No badi, cregui'm, això dura poc. En un tres i no res,
passem d'embrions incerts a calaveres atònites.

"Calaveres Atònites"

JESÚS MONTCADA

20002742
Supervisors: Mark Ingham and Nela Milic
London College of Communication
Full-Time PhD UAL

MEMORY AS FIRST BREATH

Critiquing and Disrupting the Lingering Politics of Memory of the Francoist Regime Through an Artistic Practice Involving a Personal Archive of Photographs

Mireia Ludevid i Llop

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Arts of London

February 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

6 **Images of A Walk Through Irrelevance**

18 **Abstract**

19 **Acknowledgements**

20 **Images of Becoming-Almond**

24 **Introduction**

40 **Images of Deformations**

52 **Desmemòria or how the past was pushed into the dark corners of houses**

52 A Walk Through Irrelevance
56 The Spanish Democratic Transition: National Narratives, Identity and Unity
60 An Affective Politics of Memory
63 Enforcing Unity: Disregarded Conflictivity as a Strategy of Suppression
67 The Historical Memory Law and The Law of Democratic Memory
70 Speaking from the Present and Autobiographically
70 Desmemòria as Debt or Desire
76 Conclusion

82 **Images of My Grandfather Was Born Underwater**

108 **Faió or the Wolves of la Franja**

110 Archive Silences: Deformations and My Grandfather was born Underwater
118 The Llops of la Franja
124 Rivers, Mines, Dogs and Ghosts
131 Faió: Ugliest Town in Spain?
139 Almonds as Agency
144 Conclusion

148 **Images of Memory Meal: Eating to Archive**

164 **Gathering fragmented legacies: archiving against silence**

166 Memory Meal: Eating to Archive
169 Spanish Archive: Pierced by Fascism
173 The Archive as A Site of Activism
175 Memory Meal: Eating the Earth or a Village to Return
175 A Family Archive
180 A Conflicted Taxonomy
188 Memory Meal: Drinking the River, or Water to Live By
189 Memory in the Face of Family Power
192 Memory As Social Reproduction - A Feminist Lens for Archive Research
204 Memory Meal: Eating Almonds to Make With
206 Conclusion

214 **Images of Working the Knot**

218 Minor literature for a personal archive's new frame. Can different intensities around personal conflict disrupt the territories of forgetting?

219 The Debt
226 Apparatus of Capture - Foundational Binaries
229 Writing, Thinking, Feeling In Compressed Spaces
234 A Minor Literature in the Face of the Renunciations and Binaries Established by the Regime
237 Conflict - Towards Complexity and Agency
242 Gestures of Disruption, Acts of Nomadic Kinship
245 Working the Knot
248 Conclusion

252 Images of Gathering Almonds

258 Reenchanting The Past with Photographic Narratives

259 Gathering Almonds
260 Enunciating Impossibilities as an Act of Care and Resistance
264 Pessimistic Attitudes Towards Conflict Photography and Representation
267 Active Spectatorship to Spur into Action
268 The Ethics and Affects of Family Photographs
278 Towards a Becoming-Woman of the Archive
288 Deformations
294 Reenchanting the Fragment, Reenchanting the Past
310 Sound, Hosting and Collaboration for Transnational Inquiry
313 Conclusion

318 Images of Surfacing

328 Conclusion

336 Complete Bibliography

352 Appendix: The Ethics of Working With Personal Photographic Archives Within Contested Histories

353 The Ethics of Conducting Practice-based Research with Family Materials
355 The Ethics of Collaboration
355 Some Considerations about Researching within the Political of the Intimate


BUHO


10










CANAL











ABSTRACT

This thesis examines and critiques the memory politics of the Francoist regime and the post-Franco era, looking specifically at the flooding and displacement of Faió, a village in a region called la Franja in South Aragon at the border with Catalonia. Academic literature emphasises the Pact of Forgetting (1975) and Law of Amnesty (1977) as the central moments of memory construction of the Francoist past during the Transition. This research examines the relationship between these events and the lingering discourses and affects of previous mnemonic narratives, especially those regarding territorial politics and the production of subjectivity under the regime. An analysis of the exclusion of personal accounts from political and historical research informs a critique of these politics. Examining these through a personal archive, which contains family photographs spanning three generations (from 1950 to 2000), makes it possible to identify how autobiographical narratives and affects underpin the transmission of a troubled past. I argue that these personal accounts constitute counter-narratives and memory materials previously excluded from collective memory and academic literature.

Memory studies scholars have argued that the politics of memory have historically relied on inaccessible archives, challenging the disclosure of information, research, and legal action. Despite the participation of families in these processes, there remains a need to further investigate the potential of researching personal archives. This thesis explores how a practice-based autoethnographic methodology can contribute to understanding the challenges and possibilities of situated research on personal family archives in contexts of troubled pasts. I argue that an artistic practice with a personal archive disrupts the lingering politics of the regime by multiplying the sources of historical research and political practice. Situating research within personal narratives and minor histories, this thesis proposes an alternative relationship between personal and political narratives, drawing on new materialist perspectives, in particular Deleuze and Guattari's work on minor literature. The analysis of reproductive work by feminist scholar Silvia Federici and the nomadic perspective of Rosi Braidotti privilege the perspective of women within the family archive, further defining memory as reproductive work which provides multiple material and symbolic meanings and coordinates.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Since the beginning of this project, I have received significant support and assistance. I want to thank my supervisors, Dr Mark Ingham and Dr Nela Milic, for their guidance and support. Their ideas, suggestions and critiques have greatly enriched and enhanced my work.

I want to thank the staff and workers at the University of the Arts of London and the London College of Communication for the opportunity to develop my postgraduate research. I want to acknowledge my supervisor at the London College of Fashion, Dr Paul Bevan, for the support during my master's course and in my application to study at LCC.

I also want to thank my mother, Anna, for her guidance and for, together with aunt Roser, trusting me with a small part of our family history. I want to thank them for engaging with my work and participating in the research. To my father Xavier, thank you for your endless willingness to help and for your curiosity. Moltes gràcies.

I am proud and grateful that so many cherished people have been involved in this project. Berta Salomó, gràcies per allotjar-me, acompanyar-me, assistir-me, compartir les teves idees, el teu temps: gràcies per tot, com sempre. Oriol Carmona, gràcies per recollir i guardar els meus objectes irrellevants. Katie Hammet, thank you. Gaia Crocella, thank you for introducing me to hosting and for being a thoughtful and giving friend. Paula Corella, per consultar durant la preparació de l'àpat familiar i per la teva generositat constant. Dr Kate Merrit, Clara Pérez, Tiina Ree and Evie Adams for getting sticky with resin and participating in the initial iterations of almond gathering. Julia Schauerman, for introducing me to acousmatic storytelling and bringing kindness and openness to our collaboration. Vera Zurbrügg and Seeders, for new and exciting ways of working. To Casal Independentista la Cruïlla, for hosting the Memory Meal. I want to thank Spike Milligan for proofreading my work and for being a spirited and giving partner; Kate Merrit and Evie Adams for proofreading my work, contributing meaningful suggestions and being a great friend. This work gathers meaning through its many voices.

I have learned many lessons during the four years that I have needed to complete this thesis. One precious lesson is the confirmation that all knowledge is collaborative. I am grateful to my friends, colleagues, and community for teaching me to be patient, excited, and grateful - qualities most needed to push through the hardest parts of this project and to recognise and enjoy its sweetest moments. To Anna, Atticus, Berta, Borja, Carmela, Carmen, Clara, Cristina, Evie, Gaia, Grey, Ieva, Josh, Kat, Kayte, Paula, Spike, Tiina, Xavi, and many others for their caring support, willingness to contribute and participate, and all the fun we have had these past four years.

Finalment, per la iaia, que encara que ja no hi siguis, et trobo en cada pàgina escrita. I a l'avi, m'hauria agradat conèixer-te més, gràcies per la cura amb què vas construir aquest arxiu.


prixcolor
Amsterdam
8/02
1+2





BREATHING IN MEMORY

Tinc un nou record. I have a new memory: a red sky and a body of water with a village underneath. An old memory I recreated with other people's photographs. Which are mine too. They constitute a system of traces of the past. They interact with previous experiences and potentially form a narrative. The system that supports it is enabled by a series of structures of preservation, care, circulation and value. Remembering, these abstractions become colour, smell and feeling. This experience is connected to a particular system and other systems with different memory practices and interests. There is a choice to remember in a specific way, in a particular space. When a memory is offered, its ownership dissipates. *Es difumina la propietat del record.*

What is a system that decides what is remembered and what is forgotten? system of domination in varying degrees, intensities and expressions, that decides what is relevant and what is irrelevant; which fictions will be constituted as facts; what performative acts will organise reality, inform political actions and condition the production of subjectivities. Operating economically, it ascribes value to certain lives over others, to certain voices, narratives, locations and positions over others. It erects that value through a series of material and legal relationships and affective institutions such as the family. This system has ruled Spain's past and its power lingers in its present.

Recent political events in Spain - such as the Catalan Referendum in 2017 or the rise in popularity and power of the far-right political party Vox - expose the contradictions of the Spanish Democratic Project. The very contradictions that memory scholars have located at the very inception of the system, when the transition between the Francoist dictatorship and the current democracy, a period of pacts and negotiations, limited the creation of a politics of justice, participation, knowledge and change. The work of these scholars has long claimed the insufficiency of the memory politics implemented at the beginning of the Dictatorship. This insufficiency has allowed the right to continue to deploy Francoist imaginary in instances of reaction against progressive movements and attacks on difference: immigration, queer rights, feminism, or self-determination movements whilst they continue to advocate for neoliberal or neoconservative economic policies. The strategies of these parties are linked to an attack on memory policies, such as the Law for Historical Memory (2007) and the Law of Democratic Memory (2022), with an attempt to partially derogate them in Aragon in 2023 after the coalition of right-wing PP and far-right VOX in the autonomical elections in May 2023.

My research departs from the limitations of memory in Spain, exploring these as a form of political repression which reinforces a series of binaries and borders - including forgetting over remembrance, importance over irrelevance, cities over villages, political over personal -, or epistemologies that frame forgetting as a progressive politics. Present junctures demonstrate that this is not the case, with the increase in far-right, fascist discourses across the globe, with a special presence in the West.

This research situates itself alongside the work of historians, researchers, artists, photographers, families, activists, performers, directors and everyone who has contributed to overturning the silence that has coated the past of Spain for genera-

tions. Their work has contributed to a significant body of work and knowledge that has been able to locate the areas of obscurity, invisibility and manipulation in the remembrance of the Francoist past, as well as the areas of political potential, activity and resistance. Differently to many scholars, this thesis deploys an autoethnographic methodology to situate itself within the 3rd generation after the war and specifically after displacement. I investigate the event, remembrance and ignorance of the destruction and displacement of Faió, my grandfather Sebastià's village of birth.

Faió was flooded in 1967 to build a hydroelectric dam. Despite the importance of this event, this history was hardly spoken about within my family, reproducing the dynamics of memory transmission imposed by the regime (Aguilar Fernández and Ramírez-Barat, 2016). However, throughout his life, my grandfather gathered all the family photographs in an archive which contains over 5500 positive transparencies. This material provides the opportunity to conduct research that engages with the entanglement between a history of displacement, the memory politics of the regime and transition, the construction of the family as an institution of power, discourse and affect, as well as the potential to disrupt the inheritance of this specific past. This project responds to this history through a double desire: to construct a political critique of memory culture in Spain and to construct a practice-based exploration of memory as a tool to understand the embodied, epistemic, material and political conditions left by the past and their present potentials. To do this, this practice-based research develops methods to confront the histories and conflicts that live in a personal archive of transparencies. I undertake this project from a dislocated position, away from the community, due to historical and geoeconomic reasons. Therefore, there is a transnational impetus throughout this research.

The title of my thesis is "Memory as First Breath": memory as a beginning, memory as a moment of possibility, memory as an activation or, perhaps, the collapse of an illusion. The personal, political and historical entangle within this project and mutually inform the practice and archive research; this entanglement is also an entanglement between body, memory, and matter. Therefore, the title connects to the embodied forms of memory that contribute to preserving historical narratives from a situated perspective. Breathing acts as an embodiment of time, as an infolding and unfolding of history, materially and rhythmically, reminding us of our presence and positioning within as specific context.

My contribution to knowledge is a novel analysis of the connection between the Francoist and post-Francoist politics of memory, the transmission of memory with the family and the regime's spatial politics of dispossession and displacement. By identifying the connection between private and collective remembrance and systems of relevance, a family archive helps locate the private expressions of the regime's politics. An autoethnographic approach provides unique insight into the role of affective structures on the transmission of memory. Through a practice-based approach to archive research it is possible to create a methodology that documents the narratives, errors and conflict in the archive, locates alternative memory materials and non-human agencies as well as offering an accessible entry point to memory work in the face of loss and absence. My contribution to knowledge demonstrates the value of personal accounts in resisting the erasure of the past and constructing critical political positions that incorporate situated perspectives.

The relevance of my research is evidenced by my participation in publications, conferences and exhibitions.

Book sections:

- Upcoming book chapter (2025) based on Shaking the Archive conference. This chapter focuses on the archive questions, methods and artistic approach explored in my research.

- Section in the *Handbook of Research on the Relationship Between Autobiographical Memory and Photography* in 2023. This chapter presents the context of this research, with emphasis on the politics of memory and my initial photographic explorations.

Exhibitions:

- In The Field 2 (2024) featured an audiovisual collaborative piece titled *SURFACING*.

- Unfolding Narratives 3 (2023) and 4 (2024) featured a series of darkroom prints, archive selection and almonds, as well as a participatory almond performance respectively.

- Ullal Festival de Fotografía Incisiva (2023) a series of darkroom prints based on a selection of archive photographs.

Conferences and symposiums:

- Vestiges of Memory (2024), held in Canterbury and organised by the University of the Creative Arts.

- Precarious Art: How do we Make Art in a World on Fire? (2024), held in Singapore and organised by The Arts & Design Practice Research Exchange (ADPRex).

- Why Remember? (2022, 2023, and 2024) held yearly in Sarajevo, and organised by the Peace and Conflict Culture Network (PCCN) at the University of the Arts London.

- Shaking the Archive (2023), held in Edimburgh organised by Queen Margaret University.

- Bringing Down the Archive Fever (2021), held in Zagreb and organised by the Institute of Art History.

- Memory Studies Association Yearly Conference, held in Warsaw (2021) and Lima (2024) and organised by the Memory Studies Association (MSA).

MULTIPLE SELVES, DESIRES AND HISTORIES

This thesis engages with explorations across political and personal territories, which are mobilised in the relationship with my practice. There are three key moments in this relationship: the referendum of Self-Determination in Catalonia in 2017, leaving my fashion photography practice in 2020, and the inheritance of my family archive in 2018.

Before moving to London to study fashion photography in 2017, my political education began in the local context of Barcelona and Fort Pienc (a neighbourhood of Eixample). In my last year in Barcelona, I joined the local assembly of a political organisation that belongs to the “Pro-Independence Left” in Catalonia. During the months leading up to the referendum for Self-Determination in Catalonia on the 1st of October in 2017, I participated in community organising, protests and agitation.

The referendum - where Catalan citizens voted to decide whether Catalonia should remain in Spain - punctuated but did not complete a process that had started ten years previously but that can be traced for hundreds of years. Among those in favour, the expectations for that day ranged between the naive optimism of those who believed the peaceful referendum would secure independence and the cynical scepticism of those who thought it would amount to a symbolic gesture useful only to leverage for financial pacts with the state. Those who opposed it were saddened at the possibility of actual independence or claimed this unauthorised referendum constituted illegal opposition to the state.

The state's response was violence of a degree that only made sense after the fact: it exceeded the expectations of the majority of the people in the streets. Afterwards, the Catalan parliament was dissolved; and numerous leaders of the process were judged and sentenced to jail. The referendum exposed the fractious relationship between Spain and its "historical nations" and redeployed and activated collective memories of past conflicts as powerful mediators of political action.

For as long as I can remember, I have sought to explore relationality within my creative and political practice. The camera was the first device that allowed me to explore, observe and affect those ideas, primarily through portraiture. In 2017, I moved to London to study Fashion Photography. I consider fashion to be one of the most influential contemporary cultural industries. For that reason, I developed my work within that industry with reservations and questions: I wanted to understand if I could reconcile my political ideas with a fashion photography practice - i.e. in an industry with internal and external extractive practices.

As an industry based on teamwork Fashion brings together people with complementary skills to deliver the best product and concept possible. However, outside the set, fashion operates through sweatshops, unsustainable continued production, perpetual arousal of consumerist desires and oppressive body standards, among other unethical practices. Its enormous cultural power depends on the idea that identity is constructed and communicated through our aesthetic choices, through "self-fashioning" (Greenblatt, 1984) and that cultural practices, ethics, and even politics are expressed through purchasing habits. In recent years, these fictions and practices have accelerated the emergence and disappearance of trends, such as micro trends (Nelson, 2021), further linking self-fashioning to trend-following. This form of (consumer) desire repeatedly overrides ethical considerations and contributes to unsustainable practices of inhabiting the world, ourselves and our relationality. Additionally, as I developed my practice within this industry and kept active in my politics, the temporal aspects of fashion appeared insufficient: I wanted to give myself more time to research, reflect and produce. Eventually, these critical positions led to me leaving Fashion in 2020.

Consequently, when I started this PhD four years ago, I did not have a practice: I had a photographic practice that was becoming something else: becoming an artist. Therefore, this project documents the emergence of a new practice as well as the thought and identity that stem from this process. The partial, becoming practice, at times mirrors the uncertainty present in the fragmented narratives this research engages with, which become generative territories of inquiry around a personal archive and a shared history.

REENCOUNTERING THE FAMILY ARCHIVE

My grandfather's archive was a common element during my childhood: for years, I

barely had to think about it because I knew it was in its room near the entrance of my grandparents' flat in Bailén 8, Barcelona. I clearly remember the boxes piled gently onto each other, moving up to the ceiling of their room, black plastic with yellow tags, and Sebastià projecting his photographs on the dining room wall several times a year. After Sebastià's death, the archive remained in that room ("the room of the slides[1]") for years, unseen by anyone else in the family - just as he had left it. I doubt my grandmother Roser thought about it often or wanted to decide what to do with it. There was too much memory[2] in it.

In March 2018, as I wanted to take my grandmother Roser's portrait and interview her about the referendum, I went into the room. It had been years since I had seen the boxes, and I looked through them curiously. I opened the box that read "1993, Mireia primer dia" (1993, Mireia first day) and took some slides to the kitchen. A single lamp lit the white round table in the kitchen, where so many times I had shared lunch with Roser and Sebastià: during my school lunch break, when I was ill, or when they looked after me during my mother's stays in hospital. I used that lamp to look at the images. There were several photographs of me as a newborn, but the most memorable was a big fish with its mouth open, wrapped in newspaper. I knew then that the archive contained materials worth exploring. Thinking that this day would not come until the distant future, I asked my grandmother Roser to leave me the archive as an inheritance. Roser passed away a month later. After those harrowing days, we had to do the things we did not do when Sebastià died: it was time to empty the family house in Bailén 8 (which they had rented for decades) - suddenly, I was the guardian of the archive.

It was July when I collected the archive boxes in two trips from Fort Pienc to Gòtic (Barcelona). The boxes were heavier than I thought, and it was hot: I was sweating. I did not expect it to be so laborious. I admit the whole thing took me by surprise: having claimed something and getting it so soon, I now had to host it and decide what to do with it.

Losing my grandmother meant losing a home, and it also felt like losing a connection to a landscape. Since her funeral, as my mother spoke of Roser's connection to the sea, I had felt a pull to return to the places, cultures and histories surrounding her and my family. Like the weight of the handles of the bags that carried the archive, I felt the pull and the weight of wanting to understand our shared past. However, the journey into the archive did not take me to the sea; it took me inland. Through this grief and through looking at Sebastià and Roser's archive, I found Faió again in 2018. . Looking at the images of Faió, the estrangement of knowing and not knowing about this history - never speaking about it but feeling its looming presence, unable to remember if I remembered this story - brought the realisation of the family archive's unfamiliarity.

WHAT WILL WE DO WITH ALL THIS HISTORY? A PRACTICE-BASED AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH

My research question asks: "How can a research-led art practice using a personal photographic archive contribute to critical debates about historical collective memory in Spain?".

This thesis examines how the memory politics of the regime became an essential

1 We called it l'habitació de les diapos, short for diapositiva, the Catalan word for transparency/slide.

2 Translated from Catalan as "too much memory" ("massa memòria), to indicate the difficulty of beginning to deal with the volume of history contained in the autobiographic depictions of memory within the archive, regardless of discreet events.

part of its authoritarian apparatus. Dam construction was an essential element of the territorial policy of the regime (Fernandez-Cebrian, 2023); by continuously reframing events, such as the permanent destruction of Faió, as expressions of the leadership of the regime towards the betterment of the nation (Reig Cruañes, 2009) the construction of memory since 1939 relied on affective, material and symbolic dispossession. My grandfather's archive - an expression of the situated experience of living through and after the destruction of Faió - offers a unique opportunity to analyse the role of autobiographical memory in the politics of memory of the regime. Additionally, it is possible to examine how the isolation of historical experience within autobiographical memory perpetuates present limitations on memory.

Working with a family archive makes it possible to observe the gendered structures that constituted the regime's politics and the politics of the archive uniquely. As the limited possibilities of social organisation constituted the family as the primary social unit, personal perspective enables the discovery of information excluded from official or public remembrance or documents (Jump, 2012). Additionally, family accounts contain situated perspectives on the regime's strategies of moral control.

An autoethnographic approach provides valuable information on the private transmission of memory as well as the fictions and counter-memories within families. Locating the official and alternative memories within a family provides valuable insight into the connection between collective memory dynamics and autobiographical memory. Reframing family conflict through a memory studies lens may connect it to collective experiences, mapping alternative approaches to family memory. Additionally, an autoethnographic approach contributes to understanding the specific ethics necessary to research the personal experiences of a precarious past.

A practice-based approach enables a mapping of alternative approaches to family memory: to intensify, question, perform and disrupt the affects of this past. In the face of absent or partial narratives, situating my own remembrance at the heart of this research provides the opportunity to speculate and invite participation through alternative methods such as photography, performance, hosting, field recordings or video. It enables the speculation of how memory - beyond understanding a specific historical event - can contribute to the emergence of new subjectivities and political affinities. My practice is one of multiple and often contradictory or incongruent expressions that stem from a fragmented family, national history, as well as my own fragmented relationship with photography. By embracing contradiction and instability I hope to offer insight on the, often messy and difficult, processes of conducting memory work on a past that affects the present.

I desire that this project contributes to readings of the past that might aid the healing and understanding of parts of history that are often uncared for; that it can also contribute to the kind of radical joy required to commit to a future that, at times, seems lost.

COLLECTIVE MEMORIES AND ANGELS OF HISTORY

Of the thinkers that frame this research, I want to introduce Walter Benjamin first as a figure that informs a specific dimension of the gaze of this thesis, sometimes as an invisible influence: this thesis is Benjaminian. In Carmen Rodríguez's talk Un Turista Anomenat Walter Benjamin (a Tourist Called Walter Benjamin) (2021) (part of the course by the Institute of Humanities of Catalonia, Walter Benjamin: Temptatives sobre el Present (Attempts on the present)) pointed out the vast amount of literature currently produced about Benjamin and wondered if revisiting the thinker was pro-

ductive any more or if we should leave him alone to rest (Rodríguez, 2021). I partially disagree: for Benjamin to be able to rest, we must continue the political work of opposing fascism. We must insist that his work is reproduced discursively and constitutes a political praxis.

This thesis is not a thesis about Walter Benjamin. Instead, it attempts to embody the gaze of his angel of history, which looks at the past with a compassion that demands action (Kuffer, 2021). His all-seeing gaze extends the world's fragility onto himself to recognise and rebel against it; he does not distinguish between worthy and unworthy subjects of history. He challenged thre distinction between consequential historical chapters and chapters that can be hidden within the victorious narratives of progress. The angel, disconnected from the binary narratives of salvation, desires to rescue the past and arrest its relentless destruction. In his essay, *Theses On the Philosophy of History*, Benjamin wrote:

> *"A Klee painting named "Angelus Novus" shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, and his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned towards the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress."* (Benjamin, 1969)

This thesis does not pretend to rescue the past. However, this thesis presents a refusal to ignore the importance of historical events and perspectives that have been considered minor, such as the history of Faió or the perspectives contained within a personal archive.

In the Epilogue of *The Work of Art in the Time of Technological Reproduction*, Benjamin connects technology, fascism and aesthetics in ways that still resonate today. In his analysis of the change in art's aura - a form of its social and material power linked to its singular presence - Benjamin sought to invite a different political subjectivity: one that could be activated by the new relationships with culture brought by the increased accessibility to art enabled by technological developments. Technical reproduction could bridge or collapse the spatial and temporal distance that, in the materiality of the artwork, maintained the distance between those able and those unable to access it. Instead of lamenting the decline of the aura of art, of a cult value dependent on art's isolation from "the masses", Benjamin considered it a medium to seize. This seizing cannot occur without a struggle, however, as he identified the possibility of art as a transmitter of the aesthetics of death, fetishised by fascism and reproducible in photography and film. In periods of increased technological development, militarisation of society and political struggles, aesthetics cannot - should not, following Benjamin - remain separate. Benjamin claimed:

> *The increasing proletarianization of modern man and the increasing formation of masses are two sides of the same process. Fascism attempts to organize the newly proletarianized masses while leaving intact the property relations which they strive to abolish. It sees its salvation in granting expression to the masses - but on no account granting them rights. The masses have a right to changed property relations; fascism seeks to give them expression in keeping*

these relations unchanged. The logical outcome of fascism is an aestheticizing of political life. With D' Annunzio, decadence made its entry into political life; with Marinetti, Futurism; and with Hitler, the Bohemian tradition of Schwabing.

All efforts to aestheticize politics culminate in one point. That one point is war. War, and only war, makes it possible to set a goal for mass movements on the grandest scale while preserving traditional property relations. That is how the situation presents itself in political terms. In technological terms it can be formulated as follows: only war makes it possible to mobilize all of today's technological resources while maintaining property relations. It goes without saying that the fascist glorification of war does not make use of these arguments. Nevertheless, a glance at such glorification is instructive. In Marinetti's manifesto for the colonial war in Ethiopia, we read:

For twenty-seven years, we Futurists have rebelled against the idea that war is anti-aesthetic .... We therefore state: ... War is beautiful because -thanks to its gas masks, its terrifying megaphones, its flame throwers, and light tanks-it establishes man's dominion over the subjugated machine. War is beautiful because it inaugurates the dreamed-of metallization of the human body. War is beautiful because it enriches a flowering meadow with the fiery orchids of machine-guns. War is beautiful because it combines gunfire, barrages, cease-fires, scents, and the fragrance of putrefaction into a symphony. War is beautiful because it creates new architectures, like those of armored tanks, geometric squadrons of aircraft, spirals of smoke from burning villages, and much more .... Poets and artists of Futurism, ... remember these principles of an aesthetic of war, that they may illuminate ... your struggles for a new poetry and a new sculpture!

This manifesto has the merit of clarity. The question it poses deserves to be taken up by the dialectician. To him, the aesthetic of modern war-fare appears as follows: if the natural use of productive forces is impeded by the property system, then the increase in technological means, in speed, in sources of energy will press toward an unnatural use. This is found in war, and the destruction caused by war furnishes proof that society was not mature enough to make technology its organ, that technology was not sufficiently developed to master the elemental forces of society. The most horrifying features of imperialist war are determined by the discrepancy between the enormous means of production and their inadequate use in the process of production (in other words, by unemployment and the lack of markets). Imperialist war is an uprising on the part of technology, which demands repayment in "human material" for the natural material society has denied it. Instead of deploying power stations across the land, society deploys manpower in the form of armies. Instead of promoting air traffic, it promotes traffic in shells. And in gas warfare it has found a new means of abolishing the aura.

"Fiat ars - pereat mundus," says fascism, expecting from war, as Marinetti admits, the artistic gratification of a sense perception altered by technology. This is evidently the consummation of L'art Pour L'art. Humankind, which once, in Homer, was an object of contemplation for the Olympian gods, has now become one for itself. Its self-alienation has reached the point where it can experience its own annihilation as a supreme aesthetic pleasure. Such is the aestheticizing of politics, as practiced by fascism. Communism replies by politicizing art.
(Benjamin, 1969, p. 19-20)

This thesis maps a series of attempts to find a voice between two voices: the historical voice, whose authority comes from its distance from the subject, and the personal voice, which contains familial, emotional, and delicate bonds. Therefore, the autoethnographic methodology within this thesis is informed by thinkers from different discursive and affective fields, namely Deleuze and Guattari, Rosi Braidotti and Silvia Federici. As constants among the work of historians, memory studies scholars and other practitioners within this field, their work enables a productive tension which embodies the very tension between materialists.

As my thesis deploys personal narratives to disrupt power relationships rooted in material and symbolic reality, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari inspire a reframing of the archive as an agency of resistance. Their philosophy of difference turns memory into an expression of desire: a constitutive force of ongoing internal and external transformation, with the power to disrupt the notion of static subjects and actualise emerging subjectivities. Their concept of minor literature is of significance as an anti-psychoanalytical perspective that frames family conflict as an expression of desires and potential new paths within collective assemblages or structures, instead of subsuming any desire into the family structure. Concepts such as becoming, affect, and de/territorialisation contribute to an analysis of memory dynamics that encounters new materials of memory, such as speculative accounts or nonhuman agencies (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980; Deleuze and Guattari, 1986).

This critique of history is rooted in feminist and materialist ideas. Silvia Federici's activism and research of gendered relationships of production and reproduction provide a profoundly valuable analysis of the intimate ways of control and dispossession of women's lives. This perspective positions their experiences within families as essential accounts of these events. Considering the construction of the family as a disciplinary apparatus necessary for the erection of structures of social production, autoethnographic archive research radiatespolitical agencies. Moreover, her notion that memory is reproductive work (Federici, 2018), constituting an essential unit of social reproduction and tied inherently to material relationships, makes it possible to further investigate everyday photographs as materials for collective counter-memories.

As I engage with the gendered politics of the archive, Rosi Braidotti's nomadic impetus provides a critical framework to disrupt "structural asymmetries" (Braidotti, 2021) with a dynamic reading of the past (Braidotti, 2014). Rosi Bairdotti's nomadic feminist lens positions memory work as a joyful encounter, turning imagination into a material force, which extends Deleuze and Guattaris's notions of deterritorialisation, affect and escape towards feminist politics. Her philosophical work tackles the multiplicity of positions that interact with political thinking in a time of dislocation and changing identities and subjectivities (Braidotti, 2014). Contributing to the feminist lenses of this thesis, this perspective acknowledges the situated nature of this archive - its place and identities, historically constituted - whilst fostering a transnational perspective, inviting new internal readings of this memories and extending the political learnings of the research outside the borders of territory, social unit and gender.

Additionally, throughout this project, my practice engages the collaboration of practitioners and the participation and collaboration of friends, family connections and community groups: inviting my most direct community to become active in my practice is the first step in the collective becomings of this archive.

BUILDING PRACTICES

The work of practitioners has been key to developing a rich understanding of the complex issues explored in my thesis and informing my becoming practice. Art perspectives enable a singular approach, in which praxis and research mutually intensify each other: an art perspective allows for experimentation alongside analysis.

The work of practitioners has been key to developing a rich understanding of the complex issues explored in my thesis. Art perspectives enable a singular approach, in which praxis and research mutually intensify each other: an art perspective allows for experimentation alongside analysis.

I have chosen to cite the work of several practitioners throughout the thesis to support the analysis presented. Some of these artworks engage with the power of discourse on material reality within the public sphere, often focusing on invisible gestures or relations to unearth the power of discourse in actualising social/material formations; these art practices provide valuable insight into strategies of reckoning, recovery and reconstruction of the past. Other practitioners explore the materiality of memory - soil to stones, objects or images - revealing the multiplicity of agents and forces involved in memory processes and potential sites and agencies of resistance to erasure.

Some of these artworks engage with the power of discourse on material reality within the public sphere, often focusing on invisible gestures or relations to unearth the power of discourse in actualising social/material formations; these art practices provide valuable insight into strategies of reckoning, recovery and reconstruction of the past. Other practitioners explore the materiality of memory - soil to stones, objects or images - revealing the multiplicity of agents and forces involved in memory processes and potential sites and agencies of resistance to erasure.

Some artworks respond to archives that are already established, archives at risk, or those that are yet to come. Therein, the archive is presented as a series of fragments composed from existing documents and imagined stories or perspectives, showcasing the interaction of personal and ideological perspectives in the construction of officiality and history. The complexities, fictions, and conflicts within these archives emerge as necessary elements in narrative construction and invisible forces which expose the archive's lack of neutrality, further demonstrating its political role.

Dear reader, this book is a series of five chapters with intermezzos of images of my practice for you to look at. These images, which you will see from the beginning of this book, are deliberately unfigured; they are affective documents of my practice that represent different moments of my investigation and stand on their own as actual artistic objects. These images will be elucidated in another form within each chapter.

Chapter one, *Desmemòria or How the Past was Pushed into the Dark Corners of Houses*, engages with the memory policies that erected the Spanish Democratic Transition, looking at the relationship between legal, political and affective forms of memory construction.

My practice begins with the encounter of disregarded objects in the family house of Faió. Through a photographic series, these become minor mnemonic materials that expose and destabilise the epistemologies of relevance and irrelevance connected to perpetuating erasure, especially in the private sphere.

An analysis of research accounts about the Transition from Fascism to Democracy in Spain and the subsequent memory politics and culture thus formulatedpresents the legal, political and cultural strategies involved in the construction of a unitary narrative of the Spanish past, which shaped a series of expected behaviours and discourses of remembrance. The work of memory scholars aids in conceptualising the impact of these politics towards individual memory and political agency contributing to a definition of desmemòria (unmemory). By developing this concept, I argue that Spanish hegemonic discourses of the past have engendered practices of silence and guilt that rely on the hierarchical distinction between collective and individual forms of memory and notions of relevance and irrelevance. I argue that these memory politics end up enforcing a passive memory onto the population, which translates to reduced political agency.

Chapter two, *Faió or The Wolves of la Franja*, deals with the history of the flooding of Faió in 1967, tracing the spatial and hydraulic policies of colonisation by the Francoist regime. It situates memory within the local context of Faió, its identity and the impact of the flooding and displacement on the population's memory and subjectivity, looking particularly at the impact on my grandfather and the construction of his silence.

A series of photographic and darkroom interventions on photographs from the archive explores the ethics of transitioning a personal archive from private to public, by abstracting, distorting and inverting its representations.

Through a description and analysis of Faió's history, this chapter provides context for the rest of the thesis, both historically and personally. This chapter argues that the construction of the reservoir and new village constituted an effort to dominate and shape the collective structures of that section of the population. By displacing the people of the region from their site of identity and production, the regime suppressed the identities and relationships that existed therein and, willingly or inadvertently, limited the relationships in the new village. This chapter grounds the memory politics of the regime within practices of material production and social reproduction embedded in a territory and presents the event that marked,the narratives transmitted inter and transgenerationally within my family.

Chapter three, *Archival Legacies, Silence, and Secrets: Caring for the Fragments,* situates a personal archive within the methods of knowledge control of the regime. Specifically, how lack of public access has turned family archives into sources of historical knowledge and the contradictions this presents.

In my practice, in collaboration with Gaia Crocella, I will present the meal interview hosted for my Aunt Roser and Mother Anna. The objects from A Walk Through Irrelevance become part of this meal as an installation of objects, transparencies and food. Three questions about the shared history of the family and Faió accompany the reassembled objects, archive and food to invite accounts about the construction of the collective family narrative, as well as each of their interpretations. These serve as concrete, situated examples of the dynamics and affects of memory transmission within the context of Spain, as well as perspectives that counter (national and familial) official narratives of the past.

Chapter three examines the gendered relationships within the family in the context of archive research and forms of archival power still impacted by the regime. I argue that constructing historical discourse from the family must recognise and engage with these power dynamics; the archive's conflicts and memory differences offer the

potential for deeper understanding and different responses to the penetration of fascism within Spanish historical and personal narratives, as well as family structures.

Chapter four, *How a Minor Literature Agitates a Family Archive*, applies the concept of minority to encounter collective structures within family narratives and conflict and situate a minor archive in the context of collective power.

Through my photographic and printing practice, I encounter the presence of a secret within the archive, and the questions and emotions these elicit. These enable an examination of how the precarious frameworks of conflict and responsibility result in a limited memory culture. This leads to the desire to resolve, dispel and move on upon encountering secrets; questions which mobilise political and personal dimensions, proving the precarious political frameworks to confront the past. Additionally, my practice redeploys a memory of my grandmother's hands to explore and challenge assumptions of the memory within my family.

This chapter includes secondary literature about the construction of moral structures as methods of discipline in Spain, to contextualise the notions of Minority developed by Deleuze and Guattari in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1980). Their exploration of minority - as a space where the personal and collective are indivisible - demand the search and encounter of the collective and political within the most intimate; these allow me to further define my family archive as a source of political power which examines family narratives and situated relationships through, and towards, a collective dimension. Personal conflicts within family history become instances of history which demand specific approaches and strategies to include personal perspectives within the reconstruction of specific historical chapters from a political lens. The work of posthuman and feminist author Rosi Braidotti expands these ideas towards an embodied approach to memory which welcomes nonhuman agencies, such as almonds, which are important materials in the construction of my family memories.

Chapter five, *Re-Enchanting The Past With Photographic Narratives* examines the power of photographs to destabilise the forces traced in the previous chapters. Through performance and field recordings, the practice in this chapter maps out different mnemonic accesses to the past, through the reconnection of nonhuman agencies, testimony and imagination.

Chapter Five explores photography as a medium of power to obscure or resist particular narratives, specifically narratives of absence and unitary perspectives. From an autoethnographical reflection, I present my own experience of ruptures and reconciliations with photography, withhow I have framed the photographic practice of my grandfather and responded to it through my own. Through a literature review, I present a series of critiques of representational photography that argue for the construction of active forms of spectatorship, collective practices of photography and its circulation.

Drawing from the combined experience of the meal explained in Chapter Three and this critique of photography, this chapter sets out to reencounter the photographic practice of my grandparents and rediscover alternative narratives. The narratives of absence and lack transmitted intergenerationally may have fixed both my grandfather and grandmother in opposing, gendered roles, which generate a gaze that risks reproducing the absence from which it emerges. Through iterative, reimagined interpretations of the photographs, I explore the potential of these photographs to contribute to a practice that seeks to rediscover the past to intensify present politics.

Specifically, this chapter enacts a minoritarian disruption of the narratives that gather around family photographs to challenge their affects on present understandings of the past and memory politics.

> *"We have come to visit your province, to inaugurate various important works . . . and with this to satisfy the thirst of your fields, to regulate your irrigations, which shall increase your welfare and multiply production . . . The whole of Spain has to be redeemed, sealing the brotherhood between the land and the men of Spain."* (Franco, 1959)

The field of memory studies in Spain is rich. My research is positioned within an extensive field that has created the foundation for ongoing research, political debates, and cultural shifts surrounding the history of Francoism and its aftermath. There are important works that I want to acknowledge, even though not all of them are within the particular area of research I am dealing with. I acknowledge that this work poses interesting avenues that I could have explored in this research, and many of these works might be relevant to my postdoctoral work. I would like to acknowledge that these might be works that I have not gone into in a lot of detail, but they have not been overlooked.

The plight of memory has been spearheaded by the work on exhumations. As such, the field of memory studies in Spain is established by many of the questions, challenges and avenues initiated by this work.

Francisco Ferrándiz's work on exhumations is essential to understanding the context of violence and its aftermath as the political, social and cultural site of memory recovery. His articles, Cries and Whispers: Exhuming and Narrating Defeat in Spain Today (2008) and Exhuming the Defeated: Civil War Mass Graves in 21st-Century Spain (2013) explore mass graves as cultural, political, and emotional sites of memory recovery, revealing their role as "technologies of terror" of generational unrest (Ferrándiz, 2008, p. 2). His work identifies an "institutional and judicial orphanhood". as well as an "outsourcing of human rights practices" (Ferrándiz, 2013, p. 6). Ferrándiz addresses the question of whether discourses of memory have been exhausted due to the construction of a "booming cultural industry of Civil War memories" (Ferrándiz, 2008, p. 6). To answer this, exhumations' discursive and emotional impact act as proof of Spain's unsuccessful attempt to cover part of its past; additionally, despite the extent of memory work, lingering anxieties remain on the ground (Ferrándiz, 2013, p. 2). He highlights family involvement and unresolved anxieties in addressing Spain's violent past, which evidences the ongoing relevance of memory processes in Spain.

Queralt Solé i Barjau's *Els morts clandestins: Les fosses comunes de la guerra civil a Catalunya (1936-1939)* (2008), places the focus on common graves in Catalonia, with thousands of soldiers that have been left outside of history, its narratives, monuments, and resting grounds. Additionally, it explores the movements of bodies between 1959 and 1964 (Solé i Barjau, 2008).

The production of victims and bodies to recover has gone hand in hand with the

reproduction of ghosts, some of which live in family photographs. Photographs and family albums have become important materials for analysing the transmission of memory.

Jo Labanyi's Coming to Terms with the Ghosts of the Past (2001) examines Spain's historical memory as shaped by loss and the notion of "what might have been," which offers the potential of acting as a "strategy for rehabilitating the victims of history" (Labanyi, 2001, p. 1). Labanyi's work claims the importance of ghosts within this history, as figures that offer symbolical access to strategies towards history and generate responses of denial, obsession or hospitality. She highlights that in contexts of controlled/denied collective spheres, private memory has often survived as the only form of transmission of the past. Moreover, family photographs have become foundational to filmic efforts to preserve the past, creating a hospitable space for ghosts as lingering traces of the disappeared (Labanyi, 2001, p. 3).

Zahira Aragüete-Toribio's Recomponer la identidad familiar de las víctimas del franquismo más allá de la fosa común (2021) examines how the unresolved search for disappeared people and those who suffered the repression at the hands of the Francoist regime articulates the relationship of families with an "incomplete history of violence" (Aragüete-Toribio, 2021, p. 124). The uncertain identification surrounding the bodies in graves opens the possibility of hope for families (Aragüete-Toribio, 2021, p. 127), and personal objects enable the recomposition of the personhood of those who are missing - as proof of their existence (Aragüete-Toribio, 2021, p. 137-138).

Jorge Moreno Andrés' Etnografía de una ausencia (2021) centres on the role of the custodian of family memory, whose life gives meaning to objects through a narrative, rendering the objects functionless after they are gone, yet open for another narrative organisation (Moreno Andrés, 2021, p. 2). In this context, photography opens the possibility of reconstruction and creation, especially in the context of disappearances (Moreno Andrés, 2021, p. 3). Even when family images transition to becoming humanitarian or historical documents (Moreno Andrés, 2021, p. 19), the higher involvement of women within the visual composition of family photographs' place within the home (Moreno Andrés, 2021, p. 3-4) implies a shift in the role of women within families, turning them into heirs and custodians of these important documents (Moreno Andrés, 2021, p. 10).

The importance of the narrative becomes the focus of A la Aparición del Desaparecido. Fotografía Familiar y Violencia Política' (2020) in which Moreno Andrés argues that only families can identify what is present within families, as well as what is absent, as they hold important contextual knowledge to move beyond superficial readings of images.

María Rosón's "No Estoy Sola": Álbum fotográfico, memoria, género y subjetividad (1900–1980) (2015) connects photography's notion of indexicality to its subjective and emotional life. Rosón argues that it is the emotional connection to photographs, which leads to the practice that surrounds their use and storage (Rosón, 2015, p. 149). New modes of photography, such as the focus on childhood (Rosón, 2015, p. 150), turned the family album into a processual site of autobiographical inquiry, and photographs into materialised social bonds (Rosón, 2015, p. 160).

María Rosón and Rosa Medina Domenech's Resistencias emocionales (2017) incorporates the notion of "emotional resistance" into the interpretative methods around family photographs, to contribute to reparative knowledge (María and Rosa, 2017, p.

411), which can bring forth emancipatory recoveries of the past which centre the "arts of the weak" to disrupt hegemonic power structures (María and Rosa, 2017, p. 411)

María Rosón and Lee Douglas' The Things They Carried examines the photographic imaginary of images of the Civil War, looking at images of displaced families to challenge the claim of neutrality of these photographs and their circulation (Rosón and Douglas, 2020, p. 460). Focusing on the changing representation of women, Rosón and Douglas argue the centrality of women's depictions in the humanitarian use of war photographs (Rosón and Douglas, 2020, p. 464) and connect typified representation of war's spaces and subjects to specific ideological or political claims (Rosón and Douglas, 2020, p. 466).

María Rosón's Género, Memoria y Cultura Visual en el Primer Franquismo (2016) examines the Francoist "visual construction of gender relations" (Villena, 2016, p. 7), considering the social processes that inform what does not remain in the archive (Villena, 2016, p. 8) and the "fractures" within power taxonomies (Villena, 2016, p. 9) The article exposes how the role of the woman was an object of interest, study and development in the construction of Francoism, (Villena, 2016, p. 14) as the counterpart of the erection of the Francoist architecture during the reconstruction of the nation (Villena, 2016, p. 15).

Andrea García González's *Calla y Olvida* (2023) seeks to identify violence within the basque context, to attempt to displace it and end its normalisation, whilst searching, through the practice of vulnerable listening, for the possibility of creating new imaginaries. The everyday is framed as an interruption of violent dynamics and the violent representation of alterity which frames regional movements of national liberation in Spain (García González, 2023, p. 26).

Artists and art institutions have also contributed meaningfully to this work. Museums like the Museu Nacional d'Art Contemporary de Barcelona (MACBA), or Centre Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB), as well as Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (MNCARS) have supported artists and practitioners that develop work within this area.

Artists such as Maria Ruido have explored the role of counter-narratives in developing an ethics of memory centred on what has been rendered, or remains, invisible. Works such as *Plan Rosebud* (2002), *La memoria interior* (2008) and *Lo que no debe ser visto, debe ser mostrado* (2010) situate footage from counter archives or personal archives at the centre of this effort. These have been exhibited in various museums, including MNCARS, MACBA and Filmoteca de Catalunya.

In 2024, the short documentary, *Els Buits* (the gaps) directed by Marina Freixa, Sofiia Esteva Santoja and Isa Luengo traces the history of Patronato de Protección a la Mujer (Women's Welfare Agency), dedicated to "regenerating fallen women" during the Francoist dictatorship, and where Freixa's mother was taken after being arrested at 17 by combining autobiographical material with historical research. The documentary has been nominated to several awards, including the 2025 Premis Gaudí of the Catalan Film Academy, as well as the Premio Goya of the Spanish Film Academy, in the category of Best Documentary (Esteve Santonja, Freixa Roca, and Luengo, 2024).

The violence of the Spanish regime can be traced through its graves, documentation, testimony, as well as its infrastructure.

Eduard Callis's *Arquitectura de los pantanos en España* (2015) highlights Spain's inten-

se dam construction during the 1960s, with 20 dams built annually and 500 completed by the 1970s, making it the fifth country in its latitude for dam numbers (Callis and Monteys, p. 6). Tracing back to Roman and Muslim influences, "domesticating water has been the main task of inhabitants[3] of the peninsula" (Callis and Monteys, p. 9), describing dams as "deposits of potential energy" (Callis and Monteys, p. 374) and monuments to resource control, promoted as a legacy of the population through extensive documentation and propaganda (Callis and Monteys, p. 388).

Maria Kaika's Symbols of Modernization: The Urbanization of Nature Between Geographical Imagination and Materiality (2006) argues that dams, overlooked as monuments, embody a "process of creative destruction" that blends imagination and materiality. As such, dam projects exemplify the dialectic between the production of nature and cities, transforming landscapes while enabling urban expansion, reflecting the destructive yet creative forces of "Modernity's Promethean Project" (Kaika, 2006, p. 277).

Erik Swyngedouw's Technonatural Revolutions (2007) explores Spain's contested hydraulic landscape, highlighting protests against the National Hydraulic Plan and linking the ongoing conflict to the radical socio-environmental changes initiated during Franco's regime (Swyngedouw, 2007, p. 9). Franco's use of water infrastructure promoted a nationalist vision of Spain, transforming nature to eliminate regionalism, with dam construction serving as a tool to enact material and cultural homogenization, framing natural limits as ecological deficits to be "rectified" (Swyngedouw, 2007, p. 11).

Natalia Funes Casalvázquez, Santiago Martín Barajas and Erika González Briz's *Grandes Fracasos Hidráulicos* (2018) focus on the negative impact of the construction of dams, arguing that the "obligation" to construct hydraulic infrastructure and the disproportionate construction of dams (especially since the 1950s), (Funes Casalvázquez et al., 2018, p. 5-6) have resulted in significant ecological, social and heritage destruction (Funes Casalvázquez et al., 2018, p. 7).

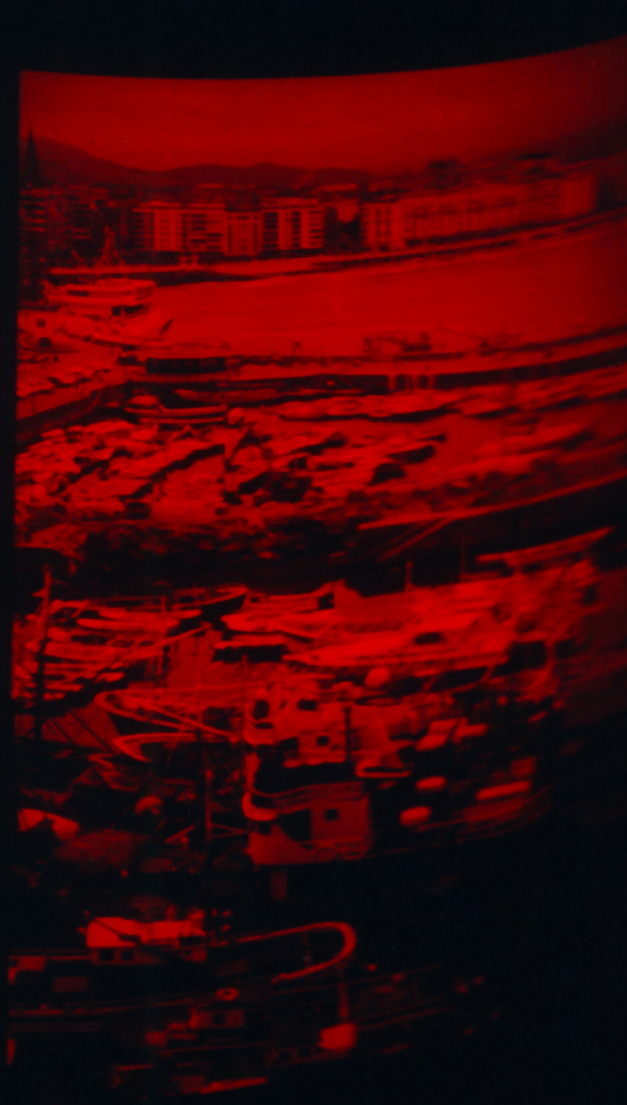
In 2024, *Sau, la Memoria Submergida* appeared on TV3, Catalonia's public television channel. The documentary, directed by Ot Burgaya, revisits the construction of the Sau Dam, completed in 1962, with a focus on the unknown histories of those who were tasked with its construction, many of whom travelled from impoverished regions of Spain and often died or became injured due to the bad labour conditions surrounding the construction of this infrastructure (Burgaya, 2024).

Similarly, the upcoming book by Ana Fernández-Cebrián, with the current title of *Land and Water: Literature of the Commons in Modern and Contemporary Spain*, studies the relationship between nature, political and literary imagination, and communitarian experiences approaches the construction of the Dams, from the perspective of the distribution of resources, community and literature (Columbia University Language Resource Center, 2024).

Despite the impact of exhumations and their ongoing discovery, in his article (previously mentioned), Ferrándiz describes their eventual normalisation and typification as an "established performance" (Ferrándiz, 2008, p. 4). This process results from sustained interest, investment and community involvement. Recently, there has been a growing interest in dam construction and the material, social, and political ecologies that shape its history. When viewed through the lens of the processes

3 The original text uses the word "poblador" which in Spanish has a passive meaning - to inhabit - and active meaning - to found a colony.

described by Ferrándiz—despite the differences in context—this raises the question of whether dams might undergo a similar process of normalisation and typification as exhumations and other historical or memory-related processes, and what such a transformation might entail.






