

Institution: UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM
Unit of Assessment: D28 Modern Languages and Linguistics
Title of case study: Promoting public engagement with the legacy of Francoism
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The impact of the research has been achieved principally in the areas of education, public awareness, political engagement, and the processes of identity-formation in contemporary Spanish society. This has been done by engaging the public with hitherto suppressed material from the Francoist period. Interaction with the target user groups has been effected by making the results of the research widely available on a range of platforms, including: new annotated editions of biographical and literary texts in reader-friendly format; a film documentary; an internet blog; public talks and debates in cultural centres and museums; activities at Adult Education centres and with reading groups. The ensuing lively (and at times heated) debates and discussions have in turn fed back into an evolving dialogue between researchers and the public. In this case, impact, like the research, is a continuous process, not a single event.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The research topics at the centre of the two ‘memory projects’ described here are part of Jato’s longstanding work on Spanish exile, beginning with a monograph in 2004. This led to Jato’s participation in several larger enterprises: the International Conference “Spain at the Crossroads of 1939” (University of North Texas, April 2006)); an International Summer Course “Francoism and Culture: Censorship,” University of Cantabria (July 2006); the International Conference “Exile and University” (San Sebastian, December 2006).</p> <p>The questions addressed in the two latest projects relate to key issues at the forefront of current controversies in Spain. The core of the research, conducted by Dr Mónica Jato (Senior Lecturer at the University of Birmingham) between 2006 and 2013, has concentrated on two collections of literary and biographical texts which remained unpublished for over 50 years as a result firstly of Francoist censorship and then of the so-called ‘Pact of Forgetting’ in the 1970s. The passing of the ‘Law of Historical Memory’ on 31st October 2007 served merely to re-ignite rather than dampen public anger about the Civil War and its consequences. Since then the processes of debate and national self-examination have become sharply focused on issues of commemoration, memorialisation and reconciliation, as Spaniards of different generations confront the country’s deeply troubling history. These controversies and their historical origins define the social and political contexts with which Jato’s research aims to engage.</p> <p>The research has involved tracking down, assembling and editing (largely from manuscripts) documents of a suppressed past, and providing the detailed commentaries necessary to explain their historical context to today’s readers. The research also entailed holding interviews and discussions with victims of the Spanish Civil War, with relatives of the victims, with organisations such as the International Brigades, ‘Basque Children of 37’, and with communities of Spanish expatriates in the UK. The research has continued through the processes of public engagement and will feed into further planned publications [see source 6 below].</p> <p>The two editions present the testimonies and cultural/literary representations of political and social exile as experienced by two Republican women, namely Cecilia García de Guilarte, who went into political exile in Mexico, and María Beneyto, one of the ‘inner exiles’ who remained in Spain under Franco’s dictatorship. Guilarte’s articles in <i>Un barco cargado de...</i>, (R1 below) began to be published in <i>La voz de España</i> in 1972, but for political reasons publication was ended after just 16 articles had appeared. Eight of the short stories included in María Beneyto’s <i>Cuentos para días de lluvia</i> (R2) likewise remained unpublished for more than 50 years (as a result of self-censorship).</p> <p>The editorial and analytic work on this material has thrown new light on women’s experiences of</p>

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war, the Francoist regime and the different types of exile to which it condemned so many. Despite the recent expansion of studies of memory, exile and the legacy of the Civil War, the textual basis of discussion has been limited to a number of 'canonical' authors. The edited testimonies of Beneyto and Guilarte aim to extend the corpus of relevant material, so that other, non-canonical voices can be heard.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- R1. Jato, Mónica. 2012. Cecilia García de Guilarte. *Un barco cargado de...* Sevilla: Renacimiento. 271 pages. ISBN: 978-84-8472-705-7. Publication funded by Tolosa Council. **(Entered in REF 2014)**
- R2. Jato, Mónica. 2012. María Beneyto. *Cuentos para días de lluvia*. Valencia: Institución Alfonso El Magnánimo. Funded by the Diputació de Valencia. 398 pages. ISBN: 978-84-7822-596-5. **(Entered in REF 2014)**
- R3. Jato, Mónica. 2012. Hacia una imposible poética del regreso: *Tiempo de llorar* de María Luisa Elío. *Mujer, creación y exilio (España, 1939-1975)*, ed. Mónica Jato, Janet Pérez and Sharon Keefe Ugalde. Barcelona: Icaria, 145-163. ISBN: 978-84-9888-102-8. (Reviewed in *Anales de la Literatura Española Contemporánea* 36.1, 2011, pp. 285-289). **(Entered in REF 2014)**
- R4. Jato, Mónica. 2008 El discurso metapoético de 'El agua que rodea la isla' y 'Para desconocer la primavera.' In: María Beneyto. *El laberinto de la palabra poética*. Valencia: Institución Alfonso El Magnánimo. 147-184. ISBN: 978-84-7822-514-9 (Reviewed in *Letras Peninsulares*, Fall/Winter 2008-2009, pp. 588-90 and in *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos* 43, 2009, pp. 599-663). **(Entered in REF 2014)**
- R5. Jato, Mónica, José Ángel Ascunce and M^a Luisa San Miguel (eds.). 2008. *Exilio y Universidad (1936-1955)*. San Sebastián: Saturrarán. 1338 pages. ISBN: 978-84-934455-5-3

