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The Spanish Civil War Memory Project: Constructing and Enhancing a Digital Archive

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The Spanish Civil War Memory Project: Constructing and Enhancing a Digital Archive

Cover Page Footnote

We would like to thank all of the interviewees, Spanish civic associations, and student researchers who participated in this project, which would not have been possible without the support of the University of California and the Mandeville Special Collections. We are also grateful to the anonymous reviewers who provided feedback that contributed to the development of this article.

The Spanish Civil War Memory Project: Constructing and Enhancing a Digital Archive

Luis Martín-Cabrera, Andrea Davis

The Creation of the Southworth Civil War Collection in San Diego

San Diego has always had a fortuitous and intense relationship with the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). For starters, Ramón J. Sender (1901-1982)—one of the most prolific writers of the post-war period and author of *Requiem for a Spanish Peasant* (1953)—was a professor of literature at San Diego State University. After fighting in defense of the Spanish Second Republic during the war, losing his wife Amparo Barayón to the fascist repression in Zamora, and surviving a concentration camp in southern France, Sender came to the United States where he taught at several universities before passing away in San Diego in 1982.

Like Ramón J. Sender, Carlos Blanco Aguinaga (1926-2013) also ended up in San Diego. After fleeing the Basque Country with his family at the end of the war, he relocated to Mexico where he became one of the leading figures of the ‘Spanish Exile.’ Later, he completed a PhD at Harvard University and became one of the most prestigious Spanish literary critics.¹ Eventually, he came to San Diego in the 1960s as a founding member of the Literature Department at the new University of California campus.

In San Diego, Blanco became a colleague of Gabriel Jackson, one of the most important historians of the Spanish Civil War. For an entire generation of Spanish intellectuals, Jackson was the acclaimed author of *Breve historia de la Guerra civil española*. Published in France in 1974 by the mythic Éditions Ruedo Ibérico, the short book circulated from hand to hand as one of the first accounts of the war that was not imbued by the hagiographic and grandiloquent tone of the official ‘histories’ of the period, such as the books of Ricardo de la Cierva and other Francoist intellectuals.

Jackson was part of a generation of British and US historians—including, but not limited to, Hugh Thomas, Stanley G. Payne, and Herbert Southworth—who took upon their shoulders the task of setting the Spanish Civil War record straight. In contrast to their counterparts in Spain, they were professional historians. Although they were not ideologically neutral, they respected the archival record and wrote free from the homogenizing pressures of the Spanish

¹ He was the author with Julio Rodríguez Puértolas, and Iris M. Zavala of *Historia Social de la literatura española* (Madrid: Castalia, 1978), the first attempt to construct a literary history, after the return of democracy, from a Marxist critical point of view. For a full account of Carlos Blanco’s intellectual trajectory at UC San Diego see the second part of his autobiography, *De mal asiento*. (Madrid: Caballo de Troya, 2010).

censure. It was not a coincidence that most of them published translations of their works with the Spanish exile press *Éditions Ruedo Ibérico*, which, in turn, promoted the clandestine circulation of their books in Spain.

Gabriel Jackson forged a particularly long-lasting friendship with one of these historians, Herbert Southworth (1908-1990). Southworth was an unorthodox historian and journalist in the best sense of the term. He was a socialist who became politicized in the 1930s while writing a series of articles about the Spanish Civil War for the *Washington Post*. Like other leftwing intellectuals of his time, he lived the defeat of the Second Republic as a tragedy that announced the rise of Fascism in Europe. Rather than admit defeat, he began to work for Spain's exiled former Prime Minister, Juan Negrín, to combat the consolidation of the Francoist dictatorship. As part of these efforts, Southworth wrote *El mito de la cruzada de Franco*. The publication of the book in 1963, again with Éditions Ruedo Ibérico, uncovered many of the lies fabricated by the Francoist regime, forcing Franco's Minister of Information, Manuel Fraga, to create a new department headed by Ricardo de la Cierva to counter the effects of Southworth's book.²

In addition to his historical work denouncing Francoist falsifications, Southworth was an important collector. In the 1940s, at the outbreak of World War II, he was appointed as a war correspondent. From his home base in Tangier, Morocco, he began to collect documents, posters, and memorabilia of the Spanish Civil War. In 1966, Gabriel Jackson convinced Herbert Southworth to sell these materials to the UC San Diego Library, paving the way for the creation of the [Southworth Spanish Civil War Collection](#). According to Lynda Claassen, the director of Library Special Collections and Archives, this is the largest archive of the Spanish Civil War with "13,000 books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers, posters, and manuscripts. Publications by Republicans, Falangists, Catholics, anarchists, communists, socialists, agrarian reformers, and regional political parties are all represented, as are those by Spanish exiles and partisans outside Spain."³

While the location of the collection on the shores of San Diego is one of the many arbitrary and serendipitous outcomes of the Spanish exile, it is not a coincidence. Rather, it is the product of the intellectual and political pathways that coalesced around San Diego and the University of California. From this perspective, the Southworth Collection bears testimony to the trajectories that emerged by necessity beyond Spanish borders. It is, in this regard, like a wrecked

² Paul Preston, "Herbert Southworth," *The Guardian*, November 9, 1999, sec. News, <https://www.theguardian.com/news/1999/nov/09/guardianobituaries>.