NASA





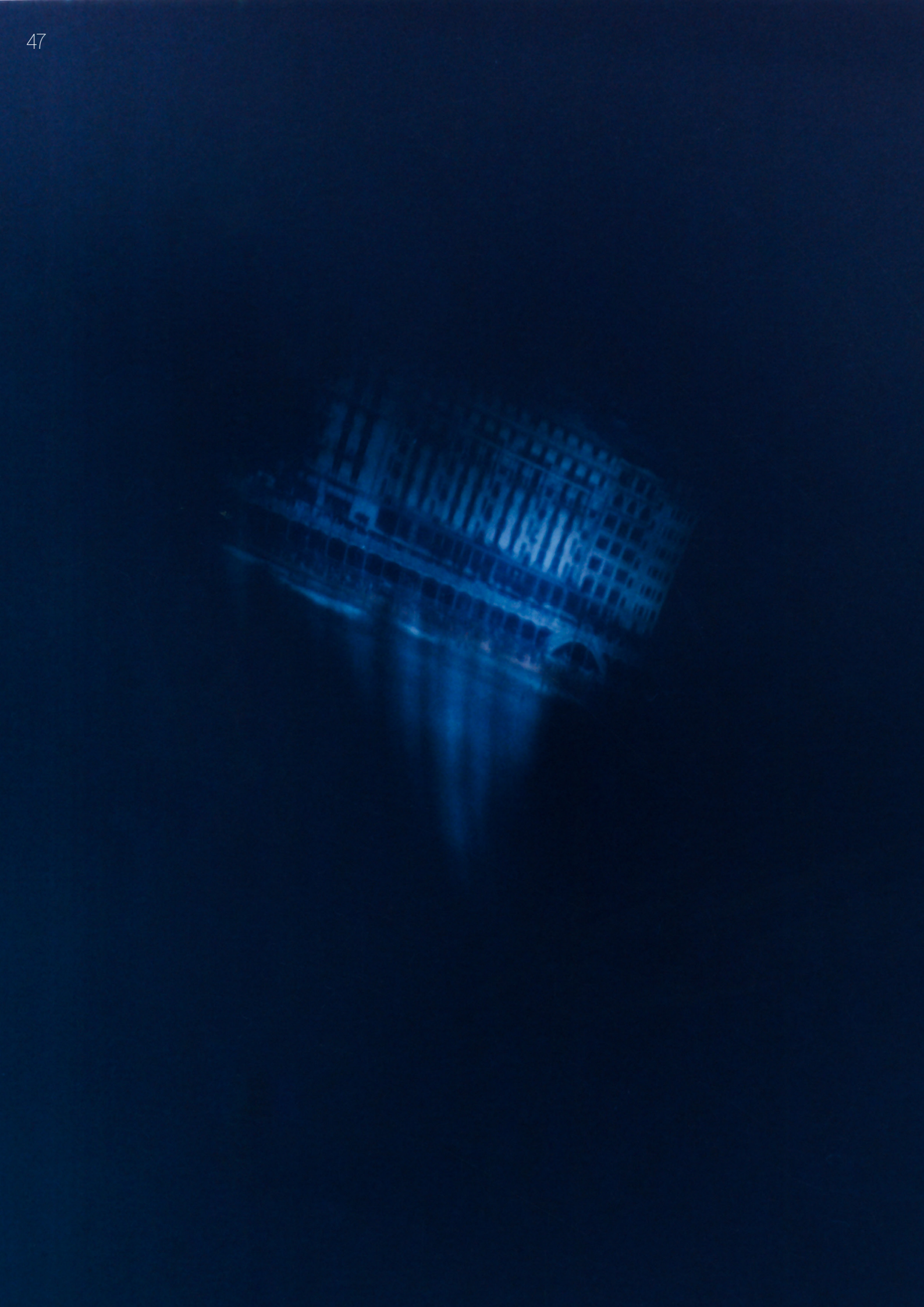








Figure 1 - Archive Box 14: Faió coming out of the Riba-roja Reservoir

CHAPTER 1 *Desmemòria Or How The Past Was Pushed Into The Dark Corners Of Houses*

"It is simply a forgetting, an amnesty from all to all. A forgetting from all to all. A law can establish forgetting, but this forgetting has to come down to the whole of society. We must make sure that the concept of forgetting becomes generalised as it is the only way we will be able to hold our hands without retort[1][2]".

Xabier Arzalluz's speech in the approval session of the Law of Amnesty in 1977 exemplifies the narratives of forgetting that I will analyse, and counter, in this Chapter: forgetting as necessary to lead to forgiveness and peace; forgetting as simple, as the correct response to Spain's past. This performance of forgetting and peace is sustained by a fiction of reconciliation.

This chapter presents the events and narratives that have constructed the collective memory of the Francoist past in Spain. I begin by situating the personal traces of the past through a photographic series. Photographing personal objects left in Faió, I engage with the memory of my family in that village and consider the relationship between relevance, irrelevance and remembrance. The autoethnographic engagement with these objects reflects on the impact of the history of Faió on the relationships within my family and, in the context of this chapter, begins to connect the progressive separation between my family and the village of birth of my grandfather and the limited frameworks of memorialisation in post-Franco Spain. [Figure 1]

Through a literature review, this chapter traces the limited forms of memorialisation in Spain, to analyse its politics of memory. By focusing on the interaction between private and public forms of memorialisation and the notion of silence, I connect the lingering affects of the Francoist political narratives with the discourses of the directed forgetting imposed by the Spanish state, and the intergeneration and transgenerational transmission of the past. I propose a new definition of the concept of desmemòria, the word used in Spanish and Catalan (Desmemòria in Catalan, Desmemoria in Spanish) for lack of memory. I do this to integrate embodied forms of memory and personal perspectives to the analysis of the mnemonic relations constituted since the Civil War. By further developing this concept, I present the relationship between relevance and irrelevance, public and intimate, and the power found in remembrance as key components in understanding the transmission, or lack thereof, of the Spanish past.

A WALK THROUGH IRRELEVANCE

I spent every summer of my childhood in Faió, with my family. My grandfather Sebastià grew up in Faió, before moving to Barcelona in his 20s. After he died in 2006, we buried him under an almond tree, in a nearby field. My mother never returned to Faió, and progressively, the family stopped visiting the village. Away from the village,



Figure 2 - Box 8: The balcony of the new house overlooking Faió

1 Translated from Spanish, "*Es simplemente un olvido, una amnistía de todos para todos. Un olvido de todos para todos. Una ley puede establecer el olvido, pero ese olvido ha de bajar a toda la sociedad. Hemos de procurar que esta concepción del olvido se vaya generalizando porque es la única manera de que podamos darnos la mano sin rencor.*"

2 Xabier Ardalluz was the leader of the PNV, the National Basque Party, between 1979 and 2004



I eventually stopped thinking about it, and I eventually forgot where it was. Years later, the family sold the old house and, after my grandmother Roser died in 2018, her three daughters, Anna, Roser and Maria del Mar, put the new house on the market.

In July 2021, I travelled to Faió with my friend Berta Salomó, and we stayed in the new family house. During the construction of the “new” Faió, my grandfather was given one of the houses at the edge of the town. Years later, he was given a plot of land in front of that house. My father, Xavier, explained that the reason for giving away homes and land was to keep the population in the village at a time when the population had halved. Twenty years later, as my Mother Anna and Father Xavier finished studying architecture, he asked them to design a house right in front of that one; they became the “old” house and the “new” house. When I visited Faió in 2021, it had been years since the old house was sold, and my mother and aunts were about to sell the new one. [Figure 2]

Even as I previously wrote about forgetting Faió, I recognised that the memories were there. When I got to the house that July, the texture of the iron garage door brought the memory of its touch to my hands; the stairs leading to the front door elicited the memory of trying to find the best stride length to run and up down those oddly sized stairs. The keys in my hand when I opened the door connected its sound and weight to the moments I walked through that same door as a child. I thought of my mother. Inside, the house smelled of wood, and the garage was as cold and humid as I remembered, with a scent that I always linked to oil, rotting

grapes and my grandfather. The wooden smell of the house made me think of my grandmother cooking and talking in the kitchen or the living room.

From the balcony, I could see a small part of the garden of the old house, which seemed much emptier than when my family was there. The old house's cool interior was darker and smaller than the new house's, but my mind preferred dwelling in the memory of the garden: the way the grass felt on my skin, the smell of the swimming pool water, like chlorine; my family gathered by the pool at different times of the day, and something I can only describe as the smell of the sun in the summer, bouncing from every surface. "Every dwelling has its individual smell of home" (Pallasmaa, 1996).

Of these spaces and their attached memories, the garage was the last one I visited. There, I found countless objects taken from the old house after it was sold and emptied. Most of them I remembered, the rest I had seen in my grandfather's archive. In the archival photographs, they appeared as the surrounding elements of the life-making of my family in the new Faió. As part of the process of letting go of Faió, which started after Sebastia died, the objects were stored in that garage, where they waited to be sold or discarded. After years there, eventually forgotten, they had become irrelevant and lost their place. In September 2021, my mother informed me that they were about to sell the house and gave me a timeframe of a month to go to the house for the last time. She explained that they might collect some of the objects, but the majority would be left there - the new owner would decide what to do with them. The encounter with the irrelevant, minor objects, disconnected from their historical and cultural origin was an encounter with the particular forgetting (the desmemòria) of my family, who seemed to have to or want to separate themselves of Faió and perhaps one day forget it.

A Walk Through Irrelevance consists of 20 images shot in Faió during October 2021. The photographs were taken using medium format Ektar 100 film and enlarged in the darkroom. The final prints were made on 10x12 glossy paper. Berta Salomó assisted on location; she needed to be part of this because we have been comrades for many years and she is part of my community in Barcelona. As I explained in the introduction, throughout this project my practice involves friends and family as collaborators, making them participants in the acts of reconstruction of this memory. This begins to transition the archive from private to public.

"*Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental encounter.*" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 139)

When I found these objects I decided I had to include them in this project as extensions, expressions, and materialisations of the archive and the life of my family in Faió after it was flooded. I photographed the objects and selected some of them to take with me, drawing from the photographs in the archive and my memories of the objects. The pool is a reoccurring image in the transparencies and my summer memories; the fishing boots embody my grandfather's love of fishing and were photographed extensively; there are several photographs of my grandmother and her daughters sitting on these hammocks under the sun. The series renames and reimagines Faiò, as *Irrelevance*. It is a small village with a minor history; its victories not victorious enough, its defeats not harrowing enough to grant it a chapter in history books. This perceived irrelevance became the starting point to question historical narratives and collective memory through the hierarchy between relevance and irrelevance. As I photographed these objects irrelevance was represented through their separation from their original purpose. [Figure 3 -5]

Memory scholar Richard Terdiman explains that cultural objects "bear these problematic meanings in the form of time become palpable, of the labour that determines it becomes material: as representations of the movement that, in separating the present from the past, produces the present as the past's representation." (Terdiman, 1993, p. 70). These objects were estranged when I found them. The same temporal and spatial separation that occurred within my family - a slow abandonment of a place, a time and a history, due to the inability or unwillingness to address it - materialised in these objects. Relegated from sight, they had also been relegated from memory; it was as if their current irrelevance projected back in time to discredit their past importance.

Ewa Domanska observes the incorporation of things into the processes of construction of counter-histories, "as something other than passive recipients of human actions" (Domanska, 2006, p. 171). This does not imply that they have not been previously considered within history. However, Domanska identifies a different framing of things in contemporary humanities which fits specifically within critical or counter-discourses. Specifically, this interest in things moves these objects from passivity to acts of speech "in their own voice", wherein "things perceived as Others" are placed within discourse (Domanska, 2006, p. 180). This analysis - which is situated within a materialist rejection of anthropocentrism which will become increasingly relevant within this thesis - captures the encounter I experienced with these objects. In this encounter I could recognise a certain claim, power, or presence which escaped preconceived frameworks of their relevance and demanded different considerations.

To photograph them, I channelled a style that comes from my previous fashion photography practice: saturated photographs taken in different parts of Faió in settings that do not represent the direct history of the objects. I avoided the conventions of documentary photography because I did not want to photograph them solely as documents of the past and thereby declaring their finitude. Instead, I wanted to reactivate them through the photographic reintroduction into the spaces of Faió and the house. This "furniture without memories", the opposite of the monument, evokes experiences disregarded by the systems of power that sanction objects and memories



Figure 3 - Box 15: Greta resting from the sun under a hammock and someone's legs



as important for remembrance (Smith and Gordon, 1999, p. 4). Therefore, this series sought to intervene in their irrelevant status, to claim that these are important access points to the affective traces of the past found within family memory. By selecting, cleaning, placing and photographing them in Faió I tended to these discarded objects to begin to teach myself how to recognise and reposition ignored perspectives and materials. These acts of care towards these irrelevant objects are best exemplified by Domanska's claim that "a discourse in defence of things (and in general of non-humans) is, in the end, a discourse in defence of the human being." (Domanska, 2006, p. 184)

After photographing the objects, I decided to take a selection of the objects and store them temporarily in my friend Oriol's house in Vilalba dels Arcs, a town nearby in Catalonia. Chairs, tables, lights, plates, a nest and a jar filled with almonds; I selected these objects by memory, size and feeling, especially the almonds. [Figure 6]

THE SPANISH DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION: NATIONAL NARRATIVES, IDENTITY AND UNITY

The rise of "programmed collective experience", through media, education, press, shopping, and entertainment influenced modern memory dynamics. The increased abstraction of psychosocial life, distanced subjects from objects, shifted cognitive activity from immediate/perceptual to mnemonic. As a result, preserving the past has shifted from an individual activity to institutionalised mechanisms such as archives or documents (Terdiman, 1993, p. 31). This promotion of unity through mediated narration relies on the appropriation of narratives and reduced individual partici-



Figure 4 - Box 07: Sebastià used to set up the pool every summer in the garden of the old house

pation. This leads to an externalised and disembodied form of narration (Olick, 2007, p. 21). However, collective or social memories are generated across various fields and challenge the notion of unified, or consensual, memory. In communities characterised by relational dynamics, memory proliferates, becoming inherently contested (Olick, 2007, p. 109). The resulting "genres"[3] of memory are historical constructs that result from ongoing processes; they interact with political systems of meaning, encompassing morality, images of the past, identitarian claims, notions of inside and outside, and more. Therefore, the systems of meaning are "wholes greater than the sums of their parts", constituting a social fact[4] in themselves (Olick, 2007, p. 108).

There are key moments to understand the construction of the official memory of the Francoist past and its forms and absences of memorialisation. The Transition is one of the most analysed and critiqued events in this history.

Despite the continuous efforts to suppress political dissent, the final years of the Franco Regime witnessed a dynamic and combative environment with the re-emergence of the left, national liberation movements and even reformist factions within the Falangist party[5]. To maintain the power of the military and the legitimacy of the Crown, Franco appointed General Carrero Blanco and brought King Juan Carlos I back from exile as his successor. However, in 1973, ETA[6] assassinated Carrero Blanco. When Franco passed away peacefully in his bed in 1975, the transition towards democracy began. The King decided not to make a direct break from the regime. The Transition rested on a series of agreements and pacts that started in 1975: the legalisation of the Communist Party in 1978, the establishment of the system of Autonomies and the legalisation of the languages of the "historical nations" (banned during the Dictatorship).

These pacts signalled that the future of Spain would be open and democratic (Varela-Guinot and Vale, 1990, p. 41). However, within the pluralism of potential identification of the Transition, there was no revision or condemnation of Francoism. There was a "gap" that, according to Elena Yeste, was "eclipsed by the spectacle of the Transition, as a result of the Spanish model of impunity active since 1977" (Yeste, 2010, p. 7). Consensus became a key term to understand the framework of the Transition (Macé, 2022, p. 753). The Pact of Forgetting in 1975 defined, and enacted, its parameters. Before the Law of Amnesty (1977) or the Constitution (1978), the left and the right, along with the King and the military, agreed not to take any legal or symbolic actions against the Regime. Agreed-upon general behaviour was expected to generate democracy in a previously dictatorial state, sacrificing the pursuit of justice in the public sphere and, instead, embracing a strategic approach focused on desirable consequences (del Águila, 2006, p. 194). Consequently, it was articulated as an act of equality (Yeste, 2010, p. 10). The Law of Amnesty sedimented this approach to law, which symbolised the desire to move forward from the structures of Francoism. Whilst the cost of implementing new structures and social pacts was the pardon of all actions

3 Genres of memory are historical constructs that mediate engagement with the past and memory practices. They encompass morality, identity, images of the past and notions of inside and outside, among others. Their textuality and intertextuality mediate the way memory is generated and received, in ongoing processes of reflection and practice. Genres help contextualise memory as an ongoing process, during which audiences might develop new understandings and attitudes towards a seemingly fixed past. (Olick, 2007, p. 57)

4 Memory theorist Emile Durkheim posited that social facts are values, institutions, and norms that transcend individuals and shape them socially (Durkheim, 1994, p. 67)

5 See Mariano, S.S. (2018) La transición sangrienta : una historia violenta del proceso democrático en España, 1975-1983. Barcelona: Ediciones Península. for an analysis of the political conflictivity of the period.

6 Euskal Ta Askatasuna was an armed organisation that operated in the Basque Country between 1959 and 2008. See Iker, C.A. (2007) ETA 1958-2008: Medio siglo de historia. Euskal Herria: Txalaparta. For an overview of the history of the organisation.



01



02



03



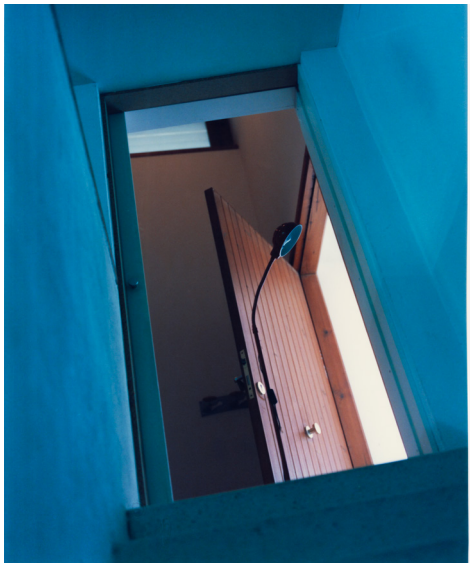
04



05



06



07



08

Figure 5 - A Walk Through Irrelevance, 2021
01 - Fishing rod and net inside work boots, side street
02 - Swimming pool ladder, new house steps
03 - Garden chair and clothing rack, between the old and new house
04 - Almond jar, balcony



09

05 - Goggles inside of jar on top of folded swimming pool, central square
06 - Fishing rod and net inside work boots, side street
07 - Lamp, front door and top of garage stairs
08 - Metal rods, between the old and new house
09 - Hammock, balcony porch

before Franco's death (del Águila, 2006, p. 194), the Law of Amnesty allowed for a triumphalist narrative of the transition, as a wholly peaceful process (Yeste, 2010, p. 8). [Figure 7]

Attitudes towards the Pact of Forgetting, and the academic literature produced during Spain's democratisation, "almost completely ignored questions about the legacy of widespread and systematic human rights abuses for the new democracy" (Davis, 2005, p. 859). Instead, during the transition, public memory was flooded with declarations of reconciliation and equidistance (concepts projected onto the population by the state). Thus, the mnemonic "chain of utterances"[7] (Olick, 2007, p. 105) initiated during the Dictatorship (Reig Cruañes, 2009, p. 40) relied on the "sanctioning" of specific agents: establishing a set of rules that determines "the coercive power of a frame of memory" (Feindt et al., 2014, p. 33).

Even though the homogenisation of responsibility erected during the transition sought to cancel blame and innocence on both sides, as the hegemonic powers remained largely untouched during this process, the transition was skewed in their favour (Yeste, 2010, p. 10). This resulted in a perception that the transition was "given by the old Francoist elite instead of negotiated" (Yeste citing André-Bazzana, 2010, p. 8), a conception that disregards alternative readings. Instead, during the transition, the Spanish population were active agents. They took to the streets, protesting and demanding systemic change (Tejerina, B., 2018, p. 75). Furthermore, the events surrounding the Transition and its aftermath witnessed a continuation of political violence by the state and from right-wing factions (Yeste, 2010, p. 8). Despite these facts, the triumphalist official narrative of the transition relied on the ignorance of forms of collective participation outside of state mediation.

AN AFFECTIVE POLITICS OF MEMORY

According to Maurice Hawlbachs, memory is a group's binding activity that is connected with social structures of meaning (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 40). Memory scholar Jeffrey Olick defines collective memory as a disembodied frame of reference that represents the past to fortify a community's sense of belonging and shared imagination. A community's past is suppressed, recovered, or even invented according to the potentials of past meanings and the needs of the present. Since retelling the past preserves it, the outcomes of each collective memory reflect the community's necessities (Olick, 2007, p. 86).

Memory scholar Paloma Aguilar defines politics of memory as "all those public initiatives (not necessarily political) aimed at disseminating or consolidating a particular interpretation of a significant past event, for certain social or political groups, or for the entire country"[8]. Aguilar emphasises that there were no memory policies during the Spanish Transition. Instead, in the name of reconciling the "two Spains" in conflict between 1936 and 1939, the past underwent a directed social forgetting - in the public space (Aguilar, 2008, p. 446). National reconciliation expected that values such as consensus, fraternity and dialogue would erase the existence of victims and victors (Yeste, 2010, p. 10). Instead, the Transition generalised guilt by interpreting the



Figure 6 - Oriol helped transport the Irrelevant Objects to his home in Vilalba dels Arcs, 2021

7 Olick defines the term chain of utterances according to Mikhail Bakhtin's definition of language occurs as a dialogue between people and, in response to, previous dialogues. See Olick, J.K. (2007) The politics of regret: on collective memory and historical responsibility. New York: Routledge.

Bakhtin, Mikhail (1986) Speech Genres and Other Essays. Translated by W. McGee. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

8 Translated from the original quote: "*todas aquellas iniciativas de carácter público (no necesariamente político) destinadas a difundir o consolidar una determinada interpretación de algún acontecimiento del pasado de gran relevancia para determinados grupos sociales o políticos, o para el conjunto de un país.*"



conflict as a "collective madness" (Ruiz Torres, 2010). What this shows is a transfer of the affects produced during the years of the dictatorship- fear, risk aversion and collective guilt - into this new narrative (Aguilar Fernández, 2008, p. 94). Whilst the elites performed their interest in reconciliation, the stability offered to the population hinged on an enforced ignorance of the past.

Gilles Deleuze defines affects as a pre-personal and pre-individual level of experience: a force that mobilises the emotions and perceptions that Stoler describes as inherent within archival governance. Influenced by Spinozian philosophy, this mobilisation of emotion and perception has an embodied and cognitive impact. Power has two expressions: potesta (power over, power of the law) and potentia (power to, potential). Affect is linked to power, increasing or decreasing its abundance in an affected body as a response to its environment and its encounters. Affect charges, or suppresses, the body's potential to action. In this dual expression, affect is the intensity that presupposes power (Deleuze and Guattari, 1989, p. 257, 282, 260). As philosopher Brian Massumi exemplifies in the Introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, affects are linked to emotion: whilst emotions are biographical and personal, affects are pre-personal and non-conscious intensities that activate feelings (Deleuze and Guattari, 1989, p. xvi). According to Massumi, the body "doesn't just absorb pulses or discrete stimulations; it infolds contexts..." (Massumi, 2002, p. 30). The body affected is the body becoming active. Braidotti refers to Baruch Spinoza's philosophy and in *Post Human Knowledge* defines affectivity as:

"*The power that activates our body and makes it want to act, a passion can never be excessive, provided we develop adequate understandings of its force. The human being's in-built tendency is towards joy and self-expression, not towards implosion*" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 48).

Over time, and through remembrance, these bodies incorporate these experiences as individual and collective narratives. Through these ideas of Deleuze, I argue that the emotions referenced in the literature that examined the construction of the memory of the past generated the foundation of these politics of memory[9], contributing to the conditions where the narratives of the Transition and the Pact of Forgetting could take hold.

A politics that seeks to prevent forgetting is intended to recognise the importance of an event and foster efforts to understand it (Yeste, 2010, p. 9). Organised forgetting has been considered necessary when conflicting memories may exacerbate the instability of a historical conjuncture. On these occasions a unifying mnemonic narrative revolves around values, such as reconciliation and equidistance, rather than facts. Even though the defeated suffered significantly more during the Civil War and for decades afterwards, there has been a gradual convergence between the narratives of the War. Madeleine Davis echoes that opposing "black and white" interpretations gradually faded to the extent that "the two sides ended up reaching a kind of agreement regarding their mutual guilt" and hindering the quest for justice (Davis, 2005, p. 865). Furthermore, historian Paul Preston traced the different acts of violence committed against the population during and after the Civil War and identifies a consistent use of the Francoist past as a decisive influence in accepting the decision to renounce revenge (Preston, 2003, p. 33). This indicates that totalising narratives of shared responsibility pose the risk of perpetuating injustice and thus, are inadequate strategies for conflict resolution and reconciliation.

On the 50th anniversary of the uprising on 19th of July 1986, the commemorative speech of Felipe Gonzalez[10] stated "...The government expresses its desire that the 50th anniversary of the Civil War seals once and for all the reconciliation of the Spanish People"[11] which signifies an ongoing manipulation of forms of memorialisation (Macé, 2022, p. 754). Commemorations are mnemonic acts that serve as a "central motor in cultural history" by creating a collection of utterances across different memory genres (Olick, 2007, p. 12). Instead, the Spanish Government signalled the completion of reckoning and recognising the past, signalling that any future frameworks of justice and history need not consider transitology[12] and limiting any other forms of expression. This approach to memory denies the importance of underscoring responsibility and the necessity to develop normative, or democratic, solutions that



Figure 7 - 35mm collection: Football match somewhere near the Pyrenees

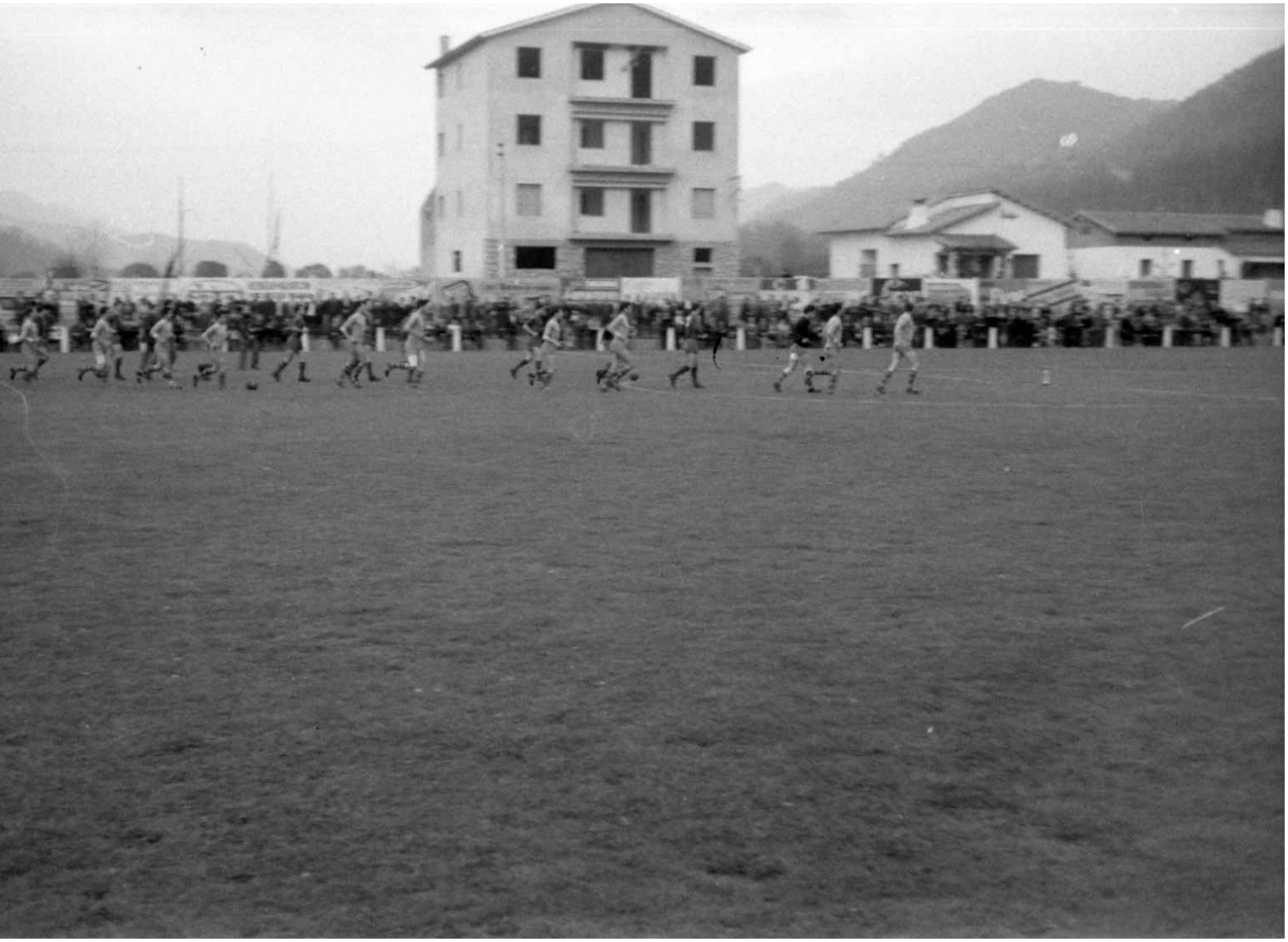
9 Sheelagh M. Ellwood and José Reig Cruañes study argues that the state-sanctioned narratives that sought to influence the memory of the Civil War began simultaneously withthe War, through radio broadcasts among other media outlets. After José Antonio Primo de Rivera's death -the founder of the Falange and son of Miguel Primo de River, Dictator between 1923 and 1930 - Franco was able to build his image as the leader of the Falange and future head of state. See Ellwood, S.M. (1987) 'Spanish newsreels 1943–1975: the image of the Franco régime', Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television, 7(3), pp. 225–238. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/01439688700260321.

Reig Cruañes, J. (2009) 'La construcción de la memoria dominante durante la dictadura', Pasajes, No. 31(Invierno 2009-2010), p. 15.

10 The Prime minister from 1982 to 1996, a member of the Socialist Party, PSOE.

11 Translated from the original quote: "... el Gobierno expresa también su deseo de queel 50 aniversario de la guerra civil selle deinitivamente la reconciliación de los españoles."

12 Transitology refers to the attention given to "transitional justice": strategies employed by new regimes to address the wrongs of their predecessors and the legacies they have left behind. These include trials, political justice, compensation, truth and reconciliation commissions, amnesties, memorialisation, and organised amnesia (among others). These solutions seek to establish a foundation for future peace through reparatory justice and knowledge production (Olick, 2007, p. 126-127).



apply to each context[13] (Olick, 2007, p. 150).

ENFORCING UNITY: DISREGARDED CONFLICTIVITY AS A STRATEGY OF SUPPRESSION

"Central to totalitarianism is the effort to eliminate nonstate frameworks for non-sanctioned remembering." (Olick, 2007, p. 190)

The ignorance and displacement of counter-narratives from the public space has not been a passive process. In a 2022 article, Jean-François Macé traced the ongoing conflict for the acknowledgement and reparation of the crimes of the War (2022). The article presents several instances in which conservative parties and media have opposed steps toward a culture of memory. Whilst they accuse memory activists and institutions of trying to "win the war", on the streets the far-right deploys Francoist symbolism without repercussions to build a sense of legacy and attract young followers. There remains an unwillingness to encourage a generous engagement in debates about Spain's history, which has led to a society that cannot establish a com-

13 In his study of the preservation and alteration of images of the past, Olick distinguishes between three dynamics: instrumental, cultural, and inertial. Instrumental dynamics occur when actors consciously engage in memory acts to maintain or transform images of the past; cultural dynamics result in changes or preservation of these images in line with a changing or stable culture (not as cynical manipulation, but as an inherent part of the culture); inertial dynamics emerge when these change or remain due to the support provided by media and institutions, operating outside of culture and deliberate action (Olick, 2007, p. 8).

I argue that the Spanish politics of memory encompasses all three dynamics: it began instrumentally and has continued culturally and inertially. Olick advocates for a relational framing of memory to recognise that the relationship between the past and the present reflects both the status of the "signified past" and the needs of the present (Olick, 2007, p. 108).

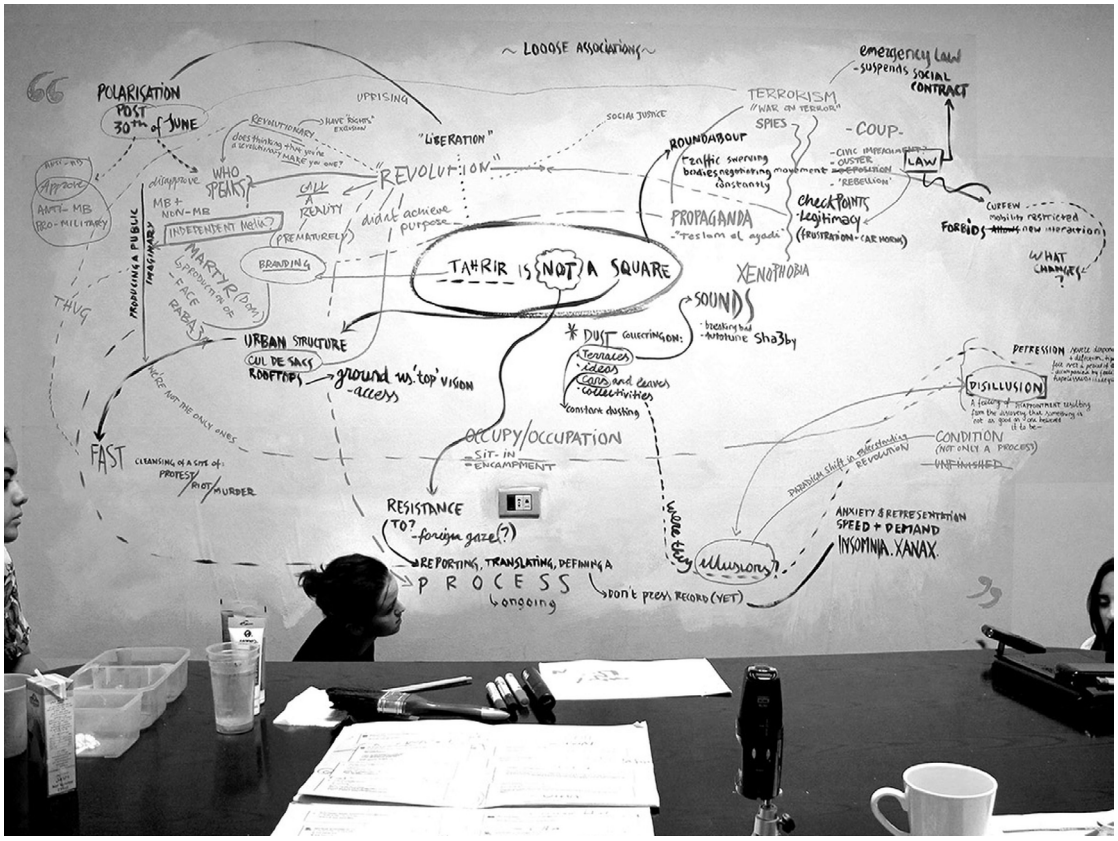


Figure 8 - On Difficult Terms (2019)

mon truth (Macé, 2022, p. 774). As a response, research on the struggle towards a participative and democratic memory culture has been led by grassroots organisations, such as the Asociación por la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, as a response to the actions of the institutions, which have been limited and dependent on the ruling party (Biesca, 2006). This limits the ability to trace the current repressive tendencies of the Spanish State to their historical origins; in recent years increasing polarisation and the unwillingness to oppose Francoist traces and symbols have seen far-right party VOX entering several autonomical parliaments. In 2023, the coalition between VOX and PP in Aragon partly derogated the Law for Historical Memory (approved in 2011).

Humanities scholar Richard Terdiman identifies a contradictory relationship within cultures that "misrecognise" memory and perceive it as a threat. Instead, memory is threatened by "determinations of ideology and habituated practice that no longer seem organic links that instituted the present by tying it to its past" (Terdiman, 1993, p. 48). Framing memory as confrontational, disruptive, and vengeful, or coming from a desire to "win the War" (Macé, 2022, p. 765), limits participation. These accounts show that rich participative mnemonic relations require structures of mediation - cultural, legal, social and individual - that encourage and facilitate them. The symbolic or abstract goals of the Transition necessitated concrete symbolic and legal actions to enact them. Instead, the lack of institutional response poses a significant challenge to achieving the reconciliation that the Transition claimed to seek. In the present, memorial disregard obfuscates the new State's policies to maintain control and indicates that non-sanctioned forms of memory have the potential to act as destabilising forces of state strategies of governance that rely on a single view of the past.

It is worth connecting these strategies to the specific worldviews and political goals of the Spanish state structure. The last desire of Franco before his death was the preservation of the unity of Spain (Macé, 2022, p. 752), which later on became the foundation of the Constitution of 1978, instead of, for example, the sovereignty of the Spanish People. This very notion is summoned in the face of potential or actual poli-

tical conflict or significant changes in the country, such as the possibility for self-determination for Catalonia. It's connection to the memory of the Civil War, as a time of social fracture which took years to repair and the Constitution as a symbol of repair, grants it power to block any political debates that might threaten it[14].

The power of concepts such as unity comes from their openness. It is worth considering, as Adelita Husny Bey's *On Difficult Terms* (2019) posits, how the political overuse of abstract terms allows for the disconnection from their original meaning, opening the space for manipulation and instrumentalisation (Husni Bey, 2019). Adelita Husni Bey's *(On) Difficult Terms* (2019) is a mind map created by the artist to explore the ideological vagueness of terms like "revolution" and "coup". Highlighting the overuse of terms to define complex historical developments portrays their insufficiency (Husni Bey, 2019). I believe this mindmap demonstrates how political terminologies are used with the intent of affecting the response of the reader. Incorporating collaborative methods of inquiry - journalists and academics - to create this work turns it into a representation of the exchange of ideas and reflections regarding its subject matter. This practice tests out a different political organisation around these contested concepts; it addresses the ethics around the ideological construction of troubled pasts and explores how veiled political interests find their home in the ambiguity and authority of language. [Figure 8]

Similarly exploring the penetration of symbolic operations into materiality, Caterina Picchioli's *Chalk Line* (2018) records the responses of ants to a chalk line being drawn around them, demonstrating the impact of gestures as mediators and organisers of power over bodies. Caterina Picchioli's Chalk Line (2008) demonstrates the impact of symbolic operations on material reality. By drawing a circle around an ant colony, she prompts a violent reaction by the ants, who begin behaving self-destructively. This work questions imagined operations such as nation, borders, and separation. Chalk Line enacts the power of simple and ordinary gestures to organise acts of violence (Pecchioli, 2021). As I understand it, Picchioli's work charges everyday ges-

14 See la Directa for journalistic coverage of the repressive operations targetting Catalan organisations. Fernández, D. (2022) '1992-2012: infiltrats, talps i clavegueram policial', directa.cat, 7 June. Available at: https://directa.cat/1992-2012-infiltrats-talps-i-clavegueram-policial/

Macià, C. (2020) 'El cas de Mikel Zabalza i l'ombra sinistra de la tortura', directa.cat, 28 September. Available at: https://directa.cat/el-cas-de-mikel-zabalza-i-lombra-sinistra-de-la-tortura/

Sánchez Esteban, R. (2016) 'Tres vaguistes del 29M, detinguts per la policia en "donar la cara" | L'Accent - Informació i comunicació popular dels Països Catalans', 14 April. Available at: https://laccent.cat/tres-vaguistes-del-29m-detinguts-per-la-policia-en-donar-la-cara/



Figure 9 - Chalk Line (Linea di gesso) (2008)

Figure 10 - 35mm collection: Roser and Sebastià sitting in front of the Pilar Hermitage, near the Ebre



tures with political significance and links them to their material impacts and origins. Photography and video, as testimonies, facilitate this conversation, drawing attention to the action, and granting it importance. The impact of a seemingly harmless act transforms the site, revealing its severe material consequences and opening up the space for questioning. In the context of this chapter, this artwork directs attention to everyday gestures, declarations or concepts that innocuously shape social relationships and begin to question them. [Figure 9]

These two art practice examples point to the ways in which the construction of a narrative, or memory, enacts a deployment of concepts that rely on vague, multiple, definitions to affect perceptions of the past. Over time, their naturalisation as the vocabulary of the past enforces a misrecognition of their lingering impact on political and everyday life. The imposed idea of unity intensified during of the Francosit regime, like an imposed idea of reconciliation afterwards, relies on the very affects and memories of conflict that it says to safeguard from. The structures and affects carried from the past, naturalised within everyday relationships, become invisible. Moreover, this construction of a unitary discourse stimulates a "dogmatic image of thought" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 131). According to Deleuze the "image of thought" contains flow and movement. Instead of thought as a fixed representation of reality - which Deleuze rejects within the history of philosophy -, thinking is a process of becoming; an active, open process (Deleuze, 1994, p. 143). He argues:

> *"The element of thought is sense and value. The categories of thought are not truth and falsity but the noble and the base, the high and the low, depending on the nature of the forces that take hold of thought itself. We always have the share of truth and falsity that we deserve."* (Deleuze, 1994)

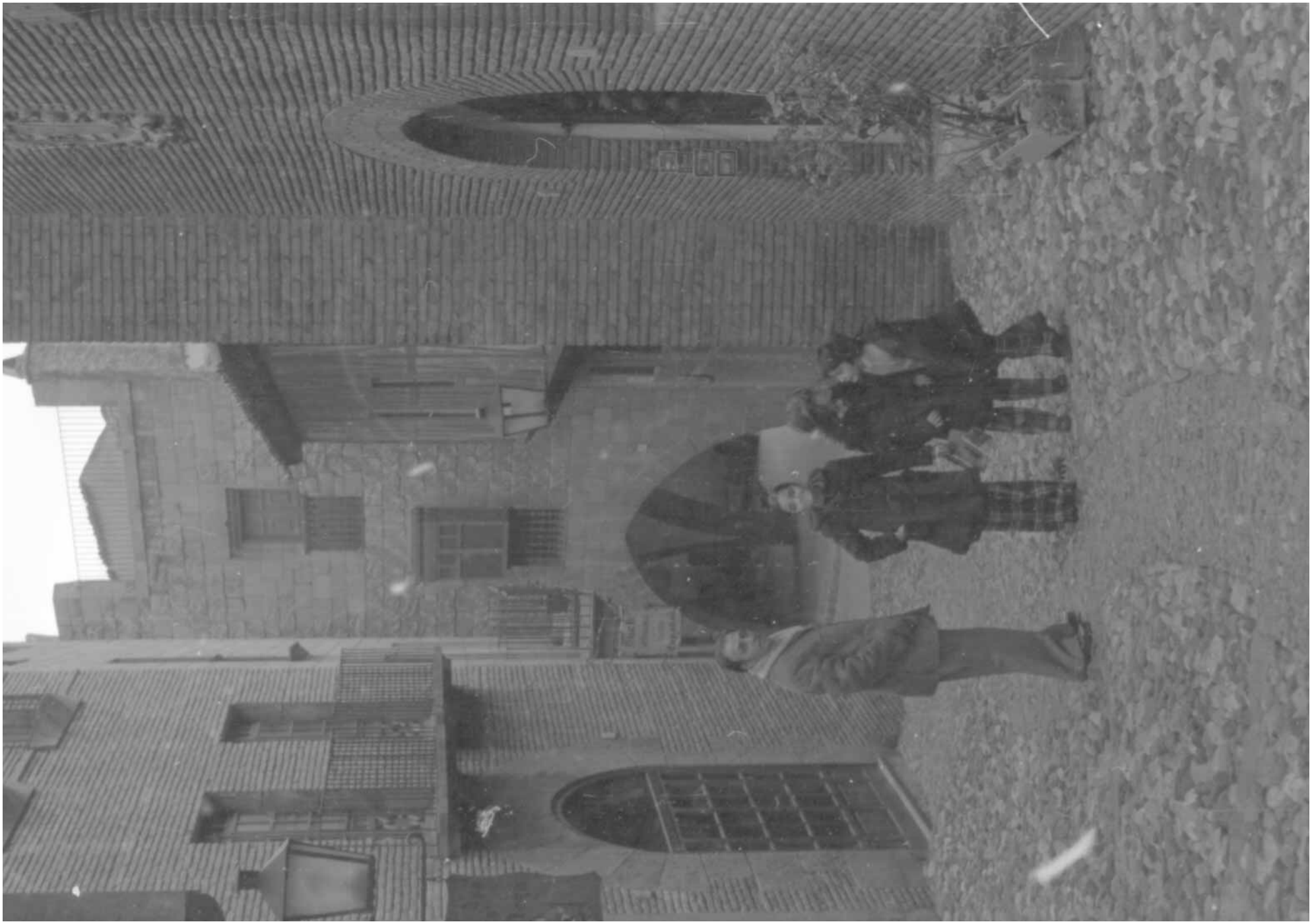
The fixed affective truths of the regime can be read as a "dogmatic image of thought": a limitation of thought's potential into one expression, one representation, and one value. As Deleuze posits, this constitutes a denial of the forces that assemble thought and, as a result, its potential expressions (Deleuze, 1994, p. 30). Furthermore, the limitations on memory I have presented in this chapter resemble the dogmatic image of thought of the Francoist regime: one authority, one narrative, one moral, one being. As such, these politics of memory cannot be understood as either a significant break from a Francoist past or an alternative that offers substantial strategies for individual or community reparation and reconciliation. If we are to continue to draw from Deleuze, it is useful to consider how incorporating other faculties such as affect, imagination and feeling into the process of thinking itself to disrupt the invisible position from which thought emerges (Deleuze, 1994, p. 143) and, in this context foster memory and political participation. This will become especially relevant regarding the affective power of personal narratives, and their entanglement with absent narratives and the affective forms of governmentally presented within this research. [Figure 10]

THE HISTORICAL MEMORY LAW AND THE LAW OF DEMOCRATIC MEMORY

> "*How a state remembers its history will not only determine future policies but will also condition the elaboration and consolidation of a potential narrative regarding the figures of its former regime and victims.*" (Escobar Fernández, 2023, p. 98)

There have been two laws that address the Francoist Past: the Historical Memory Law in 2007 and the Law of Democratic Memory in 2022. Their implementation and

Figure 11 - 35mm collection: Sebastià, Anna, Roser and Mar



concreteness have been limited. The rise of Human Rights and historical memory associations has been essential in the push for these laws in their questioning of the 1977 Amnesty Law (Escobar Fernández, 2023, p. 109). Before the approval of the 2007 law, PSOE created an Interdepartmental Commission which recommended the recognition of "the injustice suffered by the victims, to ensure individual reparations and compensations, to honour and support associations that aimed at searching for the truth and recovering the historical memory, to recognize those who were exiled, to provide economic aid and reparations through legislative reforms, to improve the annuities granted to the war children, and to recognize and provide reparations to those who died defending democracy between 1968 and 1977" (Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE), 2007).

Despite following these objectives and constituting a break from the Pact of Forgetting and Law of Amnesty, its implementation was limited because it did not annul political sentences, it did not grant the status of victim, it did not take on the task of exhumations, it did not secure a truth commission, it did not set the initial date to 1936, thus excluding a considerable amount of victims, and it did not address any possible modification of the 1977 Amnesty Law (Escobar Fernández, 2023, p. 110).

In 2022, a second law was passed; the Law of Democratic Memory annulled all the Francoist penal sanctions, established October 31st and May 8th as days of memorialisation of victims (including victims in exile), created a National Census of the Victim and National DNA Bank of the victims of the war and the dictatorship, founded a Council of Democratic Memory and a Working Commission on the Memory and Reconciliation with the Roma People in Spain, implemented an audit of looted property and goods during the Spanish Civil War and dictatorship, created a catalogue of noble titles between 1948 and 1978, suppressed the Imperial Order Yoke and Arrows, redefined the meaning of the Valley of the Fallen, declared the official right of family and society to "know what happened", declared the state's leadership in exhumations, declared the right to investigate human rights violations until 1978 (with the possibility of extending it to 1983), incorporated an official sanctioning system, made associations and organisation that make apology of Francoism illegal and included memory contents in ESO and Baccalaureate education, whilst promoting academic research on democratic memory (Escobar Fernández, 2023, p. 115).

Whilst this new Law presents significant changes from the 2007 law, it fails to state who the perpetrators were, contributing to a "partial picture of the events". Moreover, maintaining the 1977 Amnesty Law whilst accepting the prescription of crimes committed during Francoist rule could "result in a deliberate denial of international law, blocking any potential criminal prosecution against the perpetrators". Additionally, it does not account for cultural or language repressions against Catalonia and the Basque Country. It does not judicialise the graves, reducing the state's responsibility towards exhumations to an economic matter. Lastly, it does not condemn the role of the Catholic Church in erecting the ideology, and authoritarian model, of the regime, defined as a national-catholic dictatorship[15] (Escobar Fernández, 2023, p. 116).

This shows that while the legal and political approaches coming from institutions are making significant steps towards a more "democratic" approach to memory, these are insufficient and still fail to take into consideration the claims of civil society, victims and experts. This demonstrates that in the absence and instead of significant legal action, community efforts to continue to politicise memory and construct criti-

15 See Escobar Fernández, I. (2023) 'Neither oblivion nor reconciliation. An analysis of post-Francoist Spanish historical memory and Transitional Justice', Revista Historia Autónoma, 22(1), pp. 97–120. Available at: https://doi.org/10.15366/rha2023.22.006. for a detailed analysis of the process of approval and scope of both laws.

cal discourses of the past, are essential to bring these laws forward and improve their scope and implementation. Moreover, legal approaches to memory constitute only one dimension of memory work, which can contribute to cultural approaches but not replace their specific form of meaning-making.

SPEAKING FROM THE PRESENT AND AUTOBIOGRAPHICALLY

The absence of forms of memory participation has moved alternative historical perspectives into the private sphere. Therefore, theories of individual memory contextualise the impact of these memory politics. In the 1998 book *Philosophy and Memory Traces: Descartes to Connectionism*, memory scholar John Sutton describes that distributed memory processes are attuned to environmental cues in varying degrees of awareness. This results in the constant revision and modification of "perceptual input" through an "ongoing rearrangement and moulding of representations in the interaction and interpretation of new experience" (Sutton, 1998, p. 316). Therefore, the instrumentalisation of guilt to force consensus and the limitations on active involvement in the public mnemonic sphere during Spain's democratisation which I have described also affect autobiographical memory. As affective structures, memory politics enact cognitive and emotional changes that territorialise and form collective and individual fields.

In line with the work of other academics who have studied the period, Jorge Belmonte Arocha identifies three stages of collective memory in Spain from the postwar period to the present. During Francoism, memory was shaped by the Regime, legitimating the uprising and victory of the Falangists. The regime represented itself as acting in the population's interest by repairing the wounds the Spaniards had inflicted on themselves during the War[16] (Arocha, 2015, p. 57; Reig Cruañes, 2009: 41). After the Transition, the Pact of Forgetting rendered Francoism an untouchable topic, displaying a lack of trust in the population's ability to contribute to the nation's political future (Arocha, 2015, p. 58), and leaving open the possibility of covering up that past through nostalgic revisions[17]. In the present, and within the context of political and cultural postmodernity, Arocha identifies a "qualitative inflation and quantitative devaluation" of memory. Depoliticized memories fill the space left by forbidden readings of the past, through mediated cultural products like TV, contributing to pacifying collective memory practices (Arocha, 2015, p. 65). It is within these depoliticised forms of memory that personal accounts emerge in their majority. This dynamic intensifies the dichotomy between historical narratives and personal accounts. If the public sphere cannot hold space for debate, its role is reduced to governance rather than exploring the social role of memory. [Figure 11]

DESMEMÒRIA AS DEBT OR DESIRE

> '*A concept is a brick. It can be used to build a courthouse of reason. Or it can be thrown through the window.*' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1989, p. vii)

To further conceptualise the important role of individual memory within the context

16 As previously stated, this contained veiled reminders of the conflict that perpetuated guilt and fear in the population. See Reig Cruañes, J. (2009) 'La construcción de la memoria dominante durante la dictadura', Pasajes, No. 31 (Invierno 2009-2010), p. 15. for a detailed account of the mechanism deployed to achieve this

17 The author explores this phenomenon through the study of TV programs such as Curso del 63, a reality show which sent a group of teenagers to a Francoist style school (Arocha, 2015). Vicente Sánchez Biosca's analysis of the Whitewashing of Francoism through the nostalgic appeal to the past is another insightful example of this phenomenon (Sánchez-Biosca, 2003) Arocha, D.J.B. (2015) 'Ficciones audiovisuales y políticas postelevisivas de la (des)memoria histórica en la cultura española'.

