

# Peninsular Identities, Transatlantic Crossings and Iberian Networks



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Edited by

Mark Gant, Siân Edwards  
and Susana Rocha Relvas

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## INTRODUCTION

SUSANA ROCHA RELVAS, MARK GANT  
AND SIÂN EDWARDS

With the publication of this sixth volume the Association for Contemporary Iberian Studies seeks to promote research in the field of Iberian studies, originating from selected papers presented at the 43rd ACIS conference held in Palma de Mallorca in September 2022. They focus on the complexity and uniqueness of the Peninsula, more specifically on the identities, transnational exchanges, transatlantic crossings, and cultural and intellectual networks. The contributors are globally located, including Portugal, Spain, Germany, Brazil, Japan, India, Mexico, and the UK.

We continue to remain committed to exploring the diversity of the Iberian cultures by choosing conference venues in overlooked locations which are culturally important, but often underexplored academically. This was the case of Palma de Mallorca, allowing us to discover its history, its cultural background and literary effervescence up to the present day. In this sense, and as expected, Catalan studies had a special presence in the conference, and a selection of chapters in this area are gathered in this volume, with a specific focus on literature produced in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, during the dictatorship and the transition period to Democracy alongside discussion of historical events from the same period.

Furthermore, cultural, and literary representations among the full range of Iberian nationalities are also represented, with particular emphasis not only on the above-mentioned Catalan identities, but also on Portuguese-Galician and Basque cultures, considering the relational and multicultural realities beyond the traditional approach grounded on the two official Peninsular nationalities, which prevailed in academia until very recently.

Comprising a total of fifteen chapters, this collection showcases an extensive range of research fields such as cinema studies, political, economic, and social sciences, as well as literary and cultural studies providing a comprehensive perspective of this emerging area of expertise. A considerable number of chapters are devoted to Memory, reflecting the impact of the historical memory law in Spain and the lively discussion in

the public square around this topic. Alongside this the pressing and perennial themes of Spanish Civil War, dictatorships, and exile; social mobilization and economic dynamics also play an important role in this volume.

In addition, transatlantic contacts between Iberia and the Portuguese and Spanish-speaking countries are covered, revealing not only cultural and literary reception and influences but also old and new forms of imperialism, in colonial and postcolonial periods.

Contributions entail new theoretical and methodological approaches applied to Iberian Studies, namely those under the core academic research fields such as Area Studies, focusing on geo-political, socio-economic and historical areas, in a transnational perspective. This has stimulated the study of Peninsular geo-cultural diversity and connections with outer territories frequently referred using the contested term Global South.

Moreover, the contribution of Cultural Studies and Comparative literature or World literature, is also worth mentioning, and has helped reshape the discipline of Iberian Studies in terms of epistemological, theoretical, and methodological domains. Ultimately, this reflects the multi-interdisciplinary stance of the Association which supports new paradigms of this emerging and consistently productive academic field.

The book is divided into six sections. The first is devoted to Catalan voices during the Francoist dictatorship, providing cutting-edge research on gender, regional and social conflicts, and exile. Section Two relies upon transnational contacts, focusing on cultural and literary representations. Section Three is comprised of chapters dedicated to Cinema studies, related not only to the challenges of adaptation, but also the historical events portrayed on the big screen. Section Four centres its attention on memory and social intervention in Iberian literature. In Section Five the relationships between Iberia, South America and Africa are highlighted with a transatlantic perspective, and past and present forms of imperialism are also the object of thorough attention. Finally, Section Six focuses on political and economic development on a national and regional scale.

The authors framed in Section One deal with the recuperation of historical memory, bringing to light new data about the facts and characters involved on both sides of the Spanish Civil War. This is a valuable and necessary effort with a view to a more accurate and complete interpretation of the tragic events that marked Spain in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: the Civil War and subsequent dictatorship. This section also sheds some light on labour exploitation and social discrimination on a Peninsular scale and how literary production can be a means of social and political compromise.

Therefore, in Chapter One, Durba Banejee focuses on Catalan female memorial literature, establishing a comparison between the novels of Mercés Rodoreda and Teresa Pàmies, where the themes of repatriation and return are portrayed. She states that, although exile is framed in Spanish Cultural studies, it is not so present in the case of trauma studies and migration studies. The topic of women writers in exile has witnessed a revival in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, providing a distinctive identity to Catalonia's culture of exile, especially from the transition period onwards. The author concludes by highlighting that the writing exercise was vital for these women writers, both as personal empowerment and as a testament to survival.

In Chapter Two, Margaret Woods de Vivero analyses the ambiguous role of Bishop Josep Miralles during the Civil War. This controversial figure claimed the use of Mallorcan and Catalan languages in literature, daily life, and even religious activities. During Primo de Rivera's dictatorship, Miralles's stance provoked conflict with civil authorities, understanding that his actions threatened Spanish unity. During the Second Republic, Miralles sought to protect the church away from political quarrels due to constant attacks on churches and clergymen. However, with the dawn of the Civil War, and the consequent intensification of attacks on the clergy, he became a moderate supporter of the Nationalist wing and a concerned voice on Nazism. Nevertheless, until today, many doubts remain about his dubious attitude towards repression perpetrated by the Falangists, and whether his efforts to save Fr. Jeroni Alomar from death were sufficient.