³ UC San Diego Library Special Collection and Archives, "Southworth Spanish Civil War Collection," <https://library.ucsd.edu/research-and-collections/collections/special-collections-and-archives/collections/southworth.html>.

ship full of bibliographical treasures. Its presence on the peaceful hills of La Jolla is the bittersweet fruit of a history of displacement and diaspora that, as we shall see in the next section, is far from being over.

The Origins of The Spanish Civil War Memory Project

When Luis Martín-Cabrera was hired in 2005 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Literature at UC San Diego, Lynda Claassen approached him about expanding the Southworth Collection. At that time, the movement for the recovery of historical memory was in its apogee. Up until 2000, the Spanish transition to democracy had been celebrated as a model for export. This model, which has since been ‘unsettled,’ was constructed upon an Amnesty Law that shielded human rights violators and effectively silenced public discourse about the atrocities committed during the Spanish Civil War and ensuing dictatorship of General Francisco Franco (1939-1975).⁴ Although there were some localized efforts to combat oblivion during the transition to democracy (1975-1982), it was only in 2000 after Emilio Silva exhumed the mass grave of Prianza del Bierzo that a memorialist movement coalesced at the national level.⁵

In 2000 Emilio Silva was a relatively unknown journalist. Like many Spaniards of his generation, Silva only knew thru murmurs, half-truths and silences that his grandfather had been executed by the paramilitary forces of the Falange. He did not know, however, where his grandfather’s remains were lain or how exactly he had been killed. Without the help of state or local authorities, Silva and a group of archeologists and volunteers located a mass grave with the remains of his grandfather and twelve other republicans who were executed at the outbreak of the war. Because Silva was a journalist, he was able to transform the exhumation of his grandfather into a media event. At first only the international press covered the exhumation, but later the Spanish media was also forced to talk about the presence of hundreds, if not thousands, of unmarked mass graves all over Spain.

The mediatization of the exhumation of Prianza del Bierzo—combined with the founding of the Association for the Recuperation of Historical Memory (ARMH) under the leadership of Silva and Santiago Macías—paved the way for the emergence of a robust social movement in defense of the recuperation of

⁴ Pamela Radcliff, “Unsettling the Iberian Transitions to Democracy of the 1970s,” in *The Routledge Companion to Iberian Studies*, ed. Javier Munoz-Basols, Manuel Delgado Morales, and Laura Lonsdale (London: Taylor & Francis, 2017), 450–61.

⁵ Andrea Davis, “Enforcing the Transition: The Demobilization of Collective Memory in Spain, 1979-1982,” *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 92, no. 6 (2015): 673-695; Paloma Aguilar, “Unwilling to Forget: Local Memory Initiatives in Post-Franco Spain,” *South European Society and Politics* 22, no. 4 (October 2, 2017): 405–426; Francisco Ferrándiz, “Exhuming the Defeated: Civil War Mass Graves in 21st Century Spain,” *American Ethnologist* 40, no. 1 (2013): 38-54.

historical memory. Local associations were formed in every corner of Spain and volunteers with very little support from local authorities —except in Catalonia and the Basque Country—searched for the remains of loved ones and neighbors.⁶

In the summer of 2006 Martín-Cabrera traveled to Madrid to meet with Emilio Silva and representatives of ARHM. In that meeting he proposed the creation of an audiovisual archive of testimonies of individuals who suffered or witnessed human rights violations during the Spanish Civil War and Francoist dictatorship. Silva and the members of ARMH welcomed the idea and promised to collaborate with UC San Diego in the creation of the archive.⁷

During that year, Martín-Cabrera visited several human rights and memory archives in the United States. Ultimately, Martín-Cabrera decided to model [The Spanish Civil War Memory Project](#) (SCWMP) after the [Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University](#). The Fortunoff archive was created by survivors of the holocaust and psychoanalysts like Dori Laub, who posited that wars and genocides are traumatic events that resist symbolization and, instead, produce meaning through silences and oblique language. Inspired by the Fortunoff archive and the work of psychoanalyst dealing with social trauma, Martín-Cabrera wrote in the [Interviewing Protocol](#) of the SCWMP:

The methodology of this archive is based on the principles of psychoanalysis and on oral history. We turn to psychoanalysis, because we understand that the torture, the massive and indiscriminate murders and the systematic repression implemented by the Francoist forces during the Civil War and the dictatorship constitute a historical trauma whose traces are still present in Spanish society. A psychoanalytic methodology implies in the first place that the interviews have a format that is radically open and that it is the interviewee who possesses the power, the knowledge, and the initiative in the interview and not the interviewer. For this reason, some interviews can last an hour and others five, depending on what the victim has to tell and can tell.

