning that signaled to early voyagers that they had reached the westernmost edge of the habitable world.

Renau's allusion to the pillars is particularly poignant because they form an important part of Spanish iconography. Since the sixteenth century, the Spanish coat of arms has prominently featured these historic pillars as signs of the Spanish's exploration and dominance of the world. Although they originally stood as warning signs to caution travelers to go no further, Carlos V (1500-1558) resigified the columns as emblems of "his ambition to extend his sovereignty east to the Holy Land and west to the New World, beyond the boundaries Hercules had once marked at Gibraltar to indicate the further reaches of Europe in antiquity" (Tanner

155). Because the pillars' original slogan was incongruous with Spain's expanding ambitions, the king changed the inscription to read *plus ultra*, or further beyond. After the Spanish's arrival in the Americas, the motto became a celebration of Spain's willingness to assume risks in the realm of exploration.

Renau's toppled columns stand less as a celebration of breaking down barriers than as a symbol of the detrimental impact of colonization. The presence of weaponry and flames express the artist's perception of the colonial era. Together they remind the public of drastic changes to Latin America that followed the unheeded warning of *non plus ultra*. The combination of imagery and text seems to ask, "What would have happened if the Spanish had remained in their sphere?" Would the history of Spain and Latin America have been different without the destruction caused by the colonial project?

Upon entering the Latin American section of the mural, the flames give way to a vibrant sun and teal-colored waters (fig. 14). As one's eyes reach the opposite end of the piece, the leitmotifs of verdant trees, tranquil aqua waters, and a bright sky celebrate the Latin American experience. It is an environment that is remarkably similar to how the story of Spanish civilization began, with nature, sky, and water. The repetitive imagery reminds those that behold it of the common ground between the Old and New Worlds.

By using the room's corner to physically separate this portion of the mural from the fiery trajectory of Spanish history from the indigenous populations, Renau physically framed the parable's moral. He showed that nearly 400 years earlier, absent the history of Spanish imperial violence, a vibrant society existed in the Americas. In the twentieth century, the Americas once again offered a space for a peaceful, utopian project. Like the editors of *España Peregrina* and *Romance*, Renau's discourse reinforced the belief that European civilization was on the verge of

the apocalypse and that America stood poised to become a utopian space for peace and democracy (S. Faber, *Exile* 143). In the concluding panels of the piece, Renau signaled spatially and thematically that Latin America existed as an Edenic alternative to the destruction and loss that the Francoists celebrated as part of the glory of Spain.

Taken as a whole, the effect of the mural is greater than the sum of the individual images. Each of the scenes contributes to a larger cause-and-effect framing of history in which the preference for conquest and subjugation begat more conquest and subjugation. As Renau explained, “[C]onsidero la etapa histórica a que me refiero, más que como una suma o sucesión de personajes y anécdotas, como un impulso dinámico del tiempo en el que las personas y los hechos mismos no son más que la expresión episódica del movimiento general...” (Renau, “El Pintor y La Obra” 12). In lieu of a celebration of individual historical events, Renau constructed the historical narrative to highlight the cumulative legacy of these violent acts.

Renau’s message was not only shaped by the narrative’s emplotment, but also by the use of root metaphors. A root metaphor, Stephen Pepper explains, is a comprehensive, structural analogy that provides a framework for understanding life experiences (91). These metaphors have a substantial impact because they:

...inform people about themselves by revealing the continuity between key events in the history of the society and the life of the individual; to illustrate a saving power in human life by demonstrating how to overcome a flaw in society or personal experience; and to provide a moral pattern for individual and community action by both negative and positive example. (Segal 13)

Root metaphors become a unifying force within a culture by providing a central image around which to organize beliefs and by offering an example of their moral goals being realized in the

real world (Ortner 1340–41). In the case of *España hacia América*, the mural functions via historical iconography and analogies to critique the return to imperial values in modern-day Spain. By highlighting the negative impacts of the Reconquista, the Golden Age, and the colonial era, as well as the idyllic nature of pre-conquest America, Renau elevated *hispanismo* values over the beliefs of the Franco-backed *hispanidad*. In this way, the mural's images functioned together to critique the hierarchical *hispanidad* cosmovision problematically touted as friendship, and by extension, to promote the alternative *hispanismo* ideology founded in morality, liberty, and transatlantic cooperation.

As a visual parable, Renau employs recognizable moments and figures of Spanish history with the effect of drawing a meaning-laden contrast to *hispanidad* and the hagiographic, imperial discourse of the Francoist regime. For the Spanish Civil War exiles, their residency in Mexico constituted living in a contested territory. As exile artists created new works in Mexico, they were sketching out an ontological vision to reshape their world. Although Republican *hispanismo* and Francoist *hispanidad* drew from the same imagery, the structuring of those images into a narrative diverged immensely. While a *hispanidad* telling of events emphasized and crystallized traditional values, Renau's *hispanismo* narrative led the viewer toward social critique and a utopian alternative.

## CHAPTER 5

### WRITING THE PARABLE OF *LOS NIÑOS DE MORELIA: EL EXILIO INFANTIL EN MÉXICO*

Upon taking over the state of Navarra in 1936, Nationalist General Emilio Mola declared a war of extermination against their Republican opposition (Preston, *Holocaust* 179). By the spring of 1937, Nationalist forces, with the aid of German and Italian air force volunteers, expanded the campaign, bombarding Republican territories such as Guernica, Barcelona, Valencia, and Durango.<sup>14</sup> As the threats intensified and the Nationalists' forces claimed more of the Northern front, Republican authorities and supporters became increasingly focused on protecting their children from the violence.

To that end, the flailing Republican government initiated a free program to send children away from the war zone. The program's requirements were minimal. Children were to be between the ages of 3 and 15, have a valid health certificate, and provide a parental consent form. With the support of the Mexican organization, Comité de Ayuda a los Niños del Pueblo Español, and a formal invitation from the Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas, the Republicans enrolled a total of 456 children in the program (Pla Brugat 13). Of the 456 children, the majority came from regions controlled by the Republicans such as Valencia and Barcelona, although

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<sup>14</sup> Nazi Germany provided military support for Franco's Nationalist forces from 1936 to 1939. As part of this effort, in January of 1937, a joint German-Italian military staff began advising Franco on war planning. Both German and Italian forces supported the Nationalists at the Battle of Madrid. After the Italian troops suffered a major defeat in Madrid, the forces shifted their focus away from the capital to weaker Republican areas, especially in northern Spain. Most famously, the German Condor Legion attacked Guernica in the Basque Country on April 26, 1937. This air raid served as the inspiration for Picasso's 1937 painting *Guernica*.

substantial numbers came from major battlefronts like Madrid, Málaga, and Galicia as well (Payá Valera 261–75).

In May of 1937, the nearly five hundred children, along with 12 teachers, 3 nurses, and a doctor boarded the ship *Mexique* and began their life-changing, transatlantic journey. Fourteen days later, the group arrived at the Mexican port city of Veracruz. From Veracruz, the children travelled by train to Morelia, a small city in the western state of Michoacán. From this point forward, the children would be collectively known as the *niños de Morelia*, a term of endearment that reflected the city where they spent their first years in Mexico.

In this chapter, I turn to the memoir of one of these children, Emeterio Payá Valera. Born in Barcelona in 1930, Payá Valera lived in a working-class neighborhood with his family until the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. At the age of seven, his parents made the decision to send him and his siblings to Mexico through the Comité de Ayuda a los Niños del Pueblo Español program. Over the course of thirty-five chapters, his memoir, *Los niños españoles de Morelia*, recalls the circumstances of their departure from Spain, the conditions of their schools, their free time activities, their reunion with their parents years later, and his return to Spain after the death of Franco. Based on his memories and the recollections of his former classmates, Payá Valera's text relates the children's understanding of their parents' choices during the civil war, their interpretation of their surroundings in Mexico, and their perception of the consequences of exile on long-term, familial relationships.