See Sánchez-Biosca, V. (2003) 'La memoria impuesta. Notas sobre el consumo actual de imágenes del franquismo', Pasajes, 11, pp. 42–49.



Figure 12 - 35mm collection: two children standing on a balcony

01



02



03



Figure 13 - 35mm collection
01 - Roser and Anna in a park
02 - Two unidentified women (possibly Sebastià's mother and grandmother) with Anna in the flat in Bailén, Barcelona
03 - Anna, Roser and Mar playing

of the politics of memory, I conceptualise desmemòria.

"Desmemòria" means absence of memory; for example being desmemoriat (Catalan) or desmemoriado (Spanish) means being forgetful. The term has historically been associated with the unacknowledgement of historical experiences and subsequent loss of memory (Larrión, 2008, p. 81). Therefore, desmemòria describes the cultural phenomenon linked to the years of Francoism and post-Francoism. Differing from amnesia, which implies a greater degree of permanence, and from disremembering, which implies an active form of forgetting (Davis, 2005), such as that associated with the Pact of Forgetting, desmemòria refers to the effect, or affect, of this history and this suppression. Desmemòria emerges from a collective memory that denies forms of memory outside State-produced discourses and attitudes; it results from the deployment of affects that stem from the Dictatorship (Davis, 2005, p. 865), which inform the context of intergenerational and transgenerational of silenced narratives. I argue that the role that embodied memory and the displacement of memory into personal relationships can contribute to a definition.

The limitations in participation in the collective forms of memorialisation in Spain have produced a compressed space for memory. Within it, pressing issues, such as the retrieval of bodies or the removal of monuments to Francoism from public spaces, may be incorporated due to their urgency and with the effort of civil society and researchers. However, this results in an unwanted hierarchy where, despite the remarkable efforts to politicise and generate occasions for memory in the public sphere (Biesca, 2006, p. 35), claims, perspectives and demands of lesser urgency risk becoming irrelevant, reduced advocacy and eventually, the death of those affected or with relevant knowledge.

These memories remain private. Even if memories are deeply personal, individual remembrance occurs in relation to a social group (Olick, 2007, p. 24). Olick argues that perceptions of collective discourse influence individual remembrance: the value attributed to specific events over others and their relevance within the constitutive narrative of a community impacts autobiographical instances of recollection (Olick, 2019, p. 24-25). As Halbwachs suggests, the permanence and transformation of memories rely on the recollection of lived experiences within relevant contexts, highlighting the role of participation, agency, and connection (Halbwachs, 1992). Therefore, repeatedly disregarded historical experiences, which are perceived as unimportant in the public realm end up becoming minor, thus weakening individual recollection. This is an essential dimension of the dynamics of memory transmission, and erasure, of the Spanish past (also due to the impact of affect that I have presented previously). It is what I call desmemòria. [Figure 12]

Henri Bergson's conception of memory helps further understand the implications of this phenomenon. In his study of memory processes and their relation with perception, in *Matter and Memory*, Bergson emphasised that memory guides the body's action in its encounter with matter and throughout time. As memory is actualised, it becomes action in the body (Bergson, 2011). In this context, Bergson's arguments show that examining the role of individual memory within memory politics further defines their impact. When an inaccessible social space produces the perception that a subset of memories is irrelevant, these remain private. Except for the purpose of gaining access to public spaces as an apolitical experience. The result of this dynamic is further suppression of memory and pacification. Its link to potential/virtual action and previously active political agency (such as the political agencies of Faió presented in Chapter 2) is severed. Unactualised memories remain virtual, as pure memory, but not as an untouched representation of the past (Bergson, 2011). As Sutton explains,



Figure 14 - Fake Games, El monumento colectivizado (2019)

"Even things stored up constantly change their nature in the superposition mix" (Sutton, 1998, p. 322). Therefore, suppressed memories, or memories erased by the State are not lost, nor disappeared (Bergson, 2011). Desmemòria is not a memory gone but pacified and affectively passive[18]. Due to the fabrication of irrelevant memories by creating a closed circuit for public memory. Thus, the memory work of the Spanish past must also consist in creating a framework that can sustain private memories and perspectives. [Figure 13]

This is explored in Fernando Sánchez Castillo's *Fake Games, El Monumento Colectivizado* (2019). This artwork transforms Robert Capa's "Death of a Militiaman" photograph into a small plastic figure. The artist produced 4,000 figures, forming a peloton displayed in a gallery. Sánchez Castillo invited visitors to take one of the figures in

18 To further examine the broader impact that memory dynamics such as this put forth, Mark Fisher's book "Capitalist Realism," is insightful. Fisher recognises the emotional and cognitive expressions of what has traditionally been called postmodernity but he calls it Capitalist Realism. Of these affects, anti-memory precludes our ability to trace cultural practices—which Fisher describes as inherently conservative—to their historical origins while heavily relying on nostalgia as a cultural driving force for consumption. For Fisher, expanding on Jameson's theory in the essay "The End of Temporality" (2003), this effect stems from living in a constant present where life is distributed between production and consumption.

Fisher's and Jameson's concept of anti-memory allows us to contextualise the phenomenological experience of collective memory in Spain, its political attachment, its traversing from collective to individual and the way I am framing desmemòria - but the systemic critique attached to it is beyond the scope of this chapter.



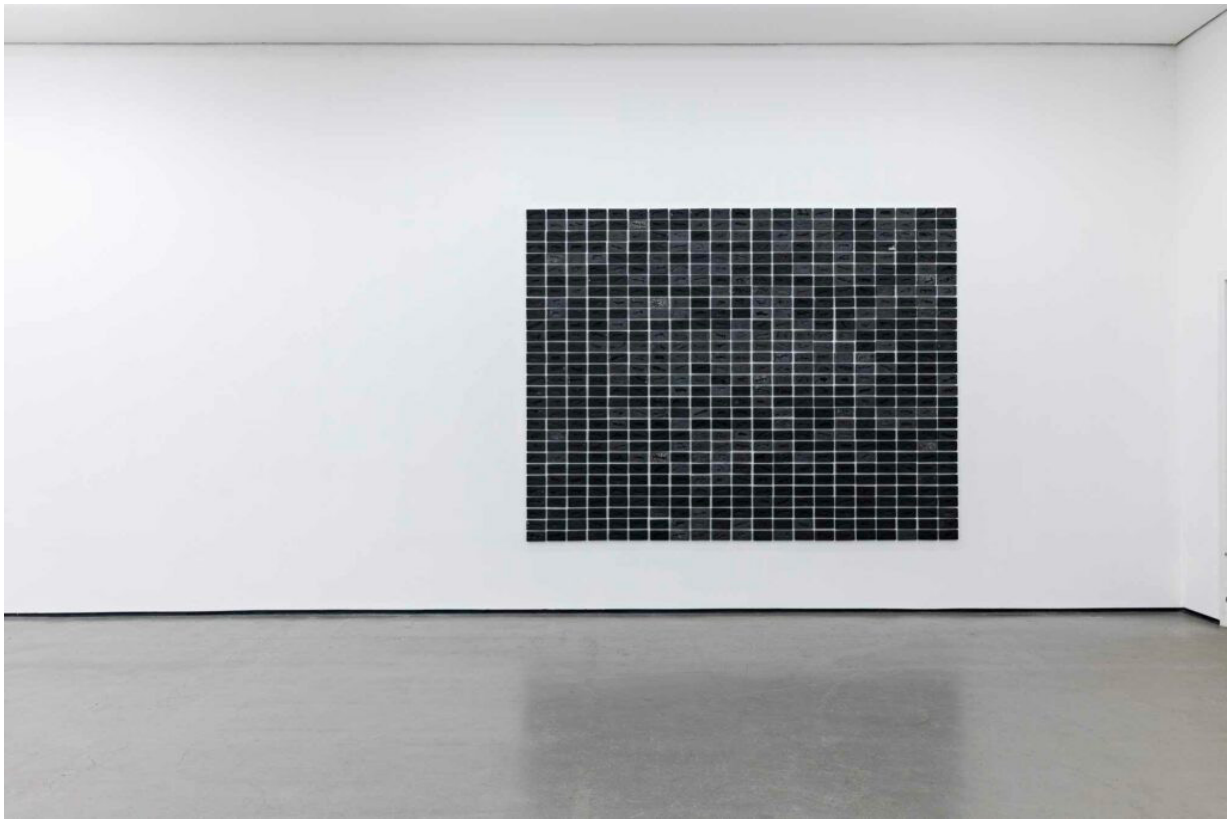


Figure 15 - Ashes to Ashes (2019)

exchange for leaving a post-it note on the exhibition wall containing their reflections on the Spanish Civil War and its consequences. Fake Games creates a progressive and participatory collective memory, without seeking or imposing a single or monumental interpretation (Sánchez Castillo, 2019). From my point of view, this approach transforms the disappearance of memory into the activation of a collective space, with potential new lives through memory. Replacing commonplace objects, images, and stories of the collective imaginary with the stories of those who experienced it, Sánchez Castillo introduces those forgotten and left out of the discourse. By inviting participation around personal experiences, Fake Games activates the collective imaginary subverting recognisable symbols. Additionally, it highlights the economy born out of the dictatorship, such as the Valencian toy industry (Sánchez Castillo, 2019), which enriches the discourse and includes all material structures in the construction of the past and its memory. [Figure 14]

Even when the past is destroyed, and so, its original form is destroyed, Jeewi Lee's *Ashes to Ashes* preserves it and retells it through the making of soap from the ashes of a burned Tuscan forest (Lee, 2019). Ashes to Ashes (2019) explores loss and transformation by creating soap sculptures using particles of burned trees from the Tuscan forest. Each containing an embossment of a piece of scorched bark, the soap sculptures act as continuations of the life of the trees, using charcoal as a pigment (Lee, 2019). I find it significant that the byproducts of the destructive effect of the fire become part of the economy as everyday objects, encasing the transformation that happened to the trees into their new life. The past itself becomes a trace in the material. Through the work of Lee, loss and absence become generative while remaining a powerful discursive and material force. [Figure 15]

Continuing this exploration of impermanence and the discourses and practices during the aftermath of destruction, Lee Mingwei explores the possibility of preservation in Luminous Depths. *Luminous Depths* (2013) is an interactive multimedia installation in the atrium of the Peranakan Museum in Singapore. The space is filled with music, and the visitor is asked to purchase a plain piece of ceramics which will



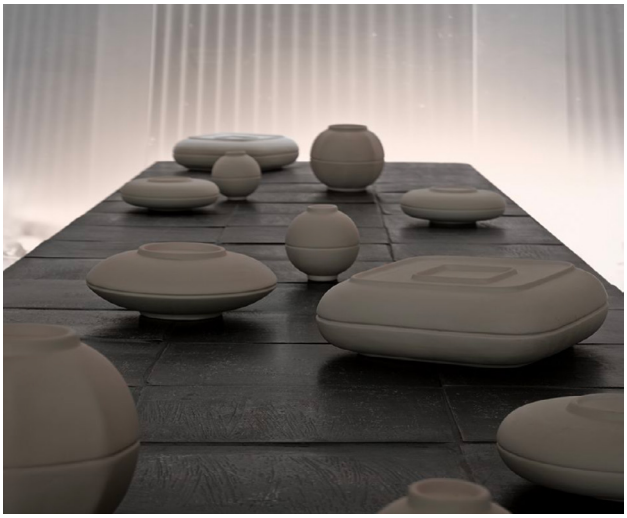


Figure 16 - Luminous Depths (2013)

help preserve objects of the Peranakan Community through acquisition. The objects have been agreed upon by the community. Once the item is purchased, the visitor is invited to go to the upper floor and throw it from a platform into the light while music plays. Once the object is thrown, the music stops until the crash underneath is heard. Afterwards, Mingwei buried the broken shard of ceramics (Lee, 2013). From my interpretation, Luminous Depths highlights the fragility of heritage, especially minor heritages. It asks the visitor to engage with that fragility by destroying the object, but also offers the possibility of care through the economic gesture of purchasing the piece of ceramic (Lee, 2013). The remaining shards appear to me as traces of history and the potential of collectivity. This artwork demands a consideration of the power of gestures that activate reflections of loss. It also highlights the potential to subvert and aid through hacking current structures, such as the museum shop and the souvenir commodity, which can be transformed into a facilitator of preservation and subsequent reflection. [Figure 16]

In these three artworks, the practices that develop around objects, artefacts and material remnants remain connected to autobiographical memory. In its potential to "obliterate the past", to "exceed(s) it...by creating a past which was never present" (Sutton, 1998, p. 322), the poetical dimension of memory is able to disrupt the expectations of practices of finitude or aftermath, many which are inscribed in the politics of memory described in this chapter. If the private sphere where these objects may have remained is the threshold into desmemòria, it also contains irrelevant stories or materials that can contribute to the broadening of public life and memory.

CONCLUSION

A Walk Through Irrelevance reintroduced personal family objects within Faió, connecting their personal meaning to the role of irrelevance in the politics of forgetting the Francoist regime. The importance and relevance assigned to these objects reflect the mnemonic politics of the system in which they are embedded. Simultaneously, they present the opportunity to reflect, play and observe the hierarchies inscribed in their materiality. This photographic series accesses this history from the position of irrelevance, offering an alternative position of inquiry, which centres the everyday and material forms of historical narration; it presents the potential of challenging the hierarchies established by systems of domination, such as that of the memory politics of the Francoist past.



Figure 17 - Box 33: Llop daughters looking at the sea

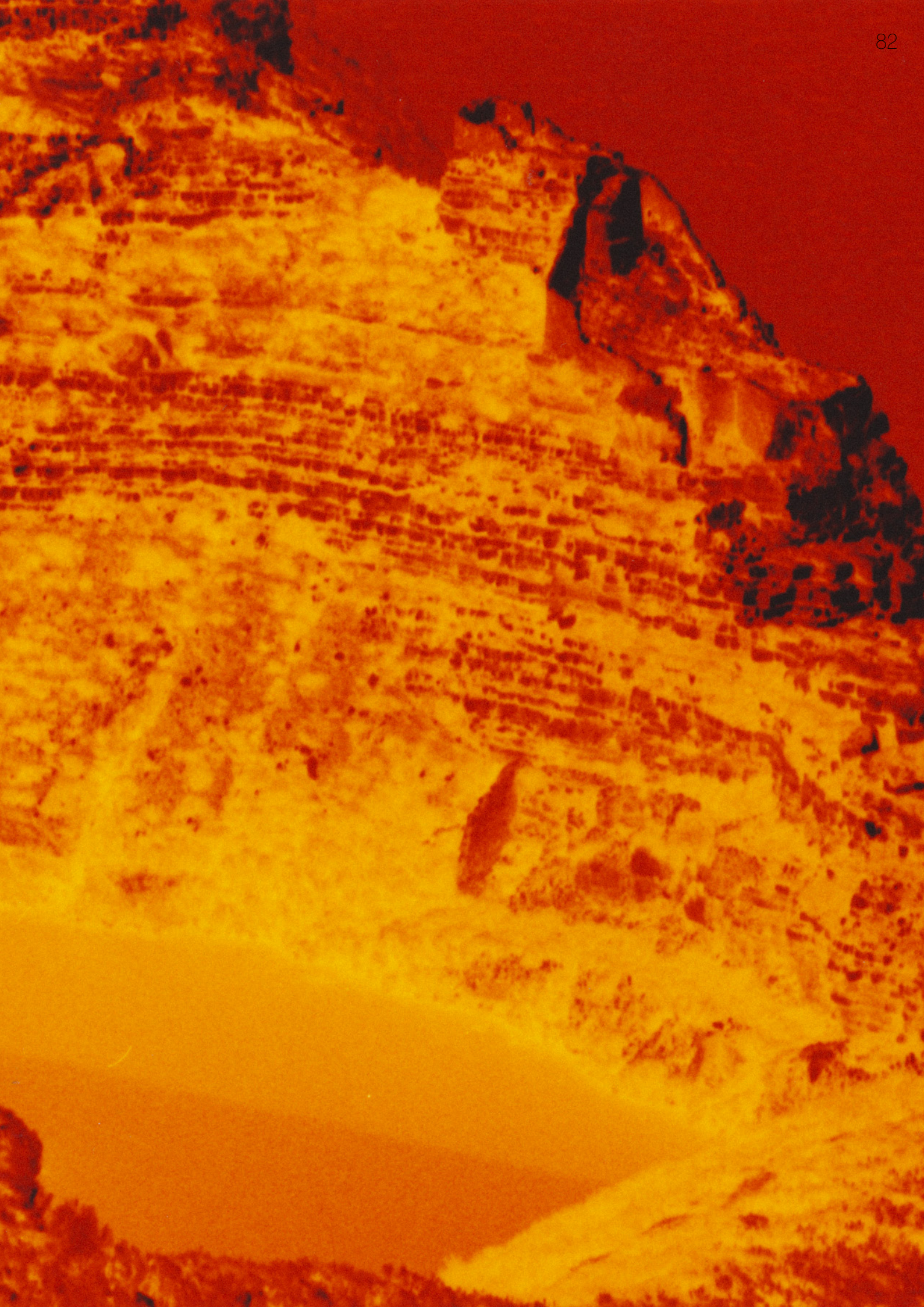
An analysis of the memory politics towards the Francoist past needs to consider the creation of narratives to legitimise the Francoist rule. Since 1936, terms such as peace, reconciliation and forgiveness were deployed to elicit the memory of the War, using the fear, guilt and shame linked to that history to underpin the power of the regime's narratives. In this context, the transitions failed to break from the mnemonic relationships established during the dictatorship. Moreover, the narrative of reconciliation promoted during the transition fostered an aversion to memory, linking it to the violence of the previous conflict. Whilst the approach advocated by institutions and the state framed the unitary narrative of forgetting as a tool for fostering consensual coexistence, whilst extending expectations of violence to the realm of memory. As the literature review showed, this turned the past into a source of compassion and shame, fostering a desire to create distance from it, which disregards claims for justice and knowledge. In turn, the present and the future have to perform this distance, encroaching on the desire to remember and engage with the past. Consequently, this chapter argues that the discourses of forgetting that began, and were enabled, during the Transition did not undo the strategies of silence and suppression that began in 1936. Moreover, the narratives of the regime constituted an affective foundation for the Pact of Forgetting, making its legitimacy harder to challenge.

The power of the Pact of Forgetting rested on a dichotomy that demanded sacrifices at both ends: abandoning the past to look into the future or remaining trapped in the past. This dichotomy also reinforces the distinction between personal and political narratives.As the unitary narrative of the past imposed a collective form of remembrance onto the population, alternative experiences were isolated as individual remembrance. This perpetuated social disconnection as a tactic of governance. Moreover, personal memory is further depoliticised.

Desmemòria conceptualises the relationship between political and personal dynamics of remembrance and forgetting in this specific context. The hierarchy that emerges from limiting participation in the construction of narratives, memorialisation and knowledge of the Francoist past rests on the distinction between private and collective forms of memory. This distinction ignores the mutually informing and relational nature of memory and its connection with action. Therefore desmemòria conceptualises the attempted enforcement of a relationship of passivity towards the past but disconnecting historical experiences from their affective, embodied and political consequences. This concept presents the subtle hierarchies and oppositions constructed around the Francoist past as a field of the perpetuation of its memory politics. I propose that it is necessary to develop practices that reconnect the private and disregarded with historical and collective narratives and politics. This chapter opens the way for a reconnection between private and collective as necessary to undo the individualising and alienating forces of fascist regimes which linger in their structures of feeling, affects, narratives and transmission of the past - i.e. its memory politics. [Figure 17]



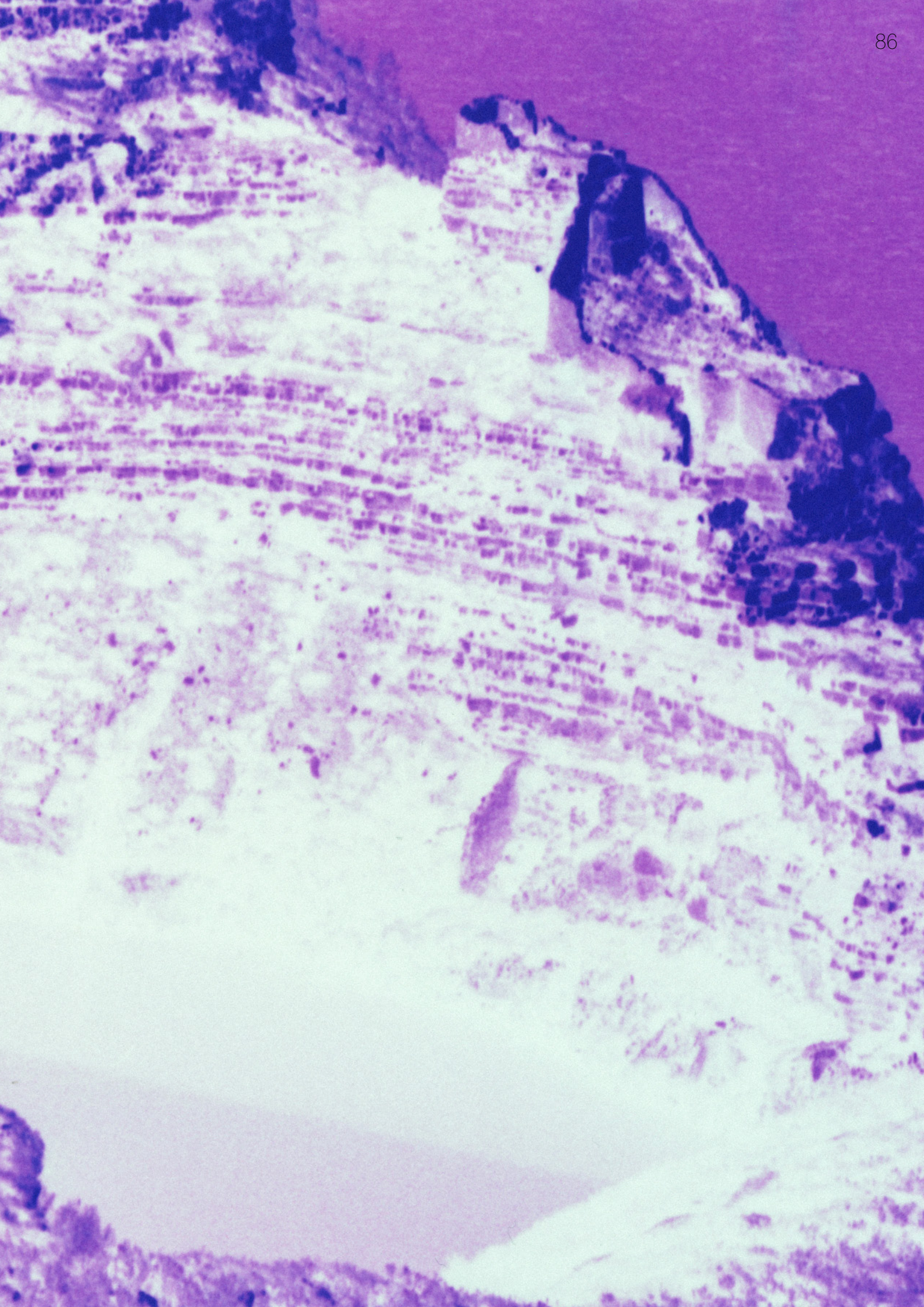




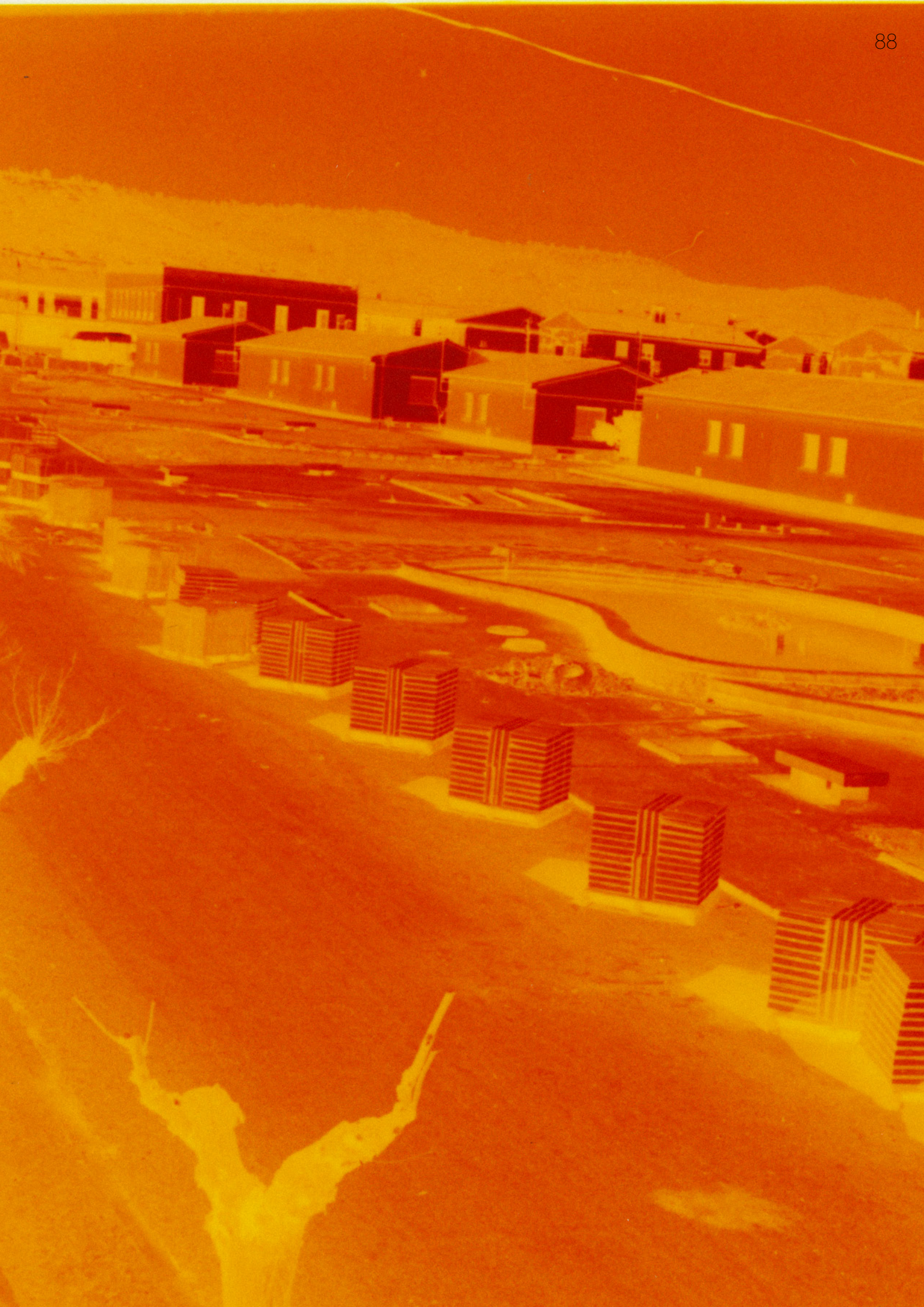


























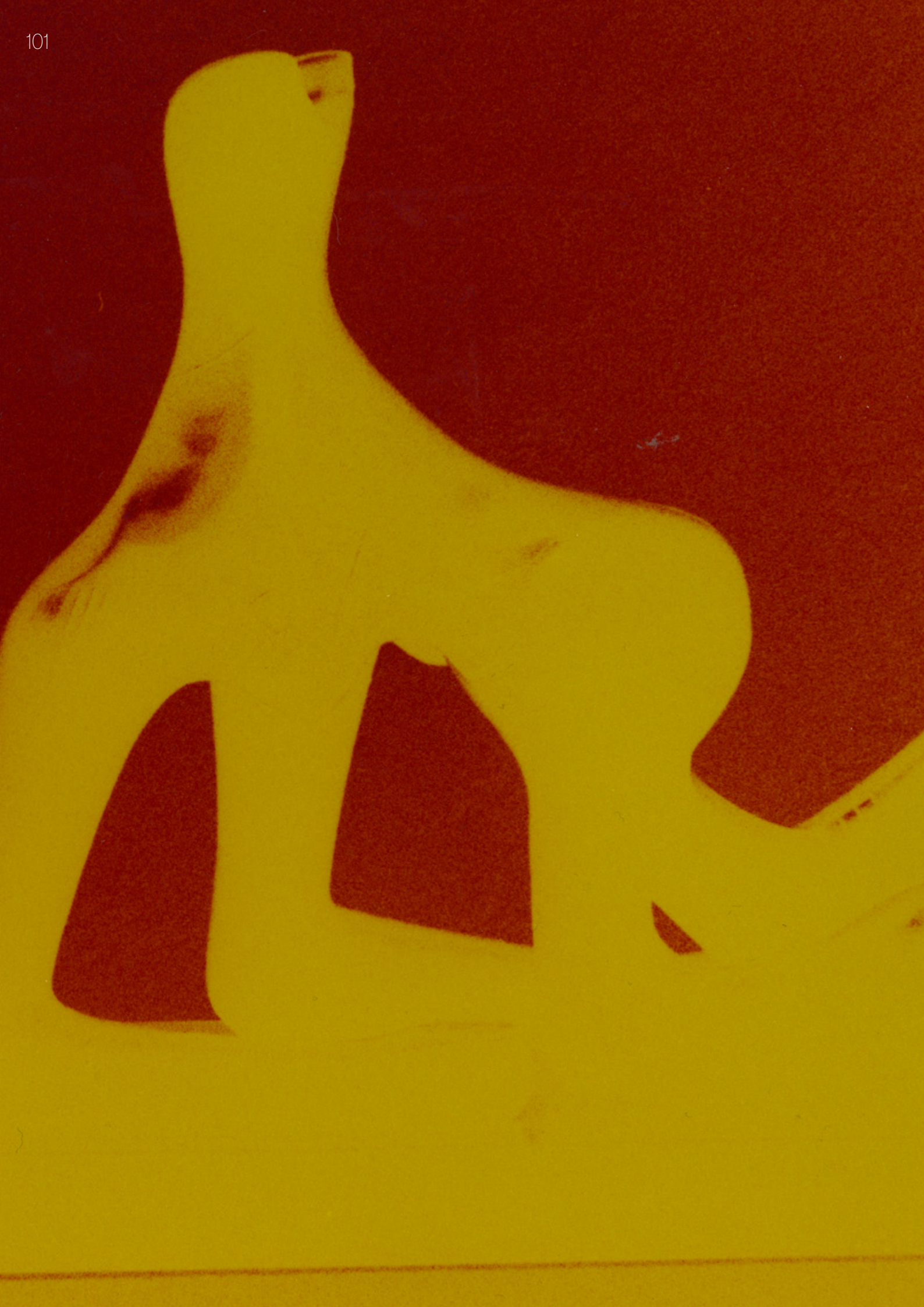
























CHAPTER 2 *Faió Or The Wolves Of La Franja*

I am holding a blue photograph; a blue transparency within a white plastic frame. At its centre, I see the Ebre, crossing the image and disappearing at the bottom right corner. On each side, gentle wrinkled mountains descend onto the water. If I travelled down the river from the bottom right corner, I would find Terres de l'Ebre, Catalunya and eventually arrive at the Mediterranean Sea. But as my eye moves from that corner towards the centre of the picture, it finds something else: Faió. But only the tip of the church, coming out of the river. On its left, the land rises and descends again into a well, as if the hills were breathing. There is a gap, then another water pit.

The sky is blue and the light comes from the right side of the image, South West, hitting the church with a yellow hue that contrasts the blue that otherwise floods the image. I recognise the hour of the day, it's evening. In 2016, I travelled to Horta de Sant Joan in Terra Alta, Catalunya, for my birthday. On the Saturday of that weekend, we took a car and drove to the Riba-Roja reservoir. We passed by Pobla de Masaluca and drove through meandering roads up to a viewpoint. The sky was red then, at the day's end. All my eyes could see was red, hitting the reservoir water. All I remember is that red, orange and yellow sky over a sprawling body of water in front of me, yet far away. As I stood at the opposite side of the reservoir, further West and South from the viewpoint of this photograph, I had a moment of recognition. I remember hesitantly saying, "I think my grandfather's village was also flooded", without knowing that I was looking at it for the first time since my childhood. [Figure 18]

This chapter looks at the flooding and displacement of Faió, within the context of its memory and history. It looks at thisin relationship to the hydraulic policy of the Francoist Regime, which flooded and displaced several villages. As a key element of the economic policies of development after the civil war ended in 1939, these forms of displacement constituted a form of material and symbolic dispossession which contextualises the impact and partial success of a politics of memory based on directed forgetting. Underwater, and with no space to share their history, these stories remain unspoken about and ignored, eventually being forgotten. The histories of these lesser-known villages provide a unique perspective on the relationship between the economic and territorial policies of the regime, its memory policies (which I presented in Chapter 1) and the post-Francoist memory policies.

This chapter presents the distinctive construction of identity in the region of Faió, La Franja (the Fringe) as a relevant context to frame the impact of this displacement on the population. Situated at the border with Catalonia, a Catalan-speaking region within Aragon, Faió's identity is embedded within its landscapes. As an underresearched region, this chapter engages with academic and regional literature, as well as oral histories to trace the relationship between Faió, la Franja and the Civil War. In the context of this chapter, these accounts help understand the political agencies found in those villages and the impact of the erasure of the town in 1967.

The practice presented in this chapter considers the transition between the private and public of this archive. A series of abstracted and inverted images perform the efforts to unearth the intergenerational and transgenerational impact of displacement and silence as an essential step within the research on a personal archive.

01



02



03



Figure 18 - Archive Box 14
01: The sun over the Riba-roja enclosure
02: The Riba-roja enclosure at dusk
03: The edges of Faió under construction

The history of Faió presents a local case of inherited memories of the dictatorship which situate the construction of a collective memory of the War explored in Chapter 1. Lesser-known histories offer insight into the construction of Spanish memory politics, particularly its everyday ignorance of commonly known events and its connection with the regime's strategies of dispossession.

ARCHIVE SECRETS: DEFORMATIONS AND MY GRANDFATHER WAS BORN UNDERWATER

These series reflect on the ethics around the becoming-public of my archive by deforming the representation of projected transparencies. To begin disseminating the photographs of the archive, I recognised that I needed to begin looking at them critically, or rather, to disrupt the preconceived ideas and gaze I had towards these images. Imagining them as depictions of the family life of people I know fails to consider the unknown stories surrounding them. In response, this series attempts to arrest the process of interpretation of archive images by disrupting their representation. Additionally, it sought to guard the identities of those photographed, whilst I began to develop my research.

This series contains ten photographs, shot on medium format Kodak Portra 400 film and printed in the darkroom on 10x12 lustre paper in December 2021. Each image is a photograph of a projection of transparency from the archive, from box 42, which I chose because it contains a variety of family scenes, including travel and domestic, in Barcelona and Faió. Projected onto a wall, the archival images become traces on a dark, distorted surface. [Figure 19 - 20]

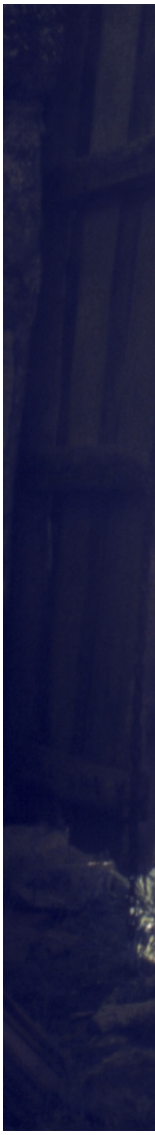


Figure 19 - Box 11: Sebastià through a door frame

In his critical analysis of the rise of the visual, architecture theorist Juhani Pallasma asserts the importance of darkness to cultivate protection and intimacy. Pallasmaa constructs a critique to architecture, and the rise of a homogeneous application of materials, such as glass, to express contemporary values of transparency and technological control. He claims that the takeover of visuality and transparency flattens the embodied experience of being in architecture and being surrounded by it in cities, in a way that promotes a sense of alienation. Instead, the textural materiality of wood and the play of light and shadow can root touch, smell and memory to the experience of inhabiting a space. Despite being arguments directed at an architecture critique, these apply to photography, as a process that involves other senses, especially when it concerns memory processes. Transparency and immediacy, according to Pallasmaa, exclude these qualities, which are necessary for belonging and memory, and dominate over other senses (Pallasmaa, 2005, p. 62). A careful consideration of texture, light and shadow is connected to a specific rhythm of engagement which connects the visual and the senses to the memories that inhabit the skin.

A displacement of the primacy of senses concerning personal archives contributes to an ethics of representation that considers the bodies and experiences of those it depicts, especially when such an archive is used to conduct historical or political research. Despite being mnemonic devices that can contribute to historical discourses, personal photographs sometimes carry unknown stories of intimate value. Beyond consent, ethics of representation of personal photographs must consider the processes of viewing and circulation. For this reason, my initial practice has not reproduced representations of my family. As Elizabeth Abel writes:

"*Collective identity is articulated primarily through the legibility of faces...If too much attention to the individual could threaten the legibility of the group, it could also*



threaten the privacy of the individual by making him or her too accessible[1]" (Abel, 2014, p.95)

In addition to safeguarding representation, this ethical position enables an autoethnographical encounter with the images that considers problems and conflicts within the archive which might otherwise be obscured by the recognition of those depicted as "mother", "grandmother", and "grandfather". Through image deformations of colour and darkness, I looked for overlooked aspects of the photographs. The spectral quality of the resulting images indicated the importance that family conflict and counter-narratives might have within this archive research. Additionally, these images invite the viewer to face the uncertainty within these photographs and involve imagination. This uncertainty prompts the viewer to join me in the space of not-knowing that surrounds unearthing these personal, erased histories. In that space, the experience of discovering an unknown and unknowable past becomes the point of encounter with the spectator.

1 Elizabeth Abel explored the representation of black liberation movements, recognising the politics of isolating faces in photographs of social movements. Not only is this an act that could facilitate - through identification - criminalisation by the State but it also exposes women to gendered scrutiny, compounding the scrutiny and exposure they already encounter in their daily lives. See Abel, E. (2014) 'Skin, Flesh, and the Affective Wrinkles of Civil Rights Photography', in Feeling Photography. Duke University Press. for an extensive analysis in the context of black liberation movements in the United States. Additionally, see Tagg, J. (1988) The Burden of Representation. London: Macmillan Education UK. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-19355-4. for a historical account of the use of the photographic medium to construct notions of criminality in the rise of biopolitical apparatus.



01



02

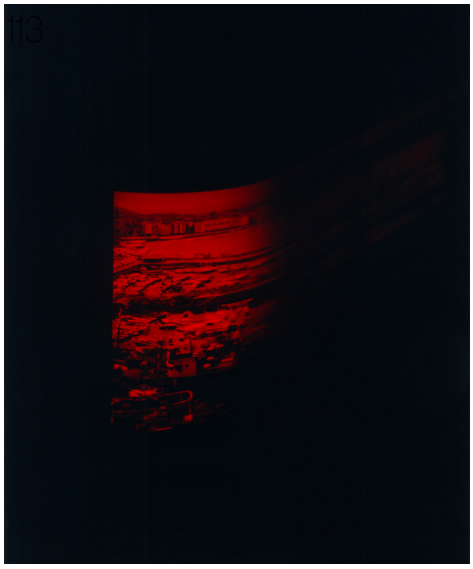
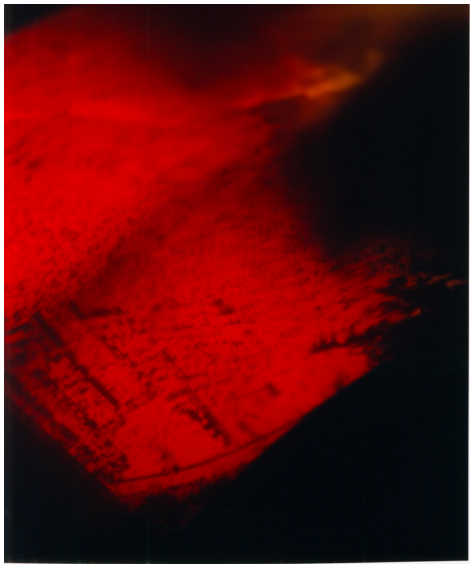
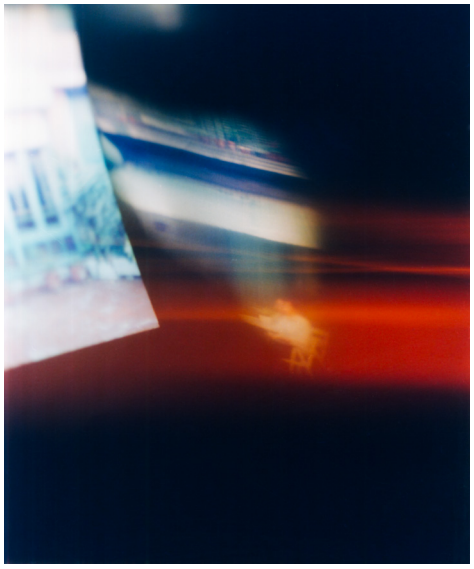
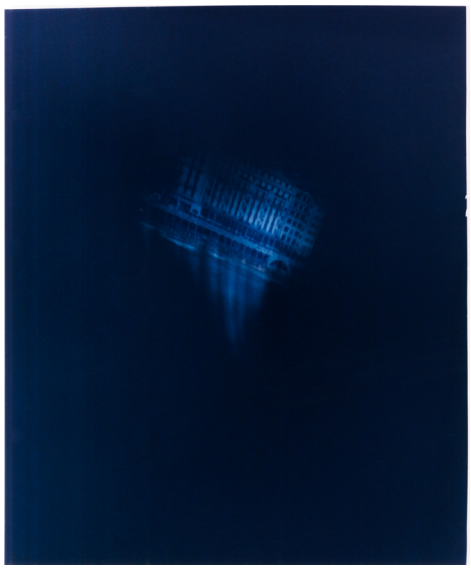


03



04

Figure 20 - Box 42
01/03 - San Sebastián beach
02 - Mar next to almond bags in Faió
04 - Celebration in Faió

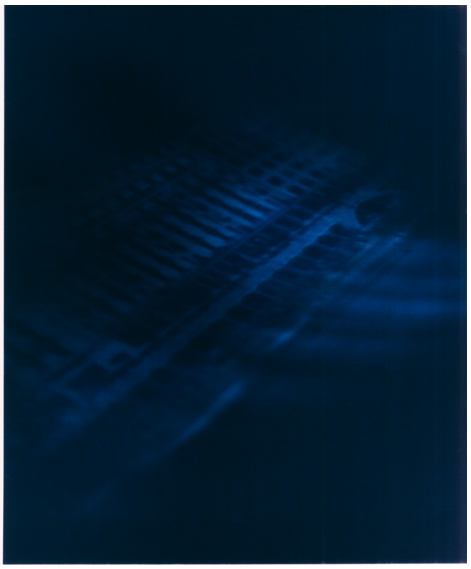





Figure 22 - Deformations, 2021



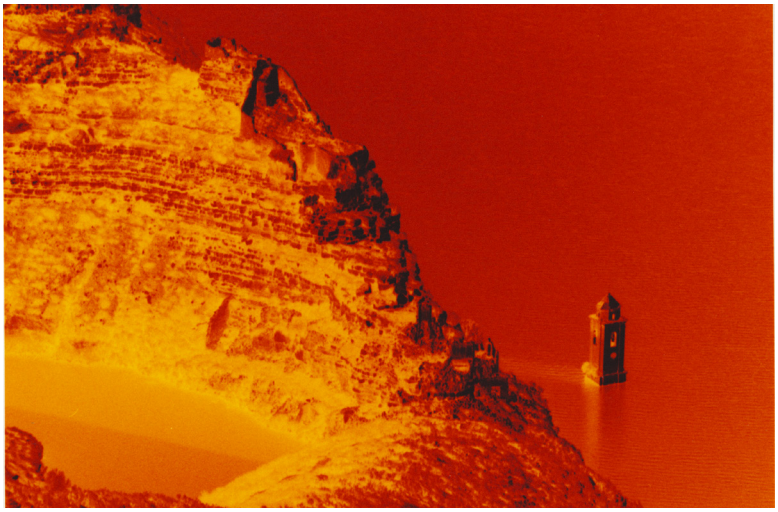
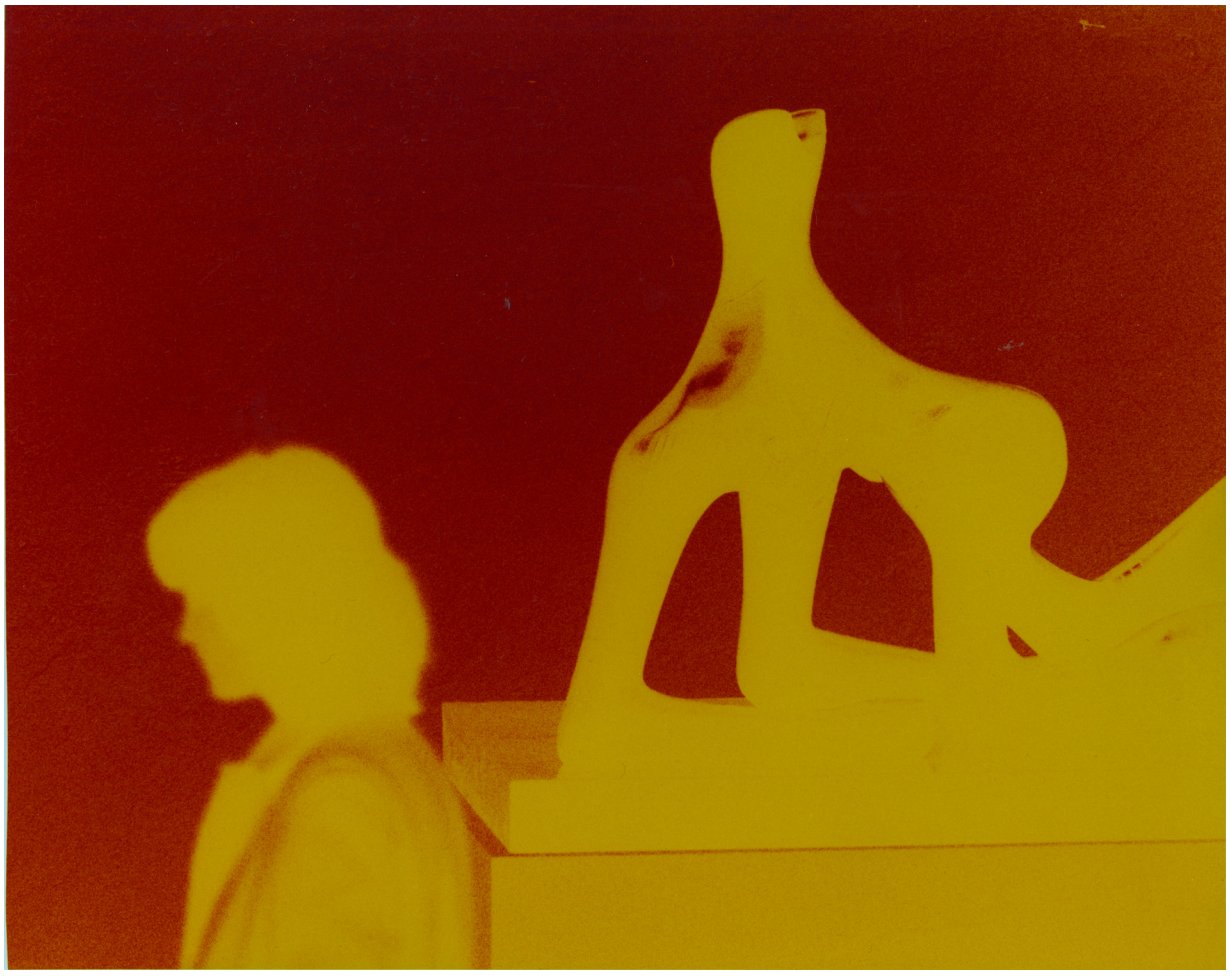




Figure 21 - My Grandfather Was Born Underwater

As a continuation of these initial archive explorations through a deformed or withheld representation, this series disrupts viewing through darkroom interventions. It contains eighteen darkroom prints printed on 8x10 glossy paper and 10x12 matte, between December and January 2022-23. Each image is a darkroom print of a photograph inverting the information within each transparency, which reveals or subtracts information within the image. [Figure 21]

My darkroom practice offers me a degree of certainty within the uncertainty of dealing with a family archive and its absent narratives: with three channels, I engage with the layers of information within a photograph. The slow time of the darkroom, as a defining dimension of its methods and rhythms, demands patience in looking and thinking. During the making of this series, the inability to reproduce the transparencies' colour and exposure, required me to print each one inverted as a negative. Each print involved a colour choice, which at times revealed or obscured their content. Throughout this process, I encountered the tension lingering behind these colourful images of family, landscapes, or Faió which can beimmediately interpreted as peaceful, happy and nostalgic. The reversal of family scenes opens up the presence of undisclosed, disregarded or ignored dimensions to this family history.













THE LLOPS OF LA FRANJA

There are many wolves in La Franja, animals and people whose - very common - surname means wolf, Llop. I remember a book in my grandparent's house called *The Wolves (els Llop)*, which narrates the origin of the surname and traces it back to an Arab knight of the time of Al-Andalus. As the Catholic Kings attempted to gain territory and push the border of Al-Andalus further south, the territory of la Franja became a site of intermittent cultural and religious conflict; a region that has been intermittently isolated from the surrounding areas, yet a key tactical position in territorial conflict nonetheless, whether religiously or ideologically instigated (in the case of the Civil War). According to historians, the Reconquest is arguably the moment of inception of the Spanish Imperialist mentality, which was later reenacted in the Civil War, as a kind of religious imperialism (Preston, 2004, p. 21) and a civilisatory project to reconquer the Spanish territory from the Republic and redeeming it from political decay, in 1936. The history of Faió is tied closely to the economy, symbolism and memory of war. The wolves, as traces of past alterities outside the Catholic norm, speak of the alternative subjectivities present during the XX-century conflicts within the region and the continuum between people, animals and landscape.

In The Town Assembled, William Viestenz, describes the changes to the region during the XX century as movements territorialisations and reterritorialisations, borrowing Deleuze and Guattari's terminology. Deleuze and Guattari explored and defined deterritorialisation in *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1994/1977) and *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1989/1980). Deterritorialisation is the disruption of the assemblage of relations within a given territory. These relationships

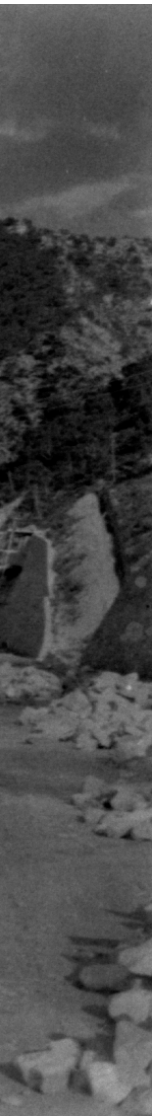


Figure 22 - 35mm: collection: Faió's train station connected La Franja to the rest of the Spanish territory. It was the point of distriution of lignite and communication with Madrid and Barcelona

are material and symbolic, guided by affect (a cognitive and emotional expression of power, through its joyful potential, or sad reactions), and, therefore, affective in their operations. The encounter between bodies - human, animal, organic, inorganic - disrupts the direction of desire and triggers a transformation. This is an internal disruption which contains the potential to ripple outwards and alter the relationships surrounding these very bodies: a becoming-minor, a deterritorialisation (Deleuze and Guattari, 1989), 1989, p. 291; Deleuze, Guattari and Deleuze, 1994, p. 33, 35). In Anti-Oedipus, deterritorialisation is inherently revolutionary, as a way to liberate the self from the Oedipal limitations and constriction of desire. However, in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, deterritorialisation is no longer the goal, or inherently desired. Instead, it becomes a step in the motion of assemblages, always followed by reterritorialisation. A less deterritorialised assemblage will always reterrritorialise the assemblage with a higher degree of deterritorialisation (Deleuze and Guattari, 1989, p. 10, 54, 70, 88; Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 35, 247, 258). In Chapter 4, I will explore the applications of the idea of minority to disrupt the suppression of agency, knowledge and memory. Within this chapter, these concepts describe the interdependence of external and internal change within social formations, placing their emphasis on uncovering overlooked agential potential to disrupt congealed structures of power.