In the following chapter, Gemma Nadal presents a comparative study of the novels *Terres de l'Ebre* by Juan Arbó and *Gaibéus* by António Alves Redol, establishing a bridge between the two sides of the Iberian Peninsula at the time marked by social struggle. Beyond the similarity of thematic options, both authors shared a sympathetic and empathetic outlook regarding the most disadvantaged and oppressed social fringe. The main difference relies, though, on the fact that on the Spanish side fatalism and hopelessness prevailed, whereas in the Portuguese case social and political commitment was evident. The author stresses the literary value of both works, produced under the same ideological framework. Their multiple readings from the ethnological, philosophical and symbolic perspectives make these works worth reading.

Section Two relies upon transnational cultural and literary representations, focusing on the image and reception of the *other* between Portugal and Spain. Therefore, in Chapter Four, Carlos Pazos-Justo focuses on the Portuguese perspective on Spain and the Spaniards. Despite historical and geographical links between the two countries and past conflicts, distrust and

annexationist fears, intra-Iberian contacts benefited from a considerable change upon the common entry into the European Community (1986), mainly at economic and educational levels. Seeking multidisciplinary theoretical support from marketing, tourism, diplomacy and comparative literature, the author explores the concepts of *imagem* (ideas/beliefs) deepening this study in the understanding of discursive constructs of the *other* and the *self*-image developed over centuries, to conclude in favour of a neo-romantic imagotype prevailing in the present Portuguese imaginary, based on positive images and a sense of relational superiority.

Chapter Five focuses on the analysis, led by Diego Rivadulla Costa, of two plays *Nome: Bonita* by Vanesa Sotelo and *Mar Revolto* by Roberto Vidal Bolaño, in which a dialogue between Portugal and Galicia is established within the scope of Iberian cultural memory. The author stresses the importance of theatre as a performative art form with multiple didactic potentialities, highlighting its ethical compromise and raising awareness towards collective memory, especially related to the Spanish Civil War and dictatorships. Although these two plays are bounded by shared imaginaries, in *Nome: Bonita* the playwright pays tribute to feminist identity and creates a universal archetype of women fighters on a Lusophone scale, whereas in *Mar Revolto*, based on the “Dulcinea operation”, a coup attempt on the Santa Maria cruise liner, perpetrated by Portuguese and Galician soldiers, aiming to establish Democracy in Portugal and achieve an Iberian federal union.

Section Three, which is entitled Iberian Cinema: Challenges and Perspectives, addresses not only the theoretical concepts and practical constraints of adapting a classic novel to the screen, but also the increasing interest given to memory, allowing the recovery of lesser-known episodes of history, now accessible to the general public through TV series and the Seventh Art. Filomena Antunes Sobral’s chapter focuses on the analysis of the Portuguese fiction series *Our Consul in Havana* (2019), which takes place in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. This tells the story of Eça de Queirós, one of the most prominent Portuguese writers, launching his diplomatic career in Habana, Cuba, assigned the mission of solving the case of Chinese emigrants, who entered Cuba through Macau and ended up treated as slaves. Within the scope of historical fictional narrative, the author reflects on the methodological and thematic aspects that shape fiction, history and memory, carrying out an interdisciplinary approach to discourse analysis.

In Chapter Seven Luís Cardoso verses the challenges of transposing a classic novel to film, focusing on a possible typology guided by its diachronic representativeness and evolution, and the use of narratology as an instrumental vector. Considering different forms of adaptation and

criteria, proposed by prominent academics such as Wagner, Garcia, or Noriega, based on transposition, commentary and analogy, the author concludes that these theoretical approaches are all aligned in the respect of the semiotic, aesthetic and ideological independence of both cinema and literary works, which makes the mission of creating a unique adaptation typology impossible.

Section Four comprises three chapters dedicated to memory and social intervention in Iberian literature. In Maria de Lourdes Pereira's chapter, the theme of dehumanization in the literary works of the Portuguese writer Valter Hugo Mãe is analysed, taking into account the role of language as a path to humanism and citizenship. Combining literature and philosophy, prose and poetry, portrayed and followed by his own drawings, the writer's works have been translated profusely and extensively, with a prominent projection in the Lusophone space. His activity as a writer has spanned more than twenty-five years of consistent literary production, conveying an innovative style and a profound ethical and aesthetic conscience. Besides these traits, which stimulate the reader's critical judgement and an urge to active citizenship, Hugo Mãe appends to his narrative an ontological dimension, at local and universal levels, especially in *A desumanização*, as analysed by Maria de Lourdes.

In the following chapter, Andrea Sanz debuts a theoretical framework on memory, establishing the difference between political/historical/collective memory, which comprises forgetting in the interests of a national consensus, and individual memory, which are both in constant tension. Additionally, the author focuses on how memory and oblivion are two interconnected forces represented in *The Lone Man* [*El hombre solo*] by Bernardo Atxaga. In this novel the identity crisis experienced by Carlos, the main character, resides in his need to forget the past, related to ETA, his incapability of doing so, and the inadaptability to a new life after Amnesty, compromising his future, condemning him to solitude and the annulment of his humanity.