In recording the events of his life, I demonstrate that Payá Valera adopts parabolic narrative structures to relate the details of his life and to communicate a moral lesson. In the first section of this analysis, I contend that by writing in the parable form, Payá Valera challenges not only the facts of what transpired, but also the interpretation of those events. I examine the

narrative structure of the parable, its rhetorical application to societal values, and its potential use to subvert the established narrative about the children of Morelia. In section two, I turn to the author's use of what I consider parabolic manifestations found in the work's imagery. I argue that the memoir's imagery uses transatlantic mirroring to highlight both the cultural connections and detachments the children underwent as they became distanced from their once close cultural, linguistic, and familiar attachments in Spain. In the final section, I use the R Studio text analysis package, *Syuzhet*, to identify the parabolic shape of the memoir's narrative structure. This section combines my subjective observations about the text's themes with quantifiable pieces of data regarding the text's changes in sentiment. I find that the shifts in sentiment throughout the memoir map remarkably well onto the parabola-shaped archetypal plot classification known as the man-in-a-hole. I explore how the idea that the memoir's theme of a fall in fortune, followed by the author's gradual recovery of wellbeing, has a direct correlation to structural elements in the text. In taking a data-driven approach to my analysis, this final section offers insights into what would otherwise be abstract assumptions about the text. In this way, the view facilitated by the digital tool R Studio provides a new vantage point for studying print culture.

The story of the *niños de Morelia* is widely known in Mexico, Spain, and beyond. As the recipients of Mexico's highly publicized humanitarian campaign, the children received broad media coverage and scrutiny. Concerned about the spread of authoritarianism, the press transformed the children into symbols of a broader political debate. News stories regularly referred to the group as *huérfanos*, children without parents or a homeland, although the children had been sent to Mexico by their parents. In the international context, these "parentless" children came to symbolize the forfeiture of the homeland's duties and the precariousness that accompanied the decline of democracy. In Mexico, the children's parentless status transformed



them into blank slates upon which to inscribe a set of democratic values. The children's arrival in Mexico became an event that expressed the symbolic power of governmental stability and societal benevolence. As Elena Jackson Albarrán writes, "In a single gesture, Mexico had moved from a position of dependency upon the mother country to one of filial duty" (269). Their presence also helped to quash political dissent within Mexico. As historian John Sherman suggests, in taking on the role of the children's symbolic father, President Cárdenas was also disarming conservative criticism. In the face of attacks on his administration as being anti-family, Cárdenas showed himself to be the model of a protective father for the *niños* and for the nation (368–70).

Before we consider the content of the work, we may consider the impact of the memoir's form as an autobiographical parable. Payá Valera's attempt to reclaim the *niños*' story begins with his choice to write an autobiography. Payá Valera's choice of self-writing allows him to craft an alternative narrative about the *niños de Morelia* from the authoritative place of his personal experiences. His choice of self-writing, however, entails more than simply recounting his personal history. Autobiographical texts often combine the personal with the communal experience. Payá Valera's choice of autobiography gives the children a voice in the historical narrative and lays the foundation for challenging the representations of their history.

In *Los niños españoles de Morelia*, the author blends these elements of autobiography with the genre of parable to the effect of actively engaging the reader with the children's interior anxieties, painful experiences, and common struggles. In traditional literary studies, genre has served as a means for classifying texts based on specific properties. To assign a text a genre was to assess the work based on a list of requisite features. During the 1970s, the parable as a literary genre underwent increased scholarly scrutiny, as academics and religious thinkers attempted to

determine a definitive set of formal properties for these works. In attempting to enumerate a specific set of key elements, critics came to realize that they had neglected the function of the story itself (Coats 371). If theorists were to assign genres to texts, it was, therefore, necessary to adopt a different theoretical framework. Scholars such as Jacques Derrida and Alastair Fowler suggested that genre should not be restricted to an examination of features, but rather the rhetorical orientation used to structure meaning (Derrida 61–64) (Fowler 22).

Drawing on the works of theorists like Fowler, parable scholars shifted to a focus on a narrative's content and comparative function. At the core of this approach is the observation that "speakers of parables do not attempt to duplicate some ideal form of a narrative genre. Instead, they invoke elements that recall and use particular modes of speech to provide their parable with a particular rhetorical orientation" (Schipper 8). Distilled to its essence, if a story draws a comparison with another situation, it may be called a parable.

To understand the rhetorical orientation of a parable, we may examine both what is being communicated (*logos*) and how it is communicated (*lexis*). In terms of content, parables generally relate the story of main characters who suffer a fall in their fortunes and then seek to recover their previous state of wellbeing. Through the story of these main characters, Charles Dodd explains, a parable uses, "...simple metaphor...[and] presents one single point of comparison" (7). This combination of *logos* and *lexis* results in a rhetorical orientation best characterized as didacticism.

These didactic lessons generally center on exposing broader structural problems in a society's value system. To that end, parabolic stories investigate the relationships between people, events, values, and obstacles. As Stephen Cockett observes,

Parable enquires into the complexities and connectedness of forces that create problems; it makes us see the earthquake faults in our ‘go without saying’ values and beliefs, but it offers no solutions. In parable, the primary objective is not problem-solving, but problem-knowing (13)

The parabolic function, then, is not so much one of finding solutions, but rather in obviating the systemic failures that generate those problems.

Cockett has suggested that parables are meant to make their readers question society’s conceptual foundations, and to that end, Payá Valera adopts the form to question a societal issue (Cockett 13). He asks his interlocutor, “¿Cómo comenzó aquella aventura que tantas implicaciones tuvo para tanta gente?” (Payá Valera 29). By introducing the rhetorical power of a question from the onset of his memoir, Payá Valera invites the reader to identify and interrogate the roots and the repercussions of the decision to send the nearly 500 children across the sea to safety.

Immediately after asking the question, Payá Valera offers his answer. He explains, “Fue una madrugada en que un tiroteo despertó a todos los de casa: era el día 18 de julio de 1936. Había estallado una sublevación militar en contra del gobierno legalmente constituido” (29). A single bullet, which should have been inconsequential, instead shattered the foundation of the existing, legally-formed government. In thinking about his memoir as a parable, what is perhaps most revealing about Payá Valera’s explanation is his decision not to identify individual actors. Instead, his answer uses the impersonal verb *había*, there was. By grounding his descriptions in the impersonal *había*, Payá Valera transforms this particular moment of violence from the Spanish Civil War into a universally relatable transgression. Like his use of a rhetorical question,

this answer positions his interlocutor to empathize with the repercussions of an instigating, violent act.

In line with the basic elements of a parabolic narrative, Payá Valera uses this act to demonstrate a series of moral failings and their consequences. He turns first to the consequences of taking immoral actions. The Germans, he recalls, introduced the “inmoral innovación” of bombing “un pueblo semi-inerme para desmoralizar a la población” as a way of rehearsing for the impending world war (29). This scene serves two purposes. First, in choosing this immoral course of action, Payá Valera points out to his interlocutor that the Germans caused the Republicans to suffer prolonged hunger and violence. Second, by using Nazi Germany as an example of what happens when an actor elevates politics over the safety of innocent lives, Payá Valera foreshadows the analogous failures that led to the children being sent to Morelia.