Using an unscripted open-ended model was a break with the epistemic violence exercised by journalist and historians who decide how and what parts of a survivor's story should be told. In our approach, we were conscious of the fact that we were being trusted with a very important kind of knowledge and that we needed to respect the will of people who, in many cases, had been waiting all of their lives to tell what had happened to them and their relatives during the war and

⁶ For a full account of the exhumation of Prínza del Bierzo see Emilio Silva and Santiago Macías. *Las fosas de Franco. Los republicanos que el dictador dejó en las cunetas*. (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 2003), 59.

⁷ In fact, Silva told us that Ariel Jérez, a professor of political science at the Universidad Complutense in Madrid, had a similar project that the authorities of the Universidad Complutense considered too controversial to fund and support.

dictatorship. Accordingly, SCWMP interviewers had to be trained as “active listeners” to facilitate “the process of the production of a testimony.” As Martín-Cabrera explained in the [Interviewing Protocol](#), “it is essential to listen actively because one of the effects of a historical trauma is precisely the destruction of the dimension of otherness that guarantees the dialogical function of language and the construction of a communal space for social exchanges.”

Perhaps these methodological considerations sound well-tread or not properly situated in current oral history debates in the United States. If this is the case, it is because of the particular relation that Spain had to the discipline of oral history when the project was designed and implemented. We were aware, of course, of the monumental oral history work of British historian Ronald Fraser. However, although his *Blood of Spain* was recognized as a major achievement, it was not adopted in the Spanish academy as a methodological model.⁸ In fact, famous Spanish historians with recognized public profiles—such as Santos Juliá, Javier Tussell, and Angel Viñas—ignored the oral record at best, and despised it at worst. For example, Santos Julia wrote in 2006: “While history seeks knowing, understanding, interpreting or explaining –acting under a demand of totality and objectivity—, memory strives to legitimize, rehabilitate, honor or condemn. Memory always acts in a selective and subjective manner.”⁹ This rejection of the historical value of the oral record may have been rooted in the persistence of positivist historical methods in Spain or personal political affiliations that extended back to the transition. In either case, it left literature and cultural studies departments with the task of defending the arguments in support of oral history that Paul Thompson made in the eighties.¹⁰ Novels such as *Requiem por un campesino español* (1960) by Ramón J. Sender or *Si te dicen que caí* (1973) by Juan Marsé recognized the crucial importance of the oral record to access the history of the Spanish Civil War and the dictatorship. By the same token, the first coherent arguments in defense of the need for a public politics of memory came from books in the field of cultural studies such as Teresa Vilaró’s *El Mono del desencanto* or Eduardo Subirats’ *Después de la lluvia*.¹¹

⁸ Ronald Fraser. *Blood of Spain: An Oral History of Spanish Civil War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979).

⁹ Santos Juliá, “De ‘guerra contra el invasor’ a ‘guerra fratricida’” in *Víctimas de la guerra civil*, ed. Santos Juliá (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 2006), 17.

¹⁰ Paul Thompson. *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988). For more on the role of literature and cultural studies see, Luis Martín-Cabrera. *Radical Justice: Spain and the Southern Cone beyond Market and State*. (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2011).

¹¹ Eduardo Subirats. *Después de la lluvia. Sobre la ambigua modernidad española*. (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 1993); Teresa Vilarós. *El mono del desencanto. Una crítica cultural de la transición española (1973-1993)* (Madrid: Siglo XXI editores, 1998).

Given these intellectual trajectories, it is no coincidence that the SCWMP was designed and directed from a literature department. Moreover, although the archive was constructed with an international audience in mind, we knew that we had to engage with the particular configurations of knowledge and power in the Spanish public sphere. Ultimately, as we shall see in the next section, these configurations shaped the testimonies as much as the theoretical tools we bore in hand.