In Chapter Ten, Florian Grafl starts by calling the reader's attention to the fact that the historical period encompassing the Spanish Civil War and the Francoist regime, still provokes lively discussion in the public square resulting in fractured positions in Spanish society today. Grounded in a recent investigation, which analyses measures taken by several authoritarian regimes regarding the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, the author then focuses on gender discrimination during Francoist dictatorship. He concludes that, within the scope of a traditional society, ruled by rigid Catholic and patriarchal norms, especially those regarding women's attitudes, extremely repressive measures, both highly questionable and

inhuman, were undertaken with those who deviated from the *status quo* ideology.

Section Five comprises two chapters devoted to old and new ways of Imperialism in the case of Spain towards Morocco, and transatlantic crossings entailing Spanish literary references and influences in South America. Therefore, in Chapter Eleven, Manuel López Forjas explores Spain's attempts to regain imperial role since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century until the present day. At the start of the period, the Spanish Africanist campaign was jeopardized by British interests, which counted on the Spanish leaders' acceptance. Then, during Primo de Rivera and Franco's dictatorship imperialist propaganda witnessed an upsurge, with the establishment of several projects which engaged intellectuals such as Joaquín Costa, Fernando de los Ríos or Federico García Lorca. Nevertheless, the African dream was frustrated due to Spain's decay, leading to economic weakness and the impoverishment of the Spanish people. Today, political, and economic elites have revived their imperialist dream in Africa, working alongside the Moroccan government.

In Chapter Twelve, Maria Stella Galvão Santos analysis how referential, mythical, and fantastic discourses are gathered in *Cien años de Soledad*, by Colombian writer Gabriel García Márquez. The author states that myth is present in Latin-America since pre-Hispanic times, and intensified during colonization period, where violence prevailed. Literary production in South America is, therefore, the result of the combination of the ancient and modern worlds. In the case of García Márquez, in association to this invaluable cultural background is the influence of Spanish literature. The pioneer of Magical Realism recognizes his narrative affiliation to the literary Spanish Golden Age, namely, the timeless works Don Quixote, Amadis or Lazarillo de Tormes.

Finally, Section Six is dedicated to national and regional political and economic development in different areas of Iberia, comprising of three chapters. The first, authored by Carla Sequeira, focuses on the elites and political organization in the Upper Douro wine region (1910-1940), examining regional political evolution and the objectives of the emerging elite in the two periods represented by the implantation period of the Republic and the subsequent institutionalisation of the military dictatorship from 1926. Among her conclusions, she notes that, over the first phase, the Douro region witnessed the emergence of a political elite focussed above all on the winegrowing interests of the area, drawn together by defence of their common interest in the latter industry and that this was to continue through the Dictatorship and *Estado Novo*, despite divisions between those

favouring the regime and those opposed to it, to the exclusion of the lower classes of society.

In the following chapter, Makiko Narita centres her attention on the economic development in the Basque Country, and particularly on the determinants of firm location. She explores the Basque experience of successful shift from heavy industry to an innovative high-tech economy as an example for other countries and regions, considering the characteristics of the Basque economy, its industrial context, the role of foreign direct investment (FDI and the factors which have attracted it. She concludes that, while the overall level of FDI is not particularly high, prominent companies have invested and there are clusters of high-tech manufacturing in particular and she provides some useful indications of areas on which future research might focus.

Lastly, Nick Sharman analyses Spain's economic modernisation, focusing on the autarkic political model and its constraints in the seven decades between the loss of Spain's last colonies in 1898 and the end of Francisco Franco's regime. He gives detailed consideration to the subsequent debate over how to modernise the country's economy, exploring the solutions attempted by liberal and conservative protections in turn, followed by the radical autarkists of the Franco dictatorship, all of whom rejected free-market ideology in favour of varying interventions. His view is that it was not protectionism which drew Spain into fascism, since for both liberal industrialists and the authoritarian conservative right, this was seen as a temporary measure to prepare the country for the pressures of full entry into international trading and commercial systems, contending that it is vital to consider instead the structural political weaknesses that prevented greater participation of the wider working population beyond the bourgeois elite in policy making and engagement with wholesale reform.

In conclusion, this wide-ranging and eclectic volume once more makes a valuable contribution to the important field of Iberia Studies in a variety of sub-disciplines. Its scope in covering lesser spoken languages and culture areas, postcolonial and transatlantic relations and influences is testament to the currency of the work of the global network of scholars comprising the Association for Contemporary Iberian Studies.

Two chapters were translated into English by members of the editorial team: Chapter Nine by Mark Gant and Chapter Twelve by Susana Rocha Relves.

The editors would like to thank all the participating authors for their engaging and thought-provoking contributions. We are also most grateful to the editorial team of Cambridge Scholars Publishing for their technical support and for agreeing to the inclusion of chapters in Galician and Catalan.





**SECTION ONE:**

**CATALAN VOICES IN DIALOGUE  
UNDER DICTATORSHIP:  
GENDERED, RELIGIOUS & SOCIAL  
CONFLICT AND EXILE**

## CHAPTER ONE

### READING MERCÈ RODOREDA AND TERESA PÀMIES POST REPATRIATION

DURBA BANEJEE

#### **Defining the Spanish Exile**

Although the Republican exile of 1939 constitutes an important identity marker in Spanish cultural studies, the specificity of the Spanish experience often loses definition in theory. The exile can be primarily understood as a mass exodus wherein intellectuals, public figures, and general citizens alike fled the country in fear of persecution. However, Spanish exile studies are often guilty of “the tendency to over-generalize, to lose track of the historical specificity of each exile experience” (Faber 2006, 12). The homogenization, especially in terms of age, gender, class, and community, shifts focus away from the systems of agendas and priorities for each of these groups, thus diluting the analysis of their ways of negotiating their identity as subjects in exile away from home.