Payá Valera then turns to the example of the consequences that ensue from the failure to act. Even if there was not a legal duty to intervene in the Spanish Civil War, Payá Valera’s narrative makes clear that the surrounding European nations should have honored their moral obligation to help. He explains that the civil war most certainly would not have dragged on for three years if not for, “la neutralidad de las democracias europeas que, temerosas del poderío alemán, colaboran con esta agresión creando el Comité de No Intervención” (29).<sup>15</sup> The author reinforces the importance of action by way of a counter example; he reminds the reader that, unlike their European counterparts, Mexico raised “su voz digna” to defend the Republic’s lawful place as Spain’s government (29–30).

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<sup>15</sup> Non-intervention severely hurt the Republicans’ efforts. As previously mentioned, both Germany and Italy sent military volunteers such as the Condor Legion to support Franco.

Following the descriptions of the air raids, the author shifts from the broad political and historic context of the civil war to the individual level. In this way, the text reflects testimonial literature that sought to insert the individual into the weft of a collective narrative and thus, call attention to broader social issues through a personal story. In the bellicose context elaborated at the beginning of the memoir, the choice to send the children abroad initially appeared to be an act of benevolence and protection. However, by foregrounding the impact on the individual, the author focalizes the manner in which larger international events shaped the children's lives. In line with the general function of a parable, this shift invites an increased degree of scrutiny of the country's underlying assumptions regarding sending the children to Mexico.

In accordance with the traditional parable structure, in the exposition portion of the narrative, the author establishes the state of personal "stability" or relative wellbeing that traditionally precedes the protagonist's decline. To do this, Payá Valera populates the beginning of his parable with unified families, children having pillow fights, and meals featuring fruits and vegetables (32). He reinforces this position with his descriptions of the Republicans' initial impressions of the war. As he notes, before their departure, both the Republican state and the individual families believed that the children's exile would be brief, a year at most. Many families framed the trip for their youngest children as a chance to "mandar a colonias a sus hijos," a phrase that is commonly used to refer to sending your children away to summer camp (Pla Brugat 18). Meanwhile, older children formed their own ideas, which were equally idealistic in nature. In their estimation, the trip was a chance for an adventure straight out of an American Western film (Payá Valera 31).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ironically, despite the fact that both *Hispanidad* and *Hispanismo* opposed the United States' cultural imperialism, the children turned to American points of reference for framing their experiences.

The optimism inherent in their use of an overseas adventure as their point of reference produces a jarring effect as the reality of the *niños*' experience comes into focus. Like the protagonist of a parable, the children experience a swift decline in their fortunes, a transition he characterizes as, "La masacre alcanza a los niños." Unlike his previous descriptions of the physical costs of war, he characterizes the toll of this massacre on the children in more existential terms. He details how, in the face of increasing danger, the Republican government decided to organize "la evacuación de la niñez" (30). While a literal level he is describing the logistical planning for moving the children out of the war zone, on a metaphorical level, he is speaking to the larger impression the conflict will have on their lives. The choice to evacuate the children entails the premature loss of their youthful innocence and an irreversible change in the course of their lives.

In recalling the days leading up to disembarking in Mexico, Payá Valera signals their descent into chaos. Reality set in after their initial excitement at receiving their suitcases and spending money from their parents waned. Pillow fights and late-night kitchen raids quickly gave way to fear and ceaseless tears.

At this moment, as entire families realized the consequences of the decision to send the children, Payá Valera introduces the figure of his father. Although his father will play only a minor role in the narrative, his brief appearance serves as both the literal and figurative point of departure for the parable. Upon seeing his children board the train to Bordeaux, Emeterio's father exclaims, "Que no se vayan mis hijos... que no se vayan" (33). And yet, as the author clearly states, it was too late. The train followed the tracks laid by fate and the children surrendered to its locomotion.

A change in perspective emphasizes this vital turning point. While his recollections up to this moment have been written in an impersonal, third-person voice, at this juncture the narrative shifts to the first person. In the place of impersonal expressions, this text is marked by the pronouns *nos* and *mi*, linguistically signaling that these are personal, shared experiences. Payá Valera moves from rehearsing the distant, collective moments that will serve as the background to his journey to foregrounding the intimate and the personal.

This change in perspective also marks the children's arrival in Morelia. As Payá Valera recalls, the children landed in Mexico on June 7, 1937, and began school ten days later. Rather than integrate the children into the Mexican public-school system, the Secretaría de Educación Pública earmarked funds to provide them with a special boarding school facility known as the Escuela Industrial España-México. By providing a separate school, the relocation committee reassured concerned parents and community members that the temporary refugees would be able to preserve their cultural, linguistic, and educational traditions while abroad.

Although the children were educated in a Spanish-style school to retain their Peninsular culture, these efforts were not espoused in the content taught daily. The diminishing presence of Spanish culture started at the top. The school's first director, Lamberto Moreno declared that if it were possible, he would expunge every last drop of Spanish blood from his body (99). Perhaps unsurprisingly, Moreno's policies made little effort to preserve a Spanish presence in the school. The curriculum included neither Spanish history nor Spanish literature and Spanish holidays came and went without recognition. Because the school used the Mexican Secretary of Public Education curriculum, they were taught from what the author characterizes as "Spanish phobic" textbooks that emphasized the brutality of Iberian conquistadors (153). The only positive

information the children received in school about their homeland came in the form of regular reports about the Spanish Civil War (Pla Brugat 84).

In addition to occupying a space hostile toward their history, the school's cafeteria turned out to be a space that was hostile toward their cultural values. A nation's existence is written into existence through literature and law, but it is also cooked up in kitchens (Labanyi, *Gender and Modernization in the Spanish Realist Novel* 1–28). During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, works like *La mesa moderna* (1888), *El Practicón* (1894) and *Guía del buen comer español* (1929) challenged the predominance of French culinary traditions by promoting Spanish cuisine and including regional specialties as part of a uniquely Spanish tradition. These texts brought food to the forefront of the conversation on national identity and economic modernization for the Spanish people (Lara Anderson 121). As home cooks prepared these dishes, they engaged in a kind of culinary nationalism, consuming and reproducing the image of a Spanish citizenry. In this way, the preparation of meals, citizens constructed meanings of home, belonging, and nationality.

Spanishness was something to be performed on a daily basis, and the children's quotidian consumption of unfamiliar foods destabilized that condition. In the chapter "La dieta," Payá Valera explains how their attachments to traditional Spanish foods and customs were assaulted on a daily basis by seemingly strange foods and beverages in Michoacán. As his classmate, Vera Foulkes, summed up the situation, "A los niños no les gustaba la comida... La comida española es distinta a la mexicana" (Payá Valera 95). The discordance between Spanish cuisine and what he refers to as Mexico's "cultura de maíz" was, in his estimation, "un choque grave con nuestras costumbres alimenticias," a cultural and culinary shock for the children (89, 91).



At the same time, with each meal the children's notions of home became increasingly open to influence and negotiation. Although the author initially disliked the flavor of tortillas, he notes, "con el paso del tiempo ha hecho que las coma a gusto" (90). The saturation of their lives with the national markers of another country gradually loosened their ties to a singular national cuisine and culture. Slowly the ritual of consumption created a bifurcated identity in which the culture of corn and the culture of wheat coexisted.