Recording Testimonies, 2007-2011

The initial testimonials of the SCWMP were filmed in 2007 thanks to the generosity of the Division of Arts and Humanities and the UC San Diego Library. That summer Martín-Cabrera and Scott Boehm, a graduate student from the Literature department at UC San Diego, returned to Spain. After one of the first interviews with [Carmen Arrojo](#), Scott Boehm decided to change his focus from American Studies to the politics of memory in Spain. This anecdote is telling, because it reflects the nature of the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee; a relationship that can best be described as an encounter with an event that is marked by an excess of dead. For that reason, neither the interviewer nor the interviewee can walk away from the experience untouched.¹²

Over the next three years (2008-2011) several teams of graduate student researchers from different disciplines—including Scott Boehm, Jessica Cordova, Andrea Davis, Jodi Eisenberg, Viviana Macmanus, Elize Mazadiego, Omar Pimienta, and Marcella Vargas—traveled to Spain to collect interviews from their home bases in Madrid, Barcelona, Granada, and Sevilla. When we ran out of funds, some of these graduate students paid out of pocket or shared their limited resources with their colleagues to keep recording interviews. These graduate students were assisted by an equally committed group of Spanish volunteers—including Miriam Duarte, Jorge Rojo, Guillermo Rojo, Jessica Plauzt, and Guillermo Izquierdo—who donated their time and expertise to collect the 111 interviews that constitute the SCWMP.¹³

For the interviewees, the very presence of a camera from an international public institution such as the University of California was seen an act of

¹² While the social dimension of an oral history interview gives immediacy to this experience of encounter, Marisa J. Fuentes speaks of a similar experience working with archival materials when writing *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016). In her words, “to sit with these sources requires the capacity to hold and inhabit deep wells of pain and horror” (147).

¹³ In addition to all the interviewees, it is also important to recognize a number of individuals who helped our teams during the field work: Emilio Silva, Gunter Schwaiger and Carlos Agüero in Madrid, Ángel del Río in Sevilla, and Venturita Ballús, Salvador López Arnal and Montse Armengou in Barcelona. Many other anonymous militants of the struggle for the recuperation of historical memory that helped one way or another.

reparation. For some, giving testimony to foreigners that they had never before seen allowed them to unburden themselves from a knowledge that they bore for too long and, often, in completely solitude. For others, it represented an opportunity to be heard above the polarizing domestic debates that surrounded the so-called “Law of Historical Memory” (2007), which was debated in parliament and implemented as we conducted interviews in Spain. The final text of this law, as many of our interviewees lamented, is limited in its scope and recognition of the atrocities that Francoist forces committed during the war and dictatorship. For example, the law equates—without respect for hard data—the violence committed by ‘both sides’ during the war and passes the responsibility for exhuming mass graves onto the families of the victims and their local and regional governments. Yet, in spite of these limitations, over half of all Spaniards rejected the implementation of the law on the grounds that it ‘reopened old wounds.’¹⁴

For those of us participating in the SCWMP, we were shocked by the contrast between the contents of the testimonials we were recording and the noise we encountered in the streets. There was, in fact, no place to hear what we were recording in mainstream Spain. This is not to diminish the labor undertaken by thousands of Spanish volunteers who worked on exhumations or in the writing of memories about the period. Rather, it is to emphasize that they, like us, encountered a society that refused to ‘really know’ what happened in those traumatic years of the war and dictatorship.

In this respect, the SCWMP proudly follows in the footsteps of our predecessors, Herbert Southworth, Carlos Blanco Aguinaga, Gabriel Jackson, and the British historians who went to written archives to correct distorted accounts of the Spanish Civil War and the Francoist dictatorship. At the same time, the SCWMP is a different kind of endeavor. It is a critical archive that uses the web to circulate oral histories of the political repression in Spain. As a critical archive, the SCWMP not only challenges state-sanctioned histories, but recognizes the role that archives play in the “production of knowledge and different types of narratives, as well as identity construction.”¹⁵

In this sense, the SCWMP is, at one and the same time, an act of activism and scholarship. As such, it embodies the link that Francisco Espinosa Maestre has drawn between the movement for the recovery of historical memory and the study of the Francoist repression.¹⁶ Furthermore, as an oral history archive, the

¹⁴ For an analysis of Spanish public opinion regarding these memory debates, see, Paloma Aguilar and Clara Ramírez-Barat, “Generational Dynamics in Spain: Memory Transmission of a Turbulent Past,” *Memory Studies* (online October 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698016673237>

¹⁵ Michelle Caswell, Ricardo Punzalan, and T-Kay Sangwand, “Critical Archival Studies: An Introduction,” *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 1, no. 2 (2017): 2.

¹⁶ Francisco Espinosa Maestre, ed., *Violencia roja y azul: España 1936-1950* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2010).

SCWMP diverges from the positivist historical approaches that were prominent during the 1960s and 1970s and persist among important sectors of the academy in Spain. The testimonials present an alternative form of knowledge and way of constructing historical reality that is best described by one of our interviewees, [Rufina Balbás](#) (Image 1).



Image 1: Screenshot of Balbás, Rufina. Testimony of the Spanish Civil War and the Francoist Dictatorship. University of California, San Diego, 2008.