Coal was a part of this continuum of nonhuman historical forces. Composed of organic and inorganic matter, lignite coal defined the history of Faió (and la Franja) up until 1967. During the end of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century, Faió, Mequinensa, and other neighbouring villages began exporting lignite coal to industrialised areas of Catalonia (Fullola Fuster, 2009, p. 430; Moncada, 2011, p. 48; Viestenz, 2017, p. 281). This became the main economic activity of this fishing and agricultural region, and it became entangled with the river, being transported on llaüts (the boats used to move up and down the rivers) towards the train station in Faió, where it was sent to the industrial cities of Catalonia. *Camí de Sirga*, which I previously introduced in Chapter 1, is a useful reference for this underresearched area. The book describes the fast growth of the population of the region, which was suddenly connected to the rest of Europe. The path of lignite travelled from La Franja to Barcelona via Faió (Darder Solé, 2015, p. 144), and in an inverse journey, many people and ideas from neighbouring regions, attracted by the economic boom of La Franja, arrived at Faió, Mequinensa, Caspe or Flix (Moncada, 2011, p. 61; Viestenz, 2017, p. 282). Mines and rivers connected these villages materially and symbolically.

The shift from agricultural practices - dominated by land owners - to lignite production brought a newfound participation in international movements of people and ideas. Contact with Barcelona has brought a significant number of people to the region. With them, came new social arrangements, social practices and subjectivities. The influence of this exchange was material and ideological, intensifying the left-wing ideologies present in the region and introducing disruptive methods such as strikes, especially after the events of the Tragic Week in Barcelona in 1909[2]. The

2 the Tragic Week was a series of riots and confrontations in the streets of Barcelona after the Spanish government called to join the colonial activity in Morocco. Whereas wealthy people could hire substitutes to go in their place, working-class people were forced to participate as reinforcements in the Second Rif War. This prompted the intensification of anti-military and anti-colonial ideologies and the call for a general strike by Solidaridad Obrera on Monday 26th of July 1909. By Thursday that week, there was a confrontation between the strikers and the military, including the burning of convents and the desecration of sepulchres. The burning of over 110 buildings and direct attack on the Church prompted the declaration of State of War. The involvement of military reservists in the strikes forced the government to bring army units from Zaragoza, Burgos, Valencia and Pamplona. By the end of the week, there had been 105 civilian casualties, 8 military casualties, and over 1700 arrests. The international response was so critical of the Spanish government that it prompted the substitution of the Prime Minister. See Dalmau, A. (2009). Set dies de fúria: Barcelona i la Setmana Trágica. for more.

hierarchies that had been previously in place were being deterritorialised (Viestenz, 2017, p. 286); new identities were underway. [Figure 22]

The identity of the La Franja presents singularities that frame its history and memory. Historian from Mequinensa Héctor Moret describes the difficulty of researching the region: its remoteness has made it unknown for a long time, externally and internally.

La Franja is the given name to a group of villages at the edge of Aragó, many of which are Catalan-speaking. These villages are not under Catalan administration, nor have they been in modern history[3]. The concept of la Franja emerged from the need to define this region by Catalan mountaineers, who came by these villages in the second half of the XX century after lignite production had decreased once again and the region had returned to material and social remoteness. This linguistic distinction and its relative isolation from the main cities of Aragon and Catalonia (Espluga, 2008, p. 73) produced a surprise and confusion expressed in the naming process, which reflects the attempt at making sense and creating a frame of reference to understand La Franja, the Fringe (Moret Coso, 1998, p. 12). La Franja is always a Fringe of:

- D'Arago (Aragonese Fringe, from a Catalan perspective),

- de Ponent (Western Fringe, from a Catalan perspective),

- Oriental (Oriental Fringe, from an Aragonese perspective),

- de Llevant (Eastern Fringe, from an Aragonese perspective)

Fishing, mining, and economic activities tied to the geography of la Franja, are the frame of reference regarding the identity of the villages of this region, at least Faió (and Mequinensa): the river, hills, paths, wind, sun and fields are markers of class and origin as well as activity-building psychological and socio-political entities[4] (Viestenz, 2017, p. 286) . Limited contact between villages, due to the geography of the area, and a history without institutional representation, prevented the possibility of homogeneous identity, or perhaps turned identity into an afterthought[5]. Whether one of the reasons this area is underresearched is that its distinctive identity cannot be claimed politically by regional or national political parties, making it an unusable asset in the politics of unity or liberation within the Spanish territory is an interesting question, beyond the scope of this project. In this context, historical events cannot be disentangled from everyday activities, as boats, coal, cliffs and rivers weave the social fabric. [Figure 23]

Montacada's books also describe a society rooted in its environment, pragmatically associating itself with other places and occasionally connecting with Lleida, Caspe, or Barcelona. Anti-clerical and anti-monarchic ideas present in the region attached themselves to the ideologies of industrialised cities during the boom of the coal industry at the beginning of the XX (Moncada, 2011, p. 44, 57; Viestenz, 2017, p. 282). However, agricultural activity was necessary to supplement the income from the

3 The only institution they have shared with Catalonia in modern years has been religious, being part of the Diocese of Lleida for many years, until 1953. See Costas, M.I. (1995) 'Así fue lo de la Franja (sobre el proceso de reordenación limítrofe entre la diócesis de Lérida y Barbastro)', Homenaje a Don Antonio Durán Gudiol, pp. 441–456. for an explanation of the change of religious administration.

4 This material and localised sense of identity meant that in 1821, some villages requested the annexation to Catalonia since this would have improved their everyday life in terms of trade and travel (Espluga, 2008)

5 See Pons, L. et al. (2017) El repte d'investigar sobre la Franja d'Aragó: Jornada de l'Associació Internacional de Llengua i Literatura s a Saragossa (28 d'octubre de 2016). 1a edición. Zaragoza: Prensas de la Universidad de Zaragoza. for an account of the linguistic, social and identity questions in La Franja.

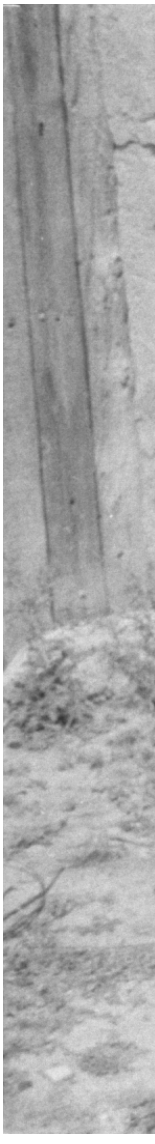


Figure 23 - 35mm: collection: these women appear to be cooking according to a traditional method, placing a ceramic casserole straight onto the fire

mines (Fullola Fuster, 2009).

Across the Spanish territory, the Second Republic brought the possibility of land reform. Historian Edward E. Malefakis argues that the main reason for the military uprising in Melilla in July 1939 was the impending land reform (Malefakis, 1970). After July 1936, the front of Aragon was the area of deployment of many popular militias fighting to defend the Republic, including the international brigades. The strategic importance of these sites came to a boiling point in the Battle of the Ebro (25 Jul 1938 – 16 Nov 1938), the longest and largest battle of the War, even "the biggest armed confrontation on the ground in the Iberian peninsula" (Cardona and Losada, 2004, p.15). As a consequence of the battle, "tens of thousands of men were buried quickly, many left where they lay, and others drowned in the river. To this day, human remains are regularly found in the area. The battle itself ruined the harvest of wheat and barley in July, of almonds in August, of grapes in September and of olives in November. " (Preston, 2007, p. 210). Additionally, tons of waste were removed from the ground, and many more remained, to be discovered by land workers for years on end (Cardona and Losada, 2004, p. 35). The unexpected defeat of the Republic in the Battle of the Ebro (Cardona and Losada, 2004, p. 26) contextualises the magnitude of the erasure of memory within this region after Faió and Mequinensa were flooded and displaced.

Aunque me Tires el Puente (2004) compiles the oral memory of the Battle of the Ebro, claiming that the Spanish Civil War was a "poor war". The precarious conditions at the Republican front came to a boiling point during the Battle of the Ebro: in the lead-up to the battle, first died the animals, as meat became scarce; soldiers had to search for esparto (or halfah) grass to make shoes, despite the scratches and cuts to



Figure 24 - 35mm collection: This appears to be a purchased film photograph of the old Faió



their hands as a result of the weaving process (Cardona and Losada, 2004, p. 64-65). These conditions and the impact of the war on the land contributed to marking this battle in the memory and imaginary of the war (Cardona and Losada, 2004, p. 49).

In the lead-up to the siege of Gandesa (Catalunya), three Republican army factions crossed the river at three different points: the division that sought to attach the 50th National Divison crossed in Gandesa, another one crossed the northern part of the Ebre between Faió and Mequinensa, and a third one on the southern end of the river, towards Tortosa. According to Cardona and Losada, the Ebre was a considerable obstacle and crossing the river required significant deployment of resources: from sailing, training and the redeployment of experienced sailors, to transporting material infrastructure necessary for the battle. Each initial party set up precarious bridges for the others to cross, but soldiers "had to trust the boats until the light of day" (Cardona and Losada, 2004, p. 75-78). By the 22nd of July 1938, a considerable amount of lorries delivered all types of boats to the riverside, with special caution to not be spotted by the Francoist aviation: the riverside had turned into the primary site of the Civil War (Cardona and Losada, 2004, p. 79).

Crossing the river became the tactical goal of the Republican Army. On the 25th of July, the 42nd, 3rd and 35th divisions of the XV body were meant to move from Mequinensa towards Ascó, guiding a line towards la Pobla de Masaluca and Vilalba dels Arcs, whilst another one occupied Corbera d'Ebre, pointing towards Gandesa. At 6 am that morning, they had successfully set up a bridge, and during the morning, in Els Auts, the mountain range between Faió and Gandesa, groups of National soldiers descended disarmed, towards the river, to be transported towards the Republican rear. Despite the undeniable events, Cardona and Losada described the limited historical remains of the battle, including the remains of the bodies buried in the land. Months later, after the vast amount of human loss during the War, the Republican side was in crisis (Cardona and Losada, 2004, p. 330). One of the defining factors of that ambivalence was the Republican refusal to deploy prisoners to battle, versus the immediate willingness of the Francoist side to do so. Those found without guilt of any crime were redeployed within their ranks; those found guilty were given the option of joining during their military trial. The material situation of the Republic was no different. On the 15th of November, the 11th and part of the 15th Brigade withdrew through the Ribaroja bridge. The remainder of the 15h brigade crossed through Flix, as did the 31st on the southern bridge in Flix and the 33rd through north Ascó. Lastly, the 13th Brigade withdrew towards Flix. As silently as the Battle had started, it ended. It is estimated that there were 20.000 deaths, and 50.000 injuries on the Republican side; 10.000 deaths and 45.000 injuries on the National (Francoist) side as well as 5.000 prisoners (Cardona and Losada, 2004, p. 329). Afterwards, the Republic was exhausted: the Nationalists took Barcelona on the 10th of February 1039 and Madrid on the 29th of March 1939 (Cardona and Losada, 2004, p. 335). Despite its location in the Battle, Faió is mentioned by name only a few times in this book, perhaps due to its isolation from the Republican side during the Battle (Cardona and Losada, 2004, p. 172). Even when marked by history, it has often been isolated and ignored from it.

The absence of significant forms of collective memory has turned the figure of grandparents into the access point to the War. It is common to know where parents were during the War, or that they had disappeared and their bodies are likely still buried in Spanish territory. Alternatively, not knowing might indicate a past that is best kept undisclosed. My father's father Marius, for example, was a republican soldier in charge of deactivating bombs. Like many after the War, he fled from Catalonia to France. In France, after escaping a refugee camp, he was offered the option of staying in France or returning to Spain. Choosing to return, he underwent "re-education"



Figure 25 - Box 14: Faió coming out of the Riba-roja Reservoir

before returning to Barcelona. Instead, my grandfather Sebastià was three years old when the War started and six when it ended. According to my mother and aunt, his family supported the national-catholic uprising and, as wealthy people of Faió, they went into hiding in a house near the village. As each side believed their village would fall to one side or another, they destroyed proof of affiliation to political parties or religion (Cardona and Losada, 2004, p. 172). The divisions that had always been present in the region - differences in class, gender, sexuality and ideology - became the foundation of the new regime. Through the violence of the Civil War and subsequent punishment and repression of the Republican side (Sánchez Soler, 2018), conflict that was previously tackled by strikes and other forms of emerging social organisation became a definite fracture and a generational inheritance. [Figure 24]

RIVERS, MINES, DOGS AND GHOSTS

After the victory of the Francoist side, the regime continued to materially and symbolically conquer the territory - de/reterritorialising - through a multitude of strategies and tactics, including its hydroelectric policy (Fernandez-Cebrian, 2023, p. 55). In 1967, Faió (and years later, Mequinensa) underwent a reterritorialisation that permanently altered its social structures: the destruction of the town to construct a hydroelectric dam and the permanent closure of the mines.

After the War, the regime invested its resources in what they presented as “rebuilding” the country (Ellwood, 1987, p. 230; Fernandez-Cebrian, 2023, p. 57). To ensure the return to the “correct” forms of exploitation and ownership of land the regime founded National Institute of Colonisation (Its objective was also reversing the collectivisations undertaken by the anarchists during the war) (Fernandez-Cebrian, 2023, p. 56; Soto, 2013, p. 120) and restoring the status quo. The investment in agriculture and agricultural enclaves was not only material: farmers and villages were to serve as symbols of the moral progress of the country under the regime. They were determined as inoffensive folkloric markers of a new/mythical Spanish iden-







Figure 26 - Box 15: Fire pires during the celebration of San Sebastiá in Faió

tity (Brandes, 2015: 800-801; Gabriel and Álvarez, 2016, p. 579). These previous sites of struggle, entangled historically with the development of a revolutionary political horizon for the population, were neutralised through the creation of new agricultural colonies.

Towards the end of Autarky in Spain, as the country sought to engage in economic exchange with the rest of Europe, its productive interests shifted. Since the 50s, the country underwent a progressive opening. Whilst the most portrayed and commonly remembered elements are tourism - leading eventually to the desmadre (chaos, playfulness) of the seventies - this project continued the construction of dams, this time shifting towards hydroelectric power (Brendel, 2020, p. 397).

The hydraulic policy was an essential part of the economic development plan, known as desarrollismo, that started in the 50s (Brendel, 2020, p. 397). The narratives that accompanied it sought to underpin a shift in economic policy through narratives of progress and access to consumer society (Fernández-Cebrián, 2017, p. 8-9) as well as narratives of discipline and colonisation of the land (Fernandez-Cebrian, 2023, p. 56). As part of this economic "miracle", the modes of production which had defined the values of the regime - land exploitation such as agriculture - shifted towards technologically mediated production, such as hydroelectric dams. The hydraulic policy of Francoism became the defining economic policy of the regime, which constituted a process of internal colonisation and "redemption" for the population (Brendel, 2020, p. 397; Fernandez-Cebrian, 2023, p. 56). The regime presented is as a way to integrate the countryside into modernising economic policies - completely abandoning any potential agrarian reform. This required the displacement of the population, and the abandonment of a way of life, identity, and subjectivity (Fernández-Cebrián, 2023, p. 60). As the case of Faió demonstrates, the actual effects of these policies further isolated the region from the surrounding area, impeding any significant "modernisation".

Within the structures of communication of the regime, depictions of farm life amplified the traditional family values es examined for the rest of the nation (Brandes, 2015, p. 803, 813). Characterisations of farm life, paired with depictions of industrial development, represented the improvement of the nation's future. Depictions of the inauguration of dams showed the dictator triumphantly entering the village, signifying the reconquest of the territory and country (Ellwood, 1987, p. 230-231). After the ceremony, Franco was shown shaking the hands of the workers who built it, whose shaved heads signalled their status as Republican political prisoners; lucky ones, however, for they could improve their sentencing through forced labour[6]. Without showcasing any political violence, these scenes of celebration projected in the cinemas were a reminder of the fate that awaited those who opposed the regime. The inauguration of dams was the perfect occasion to celebrate the regime, whilst contributing to the regime's disciplinary apparatus (Ellwood, 1987, p. 231). This tactic of affective control tied to the territorial reorganisation suggests that the politics of memory of the regime and the economic policies belonged to the same strategy of "redemption" of the regime.

Three enclosures can be found along the course of the Ebre: Flix, Mequinensa, and Faió. The Institute of National Industry led the construction of the dam in Faió, in conjunction with ENHER[7]. Research on the construction of the Riba-roja dam sta-

6 Others were forced to build the Valley of the Fallen. Those who died in their enslavement were buried in the monument buried with the body of Franco. His remains were moved to a local graveyard in 2019 but the remains of many Republican workers remain there to this day

7 Ribagorza National Hydroelectric Company.

tes that as the date approached when the floodgates opened the population of Faió wrote a letter claiming that they still held "a strong belief in Francisco Franco, but no longer in the government, and that the people of the town wished to cancel their contract with ENHER, demanding the return of the boats with which they had hauled coal upstream before the dam was built" (Brendel, 2020, p. 401). In the Mequinensa[8] mine owners "entered into a dispute with state officials to stop the expropriations" (Brendel, 2020, p. 399-400). The closure of the mines was one of the main arguments against the reservoir. Despite this mobilisation and the population's resistance, the dam was built according to plan. Such was the resistance, including the refusal to leave of a part of the population, the water reached the first floor of some houses whilst the town was still being evacuated. The floodgates opened on the 20th of November, 1967. Photographs of that day show people on boats with their possessions (Zapater, 2017). As a village of fishermen, they knew that one cannot argue with water: it was time to leave. They filled their boats with what they could, and they moved to their new village. [Figure 25-26]

Among the things that could not be transported on the day were objects of personal and collective devotion. The patron saints of Faió are Saint Sebastian and Saint Quitería. Their effigies live inside the church during the year and each February, on the 10th, they are paraded and celebrated while celebratory fires burn. On the day of displacement, such was the rush that the effigies of these two saints were left behind, becoming trapped inside the church. The story goes that the women of the village could not stop crying, thinking about having to celebrate Saint Sebastian and Saint Quiteria without them, having betrayed the trust of the saints. A group of people went to rescue them and brought them back to the new Faió (Zapater, 2017). In an interview with my mother Anna and aunt Roser (which I will describe in detail in Chapter 3), Anna explained that the conditions of the move were so precarious, that many animals had to be left behind. She told of the haunting surprise when some dogs found their way to the new village months later. So much had been left behind, that recovering their dogs was eerie. Likewise, in *Camí the Sirga*, Montcada described an eerie, empty Mequinensa; abandoned after 1975. The flickering lights of some of the visible houses evoked what had been there once and no longer was and the abysmal loss in between (Moncada, 2011).

I was never told about the old Faió. All I vaguely remembered before reencountering this story was hearing the terms "old" and "new" to refer to this double village. It was Sebastià's photographs after I claimed his archive, that confirmed that the vague memories of a flooded town matched a concrete history, making these photographs the objects of a high degree of speculation. The photographs also evoke a sense of haunting. The photograph described in the introduction to this chapter is one of only three photographs of Faió in my grandfather Sebastià's archive taken after 1967. Taken from the top of the Pilar Hermitage, this position allows for a panoramic view of the reservoir. It is possible to walk down to the riverside and encounter the tip of the church of Faió from a five-meter distance. The choice of remaining distant from the church brings me to question how Sebastià must have felt when he looked at Faió and when he took those photographs. Specifically, whether he ever visited Faió from nearby or if he preferred to remain away.

As much as I try to understand the experience of the loss of one's village and the act of staring into its ruins, I cannot uncover what was never said. However, not only did Sebastià document Faió after the flooding, if it was he who took those photographs,

8 Even though this is the same dam that flooded Faió, Mequinensa remains the more important town in the area (also because of the literary work of Jesús Moncada) and therefore the most often mentioned in research.



but he also recorded his act of looking and confronting. In this project, it is precisely his role as a photographer and the visual connection, and distance from Faió, this enabled in each photograph that permits the inquiry about this history through their personal experience.

Some of the magnitude and scale of this expression of the hydro-social dream can be found within family photographs, which offer a different perspective and a unique insight into these processes, including the documentation of the initial years in the new village. [Figure 27] Additionally, the questions and speculation presented in this paragraph resonate across this project: as a site of haunting questions that demand the recognition of the partial perspectives within a personal archive as alternative documents of the history and impact of this policy.

These photographs could have remained hidden in boxes for years to come. The act of hiding and disclosing itself responds to a particular context and carries a distinctive meaning and affect. Akram Zaatari's *Time Capsule* (2012) buried 16 wooden boxes with painted photographic objects and covered them in liquid concrete, leaving only steel rods to mark their location. The piece reenacts the act of hiding the artefacts of the National Museum of Beirut (Zaatari, 2012), which, according to my understanding, reveals the forcefulness and brutality of such an act, which many people have had to witness or carry out throughout history. The grief of this act is visible in a public re-enactment outside of the original context, which I believe, exposes the hardship of the act. The steel rods are a visual marker of the persistence of the past and the strategies of resistance of stories that have been suppressed and buried. This is a significant intervention that successfully performs the difficult decision to enforce a loss, to make a deal with absence to protect heritage. This enforced loss, only partially visible, is a haunting that serves to remind the walker of a history that should be unveiled. [Figure 28]

This haunting character takes diverse and, at times, odd turns. Faió has become a minor dark tourism destination; its church attracts people interested in strange and mournful histories. Catalan expert on the supernatural, Sebastià d'Arbó, dedicated an episode of his TV program *Mysteries with Sebastià d'Arbó*[9] to the "lights of Faió". Allegedly, lights can be seen at night where the village used to be, proving, according to d'Arbó, the haunted nature of this site (Misteris amb Sebastià D'Arbó, 2014; Misteris amb Sebastià D'Arbó, 2016). In the realm of the everyday, on the local Facebook group, people from or related to Faió share photographs of their old town, repeatedly reiterating their longing for old Faió. Even my mother Anna uses language to refer to Faió that indicates an uneasiness towards it: bad energies, uncomfortable stillness, and ghosts. The silence within the family gathers a ghostly character from wanting to speak with people who are no longer there and when confronting the tip of the church coming out of the water.

Avery F. Gordon defines haunting as "a constituent element of modern social life". It is not a symptom of individual pathology or irrational forms of knowledge. Instead, it is a phenomenon that demands a shift, a transformation of the modes of understanding and structuring knowledge, which fail to encapsulate it. Gordon describes a feeling, a real presence of something that is not there and which, upon investigating it "can lead to that dense site where history and subjectivity make social life" (Smith and Gordon, 1999, p. x, 7). The relationship between haunting and being haunted apt-

9 this program was reaired as a podcast in 2023. See CCMA (2023) Misteris, o no? - T2xC6 - Les misterioses llums de Faió i de l'embassament de Riba-roja: el llac Ness català - 3Cat, CCMA. Available at: https://www.ccma.cat/3cat/les-misterioses-llums-de-faio-i-de-lembassament-de-riba-roja-el-llac-ness-catala/audio/1177458/ (Accessed: 15 January 2024) for the full-length program.



Figure 28 - Time Capsule (2012)



Figure 29 - Box 14: Faió central Square under construction

ly describes aspects of the relationship between Faió, its population and its history, which I myself have experienced. It is an affective pull towards a place and its history and the subsequent acts of understanding and uncovering knowledge, an experience that is inherently affective and changing, sticking to the skin and the mind, or peering in the corner of the eye.

The search for economic progress demanded the move from places, modes of production, life, and political subjectivities. My grandfather, like many others, participated in this dream, moving to the city, joining a chemical factory and taking the necessary steps to progress economically, as his countryside of origin did not allow him that. The aftermath of the War had left a precarious and wounded social fabric and profound social control through religion. His willingness to abandon this place and this identity, only to witness it being destroyed and the community forced to abandon it as well, might have haunted him. This haunting might be a pull and desire to recognise the presence of history and subjectivity in a specific place and the real power of the past onto the present - especially when it is ignored - as a material force.

The immanent presence of horror in this history is undeniable, despite attempts at controlling/reducing/ignoring its intensities and responses - through morality and ideas of reconciliation and progress. Even academic subsumption of its intensities under psychological or historical analysis denies a dimension of this experience that can only be placed within the category of horror or haunting. Throughout this thesis, the horror of the experience of civil war, dispossession and dictatorship emerges in remembrance, specifically in the terms used to describe places or events. Following Mark Fisher's work on Gothic Materialism, these terms, when they appear, might be reframed from a - disproportionate, pathological, ignorant - description of social relations or a psychological description of the individual subjects collected within a family to an affective exploration of the power of remembrance to destabilise the distinction between subjectivity and materiality (Fisher, 2001). According to Fisher, horror stories help "unlearn to pray and curse, unlearn man and god" (Fisher, 2001, p.231), demanding a confrontation with uncertainty and the recognition that certain structures in place are no longer useful. Fisher's shift from attention towards the



fiction of human security, challenged and destabilised in horror stories - which also raise the question of who speaks, and which power emerges from unexpected utterances - shifts the horror from the human to its materiality.

Destabilising the distinctions that constitute the fabric of humanistic certainty fosters, also, the attunement to the strategies that enforce distinctions between humans, human-nonhuman, subject and material, and organic and inorganic[10] and continue to enforce those in the social spaces of distribution of materiality and subjectivity, such as in the case of Faió displaced reconstruction.

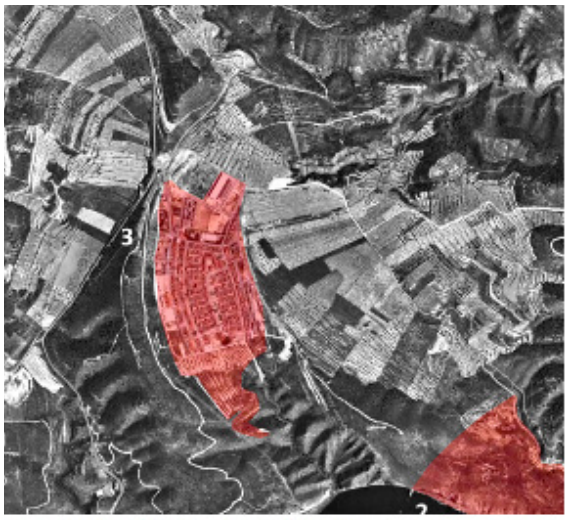
FAIÓ: UGLIEST TOWN IN SPAIN?

Simultaneous with the planning and construction of the Dam was the planning and construction of the new village. Having been responsible for the design of multiple newly founded villages across the agrarian region of Spain, the head of architects of the Institute of National Colonisation, José Borobio, led the construction of Faió. In the existing documents of the process, it is noted that Borobio was concerned with the village's proximity to the river. According to these documents, Borobio recognised the importance of maintaining the bond between the new Faió and the Ebre, to ensure the preservation of the methods of transport and communication of Faió and

10 Fisher emphasises challenging the distinction between organic and inorganic matter, emphasizing cybernetics as a field that performs the reorganisation of this distinction (Fisher, 2001, p.240). Ewa Domanska asks similar questions to connect primitive notions of animism - the notion that "trees, rivers, animals and non-organic things possess a spirit or animating power and thus, are not only alive but possess something approximating to personhood" (Domanska, 2006, p. 179) - biotronic technology in challenge to question the sanctity of established notions of subjectivity (Domanska, 2006, p. 184)







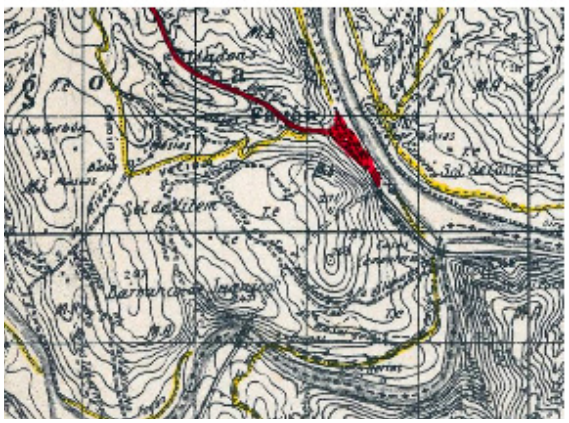


Figure 30 - Plans to build Faió's new site

its neighbouring villages as well as the local identity (Darder Solé, 2015, p. 153). However, due to topographic and geographic reasons, the current placement was the most viable one[11]. Disconnected from the river, the identities of the villages were permanently altered. In the Towpath (Camí de Sirga), Nelson's boat floats aimlessly in the Ebre, exemplifying the population's severance from the river. Without its purpose, neither the boat nor Nelson's identity is whole (Viestenz, 2017, p. 283). The new village was very different to the Faió where Sebastià grew up. [Figure 29]

I have often referred to Faió as "the ugliest town in Spain", a statement that captured the feeling of disorientation and estrangement that permeates my childhood memories of walking around Faió. The new village is shaped like an almond, a centripetal almond. From its edge to its centre, several cul de sacs force the visitors to turn streets, eventually (almost inevitably) arriving at its centre. In the centre of Faió is a long square. On each side are the centres of power: the church and the city hall. There is no direct visibility between the central public space of Faió and its edges; only following the path laid in its streets leads to the eventual emergence of its meeting place (Darder Solé, 2015, p. 150-151). Still, in their letter to the government, the people of Faió stated that "the new Faió was without flowers, joy, life, peace and spirit, the families felt hopeless and held expectations of a dark future" (Brendel, 2020, p. 401). In my memories of Faió before returning in 2021, I visualised the houses, the public swimming pool, the butchers, Sebastiàs aunts' house and the square, individually, but I was unable to join them up or place them in space. And I remembered it ugly, with quiet empty streets, warm stale air - as if it was paused.

According to my mother and aunt, the state distributed the houses in the new village according to the size of each family's previous house. Whilst the resistance endured in the old village, some people decided to leave early and settle in the new town. This created an initial fracture, and the distribution of the houses created another wound. Distribution according to size meant wealthier families would remain central and have bigger houses in the new town. Sebastià's aunts, for example, were given a two-story house by the central square. Sebastià, who did not live in Faió at the time, was given a one-story house at the edge of the village. I argue that this distribution of houses inscribed the socioeconomic difference between the population as spatial hierarchies in the new village: a planned, visual and embodied reminder of each person's place in that society. [Figure 30] In the years after the flooding, the town went from 2000 inhabitants to the current 400 (Darder Solé, 2015, p. 147). The miners' concerns were accurate, as the mines were closed. The economic life in Faió returned to agriculture, cultivating almonds, peaches, and olives. There is speculation on whether the flooding of Faió and its neighbour Mequinensa (as key locations in the republican memory of the Battle of the Ebro) was a punitive action to dismantle the mining community (Brendel, 2020, p. 399).

The haunting presence of the past is found in its materiality. Jesus Montcada's novel recalls the history of Mequinensa until the construction of the Riba-Roja enclosure. Mequinensa is a village next to Faió, and Montcada's novels provide valuable knowledge of this underresearched region. Montcada describes the destruction of each house through the objects that emerge and witnesses the, somewhat aleatory, demolition, surprising both the villagers and the construction workers in charge of the removal. House by house, demolition becomes a ritual of memory in the novel, as the objects reveal the history of the village and its people. The history of each antique is not obvious to the witnesses of their removal from the houses, but the past appears

11 Of the three options considered by Borobio, the two nearer the river were isolated from roads, impeding communication and transportation (Darder Solé, 2015, p. 156).



Figure 31 - Fieldstones (2016)

nonetheless - in the absurdity, surprise and often confusion of their resurfacing. The head that used to crown a llaüt[12] which had observed the affairs of the French vedette Madamfransuà, who lived in the village during World War I, as lignite production was booming, scares the villagers in its resemblance to a corpse when the old Edén is demolished. To a similar surprise, the coffin that was once meant to accommodate Atanasi Resurrecció, before he unexpectedly came back to life, comes out of the family house filled with onions, as its original purpose was never fulfilled and the family gave it more practical use. Moncada emotively portrays how each of these objects participated in the history of a village that, like other lignite villages, grew in importance and population as fast as it decayed. As mute testimonies of these events, the river witnessed the ignorance of the people who recovered and transported them to the new village or threw them into the river as a final goodbye.

Even rocks may have memory, or exist within the collective memory of a people; they act as silent witnessess in Sam Durant's *Fieldstones* (2016). In the exhibition B*uild Therefore Your Own World* (2016), Duran't excavates the history of marginalised people in America. These fieldstones, made by Durant and inspired by his visit to Massachusetts and (like a lot of his work) by literature - in this case Robin Coste Lewis' poem "Inhabitants and Visitors", an erasure work of Thoreau's Walden -, are a common building material in New England and conjure the oppression and violence in the context of slavery, pointing to the presence of slave labour in every construction and foundation of American homes and structures. In the exhibition, they are placed on the floor, unavoidable to the visitor. Durant creates worlds of fantasy and reimagines everyday materials to charge them with political narratives of counter-power and elements of the historical experience of blackness (Durant, 2017). Each material appears to me as an expression of a historical relationship of domination that affirms the acts of creativity against and despite oppressive forces. In the emphasis on histo-

12 Llaüt is the name of the boats used to go up and down the Ebre, transporting coal, people and whatever was needed. It was the main transportation between neighbouring villages and the main connection with other villages, either stopping in Faió to take a train or continuing along the river Ebre.



rical relationality, the everyday objects and reimagined materials gather a collective voice.For example, the fieldstone is a symbol of the naturalization of slavery. On the floor of the exhibition space, no longer avoidable or discursive; it is at the base, at the foundation of the structure and of relationships occurring in that space. [Figure 31]

As previously stated, most, if not all, miners were Republican and somewhat anti-clerical (Moncada, 1999). With the closing of the mines, the political agencies that participated in the Civil War and risked undoing the historical hierarchies of the territory were erased. In that event, Faió was deterritorialised and reterritorialised in the construction of the new village. As a result of this process, Faió became another flooded village, another Dam[13]. Roser described in our interview (in Chapter 3) that the flooding superseded the memory of the War, which was the defining underlying social conflict in Faió. The complete disruption of symbolic and material coordinates proportionately altered the present and becoming subjectivities. Gilles Deleuze reminds us that:

> "*The struggle for a modern subjectivity passes through a resistance to the two present forms of subjection, the one consisting of individualizing ourselves based on constraints of power, the other of attracting each individual to a known and recognized identity, fixed once and for all. The struggle for subjectivity presents itself, therefore, as the right to difference, variation, and metamorphosis.*" (Deleuze, 2016, p. 106)

The dispossession brought by the flooding and displacement of Faió disconnected the population from their source of identity and ways of organising, severing also the subjectivities that developed around previous structures. This effects, too, the forms of memorialisation in this region, which are impacted by the broader politics of

13 The Dam built over Faió is named after the town Riba-Roja d'Ebre. The confusing nomenclature furthers the erasure and irrelevance of Faió.

memory described in Chapter 1, with the added specificity of the material separation imposed by the regime and the absence of categories of identification in the context of this displacement and its memory. [Figure 32]

In his presentation Marxism in Culture: The Economy of Mass Graves, Memory scholar Daniel Palacios Gonzalez argued that the creation of the category "victim", as the democratising descriptor of all the population after the Francoist regime, denies the population's political agencies (Palacios González, 2023). The politics of post-Francoist memory offer a possibility of historical importance and participation, resulting in homogenisation under the category of victims and further enforcing the renunciation of past agencies (Palacios González, 2023). Victim is an organising category in the 2022 Law of Democratic Memory. However, emphasizing victim, without addressing those responsible for, or benefitting from, victimisation places all the weight on those who have to prove they are victims and lead the process of justice from that position and category. As Escobar Fernández explains this framing "implied that these persons were not fulfilling the moral imperatives attached to the concept of the ideal victim, which was previously given to the victims of terrorism, thus creating first-class victims (victims of terrorism) and second-class victims, that were systematically questioned by the opposition" (Escobar Fernández, 2023, p. 110).

The moral dimension attached to the emphasis on forms of victimhood has far-reaching consequences. As will be exemplified from a different perspective in Chapter 4, reducing justice to the binary of victim and perpetrator limits reflections on responsibility. As Michael Rothberg explores in *The Implicated Subject*, "legacies of violence spread beyond the stable categories of the "victim/perpetrator imaginary""(Rothberg, 2019, p. 11); instead of falling within these categories, injustice operates as a network of entanglement across past and present, which he calls "complex implication" (Rothberg, 2019, p. 12). Not only are these "complex and shifting" but multiple forms of "psychic and social denial" challenge their recognition and self-identification with their everyday expressions[14].

In the context of Faió, the complex network of wounding and grievances, compounded with the precarious categories of responsibility offered by the current processes of transitional justice bring our attention to the relationship between victims and material or social beneficiaries of authoritarian regimes. According to Rothberg this "testifies to the antipolitical nature of contemporary human rights discourse. By privileging reconciliation over justice, human rights discourse demands that victims give up their claims on material redistribution and settle instead for a "moral victory" that declares that evil has already been overcome". A mode of reconciliation that does not account for material structures that stem from various forms of exploitation, displacement and dispossession, and links those to the present, demands those who suffered at the hands of these regimes accept a "moral victory" that changes nothing in the past nor the future, whilst claiming that both have been settled (Rothberg, 2019, p. 19). Thus, there is a need to broaden the categories/relationships of responsibility to emphasise agency and complex forms of ethics and politics. Reducing participation to a single category of moral emphasis contributes to an incomplete relationship with the past.

14 Rothbergs emphasises racial discrimination and oppressive systems based on race difference. He places significant emphasis on forms of identification or non-identification: he links the May 1968 slogan "Nous sommes tous des juifs allemands" (We are all German Jews), which expressed solidarity across material and symbolic positions in to the response to the response to the information about Abu Ghraib in the slogan "We are all torturers now" shifting from victim to perpetrator; instead, "We are not Trayvon Martin stated a comparable degree of solidarity whilst account for the differences in positionally and power and moving away from the role of victim or perpetrator (Rothberg, 2019, p. 10).

Figure 32 - Box 14: Sebastià was interested in photographying the construction of Faió and his own house therein. This is part of series of photographs of a pipe



Figure 33 - Box 20: Men collecting alomonds



ALMONDS AS AGENCY

In chapter 1 I presented *A Walk Through Irrelevance*, which repositioned personal objects in Faió to reactivate them, the meanings of objects that once were agents in the life-making of my family in the new town. Among these objects, I found something that had never left my memory and is also present throughout the archive: a multitude of almonds, inside a jar. Many photographs capture communal activities structured around these almonds. On tree branches, picked from fields, sorted and selected in the family house, piled in bags, with multiple people involved; near cats, snowed on, even as the shape of the village (Darder Solé, 2015, p. 146). I recognised them, I remembered them.

From growth and harvest in the fields to being sorted and bagged in the home, a remarkable amount of archive photographs are dedicated to life scenes that feature almond trees. These photographs speak of the entanglement between memory and history with labour and its potential to activate the agency that the destruction of Faió might have suppressed. [Figure 33-34] As I have previously introduced, non-human agencies, such as the river, fields and mines, constitute the subjectivities and identity of the region of La Franja, and Faió itself. Shifting attention towards these agencies enables a different approximation of this history. One which allows for an analysis of the interconnectedness between the affective and mnemonic operations of the regime and their material and spatial expressions.

Lara Fluxà captures the contested relationship between people and the Ebre in *Dissolution is the Best Solution for Pollution* (2018). *Dissolution is the Best Solution for Pollution* (2018) explores the importance of remembering difficult, or "hazardous", situations (Fluxà, 2024). The artist examines the memory of water in homoeopathy, in contrast to the water disposal in the River Ebre. Fluxà offered visitors a capsule made from one of the contaminants of the River Ebre - mercury (Fluxà, 2024) - to shift the focus from human practices and concepts of memory and danger to the water and the ecosystem. In the context of this research, this artwork successfully highlights the impact of human-made activities, both technological and cultural, on ecosystems. As water contains, or remembers, the history around it, and to it, can help articulate a critique of human activity that works against other humans and the ecosystem. This approach engages with the Ebre to encounter its agency and perspective. The artwork prompts me to recognise that the Ribaroja enclosure water is an agent of inquiry that shifts that relationship towards solidarity. The haunting of the past on this water, as memory is a reminder of the importance of irrelevant history. [Figure 35]

Continuing with the intrinsic relationship between cultural and social practices and the ecosystem that sustain it, Sofiane Zouggar's *Memory of Violence* (2018) explores how the soil may remember, or be affected by, the history around it, and the violence that occurred. In *Refracted Memories* installation from *Memory of Violence* (2018), Sofiane Zouggar uses screens as grow lights for soil. The screens display traumatic images which, in their function as grow lights become part of the cycle of life of what is to grow from the soil. This work explores the role of mediatic institutions in shaping collective narratives and their impact on materiality including emotional or identity relations (Zouggar, 2021). I believe Zouggar's inversion of the relationship between the visual and material aspects exposes the visual as an active agent that drives materiality, rather than being a mere expression or response to an event. As images are shown to incessantly and inescapably nurture matter, the visual transmission of the past gathers its fully ethical and political dimension. This emphasis on the ethics of display and communication is particularly relevant to my research as it acknowledges the power of photography in grounding and building discourse. This recognition



01



02

Figure 34
01 - Box 15: Bagged almonds in the porch of the old house in Faió
02 - Folder D: Cat jumping to grab and almond, in the garden of Lola, Pepita and Odilia's house in Faió



Figure 35 - Dissolution is the Best Solution for Pollution (2018)

makes me reflect on photography as active in affecting the actualising of the potential of archives in the transmission or repair of loss. The War marked the ground with bodies and war materials and altered the human and nonhuman ecosystems in the region. Thinking through Zouggar's work, if this memory has marked the history and bodies of this place, it is worth asking how the circulation of the archive's photographs will contribute to the relationship between human and nonhuman beings. [Figure 36]

To begin to explore these questions, I made an artefact called Becoming-almond. By piling almonds on top of each other over the archive, this structure reproduces and reverses the act of sorting them out to be bagged. Instead of separating them, almonds are joined and attached in a fragile relation of support; open to interpretation whether they emerge from the archive or mould to it, guarding it. These almonds (as explored in Chapter 3) became agents of place-making after loss, and reflect the methods of creation and recreation of community despite separation. Piled on each other in precarious balance, they also point to the disruptive relationship with the material and social ecosystem of Faió. In their ambivalence, they offer opportunities for tactile play and exploration where there has previously been a loss. [Figure 37]

In writing as a Nomadic subject, feminist thinker Rosi Braidotti advocates for a joyful approach to the past. Acts of play and discontinuity subvert the mournful affects of power structures that produce differences to sever and subject. In this mode, remembering becomes an act of reconnecting with forgotten or ignored agencies and subjectivities (Braidotti, 2014, p. 173), or a Deleuzian "battle for the condition for its possible existence" (Deleuze, 2016, p. 112). The "joyful discontinuity" (Braidotti, 2014, p. 174) of reintroducing these objects of *A Walk Through Irrelevance* back into the



Figure 36 - Refracted Memories Installation from "Memory of Violence" (2018)



Figure 37 - Becoming-almond artefact over archive box, 2021

town enabled a generative reflection and questioning of the notions of relevance and memory in the previous chapter; engaging with almonds enables alternative contact with the material history of Faió, through touch and care. Therefore, as companions that offer an alternative access point to this history, these almonds and the questions around them become elements of a practice of counter-archiving, counter-narrating and counter-remembering that will emerge throughout this project.

CONCLUSION

Deformation and *My Grandfather Was Born Underwater* withhold the immediate information of the transparencies, especially those found in the faces, as a means to shift the attention from the expected content of family images. This approach engages with the hidden, unseen and overlooked parts of archival photographs to unearth the separation, silence and distance within the archive. Arresting immediate recognition is a method of archival dissemination that begins to transition it from private to public and peels back the layers of history and affect within its lesser-known histories.

These minor histories, such as the history of Faió, offer insight into the construction of Spanish memory politics, particularly in its connection with the regime's strategies of dispossession.

The social relationships of Faió were rooted in its environment and production: those who owned the means of production around the river, land, and mines, enforced their interest on the workers and village, and political struggles had clear objectives. After the Civil War, these structures augmented and intensified due to the involvement of state military institutions, especially during the Battle of The Ebre, which marked the land and memory of the population.

This chapter analysed the flooding as an erasure of the agencies and subjectivities that had developed around the rivers and mines, and the institutions that emerged around them; i.e. their conflicts and potentials. Whereas the subjectivity of the people of Faió was entangled with the land and river, the flooding of Faió in 1967 sepa-

rated the population from their previous life. In the construction of the new town, class differences became embedded into the space of the village, shifting to environmental structures of governance. Conflict shifted also, subsuming political struggles into interpersonal grievances around the distribution of houses. The impact of these experiences, combined with their enforced ignorance haunts the archive in the form of absence.

The commonality of this phenomenon, occurring within one "unimportant" set of villages among many others, there were limited efforts to comprehend and historicise the impact of this phenomenon. This echoes (or is echoed in) the national and personal dynamics of memory in Spain (explained in Chapter 2). Despite this history, there is limited literature about this particular region. To reconstruct the history of the archive, due to the absence of transmission of these events within my family, I have used literary reviews as well as literature, such as the novels and stories from local writer Jesús Montcada. This has provided a situated perspective on the history within the family archive.

As my grandfather left Faió early in his life to work in Barcelona, there is an intimate relationship between the haunting of abandoning Faió and the complexities of the inherited conflicts and desires within the village and the family. Within family and archive, Sebastià embodies this renunciation, as his photographs raise questions on the experience of leaving Faió and being unable to return to the old village after its erasure. The absent transmission of this past imbues the archive with a debt. Of over 5500 archive photographs only three photographs show Faió. The reduction of political and personal agencies as a result of the displacement of the population and the repression of the war reduced the possibility of knowing and contextualising family inheritance. These images stand out as signifiers of this unknown knowledge.

By presenting the connection of Faió, a now forgotten "unimportant" village, with the history of Catalonia, Spain and the Civil War resistance, this chapter proposed that the erasure and displacement of the population by the National Institute of Colonisation belong to the strategies of dispossession that constituted the policies of the regime. Consequently, I argued that the regime's intervention in land/space - from the destruction of villages and social structures, to the triumphalist discourses of reconstruction and forced labour embedded in the dams to the creation of villages, to the inscription of hierarchies in the very distribution of people in these villages - should be read alongside its memory politics.

The category of identification provided to the population - the victim - is insufficient because it disregards the relationship of power that produced these experiences. Additionally, it contributes to an autobiographical memory based on the separation and displacement from active forms of power, further pacifying political and mnemonic agency. In my practice, Becoming-almond, I have begun to explore the potential of displacing the human as the structuring element of politics and history. Considering this relationship as a flat assemblage of mutually affecting agencies, enables us to begin unearthing different sources of Faió's memory. This contributes to understanding the dimensions and impact of Faió's history and erasure of memory This enables the discovery of sources of memory outside of the category of victim, loss, absence and War, contributing to the reconnection with forms of agency within personal archives, and outside of family structures.

Folder D: Roser, Odilia, Mar, Anna, Pepita, Roser and an unknown woman sat on top of piled bags filled with almonds under the porch of the old house in Faió










PONS






FIBER






3/22
3/22






FIBER







CHAPTER 3 *Archival Legacies, Silence, and Secrets: Caring for the Fragments*

In 2020, I chose to stay in London for Christmas instead of returning to Barcelona due to the uncertainty caused by the pandemic. To make myself feel more at home, I watched as many films by Pedro Almodovar as I could find. His strong, female characters reminded me of the women I grew up around. I watched *Entre Tinieblas* (Dark Habits, 1983), *¿Qué he hecho YO para merecer esto!!* (What have I done to deserve this, 1984), *Mujeres al Borde de un Ataque de Nervios* (Women at the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown, 1988), *Carne Trémula* (Live Flesh, 1998), *Todo Sobre mi Madre* (Everything about my Mother, 1999) and *Hable con Ella* (Talk to Her, 2002). *Todo Sobre mi Madre* tells the story of Manuela, who travels to Barcelona after her son's death to find his father and tell him about the son he never knew. The film explores the impact of secrets on relationships in the context of the AIDS crisis in a time when LGBTQI+ rights still suffered at the hands of the post-Francoist regime[1]. The character of Rosa Maria Sardà, who plays the mother of Maria, reminded me of my grandmother. Two weeks later, in 2021, I received a package from my father containing my grandfather's archive, which he had kept after she passed away in 2018. I poured over the transparencies, and quickly found a transparency of a frame of Todo Sobre Mi Madre with the Writing "EL DESEO TODO SOBRE MI MADRE" on it. My grandmother worked as a designer and seamstress of baby clothes, and in the film, Rosa's (Penelope Cruz) baby is wearing clothes made by her. This surprise captured the contradiction between the familiarity I felt towards the archive and its multiple unknown characteristics

1 See Pérez-Sánchez, G. (2004) 'El Franquismo, ¿un régimen homosexual?', Orientaciones, 7, pp. 29–50. and Muñío, D.V. (2017) 'The Imprisonment of Homosexuals During The Franco Regime And Their Coverage Bt The Social Security System', IUSLabor, 1. for an analysis of the structures of repression of homosexuality and forms of sexual dissidence during the Francoist dictatorship. See Dominicci-Buzó, J. (2021) 'The Trans Iconography from the Spanish Renaissance Theater to Almodovarian Cinema'. LGBTQ Research Symposium, Boston University, 3 June. for an overview of the importance of Almodovar's filmography in the context of representation of trans and homosexual people.



Figure 38 - Baby wearing Roser's designs in Todo Sobre Mi Madre



Figure 39 - Baby wearing Roser's designs in Todo Sobre Mi Madre

and materials. [Figure 38-39]

This chapter contextualises the role of personal archives in the context of the memory politics of the regime, as well as their potential and challenges for memorialisation. A literature review highlights the role of inaccessible archives and undisclosed documentation in the context of attempted erasure and control over the memory of the Francoist past. Ideas of the archive as a site of power frame the limited access to these archives as an extension of the power of the regime. I situate the personal archive of my family in a context where the insufficient information provided by historical archive practices has turned family perspectives into relevant sources of context. However, working within a family perspective or archive in the context of the Francoist past raises a particular set of challenges and ethical questions. In this chapter, I explore those alongside the concrete challenges of researching a personal archive, with particular attention to the gender structures which exist within the family and their power in constructing the official narratives within personal archives.

To explore the inherited narratives and multiple perspectives that exist around the family archive, my art practice proposes that hosting and installation can act as facilitators of memorialisation. In this case, I presented my mother and my aunt with a set of questions about the history of Faió, which offer further context to the history presented in the previous chapter and the role that family dynamics play in the transmission and contestation of historical narratives. Their accounts offer situated examples, contextualised with a literature review.

This chapter explores the ethical and personal questions that emerge around this archive through an autoethnographic approach, drawing on the feminist perspective of Silvia Federici to allow for a critical approach to family. From that vantage point, I examine family and archives as sites of ideological transmission and power structures that operate through affect. I propose that memory constitutes a form of reproductive labour with significant power, as evidenced by the efforts to diminish it presented in previous chapters. Thus, the perspectives of women within the archive may provide relevant information on the practices that maintained memory alive as well as the conflict and silencing present within the family. By holding space for



01



02

these narratives, I argue that a family archive can multiply the perspectives that exist around a previously disregarded historical event.

MEMORY MEAL: EATING TO ARCHIVE

Memory Meal/Eating to Archive. Installation and performative meal, Barcelona, 2023[2].

In collaboration with Gaia Crocella, *Memory Meal/Eating to Archive* hosted a memory exchange. This installation of objects, photographs, and food sought to activate the contents of this family archive to foster participation. Three menus and questions invited the family members, Anna and Roser Llop, to share their memories and thoughts of the history of Faió. We positioned our role as hosts to recontextualise the archive through a series of performative gestures - rubbing tomato on bread, pouring water in a vase, piling and reshuffling almonds in changing structures, and placing photographs amongst family objects and food - to generate a different engagement with a troubling part of the family past (Llop and Llop, 2023).

On May 5th, 2023, Anna and Roser arrived at el Casal Independentista la Cruïlla at 4:00 PM. Two months before, I hand-delivered a self-edited zine as an invitation to the meal that was about to begin. The zine offered excerpts of research about Faió and memory studies. It stated that Gaia and I hoped to exchange information about their memories around the table. When they arrived, we guided them upstairs and took them into a room where there were three tables in front of them which diagonally distributed the space. Covered with a tablecloth from the house of Faió, on and around them was an installation of photographs, objects and food which I had selected from memory, the archive, and the new family house in Faió. Gaia and I rearranged them to form a menu of three courses and questions. [Figure 40]

2 For an audio recording of the complete conversation, see Llop, A. and Llop, R. (2023) 'Memory Meal: Eating to Archive'. Available at: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/12bPkrElmcYYkKS31VHeTHJy8qps8Xavr.