Three angles tend to dominate investigations into the history of the Spanish exile on account of the war. First, there are studies that focus on the choice of destination of those exiled (Faber 2002; Fagen 2014; Young 2014; Soo 2016). For instance, while France and Mexico took in the maximum number of Spaniards, many also sought refuge in Argentina, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Chile, Puerto Rico, Cuba, the USA, and the then USSR. Second, there are publications based on the ideological grouping of the Spaniards and their contribution to the political role played by the Spanish collective in exile (Faber 2002; Hermann 2010). Finally, many research projects centre on the heterogeneous nature of those exiled in terms of their regional and professional differences (Dennis 1999; Gemie 2006; Soo 2007, 2016). For instance, while France primarily took in exiles with low or modest educational qualifications, who were mostly agricultural

or industrial workers, countries like Mexico saw a more selective immigration of intellectuals, artists, and politicians. Thus, there has never been a dearth of literature produced on the Spanish exile. However, the experiences of women in exile warrant further investigation and research.

According to Mónica Moreno Seco (2011), while the memoirs of women intellectuals like Dolores Ibárruri, Teresa Pàmies, Federica Montseny, Victoria Kent, and a number of others saw the light of day in the 1970s, serious work on the experience of women in exile with the help of documented memories and other archived material did not begin until later. Spain also witnessed a revival of interest in the historical memory of the Spanish Civil War in the second half of the 20th century, and this, in turn, led to the publication of testimonials of anonymous women in exile and the reappearance of memoirs by known women intellectuals on the market. The new material in the form of private correspondence, autobiographical works, and oral testimonies gave impetus to the study of Spanish women in exile. The material also became an important source of investigation into the identification of the female gender because:

- (a) the individual experiences challenged the compartmentalization of their experiences within the collective identity of exiled Spain;
- (b) it demonstrated their differences as single mothers, wives, armed fighters, intellectuals, etc.;
- (c) in the context of migration and exile studies, the elaboration of their roles as agents essential to the social adaptation of family members through language, value systems, traditions, etc. further subverted the normative understanding of Spanish women as mere companions to their male counterparts.

Some notable works in the field of Spanish women in exile are *Nuevas raíces: testimonios de mujeres españolas en el exilio* (1993) by Blanca Bravo, *Voces del exilio. Mujeres españolas en México 1939-1950* (1994) by Pilar Domínguez Prats, “Identidad y arraigo de los exiliados españoles (Un ejemplo: Mujeres valencianas exiliadas)” by María Luisa Capella in *El exilio valenciano en América* (1995), “Memoria e identidad política en los escritos autobiográficos femeninos del exilio” by Giuliana Di Febo in *La cultura del exilio republicano español de 1939* (2003), *Mujer y exilio 1939* (2003) by Antonina Rodrigo García, *Exiliadas: escritoras, Guerra Civil y memoria* (2007) by Josebe Martínez and *L'exili violeta: escriptores y artistes catalanas exiliades al 1939* (2010) by Marta Pessarrodona.

War narratives by women are powerful on three grounds. Women authors have the strength to challenge institutional authority on documenting experience (Cooke 1996), both in terms of an overbearing Nationalist discourse and a male dominated historiography in case of the Spanish Civil

War. Moreover, they are able to weave a way through the immense chaos and obscurity of a war, and the same dictum holds true in the case of Spain. Finally, the fluidity between different narratives is also maintained by the complexity of the prose and the “most experientially affective representational models [of war]” (Herrmann 2003, 11) used by the authors. The writings of Mercè Rodoreda and Teresa Pàmies post repatriation are proof of this fact.

## Understanding Rodoreda and Pàmies

Except for their status as Catalan women intellectuals who spent years in exile after the war, there is not much in common between their personal and professional trajectories. Born to literature and theatre enthusiasts Andreu Rodoreda and Montserrat Gurguí in 1908, Mercè Rodoreda spent her formative years in a happy, relaxed, and somewhat bohemian environment under the strong influence of her maternal grandfather Pere Gurguí. A writer by profession, it was her maternal grandfather who inculcated in her a strong sense of Catalan identity that defined her sense of self.

A self-taught writer, Rodoreda’s career began as a journalist and a short story writer. She married her uncle Joan Gurguí at the tender age of 20 and was with a child in 1929. Thus, the collaborations with newspapers and magazines in pursuit of her passion to write were her medium of escape from a suffocating personal life. However, it was the experience in exile against the backdrop of the Spanish Civil War that significantly altered her career as a writer. To this date, *La plaça del diamant* (1962) is her most celebrated work (Casals i Couturier 1991).

Representative of women’s involvement in politicking in Catalonia, Teresa Pàmies was born in 1919. Inspired by her militant father, Tomás Pàmies, and exposed to the ideas of Leon Trotsky and the syndicalist movement in Catalonia through him, Pàmies developed a military disposition from an early age and became known for her activism (Pérez 1993). By 17 years of age, she was already a member of the *Juventuts Socialistes Unificades de Catalunya* (JSUC) and an active participant in the foundation of the organisation *Aliança Nacional de la Dona Jove*.