Rufina's father was detained at the outbreak of the war for his Republican sympathies and militancy in the province of Burgos. At the time of the interview in 2008, Rufina's father was still missing or 'disappeared.' She was only able to recover the remains of her father from a cave in Humarraña in the province of Burgos in 2009, thanks to the support of the Federación Estatal de Foros por la Memoria.¹⁷ At some point towards the end of the interview Rufina states: "the episode is so long that three books are not enough, that's why I don't buy books

¹⁷ "Identificados los restos de uno de los individuos encontrados en la Cueva Humarraña por la Asociación Foro por la Memoria," *Provincial* (Arlanzón 98.6 FM. La radio de Burgos, July 29, 2011), <http://www.radioarlanzon.com/noticias/provincial/29/07/2011/identificados-los-restos-de-uno-de-los-individuos-encontrados-en-la-cueva-humarrana-por-la-asociacion-foro-por-la-memoria/33110/>.

about the war because I suffer. Also, what other book is there apart from the one I carry inside? If your memory falters...well, but I remember everything... no, no I'd rather remember until the last moment."¹⁸

The book that Rufina has swallowed is a particular form of melancholic knowledge that was preserved in her own body because it could not be preserved elsewhere. It is a burden that she has had to carry inside because there was no place for this history in the public sphere. In a way, we could say that all the testimonials we collected in the SCWMP belong to the same kind of melancholic archive; they were lost objects that were preserved only by those who were directly affected by the lethal violence of Spanish fascism. As such, the testimonials not only "reveal unknown aspects of known events," but more importantly, as oral historian Alessandro Portelli writes, tell us about the "meaning" of these events while casting "new light on unexplored areas of the daily life of the nonhegemonic classes."¹⁹

Enhancing the Archive

In 2017, when former graduate student researcher Andrea Davis was hired as an Assistant Professor of History and Digital Humanities at Arkansas State University, she reached out to Luis Martín-Cabrera and Lynda Claassen about enhancing the SCWMP with new digital public humanities methods and tools.²⁰ Inspired by digital projects that broke down the "traditional binary between memory and history" by "making explicit the terms by which we inherit" and think of "the archive as an historical prompt," Davis proposed to build a new project website that leveraged the archival work of UC San Diego Library Special Collections and Archives using [Scalar](#) and [OHMS](#) (Oral History Metadata Synchronizer).²¹

¹⁸ Rufina Balbás, *Testimony of the Spanish Civil War and the Francoist Dictatorship*. University of California, San Diego, 2008. <http://scalar.usc.edu/works/spanish-civil-war-memory-project-audiovisual-archive-of-the-francoist-repression/balbs-rufina>

¹⁹ Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 50.

²⁰ According to Lauren Tilton and Grace Elizabeth Hale, digital public humanities "engages and often creates a public or publics for the humanities" drawing on digital humanities methods, tools, and commitments to "scholarly and other forms of collaboration and open access." "Participatory Archives," *Archives Journal*, August 2017, <http://www.archivejournal.net/essays/participatory-archives/>. As Jesse Stommel continues, and the SCWMP demonstrates, the scholarly product of this work "is a conversation that blurs...distinctions between research, teaching, and service" "The Public Digital Humanities," in *Disrupting the Digital Humanities*, ed. Dorothy Kim and Jesse Stommel (Santa Barbara, CA: Punctum Books, 2018), 84.

²¹ David Kim and Jacqueline Wernimont, "'Performing Archive': Identity, Participation, and Responsibility in the Ethnic Archive" *Archive Journal*, April 2014, <http://www.archivejournal.net/?p=5742>.

Scalar is a free and open-source scholarly publishing platform developed by the Alliance for Networking Visual Culture at the University of Southern California. With its flexible structure, seamless integration of digital media, and built in visualization tools, Scalar allows authors to critically experiment with form and content to produce scholarship that takes design as the “foundation for the conceptualization and production of knowledge.”²² We selected Scalar, as opposed to a more straightforward collection tool like Omeka, so that we can place the testimonies in dynamic conversation with scholarly and pedagogical materials. As we build the project website in Scalar, we are using OHMS to capture metadata for the digital preservation of testimonies. Developed by the Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History at the University of Kentucky Libraries as a free and open-source system, OHMS enhances audiovisual interviews by providing users with time-correlated and searchable indexes.²³

To best empower our users, we are designing the project with specific publics in mind. These publics consist of Spanish-speakers, English-speakers with at least some Spanish skills, and people whose subject knowledge ranges from introductory to expertise. To accommodate these diverse publics, we are writing project materials in Spanish and English, using OHMS to index the testimonies in both languages, and taking advantage of Scalar’s flexible structure to construct multiple entry points into the archive (Image 2). One entry point, which can be accessed through the [Testimonies by Last Name](#) page, is catered to individuals with advanced subject knowledge or specific research interests who want to search the complete catalogue by name or subject tag. A second entry point, [Testimonies by Theme](#), invites students and users with more diffuse research interests to select a theme, such as gender repression or exile in France, to access introductory material that pairs original scholarship with a curated selection of interviews.