In The Power of the Archive and its Limits, Achille Membe explains that the archive's materiality directly involves all the senses: the archive is "a tactile universe because the document can be touched, a visual universe because it can be seen, a cognitive universe because it can be read and decoded". This multiplicity of sensual dimensions constitutes proof of life that even if erased, dismantled, finished, can be "put together". Despite this putting together involving the material dimension of the archive, it is the narrative - and its connection with imagination - that grants it is reconstructive/resurrecting power (Mbembe, 2002, p. 20).

Each menu and question in the *Memory Meal* addressed a different aspect of the relationship between place, memory and family. Menu one was Earth/Ground and Territory. It addressed the destruction of Faió and the historical relationships of the population and asked, "How do you remember and conceive of the flooding of Faio now?". We wanted to understand their experience and interpretation of this history and its politics of memory. Menu two was River, a contested element of the landscape and a place of play and nurture for the family and village, and asked, "How did it affect your family life?". We wanted to see how their family life and relationship with the landscape had been affected. Menu three was Almonds and asked, "Were almonds an instance of making together as a family?". The images of all the stages of the harvest of almond trees reveal the importance of almonds within the family; in archive photographs, the family appear to meet and structure themselves around almonds. As I did not have any more information regarding that, I wanted to explore this in the space of the meal. Besides the main purpose of the interview, the creation of a space and an installation sought to distinguish this exchange from other conversations about this history we had previously had, to also make it easy for them in the future to remember what was discussed in the context of this work.

To gather the materials for the installation, two months before the meal, I travelled to Barcelona and asked my friend Oriol to bring as many objects as he could fit in his car from Vilalba to Barcelona. He had stored the objects I took from Faió in his hou-

Figure 40
01 - 35mm collection: family meal in Faió
02/03 - Memor Meal: Eating to Archive, 2023



Figure 41 - Paternal grandmother Roser looking at transparencies on the day of Memory Meal: Eating to Archive

Figure 42 - Memory Meal: Eating to Archive

se since September 2021, and it was time to find a more permanent place for them or, at least, the next step in their journey. My father, Xavier, offered to host them in his home in Sabadell and travelled to Barcelona to pick them up[3]. On the morning of the 5th of May, Xavier brought them to Barcelona, to Casal Independentista la Cruïlla, a community space in Eixample in Barcelona, managed by organisations of the Pro-Independence left. Thanks to my friend Berta, they let us use one of the rooms for the meal. My father unloaded the objects. Roser (Xavier's mother), Ariadna (Roser's carer), and Nuria (Xavier's sister) arrived soon after: they sat in the room whilst Gaia and I set everything up. Xavier knew many of the objects - he'd helped design and build the new house - and Roser knew parts of the story of Faió[4]. She spent time with the archive images and spoke of her memories of Anna and my other grandmother, Roser, whilst she observed the coming together of the room. The assemblage of objects included furniture, personal objects and unexpected materials. The swallow's nest grabbed her attention, saying the delicate gesture of retrieving it had moved her. [Figure 41]

Given the emotional impact of this history, in preparation for the event, we consulted my good friend and psychologist, Paula Corella. I shared the aims and structure with her and asked her how to engage with any possible conflict that might emerge. She emphasised the importance of everyone around the table having their turn to speak and feel heard. In case of disagreements or confrontation, she suggested taking a

3 One of the objects, a chair, did not fit in his car and had to stay in my friend Berta's house. There are many lines of flight to these objects.

4 She knew it because she had heard it spoken about and because there are other, more famous, flooded villages, like Sau, in Catalonia.



short break and moving on to another part of the meal. If necessary, we could break into two groups. She encouraged a debrief afterwards, too.

When they entered the space, their initial reaction was surprise: “hòstia” - said Roser (which roughly translates to “damn”). Simultaneously and unprompted, Roser and Anna started interacting with the objects, especially the photographs, expressing recognition, grabbing the slides, and looking at them. The familiarity, curiosity and humour toward the rearrangement of objects - and the fact that I had taken them from our home and brought them to that space - seemed to facilitate the investment and care to engage with their memories. During the meal, I led the conversation because Gaia does not speak Catalan. Being Italian, she understood what was being said and contributed at times in English or Italian. The conversation moved between Catalan, Spanish, and English, with some moments of Italian. The information shared in the meal constitutes the particular perspectives which inform the narratives transmitted within the family and the multiple perspectives that counter the single truth and memory of the past. [Figure 42]

SPANISH ARCHIVE: PIERCED BY FASCISM

In Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance, Laura Stoler argues that the power of the archive is concerned with the social structures that legitimate epistemologies: the imaginaries and institutions that provide value to specific knowledge over others (Stoler, 2002, p. 95). To understand the potential value of a family archive, it is important to look at the archival relationships that exist within the Spanish territory and the epistemologies they have contributed to.

The politics of memory presented in Chapter 1 depend on forms of archival control (Macé, 2012, p. 760, 773). Meirian Jump’s research highlights that the Spanish official

archives were closed and unkept during the Regime. After the transition, institutions did not prioritise access to historical documents and there was no State-led initiative to organise archiving. Instead, the responsibility over the archive, including their maintenance and access, was left to each Autonomous Region[5]. This resulted in an unequal ability and will to grant access depending on the economic and political context of each Autonomy (Jump, 2012, p. 152). Moreover, according to Jean François Macé, certain archives exercise control over access, often resulting in historians being denied access due to political reasons (Macé, 2022, p. 760).

Research on official archives containing documents on executions of political prisoners, as families seek to unveil the fate of family members, undo unjust trials and recover bodies provides an example of this (Rubin, 2018, p. 219). Researchers report the challenges due to the inaccessibility, as well as the inconsistency and obscurity of the terms used within available documents: rebellion or auxiliary to rebellion are written repeatedly across forms; brain haemorrhage appears as the official cause of death of many people killed by the regime; and these documents appear to be produced in a hurry, while others simply do not exist, leaving the victim's families empty-handed and without the resolution they seek (Rubin, 2018, p. 219-220). As a result, those who work with these documents become translators of the Regime's language, working as much with the gaps, as with the information found. As Jonah S. Rubin describes:

> "*By highlighting the errors in these documents—from the mundane spelling mistake to the offensive historical category—memory activists call attention to a postfascist state that is unwilling to correct even the most basic historical wrongs of its dictatorial predecessor.*" (Rubin, 2018, p. 220)

The work of those who engage with official Spanish archives is an example of "going along the grain": tracing the power relations inscribed within the internal structure of archives before disrupting and subverting them (Stoler, 2002, p. 100). In this case, going along the grain reveals that the official archive, in its in/accessibility narrative and silences, is still affected by the ideologies of fascism[6].

As a consequence, historians have had to rely on personal accounts and community help to fill the gaps in history and documentation. Due to the precarious infrastructure that researchers have to face, it is often oral testimonies and the contribution of families that empower arguments for the disclosure of information (Jump, 2012, p. 156). This reproduces the moral structures of the regime, by which the promotion of family as the natural moral unit further limited forms of collective and community organisation. In the present, it perpetuates the affective power of the archive as a form of governance which relies on moral and affective categories and taxonomies. Stoler wrote:

> "*Colonial modernity hinged on a disciplining of one's agents, on a policing of the family, on Orwellian visions of intervention in the cultivation of compassion, contempt, and disdain... When classified colonial documents argued*

5 Spain is divided into 17 Autonomous Regions and 2 Autonomous Cities with varying Degrees of Self-Governance. These are called Autonomias and were established by the Spanish Constitution in 1978

6 The uprising that started in Melilla sought to reconquer a nation in moral decay since the start of the Republic in 1932. The Regime justified the uprising in 1936 with the threat of communism and atheism; Spain's vulnerability to the penetration of immoral political ideas justified the military intervention and dictatorship. I argue that the colonial worldview that underpinned Francoism structured its knowledge production and archival practices. Its practices of governance and morals the distinction between good Spaniards (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 275) and others - Rojos. The term Rojo was used during the War and Dictatorship to indicate people of Socialist, Anarchist or any ideology that could potentially oppose the Regime. Eventually, the term itself became attached to the disciplinary and punitive practices of the Regime, as well as the pride of Republican fighters (Preston, 2004, p. 3, 38).

01



02



03



Figure 43 - Life in new Faió after old Faió existed only underwarter. Uncontextualised, these could appear as idylic depictions of village life
01 - Box 11: Sebastià apperently working in a car, near Faió
02 - Box 5: People walking along the central square of Faió
03 - Box 19: Outdoors meal near Faió

> *against the support of abandoned mixed-blood children – that "mother care" (moederzorg) should not be replaced by "care of the state" (staatszorg) – they were putting affective responsibility at the heart of their political projects.*" (Stoler, 2002, p. 102)

This affective power exists as well in the construction of the narratives and ideology of Francoism through its cultural signifiers, such as the NoDo (Noticieros y Documentales). Projected in cinemas before films, the NoDo was the main news outlet of the country, produced by the State. Whilst currently inspiring a feeling of caricature and dereliction - media products such as the NoDo contributed to a sensation of "living in black and white" that my father, Xavier, points out to describe life during the regime - the NoDo contributed to the deployment of signifiers that sought to solidify the values of the regime and reshape collective memory, or a "state of confusion" about Spain's history (Ellwood, 1987, p. 237).

At the beginning of the Dictatorship, the regime focused on reminding the population of the War through images of reconstruction combined with footage of the advances of the Axis of power during World War 2 (Ellwood, 1987, p. 230). José Reig Cruañes proposes that the purpose of that discourse was to elicit an ever-looming possibility of repetition. After the regime entered the European market in the 50s, its values changed from control through violence to governance through market efficiency (Reig Cruañes, 2022, p. 43). From that point onwards, peace was at the centre of representation, whilst inherently referencing memories of the War in their absence (Reig Cruañes, 2022, p. 44). Similarly, family photographs and images of agrarian life contributed to representing the success of the peace project initiated by the Civil War (Brandes, 2015, p. 803), by offering a singular vision and limited sites of identification and knowledge. [Figure 43]

Even though historians have linked the ignorance of the history of the Civil War, detected in the 80s amongst the population, to the Pact of Forgetting, Elwood broadens it to include the rewriting of history, which already began in the years of the Dictatorship through the narratives deployed during the War (despite minimal infrastructure) (Ellwood, 1987, p. 226) and during the Causa General[7] (Jump, 2012, p. 152). The images of the regime in the media, including but not limited to the NoDo (Ellwood, 1987), Radio Television Española (Gómez-García, Martín-Quevedo and Quevedo-Redondo, 2022), films (McManus, 2018) as well as magazine publication (not limited to, but including, academic publications) (Brandes, 2015) all contributed to this development. These discursive apparatuses consistently shifted and overcoded preexisting values with new ones according to the needs of the regime. In these disorienting movements, peace substituted victory whilst both remained reminders of the War (Reig Cruañes, 2022, p. 43).

> "*The issue of official "bias" gives way to a different challenge: to identifying the conditions of possibility that shaped what could be written, what warranted repetition, what competencies were rewarded in archival writing, what stories could not be told, and what could not be said.*" (Stoler, 2002, p. 91)

The recent approval of the Law of Democratic Memory in 2022 (La Moncloa, 2024) creates the possibility of a systematic, state-supported effort to disclose and disseminate the content found within archives of the Spanish Civil War and Francoism,

7 The Causa General was a system of citizen denunciation to judge "the Crimes of the Marxist side" committed during the War. It operated as a disciplinary apparatus that replaced possible structures of solidarity with systems of suspicion. It leads to practices of secrecy across social groups and institutions (Jump, 2012: 152).



Figure 44 - Camp de la Bota (2004)

as well as the creation of new archives to compile those histories (La Moncloa, 2024). While this constitutes a valuable shift from the archival dynamics here presented, it is important to apply a critical lens to these intentions and actions. As errors and epistemologies provide context and information about the Francoist systems of domination, the affective structures of archives and their relation with personal accounts (and even archives) should also be considered to avoid reproducing the very discourses which erected archives as apparatus of power of the regime. Despite recent changes, the inaccessibility, disregard, and substitution of information combined with the affective operations of memory narratives still constitute the conditions of the memory narratives of the Francoist regime and its archive power - informing too "how personal memories are shaped and effaced by states" (Stoler, 2002, p. 91).

THE ARCHIVE AS A SITE OF ACTIVISM

Achille Mbembe argues that the state's relationship with the archive contains an inherent paradox of dependence and threat: "More than on its ability to recall, the power of the state rests on its ability to consume time, that is, to abolish the archive and anaesthetise the past" (Mbembe, 2002, p. 23). Despite its materiality, the imaginary dimension of the archive is the site of its power. Its the power that dispels doubt and turns fragments into continuity and community. The archive's illusion of collective inheritance is its power to enforce narratives, identities and affects. It is an ordering of time in the present and its present possibilities. Consuming the past opens the possibility of freeing the present from its debts. This debt and inheritance that Mbembe describes is a debt and inheritance without a possibility of payment, a perpetual, transgenerational debt that offers a binary possibility (Mbembe, 2002, p. 23).

In response to this context, the archive becomes a site of activism. In Spain the combined effort between activists, historians, researchers, artists and families has been one of collaboration. Francesc Abad's *Camp de la Bota* (2004) is an example of the collaboration between communities, activists or practitioners to collect information and claim its importance, especially regarding sites and at risk of disappearance due to urban redevelopment (MACBA, 2007). Exploring erasure through disregard, Francesc Abad's *Camp de la Bota* (2004) interrogates violence and political dissent, through the preservation of collective memory. Barcelona city planners built Forum in an area of beaches and shantytowns. The urban plan that replaced the shantytowns with a new development was inaccessible to many due to their class (MACBA, 2007). Additionally, the population and memories of the site, which had witnessed many executions during the Francoist years, were at risk of erasure (MACBA, 2007). Francesc Abad's response consisted of compiling documents that recentered the voices of tho-

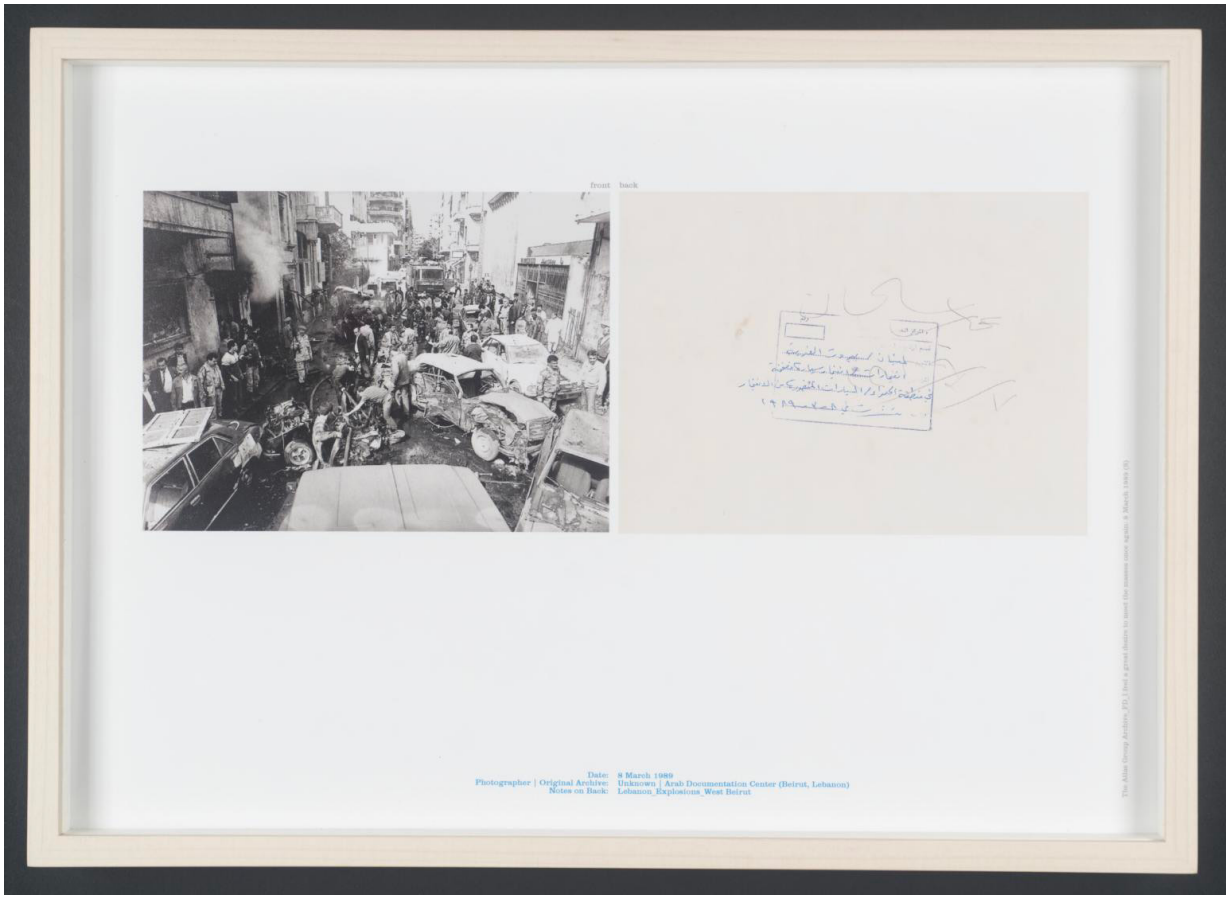


Figure 45 - My Neck is Thinner than a Hair (2000–2003)

se who had lived there before that area gathered value. In my opinion, Abad analysed this as a materialisation of a series of economic relations that visibly displaced those who had lived there. The site was not only a shantytown but also a site of trauma and killings for those who had lived there. In the context of this research, I want to emphasise that, by expanding the arguments of displacement or gentrification, Francesc Abad directs our attention to its broader impact: what is at risk - with the economic and emotional dislocation it produces - is losing a collective history. *Camp de la Bota* counteracts a double erasure by preserving the site through documentation and the experiences of those who had lived there. Moreover, Abad shifts the narrative around the people from shantytowns affected by gentrification, who no longer are the peripheral victims of the system, but the subjects of history; this shows how the symbolic and material structures that construct systems of power within a given context also affect their memory. [Figure 44]

In this context, the role of imagination, too, becomes important, in revealing the fictions and mechanism of power within the archive. Walid Raad and the Atlas Group's *My Neck is Thinner than Air* (2000-2003) presents an interesting example of this approach to archival construction, as well as a meaningful example of the responses to erased archives. This artwork juxtaposes black and white photographs next to handwritten notes with place and date. The archive has three categories - authored (Type A), found (Type FD), and Atlas Group Production (Type AGB) - yet there is no hierarchical distribution in the exhibition; the research is constructed through found and made-up stories (Raad, no date). What I find most significant about this artwork is that these documents, which oscillate between text, image, imagination, and "fact", assess the possibility of falsity, the role of imagination in memory and the challenge of accessing truth. *My Neck is Thinner than Air* shifts the focus to the conditions of truth and meaning production in the face of War or a troubled history. The resulting assembled narrative is a testimony of the loss of information, history, site, and people suffered by the Lebanese population. At the same time, I argue it declares the possibility of recreation, recovery, and critique outside of institutional power. [Figure 45]

This work performs the shift from "extractive to a more ethnographic" archive practices posited by Stoler (Stoler, 2002, p. 109). Moreover, these practices constitute a "move from archive as object to archive as subject" (Stoler, 2002, p. 93), which in the context of my research is informed by Donna Haraway's concept of situated knowledge in her essay "Situated Knowledge: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective" (1988). Haraway proposes that knowledge is embedded in a particular social, cultural, and linguistic reality. There is a multiplicity of knowledge from which to build radical cultural or political analysis; with this concept of situatedness, Haraway compels us to shift to relationships of collaborative knowledge production instead of dominance. To deepen the implication of this concept, in *Staying with the Trouble* (2016), Haraway proposes a shift from extractive relationships with objects to collaborative ones, acknowledging that all making is "making-with" (sympoiesis) instead of "self-making" (autopoiesis). As an alternative to the current system of autopoiesis, which privileges power in relationships, Haraway's ethics of sympoiesis call for a shift in subjectivity to generate relationships based on kinship and open creation (Haraway, 2016, p. 33). Through this lens, I frame the archive as an agent in a relationship of exchange: working with this archive means working with its structures, absences, and assumptions, as well as the bodies photographed, which are also archives of untold stories.

MEMORY MEAL: EATING THE EARTH OR A VILLAGE TO RETURN TO

To begin the interview/meal, Gaia and I introduced the menus and emphasised this was not a space for conflict resolution with an expected outcome and reiterated that they could control how much to contribute to each question.

We began the meal with Earth/ground, and territory, to discuss Faió, its history, and the social structures that developed there. To talk, we ate bread with tomato and olives with lemon. The first question posed was, "How did you experience and how do you understand the erasure of the old Faió?"[8]. This question sought to ask about their experience in the past and the way their perception of it had changed throughout the years.

Roser quickly answered the question: "A failure!". She repeated it several times: "A failure, a failure. A failure of history, the scope of which I can only fully understand now". Anna agreed, and she explained that for her, the new Faió became a place with oppressive energy - dense. The density and oppression extended to the family house. She said she remembers the old Faió, whereas Roser had no memory of the old Faió. Instead, she said she enjoyed walking around the new village with her mother and listening to the women talk in the shops. Roser remembers how they always ended up talking about the old town. When asked in what way, she said "through concrete, everyday facts" that consistently brought them back there. The use of concrete by Roser is significant here. Upon first hearing her say this, I immediately thought that they missed their village and could not avoid talking about it. In their grief, however, exists the desire to go back, to bring forth, to bring with them the place they came from and which to them was still very present. Roser explained that hearing about the old Faió in everyday conversation allowed her to understand the community, and became part of her joyful memories of the new Faió. [Figure 46-48]

A FAMILY ARCHIVE

I have known the family archive for as long as I remember. Sebastià projected his photographs on the dining room wall several times a year. The archive had its room

8 In Catalan, Com heu viscut i com compreneu actualment la història de Faió i la destrucció del poble vell?

01



02



03



Figure 46 - Box 11: In these photographs, taken during a Christmas meal, each person seems frozen or asleep, as if they were elsewhere
01 - Unknown man
02- Pepita
03 - Anna



Figure 47 - 35mm collection: bike and child at the front of the old house, Faió

- "the room of the slides" - where it lived for years after his death, untouched and possibly unseen. This archive contains 5600 transparencies. There are 52 boxes with a capacity for 100 transparencies each - some of the boxes are full, others are half empty -, five folders with sleeves, two small boxes, a bag with transparencies and negatives and three rolls of negative back and white film. The photographs date from the 1950s to the 2010s and were taken between Barcelona, Faió, Spain, Europe and Africa. Some boxes have information on the year and place written on them or the slides. This archive has lived in two countries and six houses - it had three temporary accommodations since it left Bailén 8 (Barcelona) in July 2018 and arrived in Stoke Newington (London) in January 2021[9]. The majority of the images include my family, which to me constitute the main categories of the archive.

Sebastià Llop was my grandfather. He was born in Faió in 1933 and moved to Barcelona in his 20s. He was not a professional photographer; he was a chemist, quiet, solutions-oriented and organised – to which I attribute the positive state of the archive. I have no recollection of his voice, or him speaking. Instead, I clearly remember the click of the projector as he showed us the photographs in the dining room. [Figure 49, 51]

Roser Rius was my grandmother. She was born in Barcelona in 1937. She is the star of many photographs: comfortable in front of a camera - her smile seems to get bigger as the years go by. As years have passed, I have realised that I never fully understood the complexity of the character behind that smile; the magnitude of her dimension as grandmother took over my whole perception of her. I did not have time to get to know more. [Figure 50, 52]

Anna Llop is my mother, born in 1962. She is the oldest of three sisters, Roser and Maria del Mar (most people call her Mar), born in 1964 and 1967, respectively. I am the eldest of the granddaughters; Marina and Júlia are Roser's daughters; Paula is Mar's daughter (too young to feature in the archive); and my (half) sister Sara is the youngest (not yet born when Sebastià died). [Figure 53, 55]

9 It has since experienced an eviction, affected by London's housing crisis. This was documented in a self-organised participatory exhibition titled An Evicted Archive, in collaboration with my then-neighbour Gaia Crocella and with the participation of the tenants, neighbours and other visitors



Figure 48 - 35mm collection: old house living room in Faió





Figure 49 - Box 11: Sebastià, Lola and Roser in Lola, Odilia and Pepita's house, Faió

Lola, Pepita, and Odilia were Sebastià's aunties. They lived in Faió together all their lives: their house in the new village directly faced the central square. They never married and were very religious women. They regularly feature in the archive, mainly in Faió and, occasionally, in travels to Spain with Sebastià and Roser, especially the years before they started travelling with their daughters instead. [Figure 54]

A CONFLICTED TAXONOMY

I inherited this archive without a name: naming it prompts questions about its identity, grounds, the alliances around and within it, as well as authorship and legitimacy. This family archive may appear to be primarily composed of Sebastià's perspective, as he likely took the majority of the pictures. But Roser (grandmother), Roser (aunt), Anna, and Mar also took many of those photographs; and featuring in most images are the women of the family and the community that held his gaze the most, Faió and La Franja. Therefore, I have named the archive Llop_Rius archive to integrate the women in the name[10]. Additionally, many people in the region of La Franja have the surname Llop (meaning Wolf) and Rius is Catalan for rivers. As two rivers converge in Faió - the Matarranya and the Ebro -, combining these surnames retains both sides of the family and both rivers: community and land. [Figure 45-46]

According to research on the different perceptions of the Civil War and dictatorship between generations, it is often the third generation that has picked up the task of confronting and reconstructing the past (Aguilar and Ramírez-Barat, 2016). As I began this work, I had to confront that while Sebastià was meticulous in its storage and conservation, I do not know that he ever intended for his archive to become historical material. The photographs are testaments of curiosity, interests, and love; the archive is structured episodically and through relationships with family, partner, place, and labour. There seems to be as much conscientiousness in documenting the construction of the new town as there is in photographing the granddaughters playing in the pool. In my encounter with this archive, I am considering its political implications without knowing whether Sebastià was thinking of the familial, the political, both, or neither. I recognise the potential to override the gaze of this archive to

10 Roser's surname is Rius, and it was passed down as the second surname of Anna, Roser and Mar.

Figure 50 - Box 34: Roser in Portugal


UNUS
TRINUS
DEUS
CARITAS



Figure 51 - Box 11: Sebastià and Mar during a Christmas Meal



Figure 52 - Box 10: Roser by the Ebre, in front of Mequinensa



Figure 53 - Box 18: Mar, Anna, Roser and Roser having lunch by the sea

construct a political or historical discourse and have responded to it through a slow and cautious interpretation, dissemination and recontextualisation of the archive.

The images of my family are images of a normal family: smiling people looking at the camera and engaging in everyday activities and occasional trips. While some of the boxes or photographs have dates and places marked, this is not consistently the case. I have identified photographs that were taken during military service in Melilla when he was in his twenties, and he continued to take photographs until the 2000s. The recognisable themes in the images are family travels (which feature in 2832), varied family scenes (503 times) including celebrations and everyday situations, and Faió (878 times throughout the years). Unlike images in Barcelona, which feature mainly domestic scenes except for the Olympic Games in Barcelona and a visit to the Miró Foundation, Faió includes images of celebrations, daily life and construction work. There are three photographs of the old town of Faió and three of the church coming out of the Riba-Roja enclosure after 1967. Regarding the archive categories that I am using, I have decided to apply a geographical, material and relational taxonomy; by focusing on the conflicts, materials (objects, trees, almonds, transparencies) and places (Faió, Barcelona, Ebre, La Franja) I seek to reflect and disrupt the "imperial rule" (Stoler, 2002: 88-89) of the Francoist politics of the knowledge. Additionally, I posit that looking at these intimate spheres reveals the hidden operations that perpetuate the lingering power of these regimes, even after their dissolution. Challenging the categories created by colonial rule (fascist rule in this case) helps pay attention to its intimate domains of intervention, to "re-imagine what sorts of situated knowledge have produced colonial sources and their own respective locations in the "historiographic operation""(Stoler, 2002: 89).

Consequently, the categories in the archive "spring from the variations among the mutual relationships between artwork, viewer, and space", and between the actor in the social field wherein the artwork is inscribed and that the artwork originates from (McTighe, 2012).



01



02

03



Figure 54
01 - Box 11: Odilia bringing food into the room and Pepita and Lola clapping during a Christmas meal
02 - Box 15: Pepita, Odilia, Sebastià (holding Greta), Roser and Lola having dinner in the old house in Faió
03 - Box 19: Odilia, Pepita and Lola holding presents during Christmas



Figure 55 - Box 13: Mar, Roser, Roser and Anna



MEMORY MEAL: DRINKING THE RIVER OR WATER TO LIVE BY

In many archive photographs, the family appear happy and playing by the Ebre and Matarranya rivers. As a site of the memory of the old town and the flooding, I wondered if their relationship with the river changed after it flooded Faió. The second question was: "How did family life continue, especially in Faió?"[11]. When we ate cockles as a child, I remember there used to be quasi-fights over them, and Grandma Roser had to intervene so everyone had a fair amount. To talk, we shared cockles, oysters, and sardines (they were the most excited about the oysters and the cockles).

Roser and Anna answered that they used to visit Faió every weekend or as often as possible. Sebastià expected them to join meals with their extended family. According to Anna, my grandmother Roser disliked those so much that, occasionally, she would pretend she was unwell. When I asked why she disliked being with them, my mother said that they were very right-wing – "fachas" (informal word for fascist). They were one of the wealthy families of Faió and supported the uprising during the War. Anna is sure Roser hated them, and her and Roser's recollections of those dinners were of a heavy environment. She describes an authoritarian family that she believes never approved of Roser: each family gathering was an occasion to evaluate the success of Sebastià in building a good family. They agreed that Roser never got the credit she deserved in the family. I pointed out that, in the photographs, she always seemed to be creating and making, and they vehemently responded that she was an artist but was never centred. [Figure 56-60]

11 In Catalan, Com es va desenvolupar la vida familiar per vosaltes, especialment a Faió?

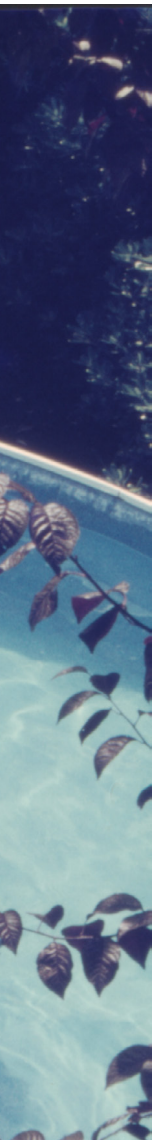


Figure 56 - Folder D: Odilia, Mar, Roser and two unknown people in the swiming pool in the old house in Faió

When asked about the river, there was no doubt or divergence. The family and the people of Faió loved the Matarranya and the Ebre. They never stopped loving them, and that did not change after the destruction of the old town. As they sat across the table, facing the fishing rods, they explained that each of them had their own because Sebastià liked fishing so much. Anna's memory of fishing was positive and warm. "Do you think those were the moments you could connect the most with Sebastià?", I asked. "Perhaps", she answered, while Roser emphatically nodded. Since receiving the zine, she said, and as she grows older, previously remote memories were increasingly present. Memories of that time were returning, and it was hard to disentangle the experiences we were inquiring about from other personal experiences. [Figure 61]

Their memories towards their father and childhood diverge: Roser has a positive memory of her teenage years in Faió, whereas Anna does not. They agreed he was a hard-working, stern man with a strong sense of duty. Anna feels she never got to know him properly: he was absent. Instead, Roser stated she connected with him in the last years of his life. As a pharmaceutical doctor, she was overseeing his health. Through that, they had many rich conversations. Each of their lives and relationships influences how they recall their past, and vice-versa. Tracing the specific weight of each of these forces towards the divergence of attitudes towards their father is beyond the scope of this research. In this context, difference, error, or conflict, highlight memory's ability to disrupt the power of institutions - whether state or family - found in unitary past narratives. It achieves this by broadening the scope of who can speak and what can be said.

MEMORY IN THE FACE OF FAMILY POWER

Research on archive research in Spain shows that families have been key in the reconstruction of local history and the disclosure of documents (Jump, 2012, p. 153-156; Rubin, 2018, p. 220-223). However, the family has been a historical structure to discipline its members or an argument for the power of archives (Stoler, 2002, p. 102). The family - as a social space where history and ideology interact with emotional bonds - invites a form of memory work that integrates these forces in its inquiry. Maurice Hawlbachs' response to Henri Bergson's theories of memory sought to decentre the



Figure 57 - Box 5: Mar and Roser



Figure 58 - Memory Meal: Eating to Archive

individual within the processes of remembrance. Hawlbachs, one of the most influential thinkers on memory in the 20th century, distinguished between collective memory on an individual cognitive level – influenced by the sociocultural environment - and collective memory as the creation of narratives of the past. He proposed that the latter is shaped by communication, mediation, and institutionalization (Hawlbachs, 1992, p. 74, 86) and therefore, most memory primarily occurs as a collective phenomenon. Halbwachs argues that “our kin communicate to us our first notions about people and things”; family is the first structure that shapes our understanding of memory, allowing for multiple perspectives or limiting them (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 61). Forms of participation in collective and symbolic structures shape our perceptions and the formation of memories. As Hawlbachs writes, “each memory is a viewpoint on the collective memory” (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 48).

Marianne Hirsch’s notion of postmemory broadens the scope of this phenomenon. Postmemory refers to the intergenerational transmission of traumatic memories - a process that occurs knowingly or otherwise. Hirsch emphasizes this process within the family structure, where the impact of history and trauma is inherited intergenerationally, operating as a memory in itself (Hirsch, 2012, p. 34), recognising the determining power of family narratives within individual experiences of memory. However, equating family and memory limits the potential of memory in connecting experience with collective contexts and agency. I argue, instead, that the family is a quasi-archive of historical forces, which include the construction of the family as an institution of property. During Francoism, ideological and political structures were expressed by family structures (Rodríguez and Félez, 2013, p. 36). The agencies and identities of each family member were lost within the family assemblage, especially depending on gender and class.



Figure 59 - Box 11: Xavier and Anna holding fish by the Matarranya river

In her book *Family Secrets* (2002), Annette Kuhn explores how working with family photographs can challenge the narratives transmitted throughout generations and reveal the mechanisms that constructed them. The book explores hidden, forgotten or suppressed aspects of family history, which at the same time deeply impact identity and relationships; uncovering these can contextualise the connection between identity and history and bring a deeper understanding of the past and the way memory works (Kuhn, 2002). The critical position that Kuhn advocates and practices turns the apparent mundanity of family photographs and archives into an encounter with history. It reintroduces the family structure within a social context, turning the personal into a potentially collective territory and the collective into a personal undertaking. This shows that despite the historical disciplinary nature of family, family memories are memories of childhood and as such, elicit feelings of nostalgia and tenderness. Through these feelings, layers of affection, or nostalgia, can cover actual historical events and forces. In time, returning to an event can lead to conflict through its threat to disrupt the family narrative.

In this project, I have situated myself within this conflict, to understand the political, historical and affective knowledge it carries. The inquiry around the Llop_Rius archive occurs at the intersections of family, memory and authoritarian politics. An autoethnographic approach to my practice helps to unveil the insertion of the interconnectedness of these different domains; it challenges the distinction between everyday and historical, personal and political. Additionally, what this work reveals, is the decomposition of the family structure even in contexts of authoritarian rule. The conflicts and multiple narratives that exist within family memory - which I am presenting in this chapter and more broadly throughout this thesis - show that families, as disciplinary structures or institutions of power, do not have the power to maintain a unitary rule over its members; the singularities within the family express themselves in diverse forms: conflicts, desires, memory. Therefore, work with family memory is also work around the inability of traditional families to remain a stable institution.

MEMORY AS SOCIAL REPRODUCTION – A FEMINIST LENS FOR ARCHIVE RESEARCH

Ann Laura Stoler argues that it is crucial to comprehend the power dynamics embedded in archives before proposing alternative narratives, as privileged social categories are “easy to think” (Stoler, 2002, p. 100). The official family narrative in the archive is that Sebastià’s camera - as the public figure of the family - captured the world. However, it was primarily (if not solely) the women in his family who maintained the structures that sustained the family.

Women’s voices are critical in the creation and preservation of memory. In *Re-enchanting the World: Feminism and the Politics of the Commons*, feminist author and activist Silvia Federici defines memory as a reproductive act historically performed by women. It is an ongoing, invisible task that ensures memories are not forgotten when needed (Federici, 2019, p. 5). In this context, Federici’s ideas show that institutions and states fail to recognize the importance of addressing the experiences of their population, women’s memory work - often dismissed as mere gossip - fills the gap to ensure no one is left without memory or care.

The recognition that memory work is a form of reproductive work might imply broadening the concept of historical records to include forms of knowledge considered minor or irrelevant, such as women’s perspectives, within and outside the family sphere. Marwa Arsanio’s *Who is Afraid of Ideology?* (2019) is a documentary that

01



02



03



Figure 60
01 - Folder D: Roser and Mar in the Matarranya river
02 - Box 43: Mireia and Sebastià fishing
03 - Memory Meal: Eating to Archive



Figure 61 - 35mm collection: Roser standing by a llaut in front of old Faió by the Ebre



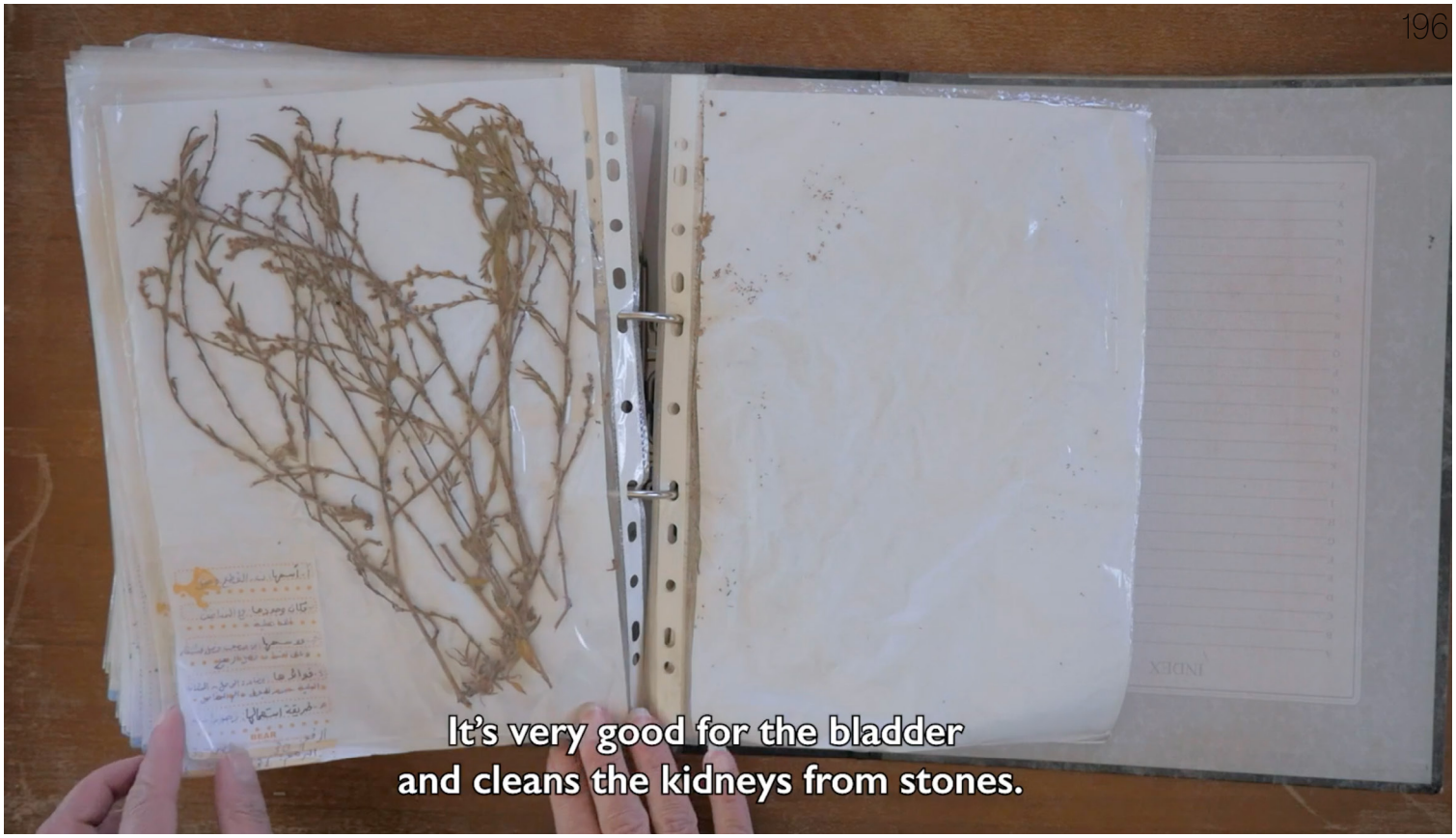


Figure 62 - Who is Afraid of Ideology? (2019)

presents the praxes of women who claim the right to the land and protect nature and the local ecologies of Northern Syria and Colombia (Arsanios, 2021). Their experience illustrates the struggle against capitalist exploitation and towards a decolonised life structure. I believe this documentary states that research and praxis do not need to come from a neutral position and, in some cases, they should not. This is powerful because the experiences of the women in *Who is Afraid of Ideology?* are framed as generative positions for knowledge production and education. Recognising the power of events as they unfold and their capacity to affect their surrounding structures builds agency in the face of erasure. It is a creative act for the production of discourse, relationships, and affect. Ultimately, it created the conditions for new interpretations, contestation, and understanding of events. This work demonstrates that documenting and recognising the everyday work that women have historically done, enables the continuation of ancestral or collective practices as materials of historical value (Arsanios, 2021). [Figure 62]

During Francoism, the family was expected to embody the regime's values and ideals[12] (Rodríguez and Félez, 2013, p. 36). Federici argues that the structure of the family and the home have been a historical site of oppression and control, particularly for women and those relegated to the private realm. She describes the family as an instrument of governance and argues that the image of the nuclear family as the natural way to structure life and emotions benefits the state by providing stability in the reproductive field (Federici, 2018). As such, families are porous structures to political forces; within the family, ideology becomes naturalised as thought, affect and desire. During Francoism the lives of Spanish women point out hidden or overlooked, dimensions of the institutions that erected the regime, such as marriage and family: these aspects which touched directly the lives of women were of extreme importance

12 The regime used the influence of the family in moral development to justify the kidnapping of Republican children from their mothers, with the complicity of the Church. See Mancho-Iglesia, A. et al. (2022) 'La memoria de los afectados por casos de "bebés robados" en la Web. El archivo audiovisual de la asociación Bebés Robados Aragón', Documentación de las Ciencias de la Información, 45(2), pp. 157–162. Available at: https://doi.org/10.5209/dcin.81152. for an account from the position of Aragón.



to the perpetuation of the regime's structures of values (I will explore this in depth in Chapter 4 and 5) (Rodríguez and Félez, 2013, p. 36). Marriage and family were the sites of the lives of these women and, for that reason, they are ambivalent sites of memory.

The power structures of family are present in archives, their readings and many lives. Sara Andersdotter's *Politics of Looking* (2020) explores the construction of archives through a gendered critique of the gaze that constructs the documents therein, which later constitute a source of historical knowledge. In *Politics of Looking* (2020), she explores, through a selection of gestures in fragments of archive images, "men presenting themselves to themselves, men documenting their spaces and activities, men looking at women, men imagining what women "do" (Andersdotter, 2020). In her research, Andersdotter has found that what seems natural and legitimized as such by the apparent truth of photography is instead arranged (Andersdotter, 2020). This series exposes the artifice of the archive and contests its neutrality, especially concerning gendered power relationships. In this disclosure, the archive becomes an archive of these relationships. *Politics of Looking* shifts the focus from the maker of the archive to the women represented to unearth the way small gestures contain and produce "womanhood" and photographs naturalise it. This series retroactively turns gestures of power over someone into gestures of agency for the women in the pictures and the women looking at them. Moreover, I find that it also asks the viewer to examine their complicity in these relationships and contest the legitimacy granted to archives and official images. [Figure 63]

It is important to note that Roser maintained the archive after Sebastià's death, leaving it untouched and never disrupting it, and now I am the custodian. If I had not done it, I know the task would likely have been taken on by another woman. As their presence shapes the representation of the family in the archive, the women in my family constructed the family narratives. Sebastià's role is contested, particularly his silence, which raises conflicting narratives and interpretations. Anna and Roser's memories disclose or obscure conflicts within the family, disguised as errors in



Figure 63 - Politics of Looking: Gestures from an Archive (2020)



Figure 64 - Image Keepers (2010)





Figure 65 - Box 42: Mar and Sebastià sat in the terrace of the family flat in carrer Bailén, Barcelona

memory or diverging narratives. But these family conflicts are also conflicts of legitimacy and power, to define the narratives and identities that develop within a family. This form of struggle, which speaks of alliances beyond filiation, shares contact points with the struggle for a unitary narrative within a community or a nation-state.

Consequently, my project does not aim to glorify the family as an essential unit of social life, or a place for nostalgia in the face of memory erasure. As much as institutional state narratives are acknowledged, researched and disrupted, the power of family memory should be disrupted, to open up its affective operations to contestation and multiplication. However, family has been the only space for many women and their role therein constitutes part of their identity or political context, and the reproductive dimension of memory makes the role of women in the family key in its construction.

The relationships and discourses that exist around administrators, historians and readers of archives, as facilitators of the discourses produced from and around archives, and acts of care also constitute the gender politics of the archive (Sedira, 2010). Zineb Sedira's *Image Keepers* (2010) explores the archive as "performed" or "installed". Based on Mariam Ghani's "What We Left Unfinished: The Artist and the Archive", *Image Keepers* examines those who perform the archive, such as administrators, historians, and readers. Through video and installation, this artwork shifts the focus from the documents to the relationships and discourses formed around them (Sedira, 2010). By focusing on the facilitators the public activation of archives through acts of care after them, Sedira brings to light the (often invisible) reproductive work involved in preserving stories. [Figure 64] Moreover, Sedira acknowledges their agency as mediators in the threshold between the public and private life of the archive. Often, this work has been informal work undertaken within the home, within a family, such as in the case of this archive.

As Rosi Braidotti argues in *Madri Mostri Macchine* (2021), "women" refers not only to a "biocultural entity and empirical subject" but also to all the feminist discourses which seek to change the value ascribed to feminine, or feminised, subjects (Braidotti, 2021, p. 73). As Silvia Federici argues in Caliban and the Witch, control of reproduction as a strategy of dispossession of women's bodies, includes forms of representation and meaning-making (as expressed in the most extreme in the witch-hunts) (Federici, 2004). Thus, family memory should incorporate the political dimensions of the gendered structures that have constituted the family historically. Each reading that claims or extends the sole authorship of Sebastià over the archive and photographs disregards the relevance of the creative work of the family women. It may appear obvious that an archive is a community effort, but the politics I have presented in this chapter, and the chapters previous, serve also to create an ignorance-turned-forgetting of events, work, identities and agencies. Therefore, this work becomes about connecting family and history while amplifying the differences of each of the individuals. Concerning the women in the family, this includes rejecting their reduction to specific gender roles. [Figure 65-66]





Figure 66 - 35mm colection: Roser and Mar (on each side) picking up Anna (in the middle) at the harbour after she spent part of the summer in Menorca

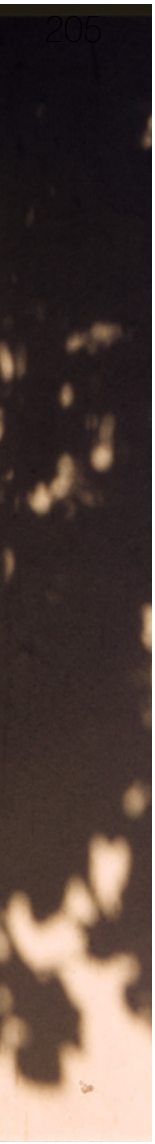


MEMORY MEAL: EATING ALMONDS TO MAKE WITH

In the last course of our menu, we explored the potential memories that emerged from cultivating almonds. In the archive, they appear in fields, in harvests and between the fingers of Roser and Odilia, as they sort them on a table. Due to their connection to the land, and the insistence of Sebastià in photographing them, in my research practice the almonds seem to offer possibilities of coming together in the face of loss, displacement and forgetting. The third question was: "Which possibilities of creating and making together did almonds offer?"[13]. In the table between us, almonds spilled out of a jar from the new house, others we placed on the almond-artefact I had made, and others we ate; salted, shelled and baked into biscuits. Roser and Anna told a story I did not know. Sebastià's father was the family heir, ready to inherit the family house and pass it down to him. He died before inheriting, and Sebastià could no longer be the heir. According to Anna and Roser, this marked him: he redirected this focus to his family instead. He moved to Barcelona, built a career and started raising a family of hard-working women. In Faió, he worked the almond fields he inherited. As this was the family legacy, during harvest, everyone had to work. There was no division of labour, and it was hard work from early morning until late. One of the transparencies shows a machine lifting a tarpaulin from underneath an almond tree, enabling the fast collection of almonds. However, before that machine was available (or in small harvests), the method consisted of hitting the almonds down from the tree and bending down to collect them. They remember having peaches for breakfast, mid-morning. How much they enjoyed the work was unclear; it was simply something they had to do and they did not question it. Anna explained that such was

13 In Catalan, Quines possibilitats de crear i "fer en comú" oferien el ametllers a Faió?

01



the family's commitment to those fields (on Sebastia's insistence) that, when designing the new house, she had to make the garage as big as the rest of the house to host the almonds after harvest. Their agreements and divergences suggested that the life within the family, and in Faió, was marked by the activities in and outside the house - or at its threshold, the garage of almonds - and specific feelings and attitudes dictated by the relationship between Sebastià and the community and landscape. [Figure 67-69]

This meal helped elucidate the perceptions and discourses my family held towards their past. Anna and Roser explained that they believe the flooding of Faio flooded the memory of the War, which was the event that created the actual fracture in the village, the deepest wound. The loss of the site of material and symbolic identity produced an irreparable loss that, I posit, superseded the political intensities of the past with resentment and defeat. Consequently, they argued, the village's past permeated every day in the new Faió, years after the flooding, repeatedly emerging in casual conversations - their minds "always went back to the village", said Roser. They also agreed that there was an inability or unwillingness, by my grandfather, to discuss these events. This attitude and this secrecy are currently perceived as an absence or severance from his family and often steer the way events are recalled.

During the meal, despite the divergence of attitudes towards the past between my mother and aunt, or different discursive or affective framings of the narrative, they both acknowledged each other's positions with understanding. After the meal, we asked them how they felt, and if they had any feedback. They both stated it was emo-

02



Figure 67 - 01: Box 15: Odilia and Roser sorting almonds in the old house's garden
02: Box 45: Mar sat on a hammock



Figure 54 - Box Folder D: Anna, Mar and Roser (holding a cat) with almonds in the garden of Lola, Odilia and Pepita's house in Faió

tionally challenging but specified they had enjoyed reencountering these objects.

In retrospect, I believe that Anna and Roser could grasp the care in our practice as soon as they saw the objects and food in the room. The transparencies engaged their curiosity and invited them to engage with the installation, the repositioned objects created a playful familiarity, and the food created an accessible opportunity to engage and participate. Moreover, the emphasis on process over resolution removed pressure from everyone involved. The interview situated the narratives I held in my memory within specific family members, allowing me to identify their origins. More importantly, it enabled me to broaden the unified memories that exist even within families and family archives. [Figure 58] In the space of that day, the archive included, too, the time and work brought together by all the participants [Figure 70], enacting what Mbembe calls:

> "*Political dimension resulting from the alchemy of the archive: it is supposed to belong to everyone. The community of time, the feeling according to which we would all be heirs to a time over which we might exercise the rights of collective ownership: this is the imaginary that the archive seeks to disseminate.*"(Mbembe, 2002, p. 21)

CONCLUSION

Historians, sociologists, and activists have taken on the task of tracing the inaccessible, and inaccurate, Spanish archives to retrieve and disseminate information about the regime. Besides providing valuable information about the regime's violence against the population, it offers insight into the epistemological strategies of the dictatorship. The research presented in this chapter demonstrates that archival dynamics in Spain are based on the withholding of knowledge. The precarious collective structures of archival research placed the responsibility on families to lead the inquiry, further presenting them as the legitimate structures for this historical work.