The author of more than thirty works and numerous newspaper articles, Teresa Pàmies first appeared in literary circles in 1967. Unfortunately, she still remains somewhat unfamiliar outside of Catalonia. According to Genaro Jesse Pérez (1998), the late arrival of Pàmies in academic circles, coupled with gender discrimination, her lack of formal education given her background, and her choice of Catalan as the language of many publications, contributed to her relative anonymity with respect to other exiled intellectuals.

Mercè Rodoreda's and Teresa Pàmies' status as female exiles from Catalonia had its own peculiarities because they suffered from a constant state of displacement and a sense of up-rootedness for three reasons. First, they experienced exile both politically and geographically. Rodoreda was forced to live in France and Switzerland due to her sympathies for the Second Republic. Pàmies left her country in January 1939 due to her politically active role in the anti-fascist struggle and went on to live for more than 30 years in exile travelling between France, Cuba, Mexico, Serbia and the then Czechoslovakia. Second, they suffered linguistic alienation and experienced a double exile as Catalonians among the vast majority of exiles from Spain. Finally, Rodoreda's and Pàmies' difficulties in exile pushed them into a state of social isolation, even among their Catalanian intellectual colleagues. Rodoreda had temporarily moved to France leaving behind her son in her mother's care following the Republican defeat in 1939. However, she struggled as a mother away from her child and a female in love with a married man, the writer Armand Obiols, as she was soon forced into a long exile. Pàmies had gone into exile with her father. She could never overcome the pain of leaving behind her mother, who died in 1940.

## Reading Rodoreda

Mercè Rodoreda's prose is not entirely autobiographical in nature. At the same time, many aspects of her writings highlight female protagonists irrespective of class or political affiliations (Arkinstall 2004) although the narrative style and linguistic markers often bear a spatio-temporal stamp. Stylistically considered "post-Joycean" (Palau 1987, 3) because of her continuous use of interior monologue, her works may be divided into different phases. Topics like unfulfilled love and marriage dominate her narrative in the first few phases. Stories in *La meva Cristina* (1967) and the novel *Mirall trencat* (1974) are representative of her final phase of writing, largely characterised by a "strong focus on the uncanny, the visionary, the supernatural, and the surreal" (Bergmann 1987, 83). Rodoreda also presents a distinct perspective on the conflict in Spain, recurring to social realism in the early phases of her writing (Bergmann 1987; Arnau i Faidella 2000).

For the purpose of this chapter, the focus is on her work of fiction, *Quanta, quanta guerra*. This 1980 novel deviates from traditional war stories and narrates the journey of Adrià Guinart from boyhood to manhood. Rodoreda's Adrià is a fatherless adolescent. He runs away from home near Barcelona to enlist in the forces with a friend at the onset of the Spanish Civil War. However, he refuses to fight and embarks on a journey of self-realisation as a war deserter. The novel is divided into three parts and is

replete with mysterious apparitions, dream sequences, and mystical and biblical references.

A singular characteristic of *Quanta, quanta guerra* is its ability to open a dialogue between the text and the trauma experienced by Mercè Rodoreda as an exile. A primitive definition of trauma rendered it “a physical injury, as in “blunt force trauma”” (Olick 1999, 343). However, trauma has now come to be understood as negative feelings and a state of shock in response to a bad, violent, or even life-threatening event. This kind of emotional response can manifest itself as “a psychic injury”, which may be “repressed and remains unhealed” or even evolve into situations of “personal violence, revenge, perpetuation of hostilities, blood feuds, and sympathy for extreme political solutions” (343-44). According to historians Bernhard Giesen and Kay Junge (2003), trauma shares a complicated relationship with historical memory because it constitutes a rupture in the collective narrative of, say, a community or a nation. At the same time, individual and collective traumatic memories oppose suppression and do not pass away easily. Personal traumatic experiences rendered as public memory in the form of narratives share two characteristics. On the one hand, only a certain degree of “temporal and social distance” (335) from the negative event allows the expression of trauma in public, staying true to the concept of latency used in psychoanalysis. On the other hand, historian Jeffrey K. Olick (1999) contends that trauma does not die with the death of its victims, nor is it simply passed on to successive generations. Trauma as narrative becomes “irreducible to individual and aggregated psychology” (345) and becomes converted into a permanent site of contestation within the grand narrative of historical memory.

The thought-provoking idea of a journey and the representation of the passage of time on a pessimistic, melancholic, or even violent note in *Quanta, quanta guerra* are especially suggestive of Rodoreda’s own traumatic memories. The wanderings of Adrià—a protagonist drawn out in the image of “un noi encara amb la llet als llavis” (Rodoreda 2021, 5)—through the country lead to encounters with ruffians and wrongdoers of all sorts who subject him to cruel jokes and merciless beatings. He experiences acute thirst and hunger and often finds himself in deplorable conditions, fighting the cold or hot weather. But Adrià resists violence and repeatedly demonstrates a just and ethical conduct. On his journey, he also meets Eva by a riverside, a fearless and beautiful girl who dreams about being a militiawoman and fighting on the war front. He loses her and continuously searches for her throughout the novel. The last part of the novel narrates the enslavement and exploitation of Eva by an old woman. In the end, she is sold off to a group of soldiers, who collectively rape her and leave her to

die. Adrià's discovery of this episode leads him to murder the old lady and set fire to her house and the surroundings. The narrative turn towards such extreme violence towards the end of Adrià's journey provides insights about Rodoreda's disenchantment with life and its outcomes. In this manner, her trauma trickles down to every part of her narrative, leaving us with a testimony of her life's realities and hardships.