As described by the children themselves, they had a positive initial impression of the school, but the condition of the surroundings quickly revealed the cracks in this pleasant-looking façade. The patio of the school had previously been a cemetery and soon after moving in, the children began finding human remains. Even when they weren't finding corpses, their surroundings triggered their underlying traumas. As one child would later recall, a series of exposed pipes had been placed on the roof to support the school's drainage system. Although seemingly innocuous, the large metal tubes triggered the children's memories of the barrels of roof-mounted machine guns from the civil war (José Ortiz quoted in Pla Brugat 62). If the building's interior was scary, the fauna outside was even more menacing. Using a man-versus-nature frame, Payá Valera recreates their educational setting in which rats and insects patrolled the school's hallways and bats darted past their windows at night (Payá Valera 61-62). It is the kind of outsider's description that brings to mind the Spanish explorers' accounts of the environment they encountered in Mexico centuries before. In defining the cultural constraints that accompany an outsider in a new world, historian Richard White writes, "We carry that history with us whenever we go discovering. No new land, no new place is ever *terra incognita*. It always arrives to the eye fully stocked with expectations, fears, rumors, desires, and meanings" (874). Like the Spanish explorers that held a mirror up to the exotic flora and fauna of the New

World and found monsters, giants, and mermaids, the children's fears and experiences with a hostile world manifested themselves in their new environment.

Despite the administrators' efforts to provide the children with structure, the school's environment was far from healthy. Within the first year, four girls were kidnapped, seven children ran away, and four children died. At the same time, lice infested the children's hair as pestilence plagued the school. During the winter of 1941, the school experienced an outbreak of typhoid and high fevers (Payá Valera 124–25).

In addition to disease, the children regularly suffered from preventable accidents. After a child fell from a fence and died of electrocution, the students blamed the school's principal. Armed with forks and knives from the cafeteria, they revolted against the authorities and ran Lamberto Moreno out of the school. Even after Paula Nava took over as the new principal, the situation continued to decline. Soon after she took over, five-year-old Luis Dáder García was crushed by a falling wall and Rafael Lauria Vicente was run over by a truck carrying paving materials for the school's patio refurbishment project (102). As the author's recollections suggest, the children's wellbeing became a physical manifestation of the deteriorating health of the refugee project itself.

With their initial impressions shattered, the memoir's protagonists continue plummeting toward the parable's crisis. In recalling the children's daily routines, Payá Valera charts his parable's protagonists' fall into vice and violence. During their time in Spain, the children had absorbed the anti-clerical stances of their Republican parents and had come to understand the destruction of Catholic property as having a positive connotation. The children continued this behavior in exile, throwing trash into the churches and yelling vulgarities at service attendees. Predictably, these actions were not viewed through a positive lens in a country as devoutly

Catholic as Mexico. Instead, their actions were seen as hostile and the children were increasingly considered delinquents. As principal Lamberto Moreno explained to a local journalist, “los niños españoles...lapidaron los templos de San Juan y de María Auxiliadora (El Salesiano) destruyendo ventanas y vitrales y abatiendo imágenes...se convirtieron en una pesadilla para la ciudad de Morelia” (Payá Valera 83). The school’s administration was ill-equipped to help the children cope with their situation and maligned their psychological struggles as stubbornness and acting out. Upon witnessing the children’s behavioral deterioration, the school’s director Reyes Pérez observed, “Y cuando siendo mayorcitos adquieren la costumbre de hacer de la cama: escritorio, costurero, mesa y excusado; ni amenazas, ni promesas, ni premios, ni castigos, ni vigilancia, ni convencimiento, contrarrestan a la terquedad” (72). In response to the children acting out, the author recalls that the administration doled out constant punishments that “aniquilaba la dignidad humana” (73). Their shift in comportment reflected the broader shift in the children’s identities. As the author explains, these were children that had families and were sent to another country without their parents and without being consulted, a situation that he suggests was tantamount to abandonment. Their move to Mexico destabilized their senses of nationality, safety, etiquette, and respect for authority. Rather than providing structure for a group of children untethered from identity markers that carried regulations and influence, the children perceived that they school had chosen to strip them of their human dignity.

Although the children were only expected to be in Mexico for a few months while the fighting concluded, only 61 of the children were repatriated to Spain. By 1985, nearly fifty years after their arrival, 162 of the *niños* had remained in Mexico and half of those had never again set foot in Spain (Pla Brugat 139). Rather than having their children return to a triumphant Republic, after the defeat in 1939, many of the *niños*’ parents sought asylum and refuge outside of Spain.

In the months following the war, Payá Valera's parents had escaped Spain and were living in a French concentration camp. Unlike their children, their attempt to flee the country failed to keep them safe. Under the order of the Nazi forces, Payá Valera's mother was sent back to Spain, and his father was sent to the concentration camp in Mauthausen, where he died soon after (Payá Valera 171).<sup>17</sup>

In August of 1945, following the conclusion of the Second World War, Emeterio Payá Valera's mother arrived in Mexico. The reader expects this to be a joyful occasion, but the author's description details the lowest point of his parable. In an unexpected turn, he describes a disillusioning encounter with a now sickly shadow of his mother, a woman who appears worn down by the loss of her husband. Rather than greeting her with a smile or tears of joy, the author realizes, "Mi madre había llegado demasiado tarde. Cuando ya no la necesitaba..." (229). In his work on exile, Edward Said observes, "No matter how well they may do, exiles are always eccentrics who feel their difference (even as they frequently exploit it) as a kind of orphanhood" (*Reflections* 182). For unaccompanied minors, the impact of exile is even more profound, for even familial relationships become provisional. For unaccompanied minors, the impact of exile is even more profound, for even familial relationships become provisional. In the place of parents and guardians, the children of Morelia came to depend on siblings, peers, and teachers to navigate an unfamiliar world. Their time living in exile broke the parental bond so profoundly that the author writes that he and his brothers, "nunca más la llamaríamos "mamá" (Payá Valera

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<sup>17</sup> Many Republicans sought safety in France during the final months of the Spanish Civil War. According to memos between Spain and Nazi Germany from 1940, when France fell to the Germans, the Franco regime requested that these Republican exiles be sent to labor camps in Austria. The first train carried 927 women, men, and children to the camp on August 20, 1940. Over time, nearly 10,000 Spaniards were sent to the Nazi-controlled concentration camp complex known as Mauthausen-Gusen. More than 4,400 of those Republican prisoners died at the camp (Pan-Montojo and Ser).

230). The arc of the exile experience had not only taken them further from Spain, but it had led them further from the individual value placed on the traditional family structure.

Following this, the lowest point in his emotional trajectory, Payá Valera reintroduces the driving question of the parable in the subsequent chapter's title, "¿Por qué se nos envió?". To focus the reader on the societal failures at the core of the parable, the chapter begins, "A mi juicio, la medida de evacuar *niños* de un país en guerra tiene más motivaciones políticas que resultados prácticos." The children, he suggests, were sent away as much for publicity as for protection. In his estimation, his condition was the result of a calculus in which politics was valued over practical considerations (183). He writes,

[L]os resultados de nuestra evacuación fueron más negativos que positivos respecto del balance final: sentimientos de abandono paterno y desarraigo patrio, que lesionaron a muchos de nosotros de manera indeleble, al quedar sin la necesaria base afectiva... también creó una especie de trauma colectivo. (184)

They were unwillingly or unknowingly serving as evidence of the horrors of the civil war and working as ambassadors to the world. As Payá Valera demonstrates, there were dire consequences for this choice to prioritize affairs of state over affairs of the family.

In making this argument, Payá Valera presupposes a connection between act and consequence. This presupposition becomes the moral foundation of his parable. Essentially, there exists an idealized conclusion and the actors involved could have made alternative choices that would have led to a better outcome. According to his calculus, if the parents had behaved in accordance with the idealized course of action, familial unity and harmony would have followed. However, because their conduct was to the contrary, they interrupted the natural order, resulting in misfortune and pain.