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The publication of the intensely personal testimonies of Guilarte and Beneyto, together with other forms of public engagement (including use of the film documentary), has **added to public understanding** of the Francoist period, but it has been particularly effective in helping Franco's victims **share common experiences**, and to discuss them with other social groups and members of younger generations, and has helped to **promote dialogue** about new ways of responding to the past. This comes at a crucial moment, as first-hand testimony is becoming ever scarcer just when the recovery of the past appears more urgent than ever. The fact that each of the women came from parts of Spain where fierce debates about centralism and regional autonomy continue unabated has added a further (often controversial) dimension to the reception of their testimonies. Thanks to the use of various platforms, the results of the research have reached new (non-academic) audiences at public events in Spain, Mexico and the UK; through viewings of a film documentary; and through an accompanying blog.

The strength of public interest in recent work on exile and the Civil War is evident from the range of institutions sponsoring the events at which Jato has sought to **encourage engagement** with these testimonies, and by the fact that the publication of *Cuentos para días de lluvia* was sponsored by the Institución Alfonso El Magnánimo, funded by the Government of Valencia, while the publication of *Un barco cargado de...* was funded by Tolosa Council. The making of essential contacts began with an official Homage to Guilarte in November 2011 (where Jato was invited to speak by Ana María Ruiz - Guilarte's daughter) sponsored by the Mayor and Deputy for Culture of Tolosa and attended by local residents who contributed valuable testimonies of their own. The event resulted in engagement with sections of the community interested in memorialisation as a current social and political process.

The second stage of public engagement involved **fostering reconciliatory dialogue with the past** through presentation of the 'lost' memories in diverse fora. Jato organised public discussions of *Un barco cargado de...* and reading group activities on *Cuentos para días de lluvia* both in Spain and the UK. In order to make the research and Guilarte's memories more accessible to wider and

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diverse audiences, Jato produced an accompanying film documentary [see source 1 below]. Like Guilarte's boat with its cargo of memories, the book and the film called at various locations in Spain and the UK, delivering her testimony and collecting new memories from the participating public. The accompanying blog acted to further engage the public with the research, as well as providing a forum for discussion, feedback and reflection upon the impact of these activities on their perception of the past [2]. In the period to July 2013, the blog had received almost 3000 hits since its creation a year before [3].

The blog traced the journey of the boat/book as it set off from the Cultural Centre in Montornés (Catalonia, 28/06/2012) before travelling on to a variety of national museums and local community centres. These included:

- the Centro de Mayores Miguel de Cervantes, London (17/10/2012)
- the Cultural Centre and the EPA (School of Adult Education) in Tolosa in the Basque Country (24/10/2012)
- the Centre of the Anarchist Syndicate, San Sebastian (22/12/2012)
- the Museum of History of Cataluña (Barcelona) (07/02/2013)
- the Museum of Exile (La Junquera, Cataluña) (09/02/2013)
- the Arts and Sciences Festival, University of Birmingham (18/03/2013)
- the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, Bellaterra (04/04/2013)
- the Centro de Personas Adultas de Santander (09/04/2013)

Audiences were strictly non-academic members of the public, with a total of over 300 people attending. Feedback from audiences indicated that Jato's events and the documentary screening **aided the recovery of memory, facilitated dialogue about and changed opinions** of exile [4].

The material was also incorporated into other public events where memory work was an urgent contemporary concern. Thus, for example, the film was shown throughout the 'Semana cultural republicana' in Tolosa (8-14 April 2013). Jato's public talks at the Museum of History of Catalunya and the Museum of Exile were part of the cultural programme organised by the 'Memorial Democràtic de la Generalitat de Catalunya' a public institution 'aiming to recover, celebrate and promote democratic memory between 1931 and 1980', including the encouragement of *inter-generational* dialogue.

The value of both testimonies for **promoting trans-national dialogue** is demonstrated in two ways. Firstly by the inclusion of the Guilarte documentary in the commemorative events held in Mexico to celebrate the 82nd Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Spanish Second Republic, hosted by the Ateneo Español de México. Secondly, through a series of reading events based upon a translation of one of the stories from Beneyto's collection, "Una historia que es Historia". Organised by Jato, the story was used in the activities of four groups, mainly of older readers, at local libraries in Birmingham in Summer 2013 (Weoley Castle Library, Erdington Library, Quinton Library, Brasshouse Language Centre) leading participants to **reflect on women's wartime experiences** (including their own) [5]. Feedback from the groups (a total of around 360 participants), also indicated improved **understanding about the Spanish Civil war and in particular the challenges faced by women** [5].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- [1] Documentary available on request. YouTube trailer available here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xzo2KMu0La4>. Total 239 of trailer to July 2013.
- [2] Collated comments generated in response to blog (available on request).
- [3] 2871 visits to blog <http://unbarcocargadode.wordpress.com/> with 2,598 visits from 33 countries since June 2012 – with particular interest registered in Spain, UK, México, USA, Ireland, France, Colombia and Malaysia.)
- [4] Collated feedback from listed events (available on request).
- [5] Collated responses by reading groups to questionnaires (available on request).
- [6] Factual statement provided by Basque Children of '37 Association
- [7] Factual statement provided by International Brigades.