The act of writing, the style of writing, and the choice of the novel as a coming-of-age story on the part of the author become clear indicators of the process of working through trauma (LaCapra 2014) while the book is viewed as an act of articulation by a repatriated Rodoreda who recognizes the difference between her past lived-in experiences and her new reality in a democratic Spain. The chaotic way of life as an endless series of chores, habits, and practices assumes meaning when it is transformed into a narrative (LaCapra 2014, 17). However, trauma's narrativization as fiction embodies a sense of "paradox or contradiction" because it problematises the understanding that "trauma comprises an event or experience which overwhelms the individual and resists language or representation" (Whitehead 2004, 3). According to Geoffrey H. Hartman (1995), trauma's transformation into a literary representation is enabled by the use of "figurative or poetic language" and a "symbolic process in general" (540) that encourages "a view of art as at once testimony and representation" (545). Trauma fiction also overcomes the challenge to representation by subverting the sense of normality through dream-like sequences for "[w]here there is dream there is (was) trauma" (546). A text thus becomes a projection of one's trauma as the employment of fantastic, hallucinatory and even exotic elements push the formal boundaries of story-telling (narrator, plot, etc.) while attempting to negotiate with the unbelievably harsh reality.

In the prologue of the book *Quanta, quanta guerra*, Mercè Rodoreda pins down the thought behind writing "una novella amb poca guerra però amb un fons continuat de guerra" (Rodoreda 2021, 5) in the following words:

Al voltant de la gent de la meua època hi ha una intensa circulació de sang i morts. Per culpa d'aquesta gran circulació de tragèdia, en las meves novel·les, potser alguna vegada involuntàriament, poc o molt, la guerra hi surt. (5)

The Spanish Civil War constantly "haunts" (Caruth 1995) the book's storyline, implying the author's "fidelity" (LaCapra 2014, 22) to her trauma. Although Adrià runs away from the war, it follows him throughout his journey in the form of conversations overheard ["Deien que si la guerra

encara seria llarga, que potser duraria cent anys. Mentre hi hagi carn de canó tindrem guerra.” (Rodoreda 2021, 29)], sightings of dead soldiers [“Riu avall baixaven tres ombres. Són soldats morts.” (32)], stories of lives affected by the war [“(…) em va explicar que els seus dos fills, en Miguel i en Llorenç, havien mort a la Guerra, tant que li havien costat de pujar.” (51)], etc. The characters feed off Rodoreda’s own memories and emotions, as one suspects in the case of the bricklayer and his friends in the chapter titled “El paleta”. As they all wonder about the meaning of the war and its purpose in the face of so many problems, emotions overflow, as the author writes:

El lampista va dir, encara que la guanyem serà como si l’haguéssim perduda, una guerra serveix perquè la pedi tothom. Se’ns va ajustar l’especialista a fer llars i va dir que ja podíem plorar, ja, que no hi havia res a llaurar; que érem carn de canó i res més que carn de canó. (117)

Rodoreda’s life suddenly turned upside down with her decision to go into exile. Trauma for her was the loss of the right to self-determination and the same sense of helplessness surrounds her characters. This feeling gets further accentuated in all the dream sequences in the third part of the novel, as, for example, in the case of Adrià’s dream about Eva. As Adrià struggles to reach Eva’s hand in his dream, he constantly feels powerless as he experiences the dream in the following manner:

(…) em vaig sentir lligat pels peus i, como més estirava, allò que em lligava m’estrenyia més i més els turmells (...) Algú es reia de mi. Algú que no podia veure jugava sense parar amb els meus sentiments, amb la meua vida per fer-me adonar que no era meua, que era deixada, que en feia el que volia. (138)

Cathy Caruth (1995) argues in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* that:

(…) for those who undergo trauma, it not only the moment of the event, but of the passing out of it that is traumatic; that surviving itself, in other words, can be a crisis. (9)

Mercè Rodoreda’s act of writing is her testament to surviving years in exile. The work *Quanta, quanta guerra* post repatriation, thus, becomes symbolic of her recall of her trauma through a language that “functions to provide some measure of conscious control, critical distance, and perspective” (LaCapra 2014, 90) to instigate the difficult task of allocating some sense of comprehensibility to the historic past and the world at large.



## Reading Pàmies

James Joyce was correct to point out that memory is essential in the process of self-determination because “‘I’ is ‘under ever-changing forms’” (Olick et. al. 2011, 177). Teresa Pàmies’ works are proof of her journey towards self-determination and self-realisation through her expression as a writer and thus have a strong autobiographical element. An autobiographical work involves imagining oneself from a particular perspective, which constitutes a “historically specific gesture” (Swanson 2000, 111). An autobiography is also an act of self-affirmation that not only takes into account the new worldview and the temporal distance of the event but also incorporates the absence of “the truth” of an event in postmodern terms because it revels in fragmentary memory, conscious of change. Teresa Pàmies celebrates the aforementioned as she recounts stories of personal and collective suffering through her texts. The author was only 19 years old when she went into exile. In their majority, her works borrow the mature viewpoint of a repatriated Teresa Pàmies to observe the events that occurred. Consequently, the loss of innocence appears as a formidable theme throughout her narratives.