Consequently, in the Spanish context of erasure and manipulation, accounting for

01



02



03



Figure 55
01 - Box 21: Mar in fields of almonds
02/03 - Memory Meal: Eating to Archive



Figure 68 - Box 43: Collecting almonds

the affective power of archives requires accounting for the authoritarian dynamic of families. Family archives offer situated perspectives that broaden the scope of historical perspectives and methods, including the perspectives that emerged within the private sphere and emotional or personal (feminised) perspectives into the construction of history. This practice-based interview centred on the gendered dimensions of the inherited silence around and within the family, activating the notion that memory is reproductive work.

An autoethnographic approach to archive research can unveil the insertion of the personal within the historical and vice-versa. More importantly, it presents the challenges of navigating family structures in the context of research. As the family is one of the normative institutions of the state, personal archives are understood as family property, meaning that its research ethics are framed by the claim of a family on its contents and interpretations. In this chapter, I have explained the way I navigate this particular context, which is an essential element of the specific politics of this work and ethical approach to this archive. A critical examination of family structures is necessary for the contradictory task of speaking from within the family. For my project, this has required decentering Sebastià as the sole owner of the archive and instead amplifying the voices of the women of the family and their authorship within the archive and in the writing of this history.

Memory Meal/ Eating to Archive created a space of inquiry around the narratives within the family archive. Responding to three open-ended questions, Anna and Roser explained that the impact of the loss of the town created a desire in the population to remember it in their everyday conversations, while it also obscured the initial wound of the Civil War. Their answers contextualised the archive contents and their relationship with the family and Faió. Moreover, they challenged the unitary stories within the archive, by offering different perspectives on the personal narratives within the family. In the context of the practice, it is worth noting that shifting the focus from outcome to process enabled freer participation in the exchange, establishing a relationship of collaboration in the space of the meal. By contextualising and challenging the power of personal narratives within archives, it is possible to focus on the political and historical aspects, integrating both perspectives. This is part of the necessary work of personal archives within the context of Spain.

In the context of the family meal presented in this chapter, the archive's taxonomy

Figure 69 - Box 11: Mar hitting the branches of an almond tree to release the almonds



of materiality, geography and relationality enabled each member to adjust their response and establish a self-lead dialogue with each other and the archive's contents. In turn, this enabled a recontextualisation of these conflicts concerning the power structures of the regime, which became naturalised into family relationships, attitudes, and gendered identities. This chapter, therefore, argues that the family is a productive structure from which to articulate historical inquiry but one which also requires a specific approach to disengage from the authoritarian attitudes of the past. A personal archive enables an engagement with the affective power of the regime and its dominations of the bodies of archives, women and other oppressed subjects. Moreover, this approach recentres the voice of women who have historically been relegated within family structures, such as mothers, grandmothers, aunts and other categories which obscure their contributions and power.

This form of engagement with memory shows the value of minor personal narratives in archives. It is necessary to continue to unearth the specific forms that minor archives can contribute to collective forms of memory and history.



Figure 70 - 35mm collection: Anna, Roser and Mar holding a fish













CHAPTER 4 *How a Minor Literature Agitates a Family Archive*

This chapter explores a minor archive's potential to disrupt the lingering power of the Francoist regime's politics of memory. I deploy the concept of minority, developed by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, to examine the political and collective potential of a personal archive. The Llop_Rius archive stubbornly affirms the entanglement between individual and collective and the resistance of minority voices within major signifiers. Framing this archive through the notion of minority allows me to reframe and deterritorialise the conflicts explored in this project. I frame the archive as an inheritance, which moves out of the private line of property within the family, to become collective. [Figure 71] This chapter argues that a family archive contains narratives, agencies and affects that offer insight into the intimate impact of the structures of power and governance erected by the Francoist regime. Moreover, by framing this archive as a minor archive, or a form of minor literature, its anomalies offer positions towards escape by offering different affective relationships towards the past.

My practice begins with the discovery of unknown photographs depicting my grandfather's complicity with the military structures of the regime through his participation in voluntary military service. These photographs depict the entanglement between personal choices and colonial fascist structures, raising questions about the limited politics of the individual. This is connected to the construction of gendered forms of governance, to contextualise the construction of a unitary narrative as a continuation of the limitation of difference inherent in the Francoist fascist project. This begins to find the collective aspects of the family conflicts presented in previous chapters, as expressions of a particular set of politics and binaries.

A literature review of Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* provides a framework to interrupt the flow of negations within this history and destabilise the borders of the binary operating therein. The feminist lenses of Rosi Braidotti direct these ethics to encounter nonhuman agencies as witnesses and companions of this history, which further destabilises the binaries and borders imposed by the Francoist regime. This chapter contextualises the use of posthuman and feminist materialist voices that inform this project, found in landscape, river and almond. Their continuations and challenges of concepts developed by Deleuze and Guattari invite the nonhuman agencies that populate this history to become active in personal and political becomings. This way, this chapter aims to conceptualise the ongoing struggle for memory as a means of becoming-active in the production of truth, power relationships and modes of existence within a territory or community. Notions of affirmation, difference and becoming posited by minority claim memory as an act of resistance and affirmation of difference.

At the end of the chapter, a performative responds to absent photographs by redeploying a gesture of my grandmother, beginning to move from family history to imagined, embodied affective expressions.



Figure 71 - Box 8: Anna's pervailing memory of her childhood was of an intense, pressuring family life.



THE DEBT

> "*Archives are the product of a process which converts a certain number of documents into items judged to be worthy of preserving and keeping in a public place, where they can be consulted according to well-established procedures and regulations. As a result, they become part of a special system, well illustrated by the withdrawal into secrecy or 'closing' that marks the first years of their life. For several years, these fragments of lives and pieces of time are concealed in the half-light, set back from the visible world. A ban of principle is imposed upon them.*" (Mbembe, 2002, p. 20)

As I was finishing *My Grandfather was Born Underwate*r, I found a series of black and white 35mm photographs taken by Sebastià in Melilla. Melilla is one of two cities in the North of Africa under Spanish Governance, a remnant of Spain's colonial past. The Rif War (1921-1926) in North Africa marked the Francoist system and has been described as the "birthplace of the national movement" (García Figueras 1944, p. 275). Colonial ideologies underpin the Francoist political project, including its infrastructure construction (Brendel, 2020, p. 397; Fernandez-Cebrian, 2023, p. 56). Francisco Franco rose within military ranks during the Rif War and the national movement's victory during the Civil War was the deployment of Moroccan soldiers. Consequently, according to Maria Rosa de Madariaga, the North of Africa became a site of memory (Madariaga 2002, p. 11). After the Civil War, military service perpetuated the power of the regime as a form of indoctrination in its values (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 282). Such was the symbolic value of North Africa within the regime, that voluntary mili-



tary service was in Melilla. Therefore, this symbolism permeates those photographs and the questions they raise[1].

Considering the mnemonic power of Melilla (Madariaga 2002, p. 11), especially for those who lost the Civil War, enlisting voluntarily implies a lack of opposition to the institutions of the regime, or a willingness to ignore its history. Finding this photograph reveals the embedded complicity within my inheritance. It makes visible a part of history that could otherwise be ignored. As a presence that haunts the archive, this is not something to be resolved by uncovering information, but rather an organising force, such as the force of the colonial past in present history. [Figure 72-75]

When I found these photographs, I faced Spain's colonial past and its penetration and capture of everyday life. I also faced the feelings that emerged upon discovering what, to me, was a secret. In The Aesthetics of the Secret, Claire Birchall engages with the moments before revealing a secret. According to Birchall, the power of secrets is found not in their revelation, but in observing what their existence reveals about the possibilities of enunciation within a given structure or society. The hermeneutic approach to secrets seeks to produce revelation and interpretation to dispel its power. Instead, Birchall asks for an engagement with the aesthetics of the secrets to comprehend "a delimitation of space, time, the visible, the sayable, the audible, and political experience" (Birchall, 2015, p. 2). The distinction between winners and losers still articulates public Civil War discourses (Macé, 2012, p.765). Consequently, reconciliation hinges on silence; this offers insufficient mechanisms that support the recognition of involvement with authoritarian structures.

1 See Esteve-Del-Valle, M. and Costa López, J. (2023) 'Reconquest 2.0: the Spanish far right and the mobilization of historical memory during the 2019 elections', European Politics and Society, 24(4), pp. 494–517. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2022.2058754. for an analysis of the deployment of the symbolism and imagination of the Reconquest by far-right groups in Spain.



Figure 72 - 35mm collection: Sebastià in Military Service, Melilla

The imposition of narratives or absences over the past imbues archives with the power of secrets. This, in turn, intensifies the feelings of guilt, shame and anxiety around the disclosure of archival materials. Politically, the consequence of this system of cyclical withholding is the inability to trace oppressive systems to their originals and structures. The guilt and shame these images carry offer a limited set of actions - hiding, ignoring, repenting, claiming -, at the service of forms of power which seek to dominate and subsume and benefit from secrets.

> "*Modes of implication—entanglement in historical and present-day injustices—are complex, multifaceted, and sometimes contradictory, but are nonetheless essential to confront in the pursuit of justice.*" (Rothberg, 2019, p. 6)

Implication, according to Rothberg, speaks of the injustices that "fall outside the purview of the law". Or in this case, that followed a past law and did not amount to a crime but constituted a high degree of participation in a colonial and fascist system of oppression, as captured by the archive photographs. In other words: "discomfiting forms of belonging to a context of injustice that cannot be grasped immediately or directly because they seem to involve spatial, temporal, or social distances or complex causal mechanisms" (Rothberg, 2019, p. 12). Thinking of an "implicated subject" grasps the contradictions and complexities that cannot be accounted for in the binary victim/perpetrator that I viscerally encountered when I faced these photographs. The power of silence of the regime is also upheld by the inability to sustain the multiple instances of implication, including as descendants of victimised and complicit subjects (in varying degrees)[2]. There exists, then, a "complex implication" which needs to be confronted to confront the structures of power that continue to benefit from a stifling moral binary; implication maps a path of responsibility that demands agency towards current political struggles (Rothberg, 2019, p. 12).

2 Rothberg notes that complicity as a category is too interlinked with legalistic readings that connect complicity with responsibility and therefore liability. This hinders recognition of implication in the present, as complicity is most powerful in connection with "unfolding processes" - in the present - but cannot be claimed of crimes not committed - those inherited from the past as structures of power - (Rothberg, 2019, p. 18)



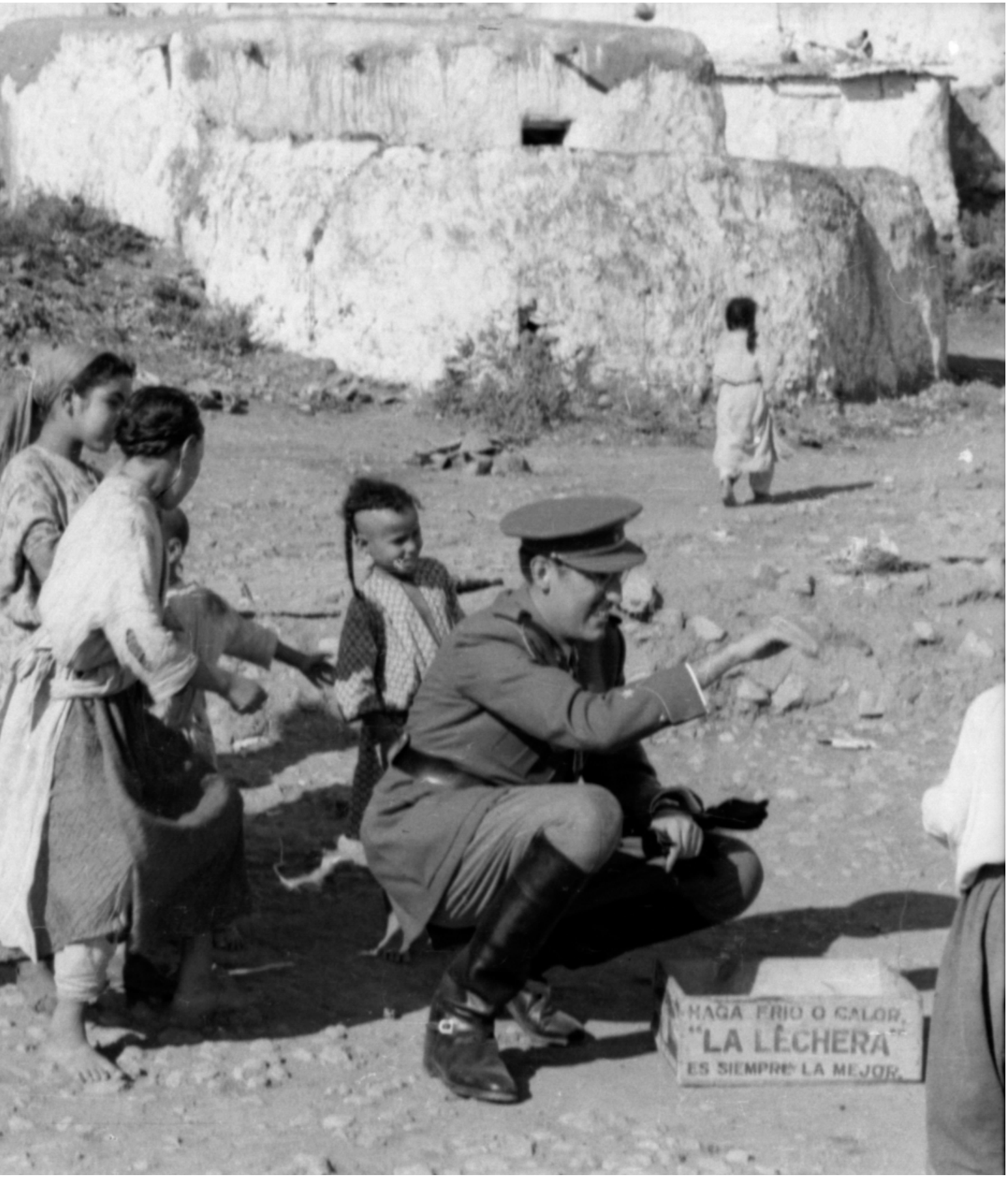
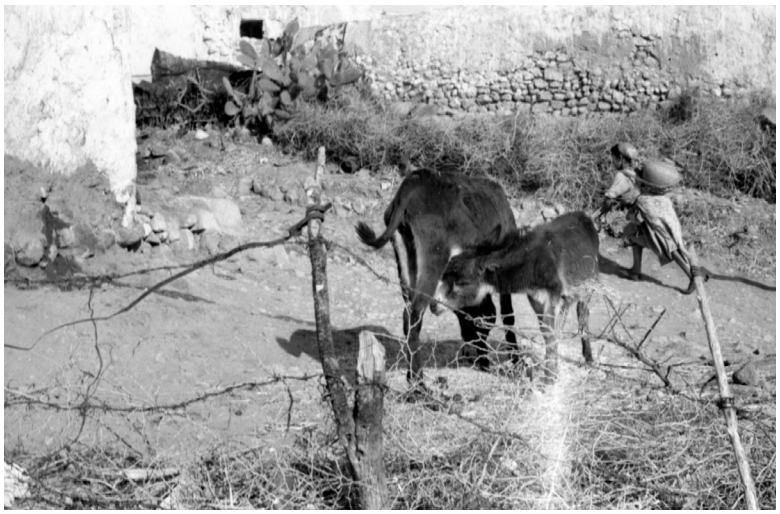


Figure 73 - 35mm collection: Soldiers and local children in Melilla

01



02



03



Figure 74 - 35mm collection
01 - Local market, Melilla
02 - Donkeys and kid, Melilla
03 - Square or wide street, Melilla



Figure 75 - 35mm collection: Soldiers having a meal

Personally, these photographs raise the question: “Was my grandfather a fascist?” and present two answers: yes or no. Each answer poses a demand, instead of enabling the appeasing certainty of a binary. If the answer is yes, the demand is not to turn it into a spectacle to absolve me of this inheritance and keep a distance from it; instead, to remain in that discomfort to understand the systems around this fact. If the answer is no the demand becomes to look for the traces of the surrounding fascist system within my family and social structures. Since I have no certain answer, I do both. The relevance of this discovery is the connection of the structures of the regime with military colonial structures and the visual insistence that there is no impermeable structure - families are not islands and grandparents had agency beyond the narratives inherited within the family. The truth behind the discovery becomes irrelevant.

I still do not know how to display these images. The decision to display is inherently the act of grappling with the colonial gaze that informs these photographs and the personal impact of displaying them since this does not concern only me. This hesitation is also connected to another form of family power regarding the archive. The family line of property wherein the archive is symbolically and affectively inscribed operates through the demand for awareness of the negative impact of critical narratives within the family. Caution, sensibility and awareness of emotional impact, which also constitute the ethics of research projects such as this one, are necessary attitudes towards this work. But it must be asked whether, in the context of family power and family archives, they hold the power to obscure important events and truths. The very perpetuation of these pacified narratives might contribute to maintaining family archives within irrelevance and sever the archive’s connection with collective histories and politics. Working with a family archive, therefore, needs to tread with delicate yet firm steps along these dimensions. I will continue to develop a response to these photographs after the completion of this PhD research.



APPARATUS OF CAPTURE – FOUNDATIONAL BINARIES

The question that emerges from working with a personal archive is how to read its materials - including debts, expected scenes, absences, or conflicts -, to reconnect it to its political contexts and potentials. Applying the concept of minor literature to archives and family narratives offers a useful framework, which seeks to dissolve the linear marks of family narratives to encounter "minor" readings. I have established the institutional structures that affect the formation of memory, and against which memory is read. As a creative and generative process, memory bound to institutional forms of authority - which are according to Braidotti "sedentary and protocol-bound" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 17) - is positioned within the binary of retracing the narratives of power that support the institution or falling into irrelevance. I propose a practice towards minoritarian readings of the archive to produce "ethically transformative and politically empowering" archival practices, readings and affects (Braidotti, 2019, p. 17).

Deleuze and Guattari conceptualised minor literature as literature that emerges in compressed social spaces; in social contexts wherein, as a result of oppressive relationships of expression, the personal and the political are indissoluble. In this context, it is possible to encounter the politics of collective assemblages within personal narratives. As a concept defined by difference, expression and creation, minority exists within linguistic relationships of subordination to a major signifier, defined by its epistemological and political power over - the power to define and limit: authority -, instead of by its size (Deleuze, Guattari and Deleuze, 2008, p. 16). Within the Spanish territory, hierarchies of language and identity articulate political conflict, inclu-



Figure 76 - 35mm collection: Family photographs are also the potographs of the landscapes wherein family life developed and therefore, the geographical history, entangled with social history.

ding those that pertain to memory (Escobar Fernández, 2023, p. 116). As such, Catalan-speaking regions have developed a history and subjectivity within a compressed social space and undergone a high degree of deterritorialisation by the major signifier (Resina, 1987).

Class division in Spain relies on a system of alterity structured geographically and linguistically, which is connected to its colonial projects. Historian Paul Preston describes the "hatreds that had smouldered in the Spanish countryside" for years before the Civil War, since the social uprises between 1918 and 1921 (the so-called Bolshevik triennial) (Preston, 2004, p. 1). These years of peasant uprising and political organisation had brought fear and hate to landowners, who considered their workers to be almost subhuman. This hatred augmented during the right-wing campaign for the 1936 elections, portraying the left as uncivilised criminals. The colonial campaigns in the North of Africa offered a site of projection for landowners and right-wing politicians; it was the "near racist contempt of the southern landowners for their peasants" that was "transmitted to the African Army which had rebelled in Morocco" (Preston, 2004, p. 5). After the victory of the National Uprising in the Civil War, the disciplinary structures of the regime returned to the natural order of things: what had previously been a relationship of paternalism became one of severe violence and punishment (Preston, 2004, p. 1). [Figure 76]

The establishment of relationships of authority disguised as natural structures characterises the state, defined by Deleuze and Guattari as an apparatus of capture (Deleuze and Guattari, 1989, p. 433). The state emerges as a machine that, upon contact with other social formations, subjugates them by limiting their ways of being and the

directions of becoming; a movement of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation of the other, by which modes of being in the world and subjectivities, as the relationships of the state become personal (Deleuze and Guattari, 1989, p. 451). The resulting loss of possibility produces a legacy of impoverished relationships which operate as a debt, wounds, or personal conflicts. As a concept that directly engages with identity and personal and political relationships across social strata, minority offers a way of engaging with this conflict as a moment of political multiplication. Therefore, the struggle for memory, which comes head to head with the defining narratives and affects of the state and institutions of authority is a struggle for autonomy, which is essential in becoming-minoritarian (Guattari, 2009, p. 139).

Becoming is the action of the self towards others; the action of the self with the other is indivisible in this process. Triggered by an encounter, this intensive motion without a preestablished completion provokes and affirms internal and external differences. It is an ongoing process of openness to and contact with, the world: humans, animals, spaces and materials are entangled in this process with multiple expressions. Therefore, becoming is the continuous process of generating and dismantling relationships from which the self materialises. Desire, in its drive towards other matter, triggers becomings with the potential to disrupt oppressive power relationships that seek to attribute an object to it and limit its movements and becomings. A becoming-open moment of deterritorialisation invites and urges the self to embody difference. Therefore, these are potentially disruptive moments towards new relationships and new horizons of being (Deleuze and Guattari, 1989, p. 34; Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 13).

In the process of becoming, difference emerges as always already present, as virtualities: as philosophers influenced by Bergson, the potentials that are being unlocked through relationships of becoming, deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation are virtualities which are present with/in time (Deleuze and Guattari, 1989, p. 96, 100, 131; Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 48). As Rosi Braidotti explains in Writing as a Nomadic Subject, these are organising forces that distribute chaotic, empty time into material, spatial relationships (Braidotti, 2014, p. 180). Interdependent and in flux, these are moments that vibrate or shimmer with possibility (Braidotti, 2019, p. 23). This hidden, powerful, exchanged charges acts of micro-politics with disruptive potentials. Against authoritarian structures of inevitability that dominate the movements of being/becoming and desire, obscuring these operations with moralising discourses (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 281), becoming-minor can be a form to reembody the world and find paths where there appear none (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 10). Even when an authoritarian regime leaves a language of negation and absence as an inheritance, a denied past and subjugated language, minor approaches turn this reality into the potential to destabilise the discursive, material and affective structures reinforced by this inheritance.

Ideas of the minor, as a productive category for political agency, populate Deleuze and Guattari's work. In *Kafka, Towards a Minor Literature* (1986), they develop those ideas by examining Kafka's literary work. Minority is defined by the relationships of power within an assemblage, which in Kafka's work is embodied and expressed in his position of Jewish Czech German within high German. Within this relationship, the minor can assimilate or resist; resistance occurs in the affirmation of alterity and escape - as lines of flight that enact new relationships, actualising their deterritorialising power (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 18).

"As long as there is familial overcoding, there will be a need for gender politics to defend and empower those disfavored by the exercise of containment that is molar Man." (Massumi, 1996, p. 88)

The singularity of each individual is its minority. Molar structures reterritorialise singularity into sameness or opposition. The minor's resistance affirms and intensifies alterity, as a refusal to relinquish differential traits of its language and identity. Despite the apparent mirroring notions of minority and majority, they are not analogous nor do they exist in a relationship of opposition by which their difference is subsumed into sameness. As Brian Massumi explains, an oppositional system within a binary system expresses homogeneity and implies equivalence in different orders and amounts. In this determination of potential expression, positivity is reduced (Massumi, 1996: 88). Instead, the minor refuses the relationship, expressed in the escape towards differentiation; towards forms of the alterity of undetermined intensity (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 13). This conceptual indeterminacy from the perspective of oppositional difference is "hyperdifferentiation" (Massumi, 1996, p. 91). Multiplied, the actualisation of potentials negated by the major assemblage of enunciation generates new power relationships (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 36).

Minoritarian approaches "privileges change and motion over stability", through the process of becoming, which is always minoritarian as becoming-molecular/woman/animal (Braidotti, 2013, p. 344). Instead, majority positions are "self-replicating" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 344), an adept term to define the memory politics of forgetting at hand: a denial of experiences and politics outside the major's, which changes throughout its history whilst at its core generating the same pacifying affects. Therefore, against the stabilising forces of the regime of forgetting, a "becoming-minoritarian of knowing subjects and knowledge practices" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 15) can contribute to encountering previously ignored forms of political power.

WRITING, THINKING, FEELING AND ARCHIVING IN COMPRESSED SPACES

To encounter politics in the minor, we need only to blow up the details, as these contain traces of the political structures that have shaped them: in the body, in the gaze, in thoughts and feelings, eventually narrated as autobiographical memory and constituted as self. The everyday scenes of Colometa in *Time of the Doves* exist within the conflict of the Civil War and the Post-War years. The book follows Colometa throughout her life, as she marries a man who dies during the Civil War and slowly recomposes her life after the end of the conflict. In the introduction of the book Rodoreda addresses some of the poeple who describe Colometa as stupid, saying that Colometa's type of intelligence allows her to discover the world around her with the eyes of a child. Her personal life is touched and moulded by the pressure and bareness of the world around her. The book itself, written in Catalan despite its limitations within the literary world, carries the hierarchy and impoverished structure of Catalonia's role within Spain during the regime. Speaking, thinking and writing in Catalan was, to Mercé Redoreda, a gesture of resistance that opposed the natural order of the world around her (Resina, 1987, p. 231). Comparably, in Jesus Montcada's literary depictions of life in Mequinensa and Faió, everyday moments and major power struggles in Spain are indivisible (Moncada, 1997; Moncada, 2011; Moncada, 1999). In *Estremida Memòria*, love stories become thwarted by the political intrigue initiated after a robbery and killing of a guard (Moncada, 1997); in *Calaveres Atònites*, the cowardly, participation of a man in the Civil War, on the national side destroys forever his relationship with his father (Moncada, 1999). The village is as narrow as the social composition of the population. The threshold between the personal and







Figure 77 - Box 5: Several scenes of Quintos, a celebration of adulthood. Originally, this indicated the deployment of men to Military service and has currently remained as a coming of age celebration.



Figure 78 - 35mm collection: Pepita cooking on the fire. The lives of Pepita, Lola and Odilia were marked by the fact they did not marry.

the political is constantly being crossed, becoming a distinction that belongs to other places or is enforced by a system that benefits from a centre and a periphery. It must be asked if a personal archive can offer similar potentials to those of minor literature. [Figure 77-78]

Deleuze's and Guattari's considerable emphasis on language and utterances (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 65; Deleuze and Guattari, 1989: 38) point to the role of affect in speaking acts, which denote an agency and express a political context - to break the silence is becoming-active. After the end of the regime, methods to limit participation maintained a focus on identity, language, and ideology[3]. Language, identity and political affinity are used in times of political instability and challenges to the state, as signifiers of political dissent and utilised for power struggles. During the dictatorship, the regime took pride in presenting the cultural differences that existed within the Spanish territory as folklore, to portray an inclusive image and obscure the hierarchies of identity that structured the system[4] (Brandes, 2015, p. 801; Gabriel and

3 After Franco died in 1975, the democratic system sought to integrate Spain's nations. In 1978, Spain was divided into 17 autonomous regions with varying autonomy and competencies, including the historical nations - Catalonia, Valencia, the Balearic Islands, Navarra, the Basque Country and Galicia. Under the slogan Café para todos (coffee for all). See Ysàs, P. (2000) 'El estado de las autonomías: orígenes y configuración', Actas del III Simposio de Historia Actual, pp. 101–126.

The state incorporated notions and multipolarity under the idea of equality and redistribution. Spain's indivisibility, written in the Constitution's second article (art 2 CE), grants its rights. As part of broader movements of decolonialism, national liberation movements - such as the Pro-Independence Left (in Catalonia, Valencia, the Balearic Islands and The South of France) or the Abertzale Left (in the Basque Country) - have arguably been some of the most powerful forces of political opposition to the state. Their historical opposition to the Spanish state has made them the objective of systematical criminalisation, infiltration and attacks. See Fernández, D. (2022) '1992-2012: infiltrats, talps i clavegueram policial', directa.cat, 7 June. Available at: https://directa.cat/1992-2012-infiltrats-talps-i-clavegueram-policial/ (Accessed: 13 February 2023).

Macià, C. (2020) 'El cas de Mikel Zabalza i l'ombra sinistra de la tortura', directa.cat, 28 September. Available at: https://directa.cat/el-cas-de-mikel-zabalza-i-lombra-sinistra-de-la-tortura/ (Accessed: 13 February 2023).

Rodríguez, J., Garcia, G. and Bou, D. (2023) 'Dani, el segon talp d'estat per espiar l'activisme', directa.cat, 30 January. Available at: https://directa.cat/dani-el-segon-talp-destat-per-espiar-lactivisme/ (Accessed: 13 February 2023).

4 This was supported by disciplines of knowledge within the social sciences, such as anthropology. At the end of the dictatorship, social anthropology boomed and framed folklore as proof of the unchangeable relationship between culture and territories, ignoring material and historical conditions. See Brandes, S. (2015)

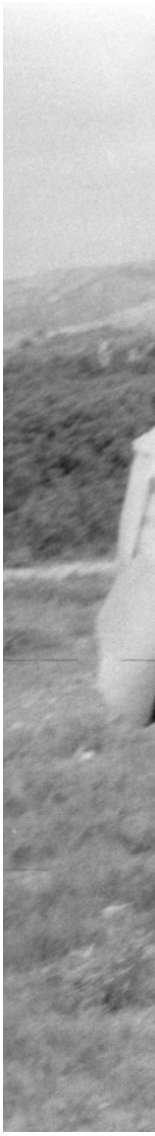


Figure 80 - 35mm collection: Roser embodied many of the attributes of a good mother: generosity, care and tolerance. Negative memories punish her for failing to embody them.



Figure 79 - Box 44: Sebastià was always perceived as a quiet authority



Álvarez, 2016, p. 579). Consequently, identitarian claims structure part of the memory politics of the regime and the resistance to the erasure of memory.

> "*So the question becomes rather simple: either a minor language connects to minor issues, producing particular results, or it remains isolated, vegetates, turns back on itself and produces nothing.*" (Guattari, 2009, p. 21)

An archive cannot speak - one makes it speak and its affects contribute to a series of relations and actions that do not require language. Remaining open to the languages and discourses that organise it, one could attempt to retrace the same utterances found in official archives, as its analogous family forms, or find its edges. Yet, despite the archive's inability to speak, it seems capable of escaping, reiterating its singularities and challenging its taxonomies. The dream of homogeneity of the regime emerges as a crumbling structure within the family archive. In it, the family, in its attempted stability, is found disintegrating when we place our gaze on it. Its conflicts are proof of the active differences that cannot be subsumed even after generations of politics of silence; as are active linguistic differences and connection to the land, despite symbolic and material dispossession. Even if the archive vegetated, those differences would desire agitation.

'Fascism and Social Anthropology: The Case of Spain Under Franco', Anthropological Quarterly, 88(3), pp. 795–816. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1353/anq.2015.0034. for an analysis from the perspective of anthropology.

The impact of the flooding of Faió was material and affective, affecting agency and subjectivity. Whilst the dictatorship's opposition to communism and atheism created a frame to justify the war (Cenarro, 2022, p. 78), the need to subjugate was represented by the concept of the Rojo (red). This category represented all the coexisting ideologies of the Republic – communism, socialism, republicanism, anarchism and nationalism – regardless of historical or ideological specificities and as such it became the target used to reinforce the values of the regime in a structure of binary opposition. (Cenarro, 2022, p. 78).

> "*The - Glorious - National Movement - the coup -, has never been a subleva-tion. The sublevvated are and were them, the reds*[5]." (Franco, 1939)

As the regime's objective was perpetuating power (Reig Cruañes, 2022, p. 39), the distinction between Spaniard/Rojo had to be stable and adaptable - a cultural signifier that could expand or contract to fit the needs of the state. Its objective was the quick identification of unwanted traits and the constant threat of violence, (relying also on the family as a disciplining institution (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 282). Salvador Cayuela Sánchez traces the biopolitical operations of the state to subjugate the population into the structures of the regime: the regime deployed a redemptive strategy based on moral and economic control to cleanse unwanted traits from the population (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 278). These were:

Being a good worker (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 276) – to commit to Caudillo's plan to rebuild Spain (Ellwood, 1987, p. 230). After the War, workers had to join the vertical union, which enforced the labour relations that the state desired (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 276-277). The union ensured Republicans could not access work (Davis, 2005, p. 861) and subsumed any potential collective grievance or struggle into individual disputes, which the union resolved in favour of the manager (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 276-77). Simultaneously, the state deployed a program of reorganisation of agriculture through the National Institute of Colonisation (Soto, 2013, p. 120) and the hydraulic economic policy of the regime (Fernandez-Cebrian, 2023, p. 56). The limited economic relationship of Spain with the rest of Europe and the inner ideological structure of work required an implicit loyalty and subordination to the Francoist vision of the future of Spain.

Being a good man – to embody and materialise the value of the regime. The good Spanish man is austere, resilient, able to suffer in silence, and dominating. Severe division of labour and mandatory military service made sure that these gendered values were embodied, forcibly or not (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 280). [Figure 79]

Being a good mother – to raise good men. Women's every behaviour and pursuit was conducive to motherhood; this was critical to the nation's success in its historical destiny (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 281). Since 1938, Pilar Primo de Rivera, daughter of the former dictator, reminded women that mothership was their role - becoming mothers of proud Spanish men. Spain's destiny depended on the moral performance of Spanish men, which was a result of the moral purity of the women who raised them. Whilst being ignored and unacknowledged, the destiny of the nation hinged on the discipline enforced on women (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 284; Martín Gaite, 2017; Rodríguez and Félez, 2013). [Figure 80]

5 Originally "el –Glorioso– Movimiento Nacional –el golpe de estado–, no ha sido nunca una sublevación. Los sublevados eran y son ellos, los rojos." (Franco, 1939)



Figure 81 - Folder D: Lola and Odilia sat or standing, as if they waited for somethin or someone

Economic institutions (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 276), cultural production (Ellwood, 1987), education, and charities (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 281) echoed the discourses of the government. The labour and gender/sexuality conditions during Francoism reveal that ideological and material goals turned class into an unchangeable inherited reality that had to be accepted with grace (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 283). The economic pressures of the poverty that followed the war (Fernández-Cebrián, 2017, p. 113), added to the fear of repression[6] (Cenarro, 2022, p. 85) created the conditions for these structures to be incorporated into the everyday. [Figure 81]

Through a logic that displaced political conflict into moral transgressions (Reig Cruañes, 2009, p. 284), the equivalence between morality and survival shaped the social sphere (limited right to assembly, ley de vagos y maleantes) and intimate structures (through the enforcement of heteronormativity and gendered forms of power, with institutions like the family). Moreover, this binary mode of social control sought to embody a biological/historical destiny that does not exist (as there is no biological marker of national purity[7]) (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 280). Morals and behaviours became the path to the realisation of an invented historical destiny, which the population had to accept, considering themselves an unfinished project (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 280).

6 Ángela Cenarro explains that practices of citizen denunciation, in a context of violent repression, contributed to a state of terror that damaged social networks and family structures, altering deeply everyday life, through constant exhaustion. As the population participated in structures of citizen denunciation, mistrust and old wounds perpetuated feelings of isolation and fear. See Cenarro, Á. (2022) 'Matar, vigilary delatar: la quiebra de la sociedad civil durante la guerra y la posguerra en España (1936-1948)', Historia Social, 44, pp. 65–86. for an overview of the repressive politics of the Francoist regime.

7 While psychiatrists such as López Ibor, Rojo Sierra or Linares Maza supported racist notions of psychology, it was challenging to locate and isolate markers of biological homogeneity in Spanish people. For that reason, they opted instead to defend an abstract notion of "national character", which had expressed itself in its maximum splendour during the Civil War) talking about the lack of biological markers(Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 280).



Sánchez Cayuela calls the resulting subjects Homo Patiens (patient man): characterised by acceptance of fate, the ability to suffer and ultimately, patience (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 280). As Cayuela-Sánchez describes:

> "*For the good of the race, the Spanish man had to prove his capacity to suffer, his often praised stoicism, his good manners in the face of adversity, his acceptance of the inequalities "naturally" established.*[8]" (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 284).

The regime's strategies of material and subjective reorganisation which constitute, too, its memory policies - by directly impacting forms of autobiographical memory and utterance - were analogous to the drive described by Braidotti as the "majoritarian meta pattern" is "driven by the speed or re-territorialisation" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 15).

"A contained population is called " a subjected group". The unity of moralized individual is transcendent (exists only from the point of view of the forms of expression to which the individual is subjected, and on their level) and redundant (doubles the individual's multiplicity in a supplemental dimension to it; continues a surplus value). A molarized individual is a "persona" to the extent that a category (cultural image of unity) has been imposed on it, and insofar as its subsequent actions are made to conform to those prescribed by its assigned category" (Massumi, 1996, p. 55) [Figure 82-83]

8 Orignally "Por el bien de esa raza, el hombre español tenía que demostrar su capacidad de sufrimiento, su estoicismo tantas veces alabado, su «saber estar» ante la adversidad, su aceptación de las desigualdades «naturalmente» establecidas." (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009, p. 284)



Figure 82 - 35mm collection: Religious wordviews were erected as the main framework of Spanish society

The apparatus of control of the Francoist regime produced obedient and resigned subjects (Cayuela Sánchez, 2009). If I think of this "homo patiens", I see my grandfather's face: stern, resigned, hard-working, looking at the future without reckoning with the past. This is, then, a question of memory, as "crucial to this entire process of becoming-molecular, in fact, is the question of memory (la mémoire)" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 346). In this context, as I have shown in previous chapters, temporal and spatial aspects of memory are entangled within its politics. But this shows that the power relationships revealed by the lens of minority are also key aspects of this history. My grandfather, as the majority subject acts like a "central memory system" which turns other memories into minorities (Braidotti, 2013, p. 347), as has been shown by the conflicting and divergent memories that my mother has towards him. I have previously engaged with this from a perspective of gender. But from a memory perspective, this centralised form of power acts as an "anti-memory" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 347) and can thus be considered another expression of desmemòria. Bringing forth the disregarded/peripheric/irrelevant perspectives within the archive is an act that actualises its minority and, therefore, its potential for memory beyond established categories.

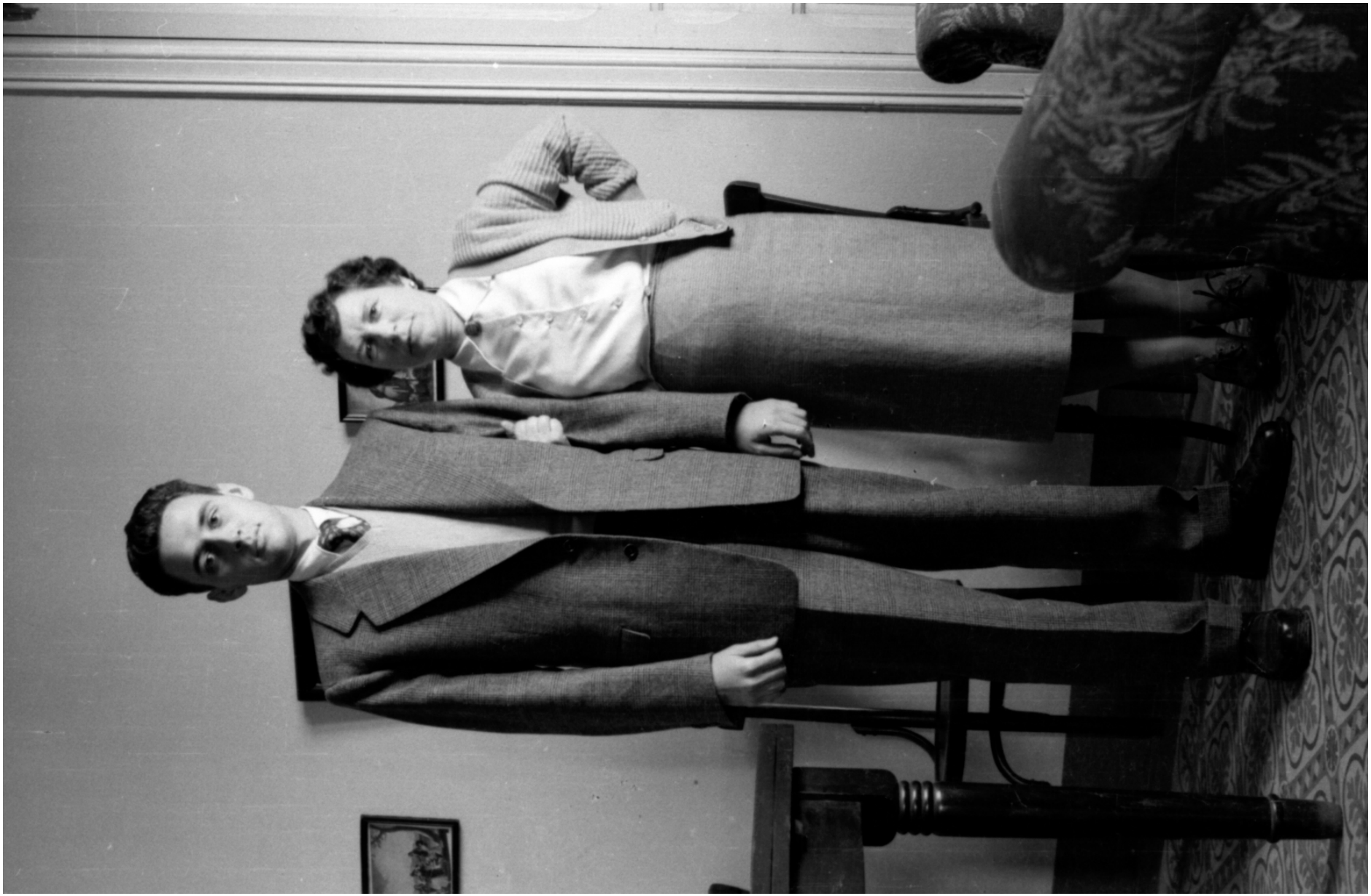
CONFLICT – TOWARDS COMPLEXITY AND AGENCY

Family conflict in the context of the recovery of memory expresses the dynamic forces of minority and demands a recognition of complexity, which despite being non-unitary is ethically accountable (Braidotti, 2013, p. 343). In the context of the archive, it posits a mutational taxonomy which moves "towards a suprapersonal level"(Massumi, 1996, p. 96); it disrupts and escapes the expected forms of memory posited by the Major signifier. Complexity distinguishes between institutional forms of knowledge and its minor expressions, by working with situated and singular "contemporary subjects of knowledge" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 18). In the context of a family archive this singular situated form of knowledge accounts too for the forms of conflict, to connect their political characteristics, instead of disregarding those altogether under within the category of private. Where institutional authority seeks to pacify memory, and therefore its conflictive active aspects. I deploy a minoritarian



Figure 83 - 35mm collection: religious rituals presented an occasion to reinforce respectability and morality

Figure 84 - 35mm collection: Sebastià posing next to a woman who appears to be his mother.



to consider the politics found within conflict within the family, as a starting point for deterritorialisation and affective agitation.

> "*Memory of an Oedipal childhood? The memory is a family portrait or a vacation photo showing men with bent heads, women with their necks circled by a ribbon.' The memory blocks desire makes mere carbon copies of it, fixes it within strata, and cuts it off from all its con- connections. But what, then, can we hope for? It's an impasse. Nonetheless, we can realise that even an impasse is good if it forms part of the rhizome.*" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 4)

I have presented the binaries and borders that make a personal archive a minor archive. The first border, the most intimate, the very skin of this archive is the border of family, its uncontested truths and unitary narratives. The conflict in the archive is the desire to transform this skin, this border. It is political personal, social and intimate. The family conflict in the archive, presented in Chapter 3, mobilises constructed binaries and affect - the affects that I experience when I look at Sebastià dressed in fascist military garments -: regret, retort, resentment and the desire to escape. This conflict demands not de-escalation, denial or suppression, but a praxis that locates its desires and distinct forms of expression and becoming; counter-memories within the family memory which multiply its voices.

The moral structures of the regime presented at the beginning of this chapter did not develop separately from my grandfather's life: they existed around him in relationships of assimilation or resistance analogous to the relationship between major and minor. Observing from the distance that time allows raises the question that Deleuze also posed as "the fundamental problem of political philosophy is still precisely the one that Spinoza saw so clearly (and that Wilhelm Reich rediscovered): 'Why do men fight for their servitude as stubbornly as though it were their salvation?' "(Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 38). And so, this conflictive relationship addresses the link between law and fatherhood: "foregrounding about the relation to the Father and a juridical-political "assemblage" that exceeds and determines the father-son relation since the time "immemorial" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. xi).

Reading Birgit Vanderveke's book *The Mussel Feast* (2013) struck me, in its depiction of a family under the dominance of a molar structure. Vanderveke constructs an insightful depiction of the insidious penetration of authoritarianism within the family sphere. Within the father's insistent desire to inculcate what he considers necessary values for survival and building a good life - rationality, hard work, reliability - are the traces of the system that he was exposed to in his childhood. The oppression he suffered is passed down as a lesson, a gift, a necessity to the family through the epistemological negation of any values and becomings outside his own (Vanderveke, 2013). During the book, which occurs over one dinner, the structures of feeling and logic that the father's worldview erected start to dissolve, and the family start to outline a possibility of escape, which, due to the limited possibilities he offers them, is necessarily a life without him. [Figure 84] This patriarchal structure transferred into intimate relationships is identified, by Deleuze and Guattari, within psychoanalysis's oedipal triangle, which perpetuates the territorialisation of desire engendered by the apparatus of capture and frames it as a natural psychological drive that originates within the family.

"The father is the one who punishes; guilt attracts him as it does the court officials", pointing at the hauntings of an archive or an unresolved past as a reproduction of the renunciation of desires inherent in acts of becoming-major (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. xi); infoldings of sad affects by which the punitive voice of the major signi-

fier becomes internalised. I cannot ascertain how deeply Sebastià opposed fascism; whether his visceral rejection of candles, which reminded him of the Church, was an act of micro-resistance. But the question emerges of what powers emerge from an imagined narrative attached to this gesture. Whereas, Birchall asks to observe the aesthetics of that which is hidden to understand what can be said in a specific context (Birchall, 2015), a minor, personal archive demands that we confront the discovery or absence of specific information and place the affect of imagination in relation to power. [Figure 85-87] As Deleuze and Guattari express:

> "*The question of the father isn't how to become free about him (an Oedipal question) but how to find a path there where he didn't find any*" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 10).

In *Kafka, Toward a Minor Literature*, Deleuze and Guattari interpret Kafka's Letter to His Father as a struggle against the oedipal territorialisation that befalls him in his relationship of filiality. Kafka moves from accusatory condemnation - blaming his father for his failings -, to exoneration - by erasing the father's faults, he seeks to hide them to hide his own -, to the strongest accusation of all:

> "*First, that you are not guilty; second, that I am the guilty one; and third, that out of sheer magnanimity, you are ready not only to forgive me but (what is both more and less) also to prove and be willing to believe yourself that - contrary to the truth—I am also not guilty.*" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 9)

Where the psychoanalytical interpretations of Kafka attribute the bent head and the photograph to a direct continuation of the father's guilt onto the son, Kafka assembles machines of confrontation, compassion and absurdity, in line with his escapes through becoming-animal. This destabilises the paths, readings and affects established by the oedipal and bureaucratic structures around him. According to Deleuze and Guattari, once the psychoanalytical connection occurs, everything can become the father's fault: sexual problems, creative problems, and body problems. Yet, throu-



Figure 86 - 35mm collection: Specific ways of socialising and construction gendered relationships were naturalised



Figure 85 - Box 7: Xavier, Roser and Sebastià celebrating a birthday in Xavier and Anna's flat in Diputació, Barcelona



gh an intensification of minoritarian positions, in the face of the impoverishment of life, Kafka projects his father's power towards "all the corners of his world". Kafka holds the past but refuses to embody its inheritance (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008) and in this refusal, he refuses too to be marginalised within his minority. Instead, becoming-minoritarian tests "new modalities of organisation of collective subjectivity" (Guattari, 2009, p. 292). Kafka begins with his most intimate form of self-organisation.

Kafka's father is the man who had to renounce his desire and difference within a normative social order. He demands an equivalent submission of the son, knowingly or not. But refusing to be deterritorialised by his parent's debts, Kafka magnifies the world-defining power of the law of the father to a degree that assembles his forgiveness. As Deleuze and Guattari read it, he expands his father to the whole world – its geography, history, and politics. (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 11). "Deterritorializing Oedipus into the world instead of reterritorialising everything in Oedipus and the family. But to do this, Oedipus had to be enlarged to the point of absurdity, comedy". Augmenting the father's onto the world grants does not subsume its agitations into the sameness of stability, signified by the binary of condemnation and exoneration. This instance of escape actualises a different source of power (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 10).

The mode of power of escape, flight, is inherently different from "liberty" as creates a new arrangement (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008, p. 10). This escaping mode of forgiveness takes the forms of intense encounters with the suppressed desires of the past and the actualisation of a new agency. This way forgiveness escapes too, its



individualised mode of action and gathers an affective and temporal power, like two arrows in time to affect others here, past and coming, or, as Brain Massumi states, "seething with fractal future-pasts" (Massumi, 1996, p. 91).

> "*A "minor theorization," a cartography of affects, on the level of daily relationships, the relationship to space, etc... In this view, the analysis consists in connecting and making coexist, neither to homogenize nor to unify—but rather to arrange these different levels of discursivity according to a principle of transversality, and make them communicate transversally.*" (Guattari, 2009, p. 45)

A family archive depicts scenes of everyday life. In that sense its political motion maps an encounter with concrete forms of oppression - which I have traced in different ways in this thesis -, instead of abstractions and uncontested narratives; then it demands a move back to the collective, through its conflicts, discontents, desires and alterities. A minor mode of confrontation enacts disruptions of precarious narratives that provide reassurance and stability, as Braidotti attributes to remembering in a "nomadic mode" (Braidotti, 2014, p. 173).

GESTURES OF DISRUPTION, ACTS OF NOMADIC KINSHIP

Becoming-minor of/with the archive alters the "typological thinking" of majoritarian approaches to archive practice and autobiographical memory disrupts memory in a generative affective mode, which unearths new relationships around the same memories (Braidotti, 2019, p. 17). Positioned in front of my archive, I am aware of



Figure 87 - Box 10: Anna and Mireia sat by the garden of the old house of Faió. Anna is knitting or mending clothes, Mireia is looking at a grape.

the forces, structured through histories of archival power, that could territorialise its contents into minor as in irrelevant expressions of its power. Instead, its becoming-minoritarian finds "missing links" and "generative cracks" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 19) such as multiple selves or "virtual possibilities in the subject" within memory (Braidotti, 2014, p.: 173). Or as in the case of almonds in this project, for example, nonhuman agencies; new bonds of solidarity and power can emerge from the very materials and expressions that have been historically irrelevant.

A minor approach according to Braidotti proposes a "vision of mediated matter" which opens "the margins of negotiation" within a specific set of re-territorialisation and zones of interest (Braidotti, 2019, p. 18). This is explored in the article A Theoretical Framework for the Critical Posthumanities, where Braidotti proposes a neo-materialist "vision of matter as auto-poetic" and affective. In the context of the recovery of memory, this turns the gaze to the sites, geographies and nonhuman entities that have co-produced historical events and social relations. Turning to the almond tree, as my own family did throughout their life, and in the years after the flooding of Faió, changes the map of relations. From political conflict abstracted into ideologies and memory struggles abstracted into the event of the war and its two sides, observing the relationships with trees, land and fruit reveals a different set of interests, conflicts, fragilities and actions. As I have presented in previous chapters, institutional discourses around memory are affected by the concepts of unity, projecting the idea of the nation-state onto the whole territory. As a result, an analysis of memory that does not consider material difference risks reproducing the unitary politics of the state. A focus on local forms of memory, "avoids the rhetorical generalizations about pan-humanity" (Braidotti, 2019, p. 22), or, in this case, the risk of extending the idea of Spain onto all its territories.

As part of this critical approach, a neo-material approach engages with the qualitative shifts in knowledge provided by different objects of study (Braidotti, 2019, p. 22). In the context of conducting memory work around precarious pasts and absent narratives, this shift offers an access point to remembrance and recollection that fosters agency. In the previous chapter, questions about the river and almonds enabled a gradual disclosure of information regarding the past, furthering the shift towards non-extractive forms of qualitative research. Particularly, in the context of autoethnographic research within the family, an approach that provides alternative access points to troubling events helps construct ethics within the family that fosters engagement without reestablishing existing power relations. It provides too, a higher degree of play and joy towards recollection, without misrepresenting the contents of the archive.