²² Anne Burdick et al., *Digital Humanities*, Open Access (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2012), 117, https://mitpress.mit.edu/sites/default/files/titles/content/9780262018470_Open_Access_Edition.pdf. For the origins of Scalar see Tara McPherson, “Designing for Difference,” *Differences* 25, no. 1 (2014): 177–88, <https://doi.org/10.1215/10407391-2420039>.

²³ For more on OHMS, see Doug Boyd, “OHMS: Enhancing Access to Oral History for Free,” *The Oral History Review* 40, no. 1 (2013): 95–106.

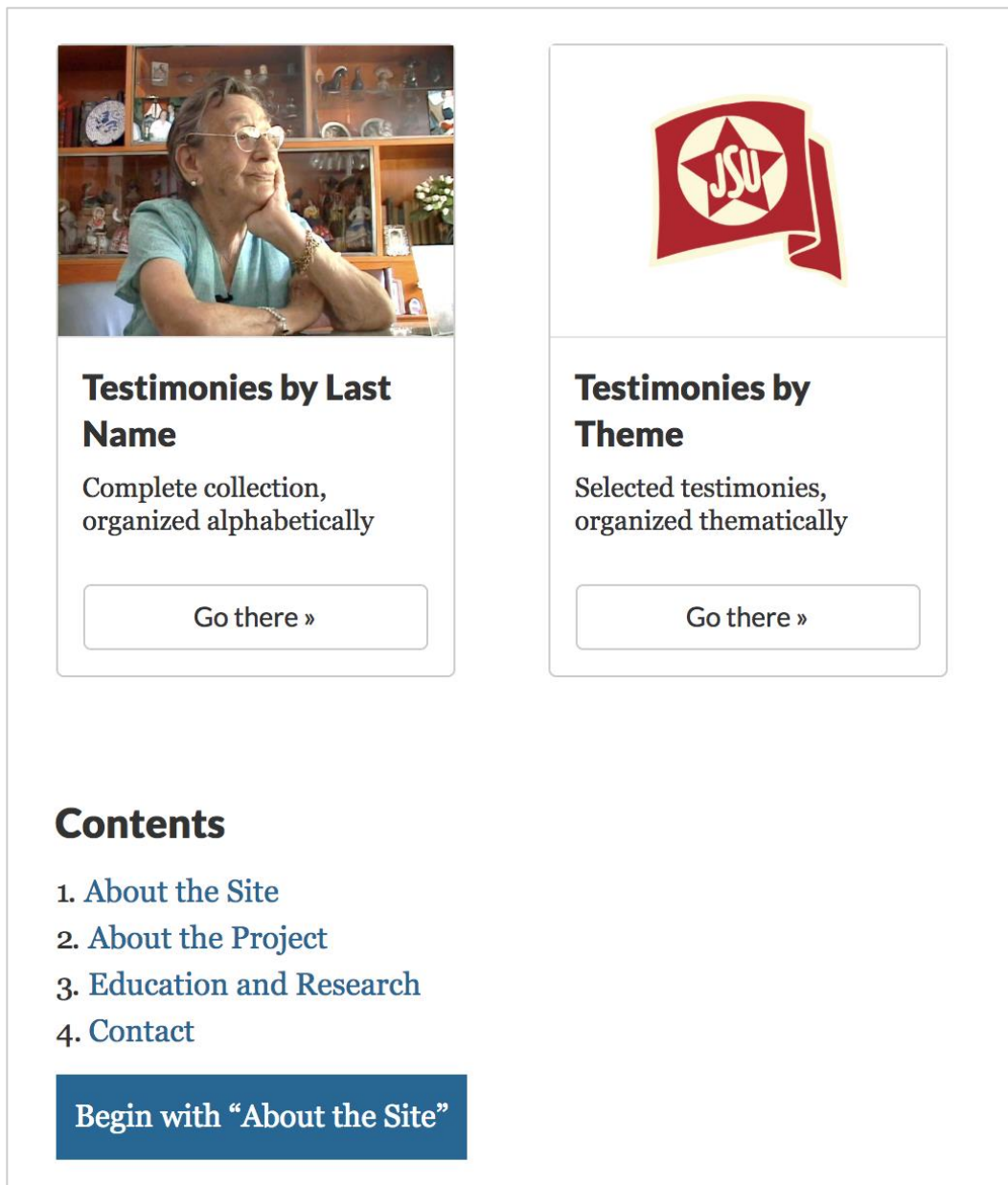



Image 2: Screenshot of the “Introduction” page of the SCWMP.