This article focuses on one of her relatively early works after her return to Spain in 1971. Of great interest is the 1976 work titled *Los que se fueron*. This book of non-fiction in Castilian is divided into four parts in a non-linear and thematic but not particularly chronological manner, namely “La huida”, “Los niños del éxodo”, “Concentrados, humillados, exterminados...” and “¿Vuelven?”. The four subheadings summarise well the direction of the narrative as the author moves between memories of the exodus, descriptions of individuals in exile, the plight of Spanish children in foreign lands away from their families, accounts of Spaniards in Nazi concentration camps, and the burning issues around the politics of return in Spain after the death of Franco.

Pàmies begins the work by highlighting the disruption of the sense of normality and the reign of chaos following the mass exodus through France. She sets the tone of the book as she writes:

Los gendarmes franceses encargados de mantener el orden en su país, jamás habían visto tanto desorden. Desbordados por el alud humano, sordo e indiferente a los reglamentos, los guardias repetían a gritos y dando manotazos: “*Allez, allez, reculez ...*” (Pàmies 1976, 9)

The work centres particularly on the theme of return. The employment of this theme together with an empathetic tone enables the work to carry out a commentary on the state of exile as a whole. A key area in migration studies, the concept of return is a complex one. When viewed in the case of

the first-generation, it involves the ever-evolving relation of those displaced on foreign soil and their homeland, when studied in the case of victims of forced displacement due to social, political, or economic upheaval and natural disasters. Unlike immigrants, who move with the ardent wish to lay their roots in a new place with better opportunities, exiles are in a constant state of impermanence. An exile's existence is ruled by the yearning for the country of origin and the hope of returning home. However, for those exiled, home becomes a very dynamic idea found in a constant state of flux. Nadjé Al-Ali and Khalid Koser (2002) write in "Transnationalism, international migration and home":

(...) 'homes' are gendered spaces, inhabited by people of various social classes, different generations and political orientations with diverse experiences of previous and current homes and the movements between them. Accordingly, conceptions of homes tend to vary even within one specific group of refugees or migrants at any given point in time. (6)

These words present a useful point of departure for the conceptualization of *home* because they highlight the dichotomy between physical and symbolic spaces inherent in its meaning. On the one hand, homes present themselves as physical entities in terms of sheltered geographical spaces lived in and found in specific sizes, places, and conditions. On the other hand, the association of a home with a family, community, or nation plays on feelings of nationalism and/or emotions of belonging and safety. When an exile talks about the prospects of and desire to return, s/he refers to the act of going back to not just a physical location but to that individual's idea of what is home, an idea fixed in a specific space and time. This strong affective interpretation of the idea of return sacralises the concept of home, making perfect repatriation difficult to achieve.

The feeling of going home assumes another dimension in the case of an exile. Most exiles consider their dislocation from their homeland a state of temporary exile, and their hope of returning one day does not allow them to integrate into the country of exile. This relationship with the host country, along with the lack of people-specific economic opportunities, gives way to feelings of marginality and discrimination. The outcome is an alienated existence for those exiled. The experience of balancing the lived experiences in a new country with the constant state of nostalgia for the home country results in an exile's "feeling of living in limbo" (Al-Ali and Koser 2001, xiii). An exile, thus, becomes a site of negotiation that leaves fragmented identities in its wake.

The seemingly random narratives of *Los que se fueron* link together to bring to light all these facets of repatriation. Pàmies informs her readers that the great majority of Spaniards left their homeland driven by an “impulsivo colectivo” (Pàmies 76, 12) without luggage or identification papers. The people in flight were united by a sense of defeat at the hands of their own brothers, their fellow countrymen, and the desire to start life anew. But those who left were taken by surprise by their long years in exile for had they known the truth, “habrían preferido afrontar a los vencedores” (13).

From the tale of waves of countrymen [“avalancha humana” (Pàmies 76, 12)], the narrative suddenly gives faces to those exiled and delves into more personal stories of suffering—from first-generation accounts of intellectuals and politicians to those of painters, sculptors, and musicians. *Los que se fueron* tells us of those who came back, those who could not come, and those who stayed away. On the one hand, Pàmies mourns the deaths of leaders like Lluís Companys, Manuel Azaña, Juan Peiró, and Josep Moix, who all suffered and died due to the war. On the other hand, she celebrates the contributions of those exiled in the world, be it the example of Professor Pere Bosch Gimpera, architect Manuel Sánchez Arcas, or painter and sculptor Alberto Sánchez Pérez. Pàmies recounts with emotion how the voices of poets León Felipe and Luis Cernuda found their way back to Spain through their works, although they died in exile in Mexico. At the same, she also tells us about the peculiar case of the Archbishop of Tarragona Vidal i Barraquer, forced into exile because of his good relations with the Catalan Republican Party, who believed in the right “[d]el uso de la lengua vernácula de los pueblos que componen el estado español” (89). The book achieves a quasi-historical effect as excerpts from real letters, interviews, newspaper articles, and historical and literary works are interwoven within the text. *Los que se fueron*, like many of Pàmies’ other works, defies precise genre categorisation (Picornell Belenguer 2002).