With the Republican government defeated and former supporters in exile, both parents and governmental organizations faced the question of what to do with the *niños*. Their initial plans had focused entirely on the best-case scenario, and now they were forced to make decisions under worst-case circumstances. They could keep the children in Mexico, but the government no longer had the means to contribute to their education and wellbeing. Alternatively, they could send the children back to Francoist Spain, a country led by a leader with a demonstrated hostility to those who had openly opposed him (192–93).<sup>18</sup>

At this point in the narrative, the Republican government relinquished its role in the children's lives and the narrative structure of the parable turns upward. The majority of the children moved to the government-run Casa Hogar in Mexico City, preferring to leave their painful past in Morelia behind them. Their lives in Mexico City stand in clear juxtaposition with the situation outlined in former chapters. In the place of the school's paltry conditions, he emphasizes that these houses had hot water and abundant food (Payá Valera 202). Rather than death and hunger, in Mexico City, “No faltaban las bromas en nuestra convivencia diaria” (205). With the markers of the parabolic decline behind them, the children, as protagonists of a parable, are positioned for an improvement in fortune.

The text draws to a close, but not before the protagonist returns to his previous position. As Matthew Jockers outlines in his explanation of the man-in-a-hole narrative, the characters of

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<sup>18</sup> During the first decade of the regime's rule, the Francoists imposed a series of oppressive policies against supporters of the Second Republic including liberals, members of the Popular Front, socialists, anarchists, Freemasons, and nationalists from areas like Catalonia and the Basque Country. As Franco's generals explained, they were spreading terror in order to clear society of bad influences and prevent rebellion. Under this *limpieza social* policy, the regime sent their opponents to concentration camps, separated children from their Republican families, and carried out a series of assassinations and extrajudicial executions. Approximately 350,000 men and women in these camps (Bevor 404), over 12,000 children were taken from their parents (407), and at least 30,000 people were executed (Payne 110).

this type of story follow an inverted-u shaped plot trajectory. During the exposition of a man-in-a-hole story, the protagonists suffer a substantial fall in fortune. As the story reaches its climax, the characters hit rock bottom (rock bottom being the hole of man-in-a-hole). After reaching the low point in their story (the low point in the parabola), Jockers explains that the circumstances of these characters significantly improve, forming the other half of a parabola.

Following this pattern, the conclusion of *Los niños españoles de Morelia* retraces the pathway of the climax and the exposition. Payá Valera first makes his way back to Morelia, where he raises his family and works in the local hospital. Then, on June 24, 1976, thirty-nine years after being sent to Mexico, he returns to Spain for the first time.<sup>19</sup> He concludes his journey by recalling that he cried as he stood in his old neighborhood. For the author to recall his childhood and the moments that could have been in Spain also entailed remembering the nearly forty years in Mexico that made him who he is. His tears, he writes, were from, “siendo muy español y muy mexicano” (254). With that line, the story completes its form as both a parabola and a parable. Payá Valera has returned to his previous spatial position, and, as is often the case in parables, he has been transformed by the events of his life story.

Autobiographical narratives are both an attempt to give voice to what does not speak and an aesthetic attempt to produce companionship, wage spiritual combat, and meditate upon the self (Molloy 1, Foucault "Self Writing" 208). While critics and scholars have often overlooked Spanish-American autobiography, an analysis of subjectivity in these texts reveals how these authors understand their place within history, everyday life, and the collective sphere. For those writing autobiographical texts in Spanish America, Sylvia Molloy observes, “as politics

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<sup>19</sup> In November of 1975, Francisco Franco died. His death began a period known as *La Transición*, the transition to democracy. With the end of the dictatorship, many formerly exiled Spaniards returned to Spain for the first time.

diversifies in discursive practices, so does literature- and, indeed, so does autobiography. The ‘I speaks from more than one place’ (5). As Payá Valera’s title and text adroitly show, this multi-spatial identity is central to the protagonists of his narrative.

In the context of *Los Niños Españoles de Morelia*, in which the author so clearly expresses feeling both very Spanish and very Mexican, I suggest that a textual analysis of his geographic identity requires a different temporospatial taxonomy. A memoir is, at its core, the author’s attempt to make sense of both the present and the past. Rather than a scene-by-scene replication, it is transformational in nature. In committing time and space to a narrative, the testimonial genre is more of a transformation than a replication. Testimonials are, as Frantz Fanon described, “woven out of a thousand details, anecdotes, stories” (111). In weaving together these anecdotes, Payá Valera is moving freely through space and time. From the time Payá Valera arrived in Mexico to the moment he realized his time in exile had become a more permanent status, he implicitly began questioning the foundations of a singular point of identity as an epistemological model. Instead, his identity began crossing transatlantic traditions.

The question that remains is how to conceptualize these contemporaneous topographies. In his studies of exile, Paul Ilie has observed that exile takes on the form of a curve as the subject gradually departs from the home culture. When we follow that curve, Ilie suggests, we “discover the changing profile of the individual values in relation to the home culture” (Ilie 26). While Ilie understands exile subjectivity as a departure from the origin, Payá Valera expresses exile as an attached, albeit expanding, territorialization. For the children of Morelia, what was meant to be a summer-camp style trip to Mexico, dragged on for almost four decades. During that time, Payá Valera’s ceaseless interrogation of country, culture, family, and self not only breached the boundaries of his initial expectations, but it also bent them into a reflective parabola. His



subjectivity was not left behind, but rather reinterpreted. The cultural, linguistic, and historical markers of an exile's identity are, as Chambers explains, "re-membered, re-read and rewritten" as they come into contact with another world (4). The *niños de Morelia* became vessels for both their home and host cultures.

By describing his exile as a fluid mixture of space and time, in which projection and reflection, Spanish and Mexican, and past and present all coexist, Payá Valera shows that the *niños'* subjectivity existed along a parabolic curvature. In describing their exile as parabolic, I mean descriptions in which there is a clear connective thread between Spain and Mexico, with connective points. This process begins as soon as the children start their journey. As Payá Valera characterizes the moment they boarded the *Mexique*, "...el barco se rompió violentamente el cordón umbilical y a partir de allí...había quedado sin patria, sin la nuestra, la de origen" (37). Once they departed, these young Spanish citizens were not only without a country, but were also without the tether that held them to the values of their homeland. The result of this condition, in the author's own words, was, "Y al ser ambas cosas simultáneamente- españoles y mexicanos- nos deja sin ser ni una cosa ni la otra" (185). Left without the familiar signs of their former lives in Spain and surrounded by the unfamiliar world of Mexico, imagery, words, and sites took on a divided meaning as they were reflected across the ocean.

By strategically duplicating these elements, the author imbues his text with examples of the children's two-world, cultural bifurcation. This process of parabolic reflection is manifested throughout the text in the author's use of repeated, comparative imagery. Before setting sail for Mexico, Payá Valera explains that the children boarded train cars to Bordeaux, France. As the author recalls, "Era de noche, tarde. Allí estaban mis padres...Debían de estar todos los padres del mundo, llorando todo el llanto del mundo..." (33). Upon their arrival in Mexico, the author

again evokes the boarding of a train. He writes, “Muchas lágrimas rodaron ese día por los rostros morenos del pueblo mexicano allí reunido... Fuimos acomodados en el tren que habría de trasladarnos a la ciudad de México y en tanto arrancaba, la gente se volcaba en manifestaciones de cariño” (46). The author uses the same fundamental elements, trains, tears, and crowds, but to drastically different effects. Whereas the train station on the Spanish side of the parabola represented pain and abandonment, the Mexican train station represented a welcoming, safe space for the children.