Regardless of the entry point, users are ultimately directed to a single page for each interviewee where the full testimony streams. As depicted in Image 3, streamed testimonies will be embedded within searchable indexes that provide users with brief descriptions of the interview’s time-coded segments.

Luis Martí Bielsa Tape 3/8

Andrea R Davis
 Andrea Davis, Interviewer |
 Testimony of the Spanish Civil War and the Francoist Dictatorship. University of California, San Diego. |



- ▶ 0:00 - Experience in and escape from Argelès-sur-Mer Concentration Camp, c. 1939
- ▶ 2:35 - Retreat to Free Zone in southern France
- ▶ 7:32 - Capture, escape and recapture by French police
- ▶ 9:19 - Experience in Bram Concentration Camp and return to Argelès-sur-Mer Concentration Camp
- ▶ 10:44 - Reflection on French treatment of Spanish refugees
- ▶ 13:29 - Release from Argelès-sur-Mer Concentration Camp to work as a forced laborer
- ▶ 15:53 - Sabotage of German war efforts and experience as a political prisoner
- ▶ 18:20 - Release and refuge with a Spanish refugee family
- ▶ 19:12 - Participation in the French Resistance, c. 1942
- ▶ 23:53 - Denunciation and escape to Paris

[Switch to Spanish](#)

Search this Index ▼

Image 3: Lluís Martí Bielsa testimony indexed with OHMS (sample YouTube version).

For additional information, users can expand these segments to access: a partial transcript, segment synopsis, keywords, subjects, geotags and hyperlinks (Image 4). The partial transcript and segment synopsis will help users situate themselves within the testimony and visualize its broader narrative structure. The keywords and subjects, which will come from a controlled vocabulary being developed by New York University's Andrew H. Lee, will allow users to search

within and between testimonies. Meanwhile, the geotag and hyperlink functions will provide additional information, opening up new avenues for user research and continued project development. We add this information to the testimonies not only because it will make the archive a more user-friendly and media rich experience, but because we view open metadata as a ‘public good’ that facilitates data reuse and sharing.²⁴

15:53 - Sabotage of German war efforts and experience as a political prisoner

[Play segment](#)[Segment link](#)

Partial Transcript: The Germans had damaged a tanker...

Segment Synopsis: Remembers working as a forced laborer in France, sabotaging a German war vehicle and being sent to Agde concentration camp as a political prisoner.

Keywords: Agde (Concentration camp); Atlantic Wall; Communist Party; Organisation Todt

Subjects: Concentration camps--France; Political refugees--Spain--History--20th century; World War II

GPS: [Agde, France](#)

Map Coordinates: 43.301, 03.501

Hyperlink: [United States Holocaust Memorial Museum holdings on Agde.](#)

Image 4: Lluís Martí Bielsa testimony indexed with OHMS (sample YouTube version).

Next Steps

²⁴ Jane Greenberg, “Metadata Capital: Raising Awareness, Exploring a New Concept,” *Bulletin of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 40, no. 4 (2015): 30–33.

The publication of this article marks the soft release of the enhanced [Spanish Civil War Memory Project](#). Although we are still developing the website and working with Electronic Resources Coordinator Matt Peters to integrate the project into the UC San Diego Library Special Collections and Archives preservation plan, we are releasing the project so that we can invite college classes, credit-earning interns, and researchers to participate in the indexing process (see Image 5 for our indexing guidelines).²⁵

Step 1 - Indexing

With OHMS, the first step is to index the testimony using the "tag now" button to divide the interview into segments. Following the broader methodology of the project, the aim here is not to impose order onto the testimony, but to encode the narrative structure that emerged during the course of the interview.

Step 2 - Adding Metadata

The second step is to add metadata (i.e. information about content) to each of the time-coded segments. Below is a list of OHMS's metadata fields along with project-specific guidelines for inputting information into each field. Because the Spanish Civil War Memory Project is geared towards Spanish and English speaking users, all metadata will be added in both languages.

Partial Transcript: The partial transcript provides users with the opening words or sentence initiating the segment. These words can be spoken by the interviewer or interviewee. What is important here is not who is speaking or even what is being said. Rather, the purpose of the partial segment is to orient users so that they know exactly where the segment begins.

Segment Synopsis: The segment synopsis provides a brief (1-2 sentence) narrative overview of the segment. For specific guidelines on how to phrase and format synopses for this project, [go here](#).

Keywords: Keywords are important words that the interviewee or interviewer directly mention in the testimony. They may include the names of people, places, events, organizations and/or themes.

Subjects: Subject tags are selected from a project-specific controlled vocabulary. The purpose of these tags is to help users trace topics and themes within and between testimonies. To see our bilingual subject thesaurus, [go here](#).

Geotag: The geotag function can be used to assign a geographical location to a particular segment of the testimony. This function should be used when an interviewee discusses an important place, such as a country where they took refuge, a concentration camp where they were interned, or a prison where they were incarcerated.