Alongside broadening the scope of agency and positionality, a minoritarian approach to memory reveals, too, the consumers of the self, which enables a different organisation of the past. In Writing as a Nomadic Subject (2014), Rosi Braidotti argues that acts of memory are points of contact with multiplicity and becoming other. Observing the photographs in my archive, I find many that depict me as a child. Watching them, I remember myself as a child seeing through my child's eyes and travelling through the memory of those photographs. I become a child, charging the current moment with the intensity (affect) of the childhood memories in the slides. Speed, occurring quasi-simultaneusly, carries the remembrance of my mother, which turns into a becoming mother; as I discover her story through images that act as my memories - I further unveil her story through mnemonic affect. This momentary process, this encounter, is charged with my family history and, perhaps invisibly, the relationships established during the dictatorship: power relationships and affects that shaped remembrance and remain as traces therein. Acknowledging this opens up the



Figure 88 - Bag of transparencies: Mireia as a child, grinning. Looking at photographs of childhood is both an activity of narcissistic enjoyment as a way to reconnect with modes of being suppressed during adulthood.

previously ignored multiples at the centre of the utterance/memory. My grandmother's lines of flight acquire a different meaning now: her odd speech at times, her passions, and her changing moods are not simply quirks but micro conquests of space for freedom. Braidotti's propositions map a change of gaze and embodiment when engaging with a family or national past (Braidotti, 2014). [Figure 88-89]

The escape of the inherited taxonomies within the archive, and its inherited affects alter majoritarian relationships, in moments which through repetition, become sequences and assemblages. Their power resonates with Bergson's[9] words:

> "*Insofar as unpredictable and new reality creates itself, its image reflects itself behind itself in the indefinite past: this new reality finds itself all the time having been possible, but it is only at the precise moment of its actual emergence that it begins to always have been, and this is why I say that its possibility, which does not precede its reality, will have preceded it once this reality emerges*" (Bergson, 2013).

Moreover, this enriches the process of multiplication of sources and agencies in memory work. By creating the possibility of speaking from multiple selves, incorporating the fragmentation of memory into its creative power, and even talking from the relationship with land or trees (or other material companions of history), memory work may become more accessible and horizontal. That is the activation of memory's social power.

9 Bergson's philosophy is highly influential in the work of Deleuze. The central idea of becoming an ontological mechanism that Deleuze develops across his philosophy, and especially in his work with Guattari, is influenced by Bergson's concepts of duration - as a temporal measure of time, as opposed to spatial measures of time - and Bergson's critique of representation - which prioritises static and fixed ideas, instead of motion and dynamics -. Bergson's vitalism and intuition, which emphasise transformation and immediacy, influence Deleuze's challenge of conventional approaches to thought, captured in his critique of a dogmatic image of through, as well as the distinction between virtual and actual which articulates the notion of immanence, becoming and power (as potential) across Deleuze's work. See Deleuze, G. (1991) Bergsonism. New York: Zone Books. for Deleuze's reframing of Bergson's philosophy.

WORKING THE KNOT

> "*The process of becoming-minor, which necessarily involves becoming-woman, is central to this pragmatic ethical project that includes human as well as non-human actors.*" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 342)

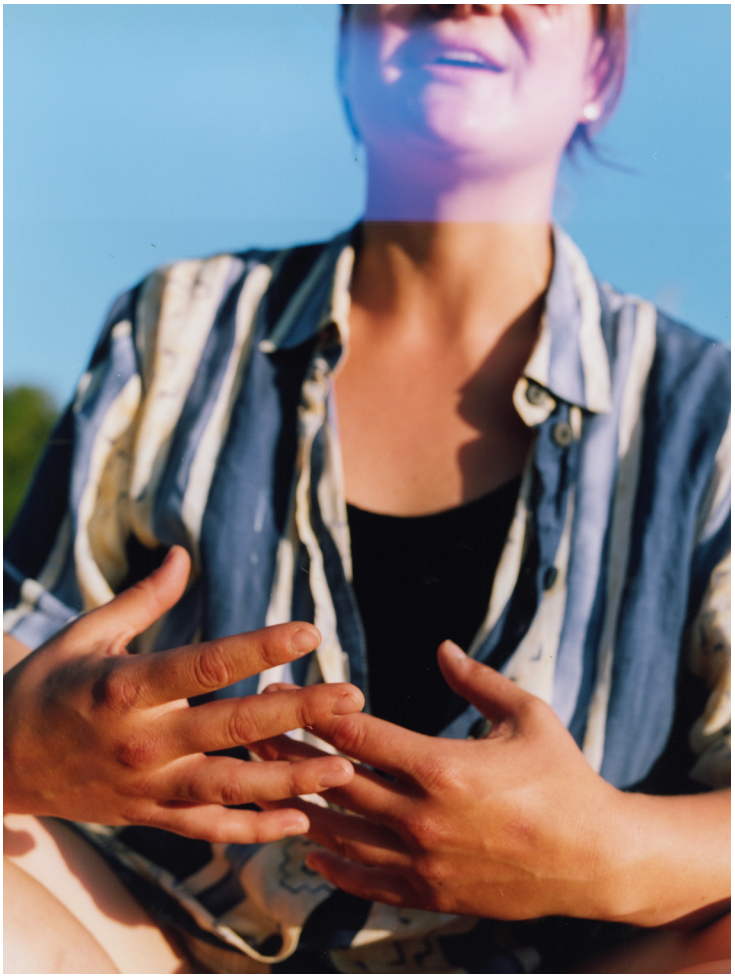
Working the Knot is a photographic participatory performance that departs from an intimate reading of a photograph of Faió - a photograph of my grandmother applying sunscreen to my back (which appears again in chapter 5) - to reimagine a gesture from my grandmother Roser. The performance consists of a spoken narration of the entangled conflicts within family and memory whilst holding the audience's hand.

I did this performance between August 2023 and April 2024; it allowed me to understand that personal readings of history offer an accessible entry to this history, but longer formats and reiterative readings might allow me to better bridge the gap towards the political. To begin the performance, I invite the guest to close their eyes. That allows for touch and sound to become the prevalent senses in this encounter. In the first performance, I applied cream to the hands while I narrated the text in Catalan, Spanish or English, depending on the audience's preference. Afterwards, I asked for feedback to engage in dialogue. I documented it with photographs. I did this format of performance seven times (Clara Pérez, Kayte Merritt, Gaia Crocella, Spike Milligan, Cristina Pagés, Wei Ting Chia, Evie Adams, Meher Shiblee). [Figure 90]

This instance of my practice introduces minor gestures within the telling of this history, in an act of becoming-woman, as "the first move in the deterritorialisation of the dominant subject" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 346) within the archive. As a move towards the alternative expressions of the photographs, it repositions a gesture with traces in the photographs, but found particularly within my memory, to reorganise the archive's affects. This moment allowed me to reposition myself towards the archive and its narratives. Moreover, the personal and embodied dimension of this performance allows for an intimate mode of engagement with this history.



Figure 89 - Box 41: Mireia as a toddler. Remembering the ways I used to look at the world is also a learning experience that expands the present



01



02



03



04

Figure 90
01 -Evie Adams responding to Working the Knot
02 - Gaia Crocella responding to Working the Knot
03 - Clara Pérez responding to Working the Knot
04 - Kayte Merrit responding to Working the Knot

The practice in this chapter presented the discovery of a series of photographs of my grandfather in military service to confront the potential presence of Francoist ideologies within my family. These images present another dimension of the power of forgetting, the fear of confronting the complicity within one's own family; they reveal the magnitude of the penetration of fascist structure into everyday life, across public and intimate.

The moral and biopolitical strategies of the regime built a concept of nation and identity around principles which sought to foster allegiance to authoritarian principles in everyday life. The narrow conception of what Spanish men and women had to be, punished and eliminated alterity from public and intimate spaces. Additionally, the literature presented in the chapter showed that these strategies revolved around gendered structures and institutions like the family. The power structures underpinning this moral apparatus were transmitted as a set of inter/transgenerational conflicts that find their home in narratives of absence, secrecy and separation. Disconnected from collective structures, these conflicts perpetuate forgetting.

By deploying the concepts of minor literature in relationship to my own family and archive, I attempted to expand the political dimension of the autoethnography around my archive. This concept, initially developed by Deleuze and Guattari, contextualises the presence of collective power within personal relationships in contexts of minority, or subjugation to a Major signifier. Additionally, becoming minoritarian offers a path to disrupt the relationships of power established by the Major signifier. In the context of the personal archive, these ideas enable a different exploration of the conflict found within the archive, specifically around the figure of my grandfather, Sebastià, as the embodiment of the authoritarian modes of the regime, and the silence that followed the flooding of Faió and the end of Francoism. I argued that the legacy of the regime created an impoverished frame for conflict that protects state power by limiting participation. Instead, Deleuze and Guattari's interpretation of Kafka's conflict with his father provides a different position to engage with this legacy's interpersonal and transgenerational expressions. By forcing the father into a power that absolved Kafka, he maps alternative paths of expression and power, free from the choices/institutions of the family. These ideas reframe the work with the generational family conflicts emerging from troubled pasts, enabling an encounter with those pasts that still have power over the present.

The posthumanist ideas of Rosi Braidotti offer indispensable positions towards rebuilding collective community relationships around memory. Her ideas of joyful remembrance foster a major degree of power towards mournful histories. Within this chapter, the ideas of minority applied from a feminist lens, reframe narratives of absence and resentment as rejection of past conditions onto the present. In the face of questions about how to return to the archive to encounter new readings and find the desires expressed within minor positions, this perspective finds alterities and potentials in irrelevant materials such as nonhuman agencies, which disrupt the borders of property and family around/within the archive. [Figure 91]

My practice, *Working the Knot*, deploys these concepts through an exchange around a photograph and a gesture from my memory. During the performance, a single photograph and an nonexistent photograph opened the space for reflection and the possibility of a different collective memory. Working with the memory of my grandmother's hands allowed me to begin to weave the past and its gaps with different gestures; this allowed me to start mapping new archive readings.



Figure 91 - 35mm collection: Sebastià's interest in fishes was mostly a solitary activity. However, it also became a relational device through knowledge exchange with his family.



35mm collection: Roser between two women standing in front of a llaut by the Ebre riverside















CHAPTER 5
Re-Enchanting The Past With Photographic Narratives



Figure 92 - Box 25: Roser looking through the curatin in a shop or restaurant

The loss and absence in this project coexist with a rupture and mourning in my photographic practice since 2020. My relationship with photography has always had ruptures and reencounters because of the distinct public register of fashion photography. Since the beginning of this project in 2020, my separations from this type of practice solidified into a critique that extended towards all forms of photography. Despite the seemingly concrete and contained scope of fashion photography, its pervasive circulation, culture-defining and world-building power impact other forms of photography. This is through a disembodied, often objectifying gaze. Therefore, a radical critique of fashion photography carried with it a partial rejection of other forms of representational photography. My critiques of fashion photography are beyond the scope of this project, but its rejection and the rejection of other forms of public photography echoed Walter Benjamin's words:

> "*The creative in photography is the latter's responsiveness to fashion. The world is beautiful - that precisely is its motto. Therein is unmasked photography which can relate a tin of canned food to the universe, yet cannot grasp a single one of the human connections in which that tin exists; a photography which even in its most dreamlike compositions is more concerned with eventual saleability than with understanding.*" (Benjamin, 1972, p. 24)

This critical position, acknowledging photography's power to sever objects and people from their relations (Benjamin, 1972, p. 24), led me to a photo-pessimistic attitude towards all current and becoming photographic practices. This chapter seeks to re-enchant my relationship with photography through a series of reframings. I begin by describing this concept through the photography critiques, such as Susan Sontag's, which describe conflict photography's potential to deactivate political engagement, or photography's inability to generate this engagement. As the imagination of the Civil War revolved around conflict images, this is a necessary starting point to situate the role of family photographs in the context of the memory of the dictatorship. Opposed to these readings, Jacques Rancière's notion of active spectatorship offers the possibility of an active engagement with photographs, which rearranges the relationship between image and audience.

This chapter presents a participatory performance that reenacts archive photographs through the gesture of harvesting almonds. By inviting people to engage with the history of the archive and the connection between the erasure of memory and the displacement of Faió through the role of almonds, I provided sensory access to this history and invited dialogue. This was documented through writing and drawing on the canvas on which almonds rested. In previous chapters, I have traced the relationship between the history of Faió, my family and the erasure of the Francoist past. I have traced the structures of power within the family, and the expected readings those project into the archive. This chapter explores the potential of photography as a mediator of memory and its politics, with particular interest in the the gendered expectations placed on family photographs and archives. In this chapter, I will reread



the archive photographs through a feminist lens, minoritarian positions and Walter Benjamin's notion of deformation. [Figure 92] Throughout the chapter I reengage with the archive narratives, to disrupt the inherited narratives from the family as well as the expectations placed on those photographs by the major signifier within photography theory.

As the final instance of my practice, this chapter finishes with the description of an audiovisual field recording titled Surfacing, in collaboration with Gaia Crocella and Julia Schauerman. This work connects the audio from the interview presented in Chapter 3 with field recordings and reflexive interpretations of the archive; it reconnects the family voices and the archive with the nonhuman agencies in La Franja. In their composition, the fragments which speak of absence, offer the possibility of return, reconnection and even reenchantment.

GATHERING ALMONDS

Gathering Almonds *at Unfolding Narratives 4*.

In the exhibition of Unfolding Narratives, held at the London College of Communication I presented *Gathering Almonds*, an installation of almonds on top of a tarpaulin and a table. As part of the same exhibition, I installed an A1 photograph of Faió coming from the water. Almonds have been a generative material across this thesis, as mediators of meaning-making after displacement and inheritance within the family. The almond is a mode of inscription of the personal and collective history of my fa-

mily and Faió within the broader national history. This was extensively photographed by my grandfather as a document of life in Faió, before and after the flooding. In my practice, almonds offer play, identification, community and curiosity in a context of grief, separation, displacement and resentment.

I invited people to meet across the materials of this memory; to inhabit the relationship between place, memory and almond and take time to consider its absences and presences. The display of the installation was activated through the movement of the almonds. During Unfolding Narratives, these installations were meant to live in a space for people to participate on their own with them; through time, they were meant to change as people engaged with them. Due to health and safety concerns, the almonds had to be covered, which required placing them within a vitrine and uncovering them during the performances. Within the vitrine the almonds gathered a different affect, reinforcing the mournful aspects of the space, resembling a coffin.

During the exhibition, I hosted two performative activations of the space, each an hour long. This consisted of a short (10') introduction to the story of the archive and a reassembly of the almonds by reenacting the gesture of sorting almonds portrayed in one of the installation photographs. This gesture, which signifies identity, labour and connection with the land, presented the opportunity to recognise the role of plants and other nonhuman agencies in the making of memory. I asked the audience to reflect and converse about the gestures and relationships that contribute to the resistance against forgetting, erasure and ignorance. The audience was invited to write or draw their answers on the canvas underneath the almonds, rearranging the almonds to create the space to write. [Figure 93]

During the performances, people responded with questions, shared personal stories and impressions, or responses to the text. They felt more inclined to draw than to write, as writing might require more specific prompts as well as time. This is something that can be moved towards the end of the performance or guided more directly throughout. The almonds provided an accessible entry point to the personal and collective history I presented, driven by tactile curiosity and play.

On reflection, I would have provided more information as a part of the installation (as text, maps or sound) so people could engage with parts of the history not presented in the reading. Specifically, I would highlight the political dimension of this history and its connection with institutional power. During the exchange, I would have asked a more direct question instead of inviting dialogue, as it would have made it easier for the audience to begin the discussion.

ENUNCIATING IMPOSSIBILITIES AS AN ACT OF CARE AND RESISTANCE

I was making coffee while I started writing and foraging through the archive. Whilst looking at all these images of the family posed or unposed, taken by whoever, the coffee suddenly gathered the smell of my grandmother's kitchen and, by extension, of her. I smelled the memory as if I had myself become my childhood; coffee turned into something adult people drank and a fixture of the environment for my growing up. As I forage and walk through this archive again, images pull me, and questions come to greet me. I am trying to give space for both through organisations around the assemblages of photographer, subject, distance and intervention that stand out from the photographs.



Figure 93 - Cathering Almonds, 2024

"*A cipher of a history written in visible forms and as obtuse reality*" (Rancière, 2003, p. 12).

Unposed distance

The distance between Sebastià and the rest of the family is a powerful discursive and affective force within the archive: a lingering that "elicits new feelings about the freshly emptied space", offering a possibility of speculation and dreaming (Birchall, 2015, p. 8). There is a noticeable distance between the photographer and the subject in seemingly unposed photographs. Among the standard family frames are some very close-up or, on the contrary, very far away images. There are a series of portraits, close-up or zoomed-in, that fill the frame without meeting the eyes of the camera. At a distance, the subjects appear mid-thought, almost as if they were considering their following words in a conversation, pondering, contemplating - about to act. In some, there is even a look of surprise as if disconnected from their surroundings, as if in a dream or just recently awoken. Even when looking into the lens, there lingers a sense of looking past, looking away, or beyond. In this selection, the camera seems to record distance and the desire to bridge it as if the camera were a hand that tried to grab something, often very far away. [Figure 94]

Moody children

The degree to which an image is staged or not, posed or unposed, is not the only indicator of how much intervention there has been in the image and its subjects.

There is an image of the three sisters as children playing on the beach. Each one of them has different attitudes and is doing a different action. To me, this highlighted their explorations and the different characters of the three sisters. Anna is looking at the water, whilst Roser and Mar play. However, to Anna, the similarities in the clothing were a reminder that they were meticulously selected, implying an act of cura-

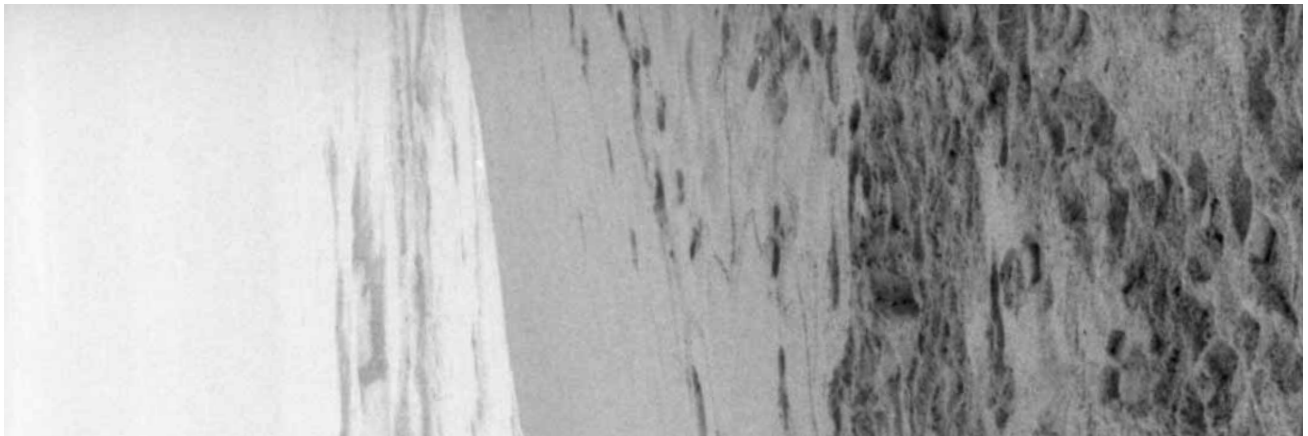


tion that almost extended to the children themselves. There is a certain strangeness to the photograph, as the clothes Anna, Roser and Mar are wearing are very formal. I wanted to admire the formal qualities of the photographs, yet, to Anna, those were the very reminders of the wound of the family. [Figure 95]

According to Rancière, facingness is "the obtuse presence that interrupts histories and discourses" (Rancière, 2002, p. 22). Their faces turned away do not enable that interruption, whilst at the same time, they insist on a sense of disconnection (by performing it in the photograph). I argue that the connection identified by Anna between the identical clothing and lingering authoritarian rule within the family is also linked to this disconnection. As a mediation of Majority rule, or molar structures imposes itself as a mediator of relationships too, leading to the perception of absence or separation.

Photographs direct us to notions of fragmentation (Lowe, 2018, p. 18). According to Eyal Weizman, their claim of truth is analogous to that of ruins. Following this notion, images emerge as "a concentration of experience into an image that suggests time interrupted, retaining the sense of a time before the image and a time after it." (Lowe citing Weizman, 2018, p. 18). According to Simone Gigliotti, "Limit events" create a rupture that severs an experience from the continuity wherein it previously flowed: reconstructing a sense of continuity becomes crucial (Gigliotti, 2003, p. 179-180). As

Figure 94 - 35mm collection: Anna, Mar and Roser by the sea





traced in previous chapters, the fragmentation brought by the displacement of Faió (Chapter 2), the reiterative denial of experience (Chapter 1) and denied access to information (Chapter 3) pressured the population to adhere to normative structures (Chapter 4). Amidst this, photography offered my family (and others who had the means to access the technology) a practice of continuous engagement with the world from an adjustable distance. Projecting and visualising images reenacted a shared narrative that produced a certain continuity. In the present, these photographs offer partial views into a history, affected by the political epistemologies built around the past and photography itself, as well as the conflicts and experiences within the family itself. In this partiality, these photographs can challenge assumptions and imaginaries of the past.

PESSIMISTIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS CONFLICT PHOTOGRAPHY AND REPRESENTATION

Building counter-narratives which hold space for complexity through a family archive mobilises a specific imaginary, outside the content of the everyday images of the archive. In the case of the Francoist past, images of war and violence have partly structured the collective imaginary of the Civil War and the dictatorship. Cultural critic Susan Sontag described it as "the first war to be witnessed ('covered') in the modern sense: by a corps of professional photographers at the lines of military engagement and in the towns under bombardment, whose work was immediately seen in newspapers and magazines in Spain and abroad" (Sontag, 2003, p. 19). Despite noting the contested authenticity of the images and the existence of a corpus of different types of photographs of that time, Sontag recognised that the symbolic power of these images legitimated the historical importance of the Spanish Civil War. To this day, those photographs still arrange the relationships of the relevance within the imaginary of the Civil War, thus raising the question of whether the imagination constructed through war photographs extends into private forms of photography, making those inherently minor in this relationship. Images of war - and in this case, the Civil War - as hegemonic representations of history may relegate conflict to the public space as a unitary narrative. As Sontag claims:

02



03



04



05



Figure 95
01 - Box 48: Odilia and Roser walking near Faió
02 - Folder D: Roser leaning her head or Roser's shoulder, near Faió
03 - Folder D: Anna, near Faió
04 - Folder D: Mar and undidentified boy, near Faió
05 - Folder D: Anna sat near Faió

> "*In a system based on the maximal reproduction and diffusion of images, witnessing requires the creation of star witnesses, renowned for their bravery and zeal in procuring important, disturbing photographs.*" (Sontag, 2003, p. 27)

However, despite the pleas for peace and moral reactions generated by war and documentary photographs, Sontag notes that these ultimately do not translate into action. Sontag identifies an extended arousal of negative emotion, followed by inaction as a response (Sontag, 2003, p. 75). This leads to what documentary photographer and academic Paul Lowe describes as a "sense of the failure of more conventional photojournalistic modes of representation" (Lowe, 2018, p. 14). I call this photo-pessimism: a photographic relation that leads to the emergence of the cynicism that Sontag's analysis itself displays, which frames photography as inherently objectifying or "redundant" (Flusser, 1984, p. 26). As Vilhelm Flusser identified in *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*, the massified production of photography has informed a gaze that expects and predicts the content and context of images, leading to a redundancy of images. A critical attitude in response is necessary, however pessimistic totalising reading of photography's potential reinforces the very affects it critiques disregarding other categories of photographs and potentially different engagements with photography. If documentary images of conflict "confirm that this is the sort of thing which happens in that place. The ubiquity of those photographs, and those horrors, cannot help but nourish belief in the inevitability of tragedy in the benighted or backward—that is, poor— parts of the world" (Sontag, 2003, p. 56). It is worth questioning if the gaze Sontag describes already presupposes and performs an organisation of subjects and their potential agency.

There has been a historical scarcity of framings of Spanish art as political or politically involved with the memory of Francoism. Sánchez Aguilar describes Franco's obsessive politicisation of memory in public spaces as a way to "eliminate the collective imaginary of the opponents of the Regime" (Rodríguez Mattalía, 2020, p. 363). Due to the extended duration of the dictatorship, the potential for counter-hegemonic discourses was curtailed; economic interests to preserve the economic growth initiated during the 60s also influenced the push for art that did not oppose the state[1] (Rodríguez Mattalía, 2020, p. 363).

In this context, family photographs emerge as marginalia in the representation of history. As such, it can offer different positions and effects in the representation of conflict. As photography critics and scholars point out, relevance in photography can be retroactively produced and according to the cultural needs of the present[2]. However, instead of proposing a becoming-relevant of family photograph, I posit that engaging in a becoming-minoritarian of photographic representation can multiply its narratives and its effects. In turn, this can generate a different engagement with the imagination of the Civil War and dictatorship, inviting participation. However, working with these minor forms of photography demands a specific set of ethics, questions and engagement.



Figure 96 - Small box 01: Xavier, Anna, Roser and Sebastià on a holiday. Roser and Anna seem to be about to speak to the camera

1 It is demonstrative of this fact that academics who have traced the reemergence of art that explicitly seeks to repoliticize memory present examples of artworks and exhibitions that date from the 2000s onwards. See Rodríguez Mattalía, L. (2020) 'Repolitizar la memoria: creación artística actual en torno a la represión franquista', Escritura e Imagen, 16, pp. 357–377. Available at: https://doi.org/10.5209/esim.73043. for an overview of this process.

2 See Krauss, R. (1982) 'Photography's Discursive Spaces: Landscape / View'. and Phillips, C. (1982) 'The Judgment Seat of Photography', October, 22 Available at: https://doi.org/10.2307/778362 for in-depth analysis of this phenomenon.



ACTIVATE SPECTATORSHIP TO SPUR INTO ACTION

According to Walter Benjamin, a photograph states history as captured, as well as its open past, present and future potentials (Benjamin, 1972, p. 7). To Benjamin, this openness is such that the photograph's inherently historical power has to be actualised through captions - through narration[3] (Benjamin, 1972, p. 8). However, these narratives and readings manoeuvre the tension between interpretation and creation, especially in the context of partial family narratives. As "operations", images are relationships between visibility, power of signification and effect. And expectations and whether or not those are met. Hence, separating the indexicality and poetics of photography dispels its power (Rancière, 2003, p. 6). Therefore, the gaze, its effects and narratives are responses to the photographs which incorporate the agency of the spectator.

In the context of the ethics of representation and the role of family photographs in acts and politics of memory, the distinction between the witnessing viewer and the active spectator is of value, such as that established by political theorist Jaques Rancière. He remarks that:

3 Benjamin identifies in the silence that "surrounds" photographs a signifier of the disconnection between the medium and actuality. Instead, a caption can actualise, in a literary form, the relationships in which the photograph is immersed, which surround the photograph and which the photographers themselves must be able to read and express in their captions. The caption then, in its capacity to express and witness the representational and social dimension of the photograph, can become "the most important component of the shot" (Benjamin, 1972, p. 25).

> "*The spectator acts, like a pupil or scholar. She observes, selects, compares, and interprets. She links what she sees to a host of other things that she has seen on other stages, in other kinds of places. She composes her poem with the elements of the poem before her.*" (Rancière, 2003, p. 13)

Rancière's act of spectating is poetic: it can generate different arrangements beyond evident modes of engagement (Rancière, 2003, p. 26). Framing spectating as a composition is relevant in the context of this project - particularly concerning the power of existing archival colonial epistemologies, in contexts of fascist colonial states - because it invites the production of an alternative taxonomy and its alternative interpretation, across dissemination and circulation. By shifting from audience to spectator, the artwork itself shifts from an object to a process, or agency in a collaborative relationship with the spectator. Additionally, this enables the encounter with the conflicts that emerge in the enactment of agencies mediated by art approaches[4] (Mouffe, 2007, p. 4).

Additionally, it demands a recognition of the expectations placed on photographs. It demands of me, for example, to question what I am looking for in these photographs, what desires I am attempting to establish as truths through the photograph's ability to legitimate memory. Asking the spectator to become a participant, a co-producer of meaning, can activate a form of spectating subjectivity that is open to ethical and political considerations. Family photographs, in their difference from expected photographs of the period, demand this reframing of the gaze. This requires a specific set of practices and performances, such as multiple readings of a group of photographs. [Figure 96]

THE ETHICS AND AFFECTS OF FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS

Lowe argues that photography invites the viewer to identify with the image by connecting the public and private spheres (Lowe, 2018, p. 18). Despite not being "destined potentially to all" (Sontag, 2003, p. 18), private photographs can act as starting points of engagement with storytelling and political action. In Visual Fictions and the Archive of the Spanish Civil War, H. Rosi Song argues that personal images can be "scrutinised without an attached narrative"[5] (Song, 2014, p. 368). Expanding on Barthes's ideas, Karina Eileraas puts forth misrecognition as photographs' "unintended effects", combined with identification "by way of eerily familiar details"; the universal character of family conventions - captured in these unexpected details that jump out of otherwise mundane images - engages identification and participation in personal photographs (Eileraas, 2003, p. 815). The minor elements of family/everyday/personal grant these unlived experiences the power to bridge space and time and foster bonds through photographs and people. As Rancière writes:

---

4 Mouffe's notion of agonistics presents a critique of liberal notions of consensus in the public space, which fail to acknowledge hegemonic power as a structural force within consensus, nor the role of difference as an essential moment within antagonistic relationships. Mouffe argues that artists can place these aspects of agonism in the public space by "contributing to the construction of new subjectivities" and abandoning the illusion of the artist's privilege to encounter its political role. While Mouffe's notion of agonism acknowledges "the contingent character of the hegemonic politico-economic articulations which determine the specific configuration of a society at a given moment" (Mouffe, 2007, p. 4), the dialectical approach undertaken by the author presents an essential difference with this project. Mouffe constructs an oppositional relationship between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic actors which, whilst it accounts for a dimension of political struggle, poses the risk of stability through sameness brought by oppositional and dialectical thinking.

5 Song identifies the power of "visual trophies" to perpetuate the attraction into other people's lives, even if the connection is impersonal. The connection without attachment that can emerge around other people's personal images enables free circulation, according to Song; this power raises questions in the context of heavily contested archives, as fictional or manipulated images could exert the power of identification without knowledge or context adn transform existing archival discourses (Song, 2014, p. 368).

> "*The face of anonymous people speak twice over - as silent witnesses of a condition inscribed directly on their features, their clothes, their life setting and as possessors of a secret we shall never know, a secret veiled by the very image that delivers them to us.*" (Rancière, 2003, p. 14).

In the context of family photographs, and photography's power of identification and composition, it is worth considering the role of childhood memory in particular. Feelings of recognition and identification with childhood can obscure the inspection of family structures within the context and structures of power; this becomes crucial in the histories of authoritarian regimes, to avoid tracing previous power structures. Therefore, activating spectatorship requires positionality. Against this all-seeing "universal" gaze that denies its situatedness and performs as invisible, Donna Haraway proclaims the need to acknowledge and narrate from a position of situatedness, to perform an opening of the possibility of interpretation and organisation (Haraway, 2016, p. 33). This situatedness echoes the notion of molecular memories presented by Braidotti:

> "*Molecular or nomadic memories are also and more especially a creative force that gives the minorities -or 'wretched of the earth' as Fanon put it - a head start towards the world-historical task of envisaging alternative world orders and more humane and sustainable social systems. It comes down to a double-consciousness of both the multiple axes of oppression and hence of hurt, humiliation and pain, as well as the creative force they can generate as motors of transversal and collective transformation.*" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 348)

Molecular memories are not a stable source of power, but rather a processual and ethical praxis and framing of the past that seeks to transform present relationships through the enactment of agency. Certain acts of resistance in the past require a reorganisation of the gaze in the present - to conjure a vision that can recognise them as such: a different narrative that reorganises the past and unearths present potentials. In the context of family photographs, this acts as a reminder that the immediate recognition of a scene may preclude the active engagement necessary to read a photograph. Therefore, positionality must consider desire as an organising force with ethical and political implications. What we want to see in an image can reveal the desire for agency within a specific context, instead of a narrative inherent to those photographs. Acknowledging this relationship between positionality, desire, image and narratives contributes, too, to dispelling the territorialising power of family (as an institution of discipline) on family photographs.

As I have explained in previous chapters, the regime used veiled redeployments of war memories, as a disciplinary tool to enforce their narratives (Reig Cruañes, 2009). This tells that the work of memory requires a reconnection with the past, which acknowledges the affective impact of previous memory politics, which have sought to create a negative association with previous forms of memorialisation. It is necessary to construct an ethics of family photographic representation and spectatorship that can offer, as Donna Haraway says in Staying with the Trouble, the possibility "to make trouble, to stir up potent response to devastating events, as well as to settle troubled waters and rebuild quiet places" (Haraway, 2016, p. 1).

The movement between stirring and settling is affective. To H. Rosi Song, the affective workings of the gaze "move from a relationship of empathy or mourning and suggest a (politically) active engagement with the photograph" (Song, 2014, p. 381). It connects the time of the archive and the encounter with a photograph of the death that surrounds this history, connecting individual (or individualised) mourning to



01



02

collective ownership of history. As Mbembe said:

> "*This time of co-ownership, however, rests on a fundamental event: death. Death to the extent that the archived document par excellence is, generally, a document whose author is dead and which, obviously, has been closed for the required period before it can be accessed*." (Mbembe, 2002, p. 21)

Roland Barthes' *Camera Lucida* is marked by the grief of losing his mother (Barthes, 1981). Similarly, the loss of Roser marked my relationship with my family archive. I inherited the archive when my grandmother died and it was that sudden loss that prompted me to begin to unearth the unknown parts of my family history. It has already been six years since I lost my grandmother and gained an archive and these two events - only one month apart - are inseparable in my memory, as is the archive from my grandmother, primarily. Even though the immense feeling of loss has weakened, it has not left; it is also a force that organises my readings of the archive and needs to be contextualised, or admitted. Looking at her in photographs feels incredibly familiar, the images so real. I admit that I might have, at times, avoided writing about her, even though she is so important, due to the impossibility of capturing her importance. When Barthes described the grief of losing his mother, he spoke too of a desire that he kept "like a treasure" (Barthes, 1981, p. 21) and I realise now that this desire - to think, to remember, to speak about Roser - is an active force in this project. Interpreting mourning as passive disregards the active forms of desire that exist within it, and its joyful expressions. The joy of remembrance, the action of mourning invites sharing, discussing and challenging, acknowledging the agency of those who have been placed in mournful contexts or positions.

03



04



05



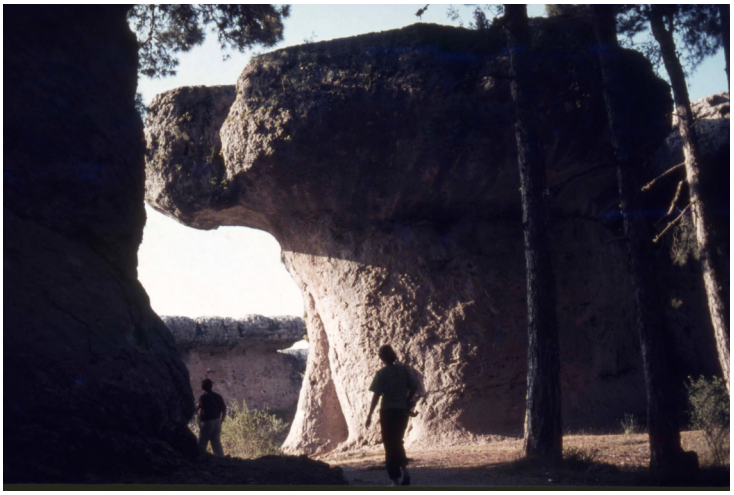
06



Figure 97
01 - Box 33: (potentially) Mar and Roser
02 - Box 7: Mireia looking at a carousel
03 - Box 13: Anna, Roser, Mar and Roser looking at architecture
04 - Box 21: Unidentified woman and Roser walking by the sea or river
05 - Box 38: Three unidentified men talking, near Faió
06 - Box 38:Pepita, Roser and Odilia by the hermitage, near Faió



01



02



03



04

Figure 98
01 - Box 11: Two people fishing by the river
02 - Box 45: Two people walking under a boulder
03 - Box 44: Odilia, Lola and Roser, potentially at a wedding
04 - Box 5: Mar in the Miró Foundation

Figure 99 - Bpx 38: Roser, Odilia and Pepita looking towards the hermitage, near Faió



Figure 100 - Box 5: Two unidentified women walking down a street



Figure 101 - *Cartografías Silenciadas* (2020)

Spatial recompositions

Several compositions, mainly outdoors, echo the distance of unposed photographs. Instead, in these images, the camera situates and embeds the subject in the environment. The women are often in action, moving towards something, leading the camera. Walking, watching, making, exploring, moving, thinking, standing, and talking, the women always appear to activate the actions within their surroundings. Often photographed from behind, these photographs entangle them with those landscapes. These seem to be photographs without a photographer as if they just emerged into being, as testaments to the distance and safety mediated by the camera in the relationship with the world. They become witnesses of the presence of people in the landscape. If the landscape were to be taken from underneath their feet once more, the projection on the wall would undo that separation. [Figure 97-100]

Reclaiming the landscape affected by the Francoist past, Ana Teresa Ortega documents the spaces that contain the violent history of the Civil War, such as prisons, bullfighting squares, and fields. ealing directly with the traces of what had once been and no longer can be found, Ana Teresa Ortega's *Cartografías Silenciadas* (2020) combines images with historical research and archival documents that deal with the institutionalisation and consequences of repression during the regime. A series of photographs of spaces, such as prisons, bullfighting squares, and fields, used during the Civil War and up to the 1970s to detain, torture, and murder thousands of Republicans go hand in hand with information on their function during the regime. In their combination, this series succeeds at presenting the entanglement of the past and the present and the violence and emptiness present in these inconspicuous spaces. Without further intervention, Ortega changes these everyday spaces. They become documents of the past in the present and presently erased. Ortega's photographs bring the audience's attention towards the traces and invisible weight of the past. These photographs reveal the traces of violence in everyday life and space while also furthering the archive of documents of the Civil War and the Dictatorship. [Figure 101] By documenting these spaces, she alters them and agitates the past, showing its presence still today and demanding the recognition of the events that took place there (Ortega, 2020, p. 371).

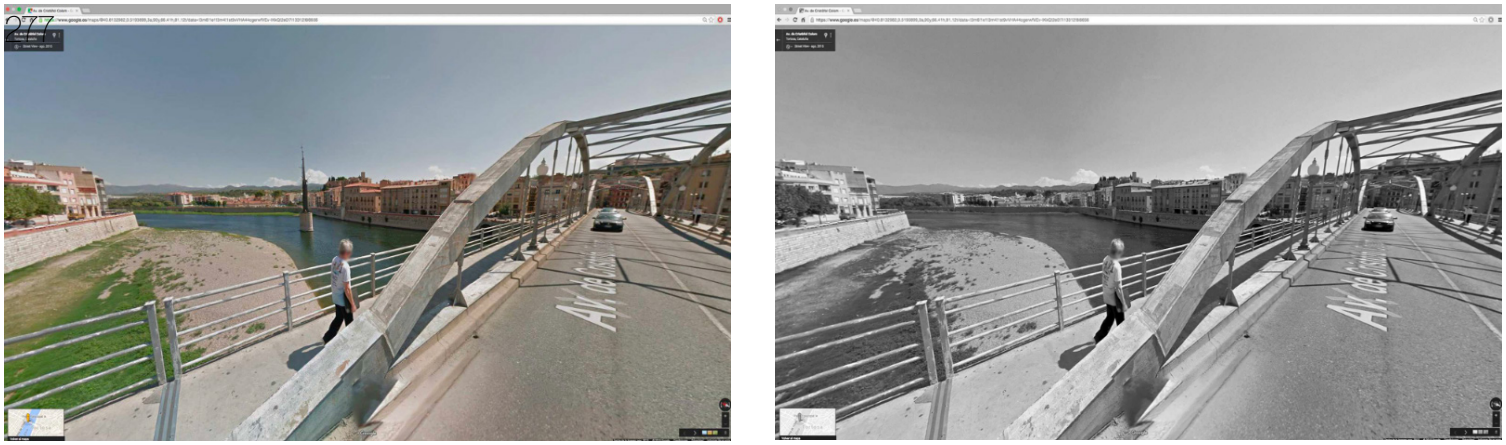


Figure 102 - *Ley 52/2007, Artículo 1586* (2015)

In a gesture of reversal, *Ley 52/2007, Artículo 1586* (2015) exposes the same dynamics of political entanglement in space. In his piece, Alán Carrasco requested that Google remove images of the Francoist monument to the Battle of the Ebro from the Street View of Tortosa, following the Law for Historical Memory of 2011. The sculpture was unveiled in 1966, and in 1986, the Francoist elements were removed from the statue, such as the inscription "To the Leader of the Crusade and twenty-five years of peace"[6]. After the approval of the Law for Historical Memory, the city hall declared it could be considered a monument to the dead from both sides. After Google ignored the request, Carrasco digitally erased the monument from the image. After his act, the artist observed that the removal of the anomaly created a feeling of estrangement. I think the assertion of the affect of this removal conveys the powerful embeddedness of these monuments into Spain's public space (Rubin, 2018). Additionally, the law remains virtual and needs to be digitally simulated (Carrasco, 2015); when it is actualised in the images, it becomes a source of perplexity. *Cartografías Silenciadas* (2020) witnesses what is no longer visible, whereas *Ley 52/2007, Artículo 1586* (2015) witness what should no longer be there. Furthermore, the threat of removal simulated in this photo manipulation exposes the historical and ideological dimension of these monuments and symbols - considered innocuous traces of the past by some - and reveals the challenges of implementing the Law of Historical Memory. Furthermore, I see it as a rehearsal of the action of removal (and implicit condemnation) of these monuments and a preparation of the responses. [Figure 102]

Both examples show the need to undertake the historical and political work of dealing with the past, in the face of the unwillingness of institutions, or companies that hold the power to do so.

6 Originally "Al Caudillo de la Cruzada y de los veinticinco años de paz".

TOWARDS A BECOMING-WOMAN OF THE ARCHIVE

In Chapter 2, I explain that the mnemonic relations set up during the dictatorship In chapters 3 and 4, I started to trace the regime's penetration into family structures and the enforcement of strong gendered structures of morality. As I explore feminist readings of photography, I want to go back to the impact of the regime, specifically in the role of women in society.

After the Civil War, women's lives and missions revolved around finding a husband and building a family (Martín Gaite, 2017). Marriage after the War was "as much an ideological model as it was a practice", by which the Regime was able to "establish its political concretion" (Rodríguez and Félez, 2013, p. 36). Despite the traditionalist appeals to the recovery of the only moral structure of affects, the promotion of marriage during the Regime responded to women's needs to survive in a society wherein they were second-class citizens.

"*The young woman looks out for her future: her father is dead, her brothers are married, she faces poverty, misery perhaps or the bitter bread given by her sister-in-law; material and moral solitude of those that walk the sad path of not being needed, being useless, being a nuisance; she says her destiny of dressing images and the nickname spinster, and she marries without love, perhaps feeling rejection towards the man who must be her partner until death*[7]" (Lacalzada de Mateo, 1994, p. 104-105).

Where once an increase in labour demands had improved their ability to be self-sufficient, after the War, unmarried women were considered parasites (Rodríguez and Félez, 2013, p. 38). As a result, at least during the first post-war years (or decades) women "lived and died" within the family (Rodríguez and Félez, 2013, p. 39). [Figure 103]

In *Usos Amorosos de la Posguerra Española*, Carmen Martín Gaite analyses the imposition of marriage as women's social destiny. She concludes that after all the efforts of women to find a husband, they often came to experience that the apparatus of (gendered) moral discipline had engendered a distance between husband and wife. The normative approaches to relationships and gender identity and expression turned husband and wife into ideas to aspire to. As representations of systems, under moral pressure and vigilance, husband and wife often ended up not knowing each other, even after a long and laborious courtship (Martín Gaite, 2017). [Figure 104]

Anna's relationship with (Grandma) Roser marked my relationship with the family's past. Since Anna had to do most of the childcare after I was born, Sebastià and Roser were very involved in my upbringing and Anna's life. Roser always made sure her daughters had her attention: she and Anna were always connected and they spoke daily, as Roser did with each of her daughters. The three sisters would often argue and Roser mediated, and their bond prevailed as long as she lived, whether they were sharing a meal (cockles, if possible) or by the sea, which they all loved. The constant talk lives in my memory as an invisible fabric of those relationships. Constant voices, cacophonic, waning and waxing – but never disappearing - became the fabric of my childhood.

In narratives where Sebastià is distant and Roser generous, they appear to be each other's counterbalance, in a gendered construction. I will not deny the historical ac-

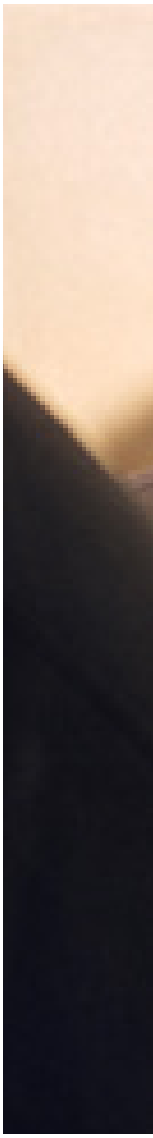


Figure 103 - Box 15: Sebastià sleeping in Faio

7 Originally "La joven mira por su porvenir: muerto su padre, casados sus hermanos, le espera la pobreza, tal vez la miseria o el amargo pan que le dé una cuñada; la soledad material y moral de quien recorre la triste escala de no ser necesaria, ser inútil, ser un estorbo; ve su destino de vestir imágenes y su apodo solterona, y se casa sin amor, tal vez sintiendo aversión por el hombre que ha de ser su compañero hasta la muerte". (Lacalzada de Mateo, 1994, p. 104-105)



curacy of these gendered historical forces, but to reiterate these as an act of memory disregards escapes, hidden actions, and covert conflicts that are a testament to their subjectivities beyond their assigned duties. Anna remembers Roser's rejection of Sebastià's family and his (possibly deliberate) ignorance of that fact. Headaches and other aches and pains were often her excuse not to go to family dinners and events. [Figure 105-106] Alongside duty and morals, Sebastià liked films. Each week, he combed the TV programming to find and record VHS of films and TV he thought we would enjoy. I enjoyed finding out which ones had been marked in red in the newspaper, almost as much as watching them. Just as I remember Anna and (Grandma) Roser having long conversations, my aunt Roser remembers having those with Sebastià. His gender legitimated him to define the family in the public sphere and photographic projections allowed him to narrate the family to itself, creating collective memory and shaping collected memory. However, when asked about the impetus in photographing the women sorting almonds in the house of Faió, my mother stated that those images depict an act of care regardless of gender.

This project could become just an extended telling of the family through the partial gaze of the patriarch: reading Sebastià through absence and Roser through presence makes Sebastià's actions invisible and Roser's granted and ignorable. Through time, this projects the structures that in the past enforced gendered dynamics of absence and presence. Sebastià and Roser's camera recorded presence, contact and communication with each other and the future through the storage of the transparencies. As posited by Deleuze and Guattari and explored in Chapter 4, Kafka's liberation occurs through the movement of reframing the father's power (Deleuze and Guattari, 2008,



01

Figure 104 - 35mm collection
01 - Roser and Sebastià on a boat
02 - Roser with Anna, Mar and Roser



02



Figure 105 - Box 26: Sebastià and Roser posing by a tree





01

p. 9). I would add that this requires redefining the mother's powerlessness and dedication. This collection presents an opportunity for such reinterpretation and amplification.

Throughout this thesis, I have mapped the absences of my family in the stories and official histories of Faió and the Dictatorship. I have looked intensely at the photographs in my archive as if I could summon or conjure information that would evaporate gaps and absences, the terrible legacy of the past. If the power of fantasies and anxieties found in photographs keeps them in circulation, constituting tools to destabilise the positions that fix the subject of the photograph (Hirsch, 2012), at times my writing, has risked creating the conditions to fix my grandfather and grandmother in roles defined by absences and genders. Whilst there are historical forces that pinned them in those positions, those are not conclusive. It was important to mark the spots where wounds have not healed and acknowledge that pain, as those are the marks that make history undeniable, despite attempts at erasure. However, the same fragments that speak of erasure, speak too of creation - and demand it as well.



02

Figure 106 - Bag with transparencies
01 - Roser by Sebastià, Tenerife
02 - Sebastià by Roser, Tenerife



01

Group photographs - Authorship

To disrupt the gendered power structures of the family, authorship must be challenged and deterritorialised. There are a considerable amount of posed photographs in my family archive, as can be expected from family photographs. Each face looks at the camera directly - around the table, standing over bags of almonds, walking on fields or swimming in the river. In some photographs, Sebastià poses amongst them, without a distinguishable author; Sebastià, Roser, Anna, Roser, Mar and other family members all seem to be in the same series of pictures of the same event, at the same time.

In these images Sebastià no longer is the author, neither do other members of th family take on that role. The camera is a witness that states his proximity to the women of the family and materialises it in the forms of transparencies; the camera enables a becoming-archivist, taking on a caring position towards the materials of the archive; taking on the reproductive role of memory through the creation of the archive. It is worth noting that several notes within the archive are written by Roser, detailing places where the photographs were taken. The becoming-woman of the archivist goes hand in hand with the acknowledgement of the power of the women already present. [Figure 107]

Figure 107
01 - 35mm: Sebastià, Roser, Mar, Roser, Lola and Anna sat in the living room in Faió in front of a Macramé piece made by Anna
02 - 35mm: Sebastià, unidentified man, Odilia, Roser, Anna, Pepita, Roser and Lola sat on the terrace of the bar in the central square of Faió
03 - Small Box 0.2: Xavier, Mar, unidentified man, Lola, Pepita, Odilia, Roser and Sebastià sat in the living room in Faió, possibly celebrating Christmas
04 - Box 15: Lola, Roser, Sebastià, Odilia and Pepita sat in the garden in Faió, eating dinner



02



03



04

Reinterpreting these photographs considers gestures and readings as a performance that organises this history. Hirsch suggests that playing with feminist readings allows for an interrogation and repositioning of the image's composition, rearranging the narrative around it (Hirsch, 2012). Expanding this notion towards a decolonial practice, Karina Eileraas points us to the power of misrecognition and the power of "unauthorised" readings of photographs as acts of rearrangement (involving photographer, viewer and subject) of "critical or creative relationship to the other's gaze" (Eileraas, 2003, p. 815). Creation and "an imagined relationship between image and identity" can be deployed to unsettle the boundaries between "self and other that Orientalist imagery works to preserve"[8] (Eileraas, 2003, p. 815). Eilerass argues that this effectively weakens the mark of "human agency or authorship" without disregarding it, as it constitutes a consequential part of the history and power around the image and mobilises imagination within history, memory and identity (Eileraas, 2003, p. 837). As Annette Kuhn demonstrates in her book *Family Secrets* (2002), imagination plays a significant role in memory processes that involve photography. In the theoretical and autobiographical analysis of memory put forth by Kuhn, photographs play a core, as a mnemonic device that triggers recollection. The role of imagination is evidenced in the way gaps in narratives are filled by interpretations of the images with varying degrees of accuracy and misplacement of interpretation (Kuhn, 2002). Image, in working with the invisible in the visible, which, according to Rancière, constitutes the system of relationships at work within images (Rancière, 2003, p. 12). "Words make something visible, yet not present, seen. Words make seen what does not pertain to the visible, expressions of an idea, the strength or control of an emotion felt" (Rancière, 2003, p. 12).