Even well-known signs of Spanish culture underwent a parabolic transformation. A few days after their arrival, the children gathered around the cafeteria table with eager anticipation after being asked if they liked *tortillas*. Although an initial point of confusion, the children soon expanded the possible meanings attached to established cultural signs. As Payá Valera explains, “con el paso del tiempo ha hecho que las coma a gusto...[e]s cierto que ese día se armó la grande en el comedor, cuyo espacio era cruzado por cientos de tortillas, pero no de patatas” (90). In consuming foods like *tortillas* and hot sauce, the children were learning food systems and this sensory input was shaping narratives about belonging and national identity. The daily ritual of breaking bread (or *tortillas*) meant that these food memories became habitual. Because these children had attachments to multiple locations, the foods that they consumed carried location-based memories. A concept that Abarca and Colby describe as food memories, food flavors our cultural identities and polytemporal notions of time. They explain, “Memories about food simultaneously place us in the past and the present and often can create situations for recollections in the future” (Abarca and Colby 2). When viewed through this framework, we observe that as food meets a biological need, it also nurtures a symbolic reality. In the moments of Payá Valera’s memoir in which food is the basis for his recollections, the author’s food

memories are tied to his circumstances as an exile and are manifestations of his transatlantic identity. With each meal, their pasts were remembered and their transatlantic identities were performed. The cultural curvature of their lives may have been opening away from Spain, but culinary confusion did not leave the children adrift. Instead, signs like *tortilla*, distorted in their mirror image, provided the children with an anchor on the other side of the ocean.

Like the mirror image of a parabola, the train stations and *tortillas* were both similar and reversed. This allows the author to demonstrate how, as a consequence of their two-world identity, the subject is both divided and reflective. When the exiled subjects hold a mirror up to this reality, there is not an exact duplication. Instead, there is a distortion. It is this distortion that history glossed over in creating the revolutionary narrative and using the children as ambassadors for the Republic.

The author uses airplanes to a similar effect. In the first chapter of his memoir, Payá Valera recalls the moments in which Nazi-led air raids began attacking their Spanish towns. As he notes, “Muchos de nosotros no conocíamos más aviones que aquellos dedicados al genocidio y a la destrucción de las ciudades” (51). For the children of wartime Spain, their limited experience with airplanes led them to associate aircraft with ruin. In contrast to their wartime experiences, Payá Valera writes that during the first days of the arrival, the Cárdenas government hired a small airplane to drop candies and flyers in celebration of the children’s arrival. Upon seeing the plane, the children initially reacted with panic. Their concerns quickly subsided, however, once they realized that the planes were part of the celebration. As Payá Valera notes, “Eran esos otros aviones y éste, otro suelo. Aviones de una nación significada por el respeto al derecho de todos los pueblos de la tierra” (51). With spatial and emotional distance, the airplanes took on a different meaning in Mexico.

As evidenced in Payá Valera's use of duplication to discuss geographic sites in Morelia, these same parabolic attachments applied to their physical surroundings. For the children living in exile, places do not exist as discrete points, but rather as parts of a temporally and spatially interdependent geography. Villages, cities, states, and countries are all spaces defined by invisible boundaries. We map their frontiers, their landmarks, and their thoroughfares. These maps, however, fail to capture the dynamism of its inhabitants. While they chart political, economic, and cultural sites of power, Iain Chambers points out, "...that preliminary orientation hardly exhausts the reality in which we find ourselves. For the city's denuded streets, buildings, bridges, monuments, squares...provide the contexts, cultures, stories, languages, experiences, desires, and hopes that course through the urban body" (92). The cartography of life exists on a broader plane. This cartography is particularly complex for the exiled subject. With their geographic markers of identity and subjectivity destabilized, "the object of the intellectual gaze—the cultures and habits of the 'natives' of local, national and global 'territories'—can no longer be confined to an obvious chart or map" (95). For the children, their present in Mexico was inherently tied to their past in Spain. The author's descriptions rely heavily on the Spanish origins of the city's design, while also emphasizing how they were transformed by Mexican sociopolitical culture. Rather than suggesting a clear before-and-after relationship between the former colony and Spain, Payá Valera celebrates the dual-origin of the town. In his descriptions of the cityscape, he refers to the main thoroughfare as "la avenida Madero –antigua Calle Real," the Cuauhtémoc forest as "antiguo bosque de San Pedro," and the city as "antigua Valladolid, fundada por colonizadores españoles" (54–56). Similarly, he recognizes that Morelia is well-known as the most Castilian of Mexico's cities, while also highlighting the fact that the city's name honors José María Morelos, the leader of Mexico's independence from Spain. Just as the

former colonial town transformed away from its Spanish heritage, so too would the *niños de Morelia*. The children's transformation was a move away from Spain, but it was not a severing. Their perceptions remained attached to their home and to a specific region of the past. With these co-existing geographies, Payá Valera allows us to witness the distorted duplication and incomplete cultural detachment that accompanies the parabolic curve of exile.

Up to this point, we have seen how his protagonists suffer a decline in their wellbeing and how their life story signals a moral message. In this section, I turn to how the form of the narrative mirrors this parabolic progression. This data-driven analysis is largely based on the work of digital humanist Matthew Jockers. Jockers' research focuses on the relationship between textual sentiment and plot shape. In Jockers' theoretical writings, he uses computational analysis to generate data in support of his assertion regarding the existence of broad literary plot patterns. Most of his research is conducted using the statistical computing program, R Studio. In 2015, he wrote an R Studio programming package, "to extract sentiment and plot information from prose" (Jockers, "Revealing Sentiment and Plot Arcs with Syuzhet Package"). Known as *Syuzhet*, the package,

attempts to reveal the latent structure of narrative by means of sentiment analysis. Instead of detecting shifts in the topic or subject matter of the narrative, the *Syuzhet* package reveals the emotional shifts that serve as proxies for the narrative movement between conflict and conflict resolution. ("Syuzhet")

As Jockers explains it, *Syuzhet* divides the text into equal segments and identifies the progression of positive and negative emotions across the work.

This approach, like many distant reading and macroanalysis approaches to literature, began at the Stanford Literary Lab. Founded in 2010 by Franco Moretti and Matthew Jockers,

the Literary Lab uses computational modeling and quantitative analysis to literary topics such as genre and character networks. Unlike close reading, distant reading seeks to understand literature by analyzing data from a large corpus of texts. Whereas close reading identifies themes and styles within a single work or a small collection, distant reading uses computers to recognize distinctive, formal features across thousands of books, details that a single reader would be incapable of detecting. In line with the principles of distant reading, Jockers has used the *Syuzhet* package to demonstrate patterns in the appearance of literary topics such as love and animals, patterns in writing style such as the usage of the word like, and patterns in novels' pacing.