In spite of the apparent hardships, it is interesting to note an exile’s continuous will to adhere to the idea of returning, for it points to his/her efforts to keep alive and consolidate his/her ties with the community and nation. Madawi Al-Rasheed (1994) notes that:

[R]efugees see their flight, not as a personal action to escape violence and persecution inflicted upon the individual himself, but as a collective fate inflicted upon a group of people who share ideological and political persuasions. Flight is therefore accepted as a communal strategy to save political ideals and practical programmes for the salvation of the whole nation. (210)

The same rings true in Spanish exile studies. The attitude towards a return is a nostalgic but wilfully political one because the exiles see themselves as representatives of what was right. Thus, their return symbolises the restoration of the homeland to its claimed glory. Return is also compared to an umbilical cord suspended between home and exile. Abandoning the idea would be tantamount to severing ties with the homeland and demoting themselves as mere immigrants.

One can see the parallels in the case of world-renowned Spanish cellist and composer Pau Casals in *Los que se fueron*. When Casals is asked about his thoughts about Spain while in exile, he confesses his constant longing for the homeland. However, when he is pressed for his thoughts on whether exile was a disgrace for him, he replies that “[l]o acepto porque creo que es mi deber” (Pàmies 76, 32). Pau Casals was a loyal Republican supporter who had resolved to come back to a democratic Spain. Although Casals’ death in 1973 did not allow him to witness the Transition, it was his ardent belief in the nobility of his cause that forged his relationship to his homeland and gave meaning to his period in exile. One senses this same sense of duty and pride in the descriptions of politician Indalecio Prieto’s ties with his past and homeland or in the words of poet Rafael Alberto, who maintains that “[n]o volveré a España hasta que no haya una amnistía total para los centenares de presos políticos (...)” (179). As Pàmies describes it eloquently in the book:

Hacen [los exiliados] de su exilio una cuestión de honor. Posición discutible pero respetable. En todo caso, no puede calificarse de antiespañola porque lleva implícita una actitud honesta y un concepto de la lealtad que les honra. (29)

Perhaps one of Pàmies’ biggest contributions is her ability to start a discussion with regard to the practical problems and political ramifications associated with the idea of returning to Spain. Apart from problems of age, the majority of those exiled were affected by the changing social and political milieu during the Transition in Spain. As a country desirous of amnesty debates the return of those exiled, the book attempts to answer this difficult question in the following words:

El exiliado, vivo o muerto, no retorna para remover heridas, ni para pasar factura a nadie. Su presencia, discreta o espectacular, le hace un bien a España. El hecho de que las generaciones de posguerra acepten esa presencia le hace bien a la sociedad en su conjunto. Es una garantía de paz auténtica en un país excesivamente inclinado a la revancha política por razones que, en muchas veces, ni siquiera se explican los involucrados. (91)

## **Mercè Rodoreda and Teresa Pàmies: Interconnected worlds**

In spite of the distinctiveness in terms of authorship, choice of genre, and narrative content, the narratives encapsulated in *Quanta, quanta guerra* and *Los que se fueron* are interconnected on two levels. To start with, as war narratives by women, they share the unique power to carve out a subversive space in the grand narrative of Spanish exile literature through complex yet affective tales of loss and suffering. Both Rodoreda and Pàmies can also be examined as Catalan authors writing in historically significant times marked by the end of the dictatorship and the resurfacing of a social, political, and cultural revolution in Catalonia during Transition. Under these circumstances, their writings become united in terms of their contribution towards rebuilding a sense of Catalan identity and nationalism in the post-Franco era.

According to Kathryn Crameri (2017), the inseparable bonds between Catalan nationalism and literature can be traced back to J.G. Herder's reflections on cultural nationalism, which stressed the "mother-tongue" as "the only legitimate means of expression for the national soul and character" and the "organic relationship between language, literature and nationality" (19). This emphasis on nationalism and literature then converts the intelligentsia, who especially write in Catalan, into custodians of Catalan identity and culture. Mercè Rodoreda and Teresa Pàmies bring back vigour to Catalan literature and subvert their own sense of exile by choosing to write after their repatriation to Spain. Their shared sense of the importance of life histories and memory leads them to focus on the individual to draw out the plights of the collective in their texts. This, in turn, lends the exact specificity lost due to the over-generalization and homogenization of the Spanish exile experience, as mentioned earlier. Rodoreda plays a pivotal role in Catalan literary history as she decides to write in Catalan in her state of exile and continue the tradition back in Spain. At the same time, Pàmies' works, both in Castilian and Catalan, assume political significance as the narratives assert her sense of memory, identity, and nationalism while making sense of her repatriation.

## **Conclusion**

This article has endeavoured to bring to the surface the different facets of the writings of Mercè Rodoreda and Teresa Pàmies as women intellectuals post repatriation, which gave a distinctive identity to Catalonia's culture of exile and literature, especially during the Transition. The exploration of

their works, *Quanta, quanta guerra* and *Los que se fueron*, with the help of theoretical frameworks from trauma studies and migration studies, highlights the singularity of their prose to commemorate the lived-in experiences of Republican exiles and invites deliberation over its impact on individual lives. At the same time, the texts resonate with attempts to negotiate with and react to the feelings of alienation as Catalonians in exile, which built invisible ties of solidarity between the works and fellow Catalanian exiles.

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