Image 5: Screenshot of the [Indexing Guidelines](#) page of the SCWMP.

²⁵ For an award-winning example of how oral history indexing can be integrated into the college classroom, see Charles Hardy III, Janneken Smucker, and Doug Boyd, "Connecting the Classroom and the Archive: Oral History, Pedagogy, & Goin' North," *Oral History in the Digital Age*, 2017, <http://ohda.matrix.msu.edu/2017/02/connecting-the-classroom-and-the-archive-oral-history-pedagogy-goin-north/>.

We invite these publics into the archive because, as the Newberry Library writes about their crowdsourced transcription projects, indexing “gives participants the chance to engage [with interviews] in new and exciting ways while also contributing to scholarship and expanding public access.”²⁶ Since the process of indexing—and adding metadata more broadly—is “not merely descriptive, but also already on its way to interpretation,” we will publicly credit all indexing work as a research activity.²⁷ We will also encourage participants to present on the project, list their collaboration on their resume or CV, and elaborate upon their experiences to develop new scholarship and lesson plans that can be linked to or featured on the SCWMP website (Image 6).²⁸

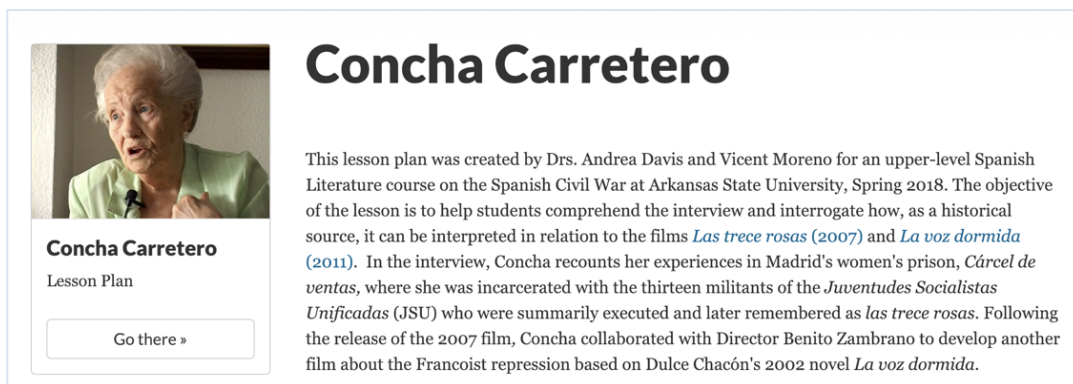


Image 6: Screenshots from the [Education and Research](#) page of the SCWMP.

In addition to providing research opportunities to classes, interns, and researchers, we are creating a signature program that pairs students in the United States with students in Spain. The goal of this program is to increase access to high-impact learning by serving students whose skills might have otherwise prevented them from participating and/or personal circumstances might have otherwise limited their access to international exchange.²⁹ We dedicate this

²⁶ Newberry Library, “About This Project,” Transcribing Modern Manuscripts, accessed July 2, 2018, <http://publications.newberry.org/digital/mms-transcribe/about>. For more on crowdsourcing and participatory archives, see Trevor Owens, “Digital Cultural Heritage and the Crowd,” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 56, no. 1 Tilton and Hale, “Participatory Archives.”

²⁷ Michael Kramer, “Going Meta on Metadata,” *Journal of Digital Humanities* 3, no. 2 (2014), <http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/3-2/going-meta-on-metadata/>.

²⁸ These objectives are adapted from Haley Di Pressi et al., “A Student Collaborators’ Bill of Rights,” Center for Digital Humanities - UCLA, June 8, 2015, <http://cdh.ucla.edu/news/a-student-collaborators-bill-of-rights/>.

²⁹ One of the seminal texts on high-impact learning remains George D Kuh, Carol Geary Schneider, and Association of American Colleges and Universities, *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter* (Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2008).

program to our interviewees, whose stories have inspired us to develop new practices of social inclusion and international solidarity for the digital age.

Conclusion

As we transform the SCWMP with new digital public humanities methods and tools, we strive to keep the core values of the project the same. First, by licensing our work with Creative Commons and selecting free and open-source software, we continue to support and participate in the free-culture movement. Second, by continuing to collaborate with diverse stakeholders—including human rights associations, librarians, software developers, researchers, and students—we renew our commitment to examining the nature and politics of the archive via-praxis. Third, by creating educational resources and inviting students into the research process, we reinforce the educational mission of the SCWMP.

By way of conclusion, we would like to invite readers who share our values and/or research interests to participate in the SCWMP. If you would like to become an affiliated researcher, integrate an indexing assignment into one of your courses, or place a student intern with the project, please contact us via the project [Contact](#) page or at scwmemoryproject@gmail.com.