Much of Jockers' inspiration for analyzing patterns in plot shapes originates with American author Kurt Vonnegut. While a student at the University of Chicago, Vonnegut had proposed a master's thesis topic that suggested the good and ill fortune of fictional characters followed a few simple shapes. His advisor, however, rejected the proposal and Vonnegut eventually dropped out of the anthropology department to work at General Electric in 1947.<sup>20</sup> Although leaving academia, the author remained committed to the idea, an idea he referred to as his, "prettiest contribution to the culture" (qtd. in Quick n.p.). In a 1995 public lecture titled "On the Shape of Stories," Vonnegut returned to identifying plot shapes. Using a chalkboard, he graphed plots on an X-Y axis, with the story's time progressing along the horizontal axis and the character's fortune on the y-axis (*On the Shape of Stories*). Vonnegut based his hypothesis on his years of experience reading fiction, but believed that it was possible to research the same conclusion with the aid of technology. In his same lecture, he remarked, "There is no reason why the simple shapes of stories can't be fed into computers" (qtd. in Quick). Matthew Jockers took

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<sup>20</sup> Reflecting on his thesis, Vonnegut explained that his idea had been rejected because, "it was so simple and looked like too much fun" (quoted in Quick n.p.).

up that challenge and with the aid of text-analysis software, confirmed Vonnegut's premise. After processing 41,383 novels in *Syuzhet*, Jockers initially identified two large patterns in narrative structures. He called these broad categories "man in hole" and "man on hill," after the observations made by Kurt Vonnegut in his lecture.<sup>21</sup>

Provocative assertions that challenge traditional literary studies, both the *Syuzhet* package and the macroanalysis of literary works generated substantial controversy when Jockers initially released them in 2015. Digital humanities specialist Annie Swafford, for example, was the first to realize that that the original release of the *Syuzhet* programming code used a low-pass filter that eliminated emotional extremes in texts and generated artificial rises in emotion at the end of novels. Swafford also pointed out that the program occasionally misinterpreted sentences within irregularly structured dialog and miscalculated the emotional valence of sentences with repetition or intensifiers (*Problems with the Syuzhet Package* n.p.).

In response to these critiques, Matthew Jockers has made a number of adjustments to the program and its application of the Fourier transform.<sup>22</sup> To eliminate the false emotional rises at the end of novels, Jockers added padding factors in the `get_transformed_values` function of the package. In addition, Jockers performed extensive tests to ensure that even if machine analysis incorrectly identified sentiment in a single sentence, over the course of several sentences the sentiment would process correctly (Jockers, "My Sentiments (Exactly?)").

In spite of these initial data-processing concerns, Jockers' basic premise remains an interesting point of departure from which to analyze texts. As he explains,

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<sup>21</sup> Jockers later finetuned these categorizations, naming a total of seven subcategories of plot shapes.

<sup>22</sup> The Fourier transform is a function that is applied to waves. The technique takes time-based patterns and transforms them into a frequency. The transformation is useful in the context of sentiment-based plot trajectories because it provides a data form that is independent of the length of the text being analyzed.

...the kind of reading that computers can do gets us closer to the details of a novel than even some of the most practiced literary critics. That's because computers are experts in pattern recognition, and computers can study patterns at a scale and a level of granularity that no human could ever manage. (Archer and Jockers 20)

Although Jockers' research has concentrated on comprehending broad structural trends regarding the emotional trajectory of works of literature, I believe the same type of analysis may be applied to non-fiction works. To that end, I have applied Jockers' framework to Payá Valera's autobiography. And while Jockers' work has concentrated on the macroanalysis of a large body of works, I have applied the *Syuzhet* to a single text. This choice allows me to combine the focus on variations in style and theme from a close-reading approach with computational data. Up to this point, I have observed through close reading how this parable manifests a combination of testimonial and ideological narrative functions in which the narrator blends an eye-witness account of events with an instructive, moralizing message. By adding computer-based sentiment analysis, we are able to go a step further and generate data for these structures.

In studying narratology, Gérard Genette created an inventory of narrative processes. By examining the interplay of the story, narrative, and narration, he argued that we may gain insights into how the narrator, distancing, and narrative mood impact the text. Through his theory of narratological poetics, Genette aimed to reveal an underlying structure at the core of narrative (8–13). Using data to complement a close reading, I observe how, even as the text attempts to contest established narratives, the deep narrative structure perpetuates the culturally-defined *hispanismo* ideology.

Using a combination of R Studio text analytics and close reading, I have categorized Payá Valera's text as following a man-in-hole, parabola-shaped plot. The man-in-hole shape, as



Jockers explains it, “is often about a hero and a bad guy where there is some threat to a person or a culture that must be eliminated...the main character is forced to take it on and then change his or her fortunes back to good” (Archer and Jockers 104). As the plot graph for *Los Niños Españoles de Morelia* shows, the text’s protagonists suffer a rapid fall in their fortune and then experience a sustained period of distress (fig. 15).

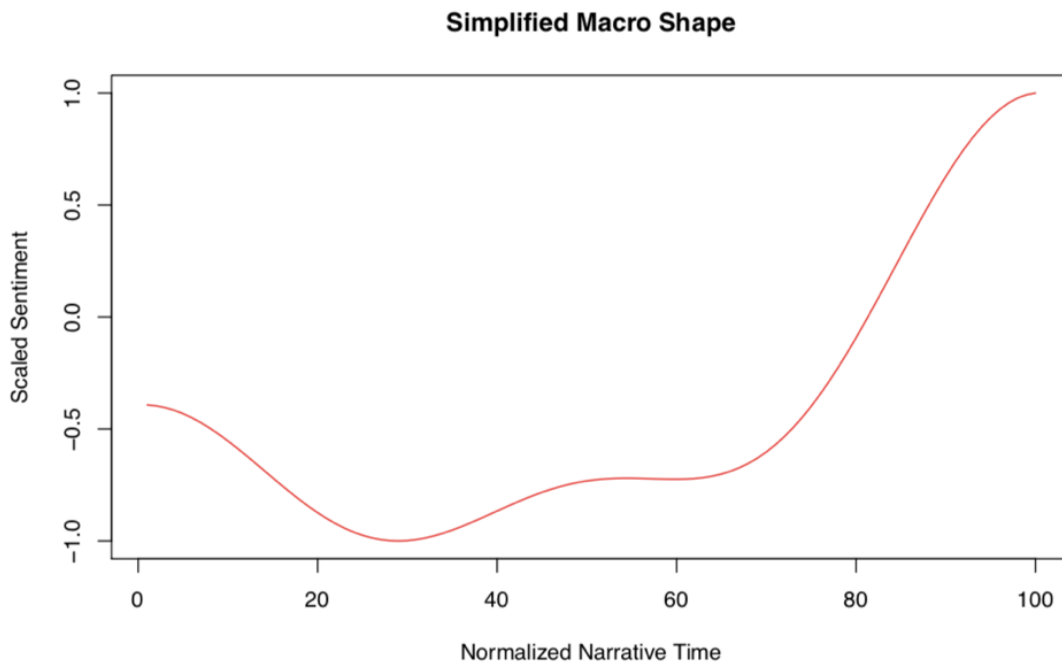


Figure 15 Sentiment-analysis graph, generated in R Studio

In the last third of the autobiography, as Payá Valera’s story comes to a close, we find that his protagonists experience a significant improvement in their life circumstances.

Beyond simply mirroring the parable plot shape, I suggest that the man-in-hole shape reinforces the children’s transatlantic attachments and represents a manifestation of the broader *hispanismo* narrative. In studying autobiographical memory, Dan P. McAdams observes that authors’ subjective perspectives provide the details of their mental states and their experiences,

while a societal master narrative provides the framework for how their lives are represented and evaluated (95–116). When these memories are committed to the page, Ángel Loureiro writes, that autobiography is, “an act that is at once discursive, intertextual, rhetorical, ethical, and political” (4). It follows that, although memoirs are recollections of personal experiences, the memories recalled are not exclusively individual in nature. As Robyn Fivush notes, “autobiographical memory is memory beyond the individual to include how an individual life is understood, modulated, and transformed through socially and culturally constructed narratives” (226). Viewed through this lens, we may anticipate that Payá Valera’s memoirs are undergirded by how the children internalized and reproduced narrative structures and how the *niños* inscribed a set of ideological, moral values to their life stories.

From Thomas More’s *Utopia* to Pedro Henríquez Ureña’s *La utopía de América*, the idea of utopia has long occupied a hallowed place in the literary canon. The utopic impulse, a notion of a paradise just out of reach, has served to justify colonialism and undergird an entire textual tradition. It is the same discursive position that lies at the core of Latin Americanism, an intellectual and aesthetic assertion of Latin America as a site of cultural contribution exemplified in José Martí’s “Nuestra América” and continued with the works of authors such as Alfonso Reyes and Gabriela Mistral (Ramos 244–45). For these thinkers, utopia consisted of, “a strategic appropriation of the idea of the American continent as a site of projection of an ideal future by European colonizers, in order to deploy it as a political claim that establishes Latin America as the vanguard continent in historical and cultural terms” (Sánchez Prado 95). Although an attempt to distinguish Latin America, this utopianism also recognized its origins in the cultural intersections of the Americas and Europe.

The Republican *hispanismo* ideology followed this tradition of projecting utopia onto the Americas. With the onset of the Spanish Civil War, Latin America offered a peaceful, idyllic place of refuge. Writing from a space of refuge in Mexico, Juan Larrea conceived of a reflective and evolving utopia of cultures and civilizations. In the face of fascist threats, the transatlantic connection of these two expressions of culture would provide the spiritual foundations for a new civilization. This ideal required the confluence of the humanist spirit of European civilizations with the “unspoiled” nature of the Americas. It was an ideology that was not self-contained, but rather entailed a broader expanse of space and a sense of transatlantic collaboration. It was an ideology based on common ground, and a shared history.

Although Frederic Jameson posited that literature was largely utopian or dystopian, Payá Valera’s work presents a combination of the two categories (*Seeds* 55). The predominant downturn of the parabolic progression of his narrative represents life under a system in which the subject is involuntarily forced into exile and subsequently suffers a profound identity crisis. At the same time, however, the upturn of the *parábola* provides a utopic view of a society in which nations coexist. As Said explains, “much of the exile’s life is taken up with compensating for disorienting loss by creating a new world to rule” (*Reflections* 363). Payá Valera’s engagement in the act of writing and creation empowers a different reality and projects a utopian possibility. What is more, couched in Payá Valera’s descriptions of the decline of both Spain and his own wellbeing, there is also the vision for a better life and a better system on the other side of the ocean. In embodying the world of *hispanismo* collaboration, the memoir counteracts the ideology of Francoist Spain. He resists *hispanidad*’s hierarchical understandings of Latin American traditions and culture. Rather than a living in a world defined by the Catholic Kings, he inhabits a world in which he is educated according to a more expansive historical narrative. His memoir

builds a world that combines Spanish traditions, foodways, language, and cultural practices with largely unfamiliar, yet still recognizable, public spaces, dishes, and vocabulary. Even his accounts of suffering serve as the point of inflection and reflection for this transition to advancement and improved circumstances. Moreover, a return to Payá Valera's writing makes clear that even though he disapproves of the circumstances that brought him to Mexico, he does not blame transatlantic alliances. Instead, his account suggests that the dual presence of Spain and Mexico in his life enabled a life beyond singularly territorialized cultures. When the memoir's content is combined with the data from *Syuzhet*, we may say that contained within the parabolic form of the text's man-in-hole plot, there is a latent utopian message. As the text's graph demonstrates, after his fall in fortune, the protagonist not only returns to his original state of wellbeing, he actually surpasses it. In line with the common usage of the word utopia, we see that there is a fundamental improvement in the human condition (Sargent 11). And more than a simple chronological progression, we see in the text analytics that his life has undergone a utopian transformation in which his life experiences in Spain and Mexico have allowed him to envision a collaborative culture that is greater than the sum total of its constituent parts.

In a traditional narrative, sequential action means that the events are related in the order in which they transpire. The result is a beginning, middle, and end that give a linear structure to the story. As an alternative, a narrative may come full circle, returning to the place where the action began. The parabola, however, is an open form defined by reflection and duality.

By engaging the parabolic form, Payá Valera's memoir has elucidated a set of ideologies and conceptualizations that redefine our understandings of the experience of exile and the perpetuation of cultural legacies. Against the grain of a before and after existence, the memoirist demonstrates that identity may manifest itself in multiple sites. The challenge for today's

analysts is to develop an approach that accounts for this framing of one's life and the world. In the realm of digital humanities and literary studies, this may mean complementing close reading with new methodologies such as computer-aided text analysis.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

In his *Reflections on Exile*, Edward Said argues, “our age- with its modern warfare, imperialism, and the quasi-theological ambitions of totalitarian rulers- is indeed the age of the refugee, the displaced person, mass immigration” (*Reflections* 174). Issues of warfare, imperialism, and authoritarian rule are at the core of my research and my work offers new insights into how displaced peoples respond to these matters in the autobiographical, architectural, artistic, and written forms. In this study, I have suggested that each of these cultural products wrestles with the meaning of exile, community, and established narratives. The dialectical interplay between Spain and Mexico in all of these works lays bare deep ideological, identity, and narrative practices of their creators. Moreover, through these distinct artistic expressions, these cultural texts all advocate for ways to rewrite a transatlantic relationship.

Similar in imagery and historical references to Franco’s *hispanidad*, the magazine *España Peregrina* and the mural *España hacia América* draw from the iconography of the much-celebrated Golden Age of Spain. These texts differ from their *hispanidad* counterparts, however, in the critical vantage point from which to narrate the past. They invite a dialogue about the effects of those moments in history. In much the same way, the buildings of Candela and memoir of Payá Valera, the parabolic shape embedded in their structures illustrates how the past manifests itself alongside the present.

With this work, I hope to begin a conversation about the numerous points of contact between the texts discussed in this project, including the ways in which aesthetics, politics, and

ideologies converge. I have attempted to provide diverse perspectives from the different waves of exiles that arrived in Mexico, but this study has largely centered on male producers. This shortcoming is part of a larger gap in research. With few exceptions, the work of female exiles in Mexico is still largely underexamined. Going forward, I would like to expand this research to include works from female intellectuals such as María Zambrano.

While I have worked with a select set of cultural products, the analysis of the themes presented in this study need not be limited to the works examined here. This study may serve as a point of departure for additional critical approaches to theorizing about the dialogue between *hispanismo* and *parábolas*. In addition to *hispanismo*-related topics, many questions remain unanswered regarding the pervasiveness of man-in-a-hole shaped emotional arcs. This study centered on the non-fiction text of a single writer who spent nearly his entire life in Mexico. The emotional arcs of writers of different age groups, for writers of fiction, or of writers at different points in the trajectory of exile could be considered as a fruitful area of research using sentiment-analysis programs. Used in combination with the related approach of text mining, future projects might demonstrate interesting changes in style or language usage as the period of exile extended into the 1970s and beyond.

As I conclude this project, it is my hope that readers understand the story I have told as something of a parable about the enduring benefits of welcoming peoples seeking exile and refuge into their countries. In addition, I hope that my examination of Emeterio Payá Valera's memoir has brought a moment of reflection to my readers about the enduring pain that separating children from their parents can cause, particularly when they are in foreign lands. I hope that as readers have engaged with this work on a theoretical level, they have been left with the story of

the professional, social, and cultural contributions of people who have left their homes and started over in a new country.



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