By mobilising critical imagination, it might be possible to, as Benjamin posited in The Author as Producer, subvert the "distinction between author and reader" (Benjamin, 1970, p. 772). Steffi Klenz's *He Only Sees the Black and White of It: Berlin Wall 14-07-1973* (2016), explores the process of reckoning with memory by manipulating a single photograph. In doing so, Klenz represents remembrance as a process which continuously mobilises different approximations to an event (Klenz, 2016). Simultaneously, I want to highlight that this series represents the persistence of searching for information about the past, or perhaps the patience of staying with a story to fully understand it, without needing to acquire further information than already exists. Visually, each intervention reveals a different aspect of the photograph, articulating the recreated and imagined elements of remembrance and holding the space for the narration underneath. The narrating voice underneath gathers its full power by echoing the emotional and imagined dimension of a memory made of fragmented narratives. [Figure 108]

The rereadings and photographic questions and interpretations can be enacted autobiographically through a critical lens. Wilke's *So Help Me Hannah* (1978-1981) is a series of self-portraits with her mother. Their shared experiences represent their legacy as gendered subjects. Hanna's mother's mastectomy scar, left from her cancer surgery, is re-enacted by Hannah's drawings of objects she gifted to her ex-partner, placeholders of the invisible scars their relationship inflicted. In this photographic

8 As I presented in previous chapters, the Francoist Regime is inherently connected to the Spanish colonial project, especially through its military and symbolic connection with the North of Africa. While it is beyond the scope of this project to construct a substantial decolonial photographic critique of the Francoist regime, the remnants of this system are present throughout this thesis, and cannot be disconnected from the erasure of memory, construction of the family and territorial distribution of the country, nor the most essential core of fascism. Therefore, the accounts and work of decolonial practitioners and thinkers are essential, especially when it pertains to the construction of a gaze that perpetuates the organisation between humans, alterities and other forms of agencies.



Figure 108 - *He Only Sees the Black and White of It: Berlin Wall 14-07-1973* (2016)

act of vulnerability, exposing both of their chests, Wilke draws attention to the physical scars on their bodies and the emotional scars on their lives (Tembeck, 2020). I see this as an act of documenting the genealogy of gendered scars, which connects her with her mother and articulates her practice. As she seeks to come to terms with her mother's illness, Wilke reflects on their similarities and differences: rather than witnessing her mother's narrative, Wilke embodies their bond as mother and daughter and visually represents it. Wilke publicly exposes and reckons with the desire to rescue her mother and in the impossibility of doing so, she presents us with the contradiction between foreshadowing and agency. [Figure 109]

In her later work, *Intra Venus* (1991–1992), Wilke documents her experience with terminal cancer. Her self-portraits challenge prescriptive stereotypes by re-appropriating her subjectivity during her illness and exploring her experience from a first-person perspective. "By conspicuously including her commentary in these aesthetic formulas, she reveals them to be prescriptive stéréotypés that generally leave no room for the représentation of "déviant" bodies"(Tembeck, 2020). In both series, life's vulnerable, fragile, materiality becomes a witness to power relationships and a position of world-building. Her multiple images arrest the expectations of representation around the topics of illness by saturating the image with the different dimensions of her experience with sickness, reminding us of the vital intersections of life and death.

Hannah Wilke's practice turns the camera onto herself. In this move, she collapses, or enriches, the distinction between photographer and subject and subverts the gendered structures that affect some photographic subjects. Moreover, her practice offers a situated example of the constitution of subjectivity through relationships; in this case, the mother-daughter bond, presented as an act of mirroring, foreshadowing, and materiality, as her body imposed logic on her life that could not be overcome but expressed and understood. Wilke's exploration of photography's power in building agency through representation presents relationality and inheritance as the



Figure 109 - *So Help Me Hannah* (1978–1981)

raw material of her practice. [Figure 110]

Shifting the notion of authorship within the archive's photographs might enable a new critical reading of the agencies of the women photographed therein. As Braidotti posits Deleuze's becoming-woman, the feminine (or feminised), as material and maternal speaks of major signifier's despotism and the minor pathetism. And it is the power of becoming-woman to deform the trace of the "word of the father" (Braidotti, 2021). De-formation, according to Walter Benjamin, is the imagination's power to transform the future (Benjamin et al., 1996, p. 280). Throughout his work, Benjamin was concerned with ways to produce revolutionary, eschatological[9] readings of the past. Benjamin opposes imagination to prophetic vision: while the latter can "perceive the forms of the future", imagination is aware of their potential change, their deformation; and so, one extends the present towards the future as a "premonition" while the other alters the future by "forgetting" the past. Therefore, the fixity of the past relationship with the future is destabilised as "the imagination knows only constantly changing transitions" (Benjamin, 1969, p. 282). As this quality of experience with the power to forget the past in the creation of a different future, imagination is a critical quality that itself needs to remain critical, so as not to extend triumphant narratives of success without actually changing the material and social relationships that connect past and future in a temporal relationship of causality.

Throughout this project, it has been necessary to make space to observe and sustain the narratives inherited from my family, as the particular memory of Faió has been displaced within personal narratives. With them, I encountered the body of the

9 Benjamin's philosophy was concerned with the interrelationship between theology and Marxist ideas. Eschatology is concerned with the end of the world. For Benjamin, it was tied to Jewish Messianism, albeit through a unique interpretation. Against the theological framing of history that configured Marxism around him - a framing of history by which each event is a necessary step towards the completion of time - Benjamin sought to rescue the past from history itself. He claimed that the past was not fixed, nor present and future, and that understandings of time as a single line forward reenacted the condemnation of those forgotten by history, again, and again. Without challenging the very material forces in conflict during history and the temporalities we interpret from them, the future remains in the hands of the same power that turned the past into ruins. See the Theses of the Philosophy of History in Benjamin, W., H. (1969) '*Illuminations*', in. New York. for an overview of Benjamin's theories of history



Figure 110 - *Intra Venus* (1991–1992)

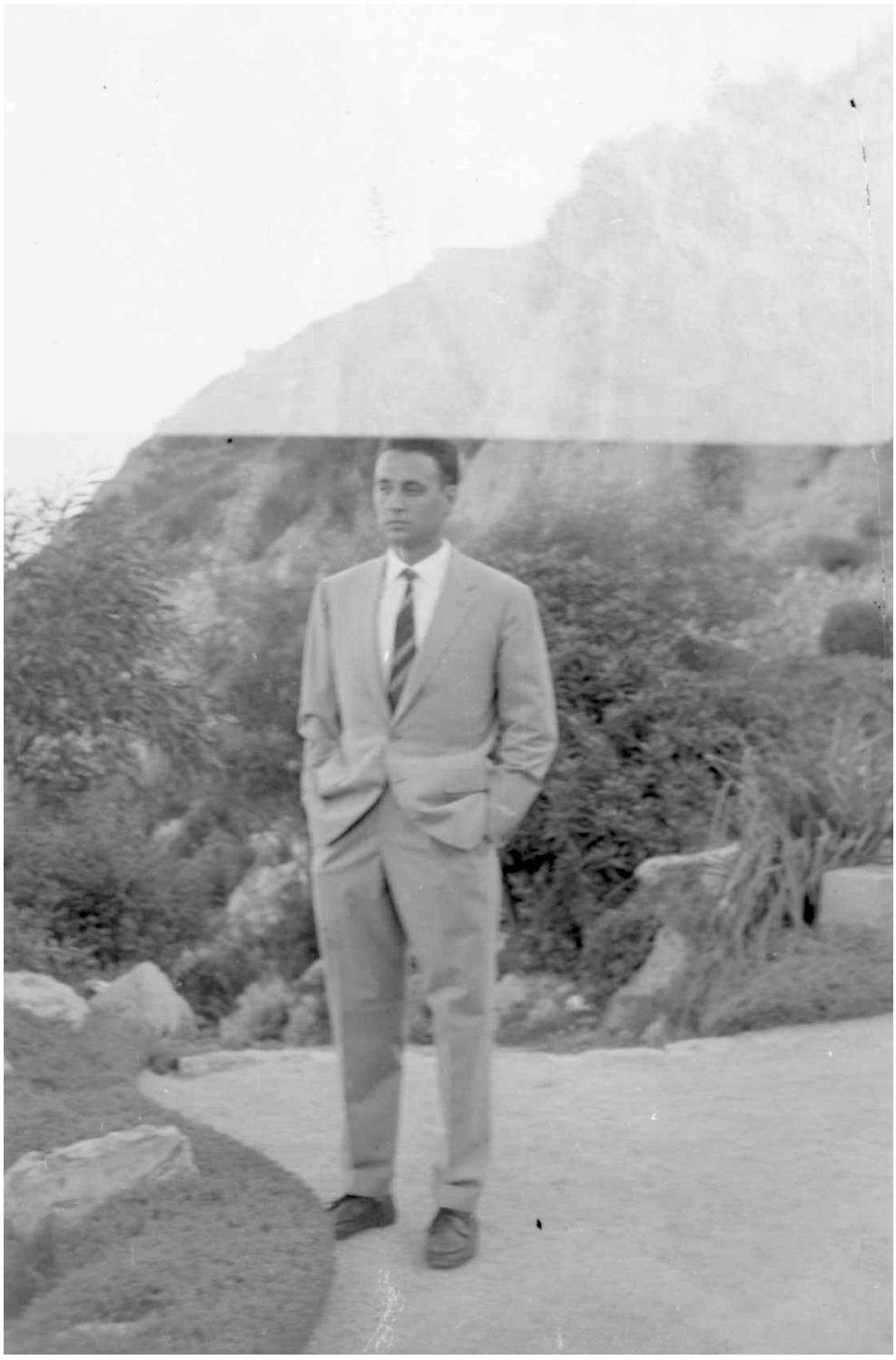
archive, the ideas and affects that run through it and its photographs. But a reading that deforms official narratives and singular truths may be able to sustain multiple photographic interpretations simultaneously: the inherited family narratives, and the alternative readings of that family history, holding space for complexity.

Grandma's smile

Roser bridges the distance with the camera, looking right into it. The camera witnesses the changes in my grandmother, in her facial expression, and her facing the camera. In her youngest years, after she had Anna, she seems shy, her body is still, and her pose is static. This is most evident in photographs with Sebastià's family and what seems to be one of her first visits to Faió. She might have felt constrained by the expectations placed on her newfound family; perhaps she was still not used to being in front of a camera. Over the years, as her teeth emerged through her smile, her shoulders relaxed. In time, after spending years in front of (and behind) the camera, she stares with security and confidence and naturally faces the camera as a family member.

Sebastià did not become as open to the camera. His smile remained shy. However, Roser's photographs seem to try to catch him with his guard down, inviting comfort to join the composition. There is a gentle softening of his face in the pictures she took. In these images, Roser turns the camera into a bridge between Sebastià and the world. [Figure 111]

The camera was also a witness to the gestures of care my grandmother performed towards herself and her surroundings. Her presence is embodied in her hands. Through the camera, in those instances, the photographer recognises the presence and connection with the environment, through her hands. [Figure 112]



01

Figure 111 - 35mm collection
01 - Sebastià standing looking away from the camera
02 - Sebastià smiling at the camera but looking away
03 - Sebastià gently smiling at the camera



02

03



Where he remained shy, her smile can have multiple interpretations. Women's smiles can act as representations of their place within gendered structures, such as family, as well as the male gaze, which projects an expectation of pleasantness and inoffensiveness (Sheehan, 2014). However, showing all the teeth can be reinterpreted as a demonstration of power. After years of gentle smiles at the camera, and in the family, my grandmother started showing her teeth - putting them on show for everyone to see. For that reason, I see her smile towards the camera as a smile to Sebastià, to the world, and herself. As Sebastià projected those photographs on the wall of the house, she would have seen her photographs many times, in the company of other people. I imagine her choosing to show all her teeth to the world, through her smile, because she liked looking at them, looking at herself, in that way: her teeth could smile and bite, with her words, as much as her hands could give or withhold. Even though Sebastià might have been in charge of photographing and projecting the images to the family, I imagine that in those photographs she was performing for herself. [Figure 113-116]

REENCHANTING THE FRAGMENT, REENCHANTING THE PAST

> "*Consider the care with which an operator crafts a photograph, the range of emotions that may or may not be captured in the photographed, and the myriad ways we may be attached to some cherished images: a critical attention to the negative dimensions associated with a sceptical approach can only begin to grasp but can hardly encompass, the many ways of feeling photography.*" (Phu and Brown, 2014, p. 351).

My grandfather is regarded as distant, serious, somewhat quiet, and severed from his relationships after having suffered a double impact: being brought up in Faió, a small village, socially fragmented by the war, and later losing Faió and witnessing the erasure of his common history. Within his character and his family, passivity carries complicity with the authoritarian values of the Regime. But my family are not characters contained within a story and each retelling should not further fix them within a storyline. Especially those that can no longer speak, should not be made to speak with the words that interest a specific political, personal or academic sector.

Whether in Barcelona, Faió or abroad, these family photographs maintain a constant gaze. No instructions accompanied the transparencies: there did not seem to be a defined purpose, after Sebastià's death, which could be interpreted as disengagement or an open offering. He died before he had time to think about them as inheritance, or at least state it. Sebastià's contribution and collaboration through time was collecting, storing, looking at and preserving these images and these boxes. Having traced the histories within and around the archive, I can think of this inheritance as a leap towards the unknown. Also, a becoming repertoire of resistance towards the enclosing affects of compressed historical experience. Writing about these photographs, as I do in this chapter, becomes a practice of reorganising the collection to rediscover the traces of a gaze within the images, myself, or the family, I might have overlooked, as are the performative and visual approaches I have taken in my practice; it reorients the conflicting notions of photography I outlined in the introduction. It must be asked how acts of imagination can produce a photographic re-enchantment of the narrative at hand: a different engagement, affect, towards the politics of this past in the present and future.

In McTighe's interpretation of Walter Benjamin's notions of photography, "The silence of the solitary image leads to a desire to see the photograph of the moment before and the moment after to discover meaning. A single photograph naturally leads to a

01



02





03

Figure 112- 35mm collection
01 - Roser sat on a towel by the sea
02 - Roser sat on a bench
03 - Anna and Roser sat in a home interior



01



02



03



04



05

Figure 113
01 - Box 34: Roser standing smiling at the camera
02 - Box 37: Roser sat looking away from the camera
03 - Box 50: Roser standing smiling at the camera
04 - Box 6: Roser sat smiling at the camera
05 - Box 19: Roser sat reading away from the camera
06 - Box 51: Roser sat reading smiling at the camera


rnet
nail

01



02



03



Figure 114
01 - Box 38: Roser painting, Faió
02 - Box 43: Mireia and Roser picking flowers near Faió
03 - Box 38: Roser picking flowers near Faió

01



02



03



Figure 115
01 - Box 19: Roser bringing a cake to Mar, Bailén, Barcelona
02 - Box 7: Roser applying sunscreen on Mireia by the beach
03 - Box 15: Roser and Odilia sorting almonds in Faió



Figure 116 - 35mm collection: Possibly Sebastià's mother sat with Anna, Mar and Roser

series, which demands an order" (McTighe, 2012, p. 38). Photography can aid in sustaining uncertainty; in its silence, it can mediate the encounter to offer the possibility to confront desire and debt in inheritance; and the necessity to remain and confront the precarity of the narratives inherited. [Figure 100]

The ideas presented in this chapter more adequately illustrate the family as a dynamic field of struggle instead of a passive extension of a system of power. The traces of this struggle require activation by the spectator through a self-reflexive and poetic act of imagination that "deforms" the past and future of the photographs. In this framework, photography becomes an embodied act of mediated engagement with the environment: a rethinking and iterative framework for the self, as well as a collaborative projection towards the future as an act of trust in the other. With these photographs, I have extended my imagination to these fragments and posited new critical readings, which unearth potential materials and relationships for memory.





01

Interventions and leftovers

Along with the boxes and sleeves of the archive are two small plastic cases. Inside them, are transparencies, separated from the main contents of the other boxes. These appear to be the leftovers that Sebastià did not consider successful photographs. Instead of discarding them, he stored them separately, without distinction or information. These transparencies are not that different from the selected, “official” family photographs. I wanted to see if there were traces of fabrication, through poses, of seemingly natural family scenes. If that were the case, perhaps the discarded images would show differences in the attitudes of the subject photographed; such as inadequate posing or uncompliant attitudes. That might indicate a level of direction in other images. If they ever existed, I have not found any of them. What is there presents sufficient naturality and reciprocity in the relationships depicted, especially between Sebastià and Roser and the images of all the children. Two images particularly struck me. One is the fallen ceiling in the living room of Bailen 8. The collapsed ceiling makes me think of the collapsed safety of the home, its collapsed certainty. Structures that appear solid and unmovable, structures that have been erected to present themselves as stable through time can come undone, or display an undoneness that has been present for longer than it has been visible. The violence of the objects within this image, the collapsed ceiling as an eruption of otherness in the space may be able to express a wave of anger that has nested itself in the crevices of the archive, in the space between photographs and the deepest folds of family narratives. Furthermore, following this line of thought, even if the ceiling has collapsed, it is recomposed in other images, showing one of two things: either the family reterritorialises any divergent narrative or memory, or expressions of anger and instability appear only totally destructive in the context of enforced stability and control.

Another discarded photograph shows Roser and I sitting on a sun lounger in Faió. She is applying sunscreen on my back. This transparency has multiple exposures, as well as lines across the image, probably prompting it to be discarded. But to me, it is

02



a record of a photograph that does not exist: Roser applying hand cream to my hands in her room in Bailen 8. I have never forgotten that moment and I have never forgotten her hands, as recipients and givers of time to herself and others. If there was a gesture of the past that I had to take with me, it would be this one, as an offering, connection and openness to holding. [Figure 117-118]

Almonds: the everyday and the inherited

At this point in my writing, I have spoken about almonds multiple times. I have provided personal context, situated them geographically and explained their role as binding agents within my family, connecting the private and public spheres through acts of labour. This work contains the economics, social divisions, ecological relations and narrative construction that has been suppressed. What I have not been able to explain is their affect, which lived in my memory and drew me to them. Almonds have been extensively photographed - they constitute a distinct photographic interest and mode in the work of this archive. Fishing, for example, is also an important activity in the life of my grandfather and the imaginary and memory of the family. However, its binding and generative power is weaker than almond harvesting.

Additionally, almonds have an affect: a playfulness and demand for care that lives with the tremendous amount of effort required for growing and harvesting them. By including images of almonds in this chapter, I hope to direct your attention to the affective power of photography, which often can only be described in too many words, or clumsily. As I do not have more words to convey the power of these almonds in my family and my memory, I will leave you with a selection of their photographs. [Figure 119-120]

Figure 117 - Bag with Transparencies
01 - Roser applying sunscreen on me, Faió
02 - Anna and me sat by the riverside



Figure 118 - Bag with Transparencies: White ceiling paint over the living room, Bailén, Barcelona



01



03



Figure 119
01/02 - Box 20: Field of almonds and harvest
03 - Folder A: Almond trees in bloom

02







01

02



03



04



Figure 120
01 - Folder D: Sebastià, Mar, Anna, Roserand Roser in front of an almond tree
02 - Box 36: Mireia in front of almond tree
03 - Box 43: Mireia in front of almond tree
04 - Folder A: Mireia on a traktor in front of the garage of the new house, Faió

SOUND, HOSTING AND COLLABORATION FOR TRANSNATIONAL INQUIRY

Submerged with Gaia Crocella and Julia Schauerman (2024)[10].

As part of hosting and inhabiting other practices and investigations, I started a collaboration with Julia Schauerman in June 2023 and invited Gaia Crocella to join as well. I wanted other practitioners to inhabit and populate the stories and conflict within my practice research in the hopes of contributing to notions of transnational solidarity and transnational embodied memory. During the Memory Meal explained in Chapter 3, I recorded the interview and invited Julia to join since she has a very open sound practice based on collaboration and contemporary conflict. Julia's practice involves collaborative methods of acousmatic storytelling, with a focus on enmeshed storytelling. In this collaboration, we explore the power of sound, hosting and visual arts in mediating memory and collecting oral history. The aim is to instigate instances of transnational solidarity by inviting strangers into personal narratives. This collaboration is iterative and in dialogue: in each meeting, we come together around exercises that build the body of work of our collaboration.



Figure 121 - Surfacing, 2024

At the first meeting, we responded to 3 photographs that I chose; this was suggested by Julia, for me to get used to the sound of my voice; Gaia suggested the three of us do the exercise; and I suggested that all of us use the same three photographs. We recorded our responses separately and shared them in our first meeting. From the discussions that followed we chose six words for the following exercise and responded to these words through movement.

Our third exercise was a presentation on our collaboration at The Research Network UAL (RNUAL) spring symposium, where students present their ongoing research. As part of the presentation, we shared an audio piece that Julia had made by bringing together the responses to one of the photographs we chose for the first exercise. Whilst we listened to it, we arranged and rearranged almonds. We invited the audience to listen to the file whilst holding a personal object, to see if the shared experience would alter their relationship/experience to the object. Initially, this was an in-person presentation in which we would all have touched the almonds. However, due to train strikes, the presentation was held online; for that reason, we asked the audience to join us through a simpler gesture of holding onto a personal object.

On the day of RNUAL, when students present their ongoing research, after our presentation, we submitted an abstract to the Creative Research in Sound Arts Practice (CRiSAP) research centre at the University of the Arts London open call for In the Field 2, happening in July. Our abstract proposed a sound exploration of the past as a field for memory and memory as a way to reenchant the past and lost or absent narratives.

In June, I travelled to Faió with Berta again. There, I recorded videos and sounds of Faió, the fields around it and the water of the river Ebre. I travelled to the top of the Pilar Hermitage, to look from the same position where Sebastià took the photographs of Faió underwater. I previously described wondering why he had kept his distance. But, when I was up there, I started to wonder whether he wanted to look at the river as much as the village, or whether accessibility and the possibility of ritual, were a factor in the decision to travel to the hermitage instead of to the riverside: it is possible to drive up the road, making it easy to coordinate travelling with people of different ages and degrees of mobility. Visiting the hermitage also offered another activity

10 To watch the film, see Surfacing (2024). Available at: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1yX6NltA-2pmtooUclyfienENK9kQK0V_a.



and point of view while looking at it. In that sense, the distance might have been the very thing that facilitated looking.

By the riverside, I placed the recorder inside of a balloon and dropped it in the river. I have often imagined looking under the water to see the village. And people have also asked if that is something that might be possible. I do not believe I could face doing that; when I try to imagine it, it makes my skin crawl. But the idea of listening to the underwater Faió is manageable. When we were doing the recordings, Berta expressed she had become angry and upset about the destruction of Faió, something she had not expressed in the first visit. It appears that the repeated visits and connection to the place through the practice facilitates also a connection with the history.

In the editing of the recordings, we combined field recordings with testimony from the meal as well as my own reflections, recorded while I was walking in Faió, and responses from Crocella and Schauerman, as well as the sound of the projector. This reconnected the fragments into an open narrative that presents the history of Faió, its significance and its materiality captured in the sounds of the wind, river and ground. [Figure 121-122]

The combination of testimony, field recording and reflective response to the archive extends the concept of de-formation “in the acoustic realm (so that, for example, the night can reduce noises to a single great humming), or the tactile (as when the clouds dissolve in the blue or the rain)” (Benjamin 1986, p.282) as a way of return. In this way, this return can act as a moment of reenchantment which changes the relationship with the past turning it into a space for wonder, exploration and agency.

Jeffrey K. Olick speaks of the rise of a politics of regret as the driving force to the interest of the past, and one of its consequences (Olick, 2007). It must be asked if, in



Figure 122 - Screening of *Surfacing* at In The Field/Of The Field 2, 2024

addition to Olick's analysis, the recent memory turn responds to the desire to discover perspectives and imaginaries that have not been captured by official narratives and epistemologies – to reenchant the present and define a different future. Through the concept of reenchantment the uncertainty located in unknown pasts, or fragmented narratives, could offer the possibility of creating new narratives to project towards the present and the future. In this task, photography's fragmentary identity aids the performance of new readings and reenchantments, enacting Rosi Braidotti's nomadic readings of memory:

> "*The tense that best expresses the power of the imagination is the future perfect: 'I will have been free.' Quoting Virginia Woolf, Deleuze also says: 'This will be childhood, but it must not be my childhood', shifting away from the reassuring certainties of the past to the openings hinted at by the future perfect.*

This is the tense of a virtual sense of potential. Memories need the imagination to empower the actualization of virtual possibilities in the subject. They allow the subject to differ from oneself as much as possible while remaining faithful to oneself, or in other words: enduring." (Braidotti, 2014: 73-734)

This quote expresses the transformative potential of memory. In recognition of the role of imagination within memory processes, as well as the agency and inquiry of the person remembering, memory can contribute to changing not only the relationship of the person towards the past, but their capacity to act in the present and future (Braidotti, 2014: 73-734).

My grandmother Roser referred to generous people as *splendid*. She always used words in a particular - often incorrect - way, partly due to the lingering influence of Spanish dominion over the Catalan language during the years of Francoism where she grew up, but also, according to Anna, because she liked to speak however she pleased. In her use of the word splendid, generosity was directly linked to abundance, turning even the smallest gesture into a graceful act of beauty and wonder. I always remembered her use of that word and think it is an adept term to consider memory work.

Exclusionary unitary narratives limit the possibility of a generous engagement with the past. They do so by severing communities and individuals from participating in the construction of shared meaning and forcing the identification with an insufficient narrative. As I have demonstrated in this document, the limited possibility of processing the most painful events of the past, also reinforces its affects, turning the past into a source of pain and conflict. In this context, the work of those engaging with the past is a work of generosity: primarily, it contributes to a body of work that enables a deeper understanding and action concerning the past; additionally, it also changes and broadens the modes of engagement with the past.

Having worked with a family archive to encounter the multiple and diverse traces of the past, I have observed that it is often the smallest, most inconspicuous materials that demand generosity. Through minor materials such as almonds, water, or even the sounds of the wind over the river, or voices over a shared meal, the relationship with the past becomes splendid, as curiosity and criticality entangle to encounter the history erased. It is within this relationship that I place a power of reenchantment, as it enables a meeting with the past as a source not only of information and knowledge but of wonder and change. The possibility of a splendid engagement with irrelevant materials may thread the connection between different affects, to recognise the multiple narratives where only one has previously been allowed. In its power, it speaks also a truth: in the return to the past, there is a desire for transformation in the present.

CONCLUSION

Working with a family archive in the context of the Spanish Civil War and Francoism raises questions about the construction of imaginaries around historical narratives. Through the interaction between mundane and traumatic, banal and oppressive, from war photographs to everyday images, photographs contain the affects of the events and narratives around them. Photograph's power of representation is tied to their circulation and each reading contributes to this power. Photography's limits of representation are faced in the context of violence, as the continuous circulation of images of conflict is not directly connected with actions in response. Moreover, their territorialising power defines the imaginary of specific histories, places and people.

In this context, everyday photographs - unable to generate the same kind of response and imaginary than conflict photographs - present the opportunity to develop a different ethics: they reveal what is expected of an image in a specific context and demand the production of specific practice and discourse around viewing and disseminating these images.

Enacting different positions of viewership can unearth and create different relationships and alliances around family photographs, beyond filiality. Activating spectatorship is necessary to compose the meaning and power of photographs within a specific political or social context. Specifically, in the context of family photographs and family - which risk being pacified under the guide of universality and the every day - a practice of spectatorship that questions and rearranges can agitate the contents of these images and create new positions. Family photographs are considered to act as an offering of universality and identification - empathy without analysis -, thus promoting unitary narratives and affects. In the face of this narrow positionally in front of family photographs, feminist decolonial notions of reinterpretation and rereading destabilise the power of unitary narratives over practices of spectatorship and narration of those images.

This chapter explored this through the reinterpretation of groups of archive photographs. Who is present and who is not - who is seen as the subject, or maker, or reader of a photograph - influences too who is heard, whose perspectives are included in official narratives, even if those are the official narratives of counter-narratives. The legacy of the Dictatorship has passed down an acute awareness of the inability to know some members of our family. To challenge the invisible power of this structure, by reinterpreting some of the photographs in the archive and creating certain new categories based on proximity, distance, affect and pose, I place my speculations within the story as small archival gestures. Specifically, I introduced imagination into the collection to reframe this familial relationship.

As the moral symbol of the regime, the family became the sole aim of women's lives during the regime, furthering their oppression and subjugation to men and the State. In this chapter, I argue that an autoethnographic practice that centres women's voices within a family can help subvert these historical archival dynamics. In these new readings, the father becomes a witness instead of a force of suppression and authority. His witnessing enables critical readings and reinterpretations in the present. Gathering Almonds invited the interpretations of participants in an exhibition, around an installation of almonds. The selection of images of labour around almonds offers an alternative access point to this history with the potential to map different discourses and debates beyond the family. Surfacing extended this notion through sound, by reconnecting the voices of Anna and Roser, recorded in the Memory Meal, with the landscape of Faió. This film invites nonhuman agencies of the landscape to participate in the narrative, offering an open perspective with multiple narrative threads and perspectives. In these practices, the camera and recorder act as witnesses to the interactions between human and nonhuman agencies. The memory of the displacement of Faió mediates a deeper understanding of the relationships between people and the environment.

By the end of this chapter, the family archive has become open to multiple interpretations from an autoethnographic position, diverse access points through nonhuman agencies and participation in the construction of narratives and dissemination of the archive's contents.






They opened the floodgates and pe


pple had to run.





sters may have
e real Azan
anged... became
ce still present
n form



I just found it as if it were an


apparition.







METHODS FOR BREATHING MEMORY

This thesis addressed the memory politics in Spain during the Dictatorship and after the Pact of Forgiveness in 1975 with the question: "How can a research-led art practice using a personal photographic archive contribute to critical debates about historical collective memory in Spain?". The autoethnographic approach responded to the specific potential of the personal archive to unveil disregarded narratives, conflicts and imaginaries that have constituted the transmission of this past in a context of dispossession, absence of representation and participation in collective and historical memory. With an artistic practice, this project has attempted to broaden participation around my family archive, intending to challenge the unitary narrative that underpins the politics of forgetting enacted at the end of the regime.

At the start of this project, this history emerged around my grandfather and grandmother figures. The memories of my childhood in Faió remained as grounding moments of my relationship with my family's past because, even though I had not visited Faió for years at the beginning of this project, the village still holds symbolic importance within the family. I was unaware of how much importance Faió would gather throughout this project and that I would focus on such a specific site of history. However, positioning this project within the history of Faió and its memory within the archive and family narratives has enabled a deeper understanding of local forms of memory erasure through the connection between forgetting, irrelevance and private forms of knowledge.

Family memory occupies an ambivalent space within the politics of memory of the Spanish past. The limitations on public participation isolated intergenerational and transgenerational transmission of memory as the primary mode of memory transmission, especially of experiences outside the narrow frame of official memory. At the same time, the narratives of forgetting and reconciliation of the Democratic Transition, combined with the affective impact of the war and regime, have overridden the public limitations on memory and within the private sphere.

To conceptualise this, I defined desmemòria as a passive and pacified form of memory. The limitation of participation in public memory brought by the Pact of Forgetting and subsequent attacks on memorialisation have perpetuated many of the affects deployed by the regime around its memory and history: shame, guilt, and fear. With limited and contested possibilities to contribute to collective forms of memory, community memory has remained mainly private and thus connected to categories of irrelevance and secrecy. Furthermore, the perpetuation of a binary between collective and personal forms of memory, promoted by the single narrative of reconciliation deployed during the transition, relies on an equivalence between individual memory and apolitical memory that further devalues situated narratives. There needs to be continued research on the role of private accounts in the politics of memory.

Within my archive, the abandoned objects in the house garage embodied and materialised the separation between my family and Faió, my family's past source of identity, meaning, and work. Unable or unwilling to engage with this place and past, its traces - the objects - were abandoned and disregarded. Becoming irrelevant, these

materials of memory lose their ability to contribute to forms of meaning-making towards the past, further intensifying the politics of forgetting. By photographing and taking these objects out of the garage, I interrupted this dynamic and began creating a new chain of utterances in the present.

By engaging with these disregarded materials, I discovered memory materials outside the official narrative of the family. The reflections prompted by this encounter indicate that, in contexts of suppressed memory, there needs to be a consideration of inconspicuous or disregarded materials that need to be read as containers of insight into the entanglement between remembrance, forgetting, relevance and irrelevance. Considering unnoticeable or overlooked materials is especially important in authoritarian or post-authoritarian contexts, especially when there have been instances of displacement or enforced migration.

The separation of the population of Faió and their natural and social ecosystems is an example of the connection between disregarded memory materials and alternative memories. The systematic alteration of the territory enacted as part of the Hydraulic Policy belongs to the economic and cultural policies of the regime. As a result, the flooding of the village constitutes an act of political and social pacification of regional conflicts. Combined with other forms of discipline rooted in moral and religious narratives and behaviours, including the reinforcement of the family, acts of dispossession and displacement altered the political subjectivities that had previously existed, which in Faió developed around the rivers and mines.

As such, these need to be considered events that created the conditions for the memory politics of the Francoist regime, alongside the Spanish Civil War and the Democratic Transition. The altered spatial, labour, and social relations brought by instances of displacement created the affective conditions on which the shifting narratives of the regime could root to a higher degree, or at least, had a decreased degree of organised opposition. Additionally, the irrelevant status of this history - which is a well-known element of the history of Francoism yet remains mostly disconnected from its memory studies, which are read through the events of the transition - contributes to the loss of knowledge and testimonies of these events. These alternative testimonies remain as oral history and personal perspectives. Therefore, research on the disclosure and understanding of the history of Francoism and its current forms of memory needs to account for forms of material and territorial dispossession. Personal archives, as documentation of the everyday manifestations of these events, offer a situated perspective that can reconnect the material and the mnemonic aspects of this.

These archives also demand a critical analysis of the role of the family in memory work. In this context, family accounts are sources of historical information which contextualise archive research in instances of limited access or manipulated information within official documents. However, families represent the moral values of the regime and remain affected by its power structures. Therefore, in my research, I have developed a critical lens to read the contents and context of my specific archive, intending to create a taxonomy that does not reproduce the very power structures it seeks to analyse.

Within personal archives, certain family members may be attributed authorship or placed at the centre of the narrative. Such is the case with the Llop_Rius archive and Sebastià, who became the author of the photographs, as he was the carer of the archive. His silence, connected to the flooding of Faió, has become an organising force of the archive's fragments and the family's conflicting positions. The necessity to

reorganise the components of the archive spurred a taxonomy based on relationality, geography/space and nonhuman agencies, demonstrating the value of alternative taxonomies in the context of troubled memory, as these were able to foster accessibility and autonomous degrees of agency. I explored and activated this taxonomy as part of a performative meal/interview with my mother/aunt, in which the installation of the archive, objects and food, organised according to those categories, enabled an accessible connection and recollection of the histories of the archives. Interviewing members of my family provided valuable information that contextualised the research and materials and affects. Moreover, the feminist lens that I have applied towards this research has connected acts of memory and acts of social reproduction, claiming the value of women's, or feminised, perspectives to construct complex narratives of the past; this led me to consider how to continue to connect individual narratives with collective structures to situate this photographic archive within potential and alternative forms of collective memory.

Through notions of minority, following Deleuze and Guattari's work, or becoming-minoritarian, I proposed that a personal archive contains materials that frame and disrupt the power of oppressive systems across collective and individual spheres. A personal archive comprises materials that may appear irrelevant due to their everyday character and expected relation with family scenes. Therefore, this archive demands and enables a change of gaze and positionality to connect the individual stories therein with collective structures of power, as well as potential new readings. A minoritarian approach reframes the archive as an assemblage of potentialities which transform the relationships around it and its history. This approach facilitates a specific practice.

Performative acts which seek to recontextualise gestures and nonhuman agencies found within the archive have enabled a disruption of the power of the family narratives and hierarchies within the archive. The sensorial approach of sound and touch concerning the archive photographs and my retellings of its histories have enabled a multiplication of the perspectives of the family archive to include, too, the agencies of the river, land and almond trees. These iterative encounters with the archive contributed to undoing the very assumptions I had towards my archive and history. Moreover, it suggests that irrelevant materials, or materials that exist at the edge of official narratives, even within archives - whether these are objects, almonds, hand gestures, diverging perspectives or first-person accounts - contain a distinctive kind of power which enables an ongoing contact with a specific history, fostering a complex engagement with its politics and affects. Their situatedness, outside systems of relevance, demands experimentation with modes of discourses, analysis and activations of these materials. An art practice has enabled me to connect those to their history and foster participation around them, exploring their discursive and affective power. As a result, I began to alter the role of absence and silence into a creative historical space, engendering collaborative relationships and structures that depart from memory and broaden mnemonic participation.

My contribution to knowledge is constructing a novel analysis of the connection between spatial politics and the impact of the politics of memory constructed during Francoism - and left unchallenged afterwards - by investigating the history of the flooding of Faió with a personal archive. Specifically, conceptualising desmemòria shows how stifling the binary between private and collective memory engenders a system of "irrelevance" which underpins the limited forms of memory in Spain.

By centring this research on a personal archive, I have traced the impact and lingering power of the memory politics erected during the regime within family narra-

tives. Through research and practice around the memory of my family and Faió, I have demonstrated that a personal archive, framed by notions of minor literature can contribute to collective narratives by holding space for complexity and disrupting the epistemologies erected by systems of power. Moreover, an autoethnographic practice-lead approach engages the family in instances of participation, shifting hierarchical private spaces into spaces for collaboration. My contribution to knowledge demonstrates the value of personal accounts in resisting the erasure of the past and constructing critical and political positions that incorporate situated perspectives.

A practice-based autoethnography highlights counter-narratives to the official narratives of the state, as well as counter-narratives to the official narrative of the archive. The emergence of multiple narratives contributed to a methodology based on situated ethical-political reflections that enable the locations and reframing of conflict in the archive. Moreover, recognising the potential of irrelevant materials and nonhuman agencies constitutes accessible entry points to this history, with the potential to contribute to alternative imaginaries within archives of loss and absence.

I have attempted to transition a private archive to a collective archive. But I have not been able to do this at this point. Collaboration has emerged as a stepping stone in this process.

Collaboration has been a critical method of participation in my thesis. As collective discourses and practices impact personal recollection, personal accounts can contest and alter perceptions of collective memory; this relationship operates as a chain of private meanings within the archive. In this thesis, I have begun to create a chain of practices around this archive, emphasising understanding its narratives and the methods to position, intensify, or challenge them. Consequently, it is possible to preserve these situated perspectives even when transitioning the archive to the public. Establishing collaborations across disciplines, national origins and geographic locations - including family, friends, and other practitioners - I have disseminated the archive's contents and created new insights. Collaborative methods demonstrate that personal perspectives can become valuable sites of collaborative practice and political work with valuable and diverse perspectives on complex histories. Moreover, this shows that a personal archive and a memory studies lens can contribute to other practitioner's work as well as my own.

For that reason, I will continue to develop the collaborative aspects of this archive to begin to map collective readings and relations around this memory, incorporating joy and play into this historical effort to foster an engagement that can bring about the collective aspects of this archive, by which other people conduct their independent work.

Collaborative curation *with Museu de la Batalla de l'Ebre*

To foster this collaboration further, I proposed a collaboration with the Museum de la Batlla de l'Ebre. I visited The Museum of the Battle of the Ebro in 2021. At the time, I was beginning this research and understood what the museum could offer to my project but not what I could offer in exchange. The museum contains countless materials gathered over decades and donated. There is limited institutional intervention in the curation and dissemination of materials which represent a point of reference and institution of memory in Faió, Mequinensa, La Franja and (to a degree) Terres de l'Ebre. It is a site of identity of the village and a site that contributed to the national identity of resistance to the military uprising (1936).

I have sent an email to the museum proposing a collaboration with the hopes of exchanging materials: inserting the historical documents and materials they have collected over the years within my archive and vice versa. There is a difference in terms of timeframes and scope since the museum deals specifically with the Battle of the Ebro (1938), whilst my grandfather's archive spans over 50 years. However, it is necessary to highlight the connection between one specific event and the years that followed it as a continuation of many of the realities that his event brought; this can broaden the scope of historical inquiry within the museum with a personal perspective of the construction of the new town and life in the village directly after the war. It can also represent, within the space of the exhibition, the importance of Faió to preserve the battle of the Ebre without reducing the memory of Faió to the memory of the war and the flooding; this collaboration will expand on these ideas.

I am awaiting a response to discuss whether this is possible.

Irrelevant Encounters with Vera Zurbrügg

Irrelevance has emerged as an essential category across this project, as an organising force of what is remembered and forgotten, what is allowed to disappear and what must remain, who narrates the past and how the telling occurs. Outside of direct interventions of institutions and centres of power, the systems of value, feeling and narratives we have inherited determine what we will discuss, how, who will discuss it, and so on across years, decades and generations.

In collaboration with Vera Zurbrügg, we are working towards collecting a series of writings around the concept of irrelevance. Vera Zurbrügg is a PhD researcher whose thesis investigates Swiss involvement in the trade of Nazi gold. Her practice intervenes on postcards and memorabilia with methods of guilding to create a counter-archive to official narratives. I wanted to explore the connections between my research and the concepts that have emerged and developed within it and other practitioners' projects, and Vera's use of everyday objects to disrupt their interpretation and connection to state power presented an opportunity to explore this with a researcher whose aligns with mine yet present generative differences.

I proposed the concept of an irrelevant reader, which we have turned into (ir)relevant to refer to the system that creates relevance and irrelevance; this will allow us to explore the collective expressions of both our research. To investigate the concept further, we produced a proposal for a symposium: a knowledge exchange based on theoretical approaches and practice. From this event, we will collect the materials for the reader, either in collaboration with the participants or from the reflections and positions that emerge in the symposium, that will inform our practice. We are currently defining the concept collectively to prepare a callout for participation. We are aiming to host it at UAL at the end of 2024. Once the callout is ready and the concept is fully defined, we will find the appropriate space, hoping for the support or guidance of the university.

Working with a personal archive draws attention to the potential for disconnected readings of personal pasts and the politics that lead to those systems to fuel new forms of oppression in the present.

The affects and categories traced in this thesis refer to specific styles of politics. Tracing those connections allows us to understand how the current relationship to memory also points to a distinctive style of politics: a politics that could be much more comfortable with undoing consensus and multiplying truth to destabilise common

sense-making structures further. Wherein the regime over-coded meaning to construct a unified narrative across decades, current political tactics contest consensus, agreed-upon truths, and social contracts seeking short-term gains, showing disregard for a unified narrative and accelerating the rate of change of values.

Navigating the contradictions and invisible power within personal archives highlights the power of personal narratives in the present, especially in a context of political individuality and immediacy, and the deployment of an aestheticised politics that has shifted the epic narratives of fascism towards a cynical proliferation of shifting narratives based on polarisation. In a moment of increased individualism, working with a family archive has taught me that connecting situated perspectives within political contexts calls for considered participation in forms of community meaning-making, with an emphasis on challenging impoverished epistemologies.

In this thesis, I have mentioned the separation from memory brought by intensified technological and economic mediation and the compartmentalisation of life in labour and consumption. From the resulting inability to understand the source of social structures emerges a disengagement with notions of preservation and care to guard materials of the past: the sense of transience and disposability that constitutes the precarity of the present extends to memory and its temporalities.

Precarity and uncertainty define the past explored through and the present around this archive. Engaging with the coordinates that inform the subjectivities found in the archive shows that the past intensifies present understandings in a specific political register, offering a broader understanding of the complexities of social formations. The personal relationships I have presented are examples of the "irrelevant" loss can have even on those who have played insignificant roles in their national or local histories. It shows that the same distinction between relevant and irrelevant is contingent on power relations, enabling an increased degree of responsibility, implication and action that dismantles those binaries. Part of the history and practice around this archive is defined by precarity and uncertainty. Present economic and political precarity raises questions about the preservation of personal archives and the access to travel, materials, space, and time to develop artworks.

The resulting artworks have a declining aura, defined by unstable physical and symbolic coordinates and extend to the viewer who has or lacks access to the artwork. In my practice, I have responded through a careful approach based on a slow production rhythm, fostering a politics of collaboration, iteration, and participation that does not seek resolution or completion and is process-based and iterative. The categories and expressions of relevance, affect, conflict, and invisible desires, which I have mapped in this project, may indicate what to arrest, multiply and intensify within political work while offering a specific rhythm and care to create the conditions for healing the wounds that reemerge from looking at the past. Consequently, this practice asks urgent questions about the material position from which we engage with history and politics in the present. I will continue to explore these questions, with special interest in making the archive accessible and fostering further research[1].

Lastly, when I began this project, I understood that one of the social values of engaging in memory work was learning from the past. Now I know that the value of memory work is also changing, which I define as reenchanting: changing the relationship with the past, present and future, becoming larger to hold its contradictions, multiplicities and emerging potentialities.

1 Some options are offering a digitised archive for hosting to the Museo de la Batlla de l'Ebre in Faió and the Citizen's Archive in Amsterdam, which hosts the archive of the CNT among other political archives.

Box 38: Lola, Odilia, Pepita, Roser and two unidentified men walking through fields towards a house near Faió





Abad, F. (2004) *Camp de la Bota*. [Photographic Archive Installation] Available at: https://www.macba.cat/en/art-artists/artists/abad-francesc/camp-bota (Accessed: 2 March 2023).

Abel, E. (2014) 'Skin, Flesh, and the Affective Wrinkles of Civil Rights Photography', in *Feeling Photography*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

del Águila, R. (2006) 'Desmemoria y rememoración: la guerra y el franquismo hoy', *HISTORIA Y POLÍTICA*, 16, pp. 183–206.

Aguilar Fernández, P. (2008) *Políticas de la memoria y memorias de la política*. Alianza Editorial.

Aguilar Fernández, P. and Ramírez-Barat, C. (2016) 'Generational dynamics in Spain: Memory transmission of a turbulent past', *Memory Studies*, 12(2), pp. 213–229. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698016673237.

Aguirre-Oteiza, D. (2015) '"La fotografía es la misma muerte": Ruina, espectro y testimonio de Antonio Machado en *Guerra en España* de Juan Ramón Jiménez', *Hispanic Review*, 83(4), pp. 379–401. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1353/hir.2015.0042.

Andersdotter, S. (2020) *Politics of Looking: Gestures from an Archive*. [Photographic Series] Available at: https://www.andersdotter.com/the-politics-of-looking-gestures-from-an-archive (Accessed: 2 March 2023).

Aragüete-Toribio, Z. (2017) 'Confronting a history of war loss in a Spanish family archive', *History and Anthropology*, 28(2), pp. 211–234. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/02757206.2017.1279157.

Aragüete-Toribio, Z. (2021) 'Recomponer la identidad familiar de las víctimas del franquismo más allá de la fosa común', *Huarte de San Juan. Geografía e Historia*, (28), pp. 121–142. Available at: https://doi.org/10.48035/rhsj-gh.28.6.

del Arco Blanco, M.Á. (2007) '«Hombres nuevos». El personal político del primer franquismo en el mundo rural del sureste español (1936-1951)', *Ayer. Revista de Historia Contemporánea*, 65, pp. 237–267.

Arocha, D.J.B. (2015) 'Ficciones audiovisuales y políticas postelevisivas de la (des)memoria histórica en la cultura española'.

Arsanios, M. (2019) *Who is Afraid of Ideology?*. [Film Still] Available at: https://www.brokenarchive.org/artist/marwa-arsanios (Accessed: 2 March 2023).

Barrado, M.P.D. (2022) 'Historia y fotografía: La memoria en imágenes', p. 24.

Barthes, R. (1981) *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography.* New York City: Hill & Wang.

Bellah, R.N. et al. (1986) 'Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life', *Review of Religious Research*, 27(3), p. 286. Available at: https://doi.org/10.2307/3511439.

Benedictus De Spinoza, Curley, E.M. and Hampshire, S. (2005) *Ethics*. London ; New York: Penguin Books.

Benjamin, W. (1968) *Illuminations*. Edited by H. Arendt. Translated by H. Zohn. New York: Schocken Books.

Benjamin, W. (1972) 'A Short History of Photography', *Screen*, 13(1), pp. 5–26. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1093/

screen/13.1.5.

Benjamin, W. (1982). The Author as Producer. In: Burgin, V. (eds) *Thinking Photography. Communications and Culture*. Palgrave, London. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-16716-6_2

Benjamin, W. et al. (1996) *Selected writings*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press.

Benjamin, W. (no date) *The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction*. Available at: https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm (Accessed: 29 January 2025).

Bennett, J. (2005) *Empathic Vision: Affect, Trauma, and Contemporary Art*. Stanford University Press.

Bergson, H. (2011) *Matter and Memory*. Mansfield Centre: Martino Publisher.

Bergson, H. (2013) *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics*. Translated by M.L. Andison. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications.

Bernecker, S. (2008) The Metaphysics of Memory. New York: Springer (Philosophical Studies Series, v. 111).

Biesca, S.G. (2006) 'El proceso de la recuperación de la memoria histórica en España: Una aproximación a los movimientos sociales por la memoria', *International Journal of Iberian Studies*, 19(1), pp. 25–51. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1386/ijis.19.1.25/1.

Birchall, C. (2015) 'Aesthetics of the Secret', *New Formations*, 83(0), pp. 25–46.

Blumer, H. (1986) *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE), no. 310, 27 December 2007, pp. 22296–22310.

Braidotti, R. (2013) 'Nomadic Ethics', *Deleuze Studies*, 7(3), pp. 342–359. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3366/dls.2013.0116.

Braidotti, R. (2014) 'Writing as a Nomadic Subject', *Comparative Critical Studies*, 11(2-3), pp. 163–184. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3366/ccs.2014.0122.

Braidotti, R. (2019a) *Posthuman Knowledge*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Braidotti, R. (2019b) 'A Theoretical Framework for the Critical Posthumanities', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 36(6), pp. 31–61. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276418771486.

Braidotti, R. (2021) *Madri, Mostri, Macchine*. Roma: Castelvecchi.

Brandes, S. (2015) 'Fascism and Social Anthropology: The Case of Spain Under Franco', *Anthropological Quarterly*, 88(3), pp. 795–816. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1353/anq.2015.0034.

Brendel, B. (2020) 'Dam Construction in Francoist Spain in the 1950s and 1960s: Negotiating the Future and the Past', *Sustainable Development*, 28(2), pp. 396–404. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.1993.

Brown, K.J. (2014) 'Regarding the Pain of the Other: Photography, Famine, and the Transference of Affect', in *Feeling Photography*. Duke University Press.

Bullock, M., Eiland, H. and Smith, G. (2005) *Walter Benjamin: 1931-1934 v. 2, Pt. 2: Selected Writings*. Harvard University Press.

Burgaya, O. (2024) *Sau: la memòria submergida*. Spain: El 9 TV and La Xarxa.

Bush, P. and Rodoreda, M. (2014) I*n Diamond Square*. London: Virago.

Callis, E. (2015) *Arquitectura de los pantanos en España*. Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya.

Castell, E. and Al, E. (2008) *La batalla de l'Ebre: història, paisatge, patrimoni*. Barcelona: Pòrtic.

Sánchez Castillo, F. (2019) *Fake Games, El monumento colectivizado* [sculpture]. Available at: https://politicasdelamemoria.org/en/2020/07/exhibition-fake-games-the-collectivized-monument-at-the-ivam/ (Accessed: 30 January 2025).

Cardona, G. and Losada, J.C. (2004) *Aunque me tires el puente. Memoria oral de la batalla del Ebro*. Madrid, España: Alfaguara.

Carrasco, A. (2015) *Ley 52/2007, Artículo 1586*. [Documentary Visual Reference] as discussed in Rodríguez Mattalía, L. (2020) 'Repolitizar la memoria: creación artística actual en torno a la represión franquista', *Escritura e Imagen*, 16, pp. 357–377. Available at: https://doi.org/10.5209/esim.73043 (Accessed: 30 January 2025).

Cayuela Sánchez, S. (2009) 'El nacimiento de la biopolítica franquista. La invención del «homo patiens»', *Isegoría*, 0(40), pp. 273–288. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3989/isegoria.2009.i40.660.

CCMA (2023) *Misteris, o no? - T2xC6 - Les misterioses llums de Faió i de l'embassament de Riba-roja: el llac Ness català* - 3Cat, CCMA. Available at: https://www.ccma.cat/3cat/les-misterioses-llums-de-faio-i-de-lembassament-de-riba-roja-el-llac-ness-catala/audio/1177458/ (Accessed: 15 January 2024).

Cenarro, Á. (2022) 'Matar, vigilar y delatar: la quiebra de la sociedad civil durante la guerra y la posguerra en España (1936-1948)', *Historia Socia*l, 44, pp. 65–86.

Cifor, M. (2016) 'Affect and the Archive, Archives and Their Affects: An Introduction to the Special Issue', *Arch Sci* [Preprint].

Colom, F. (2017) 'The Spanish Transition Forty Years Later: Democracy, Devolution, and Pluralism', *Global Center for Pluralism* [Preprint].

Columbia University Language Resource Center (2024) 'Language and Climate: Making Connections for a Sustainable Future', *Columbia University,* 3-4 May. Available at: https://www.lrc.columbia.edu/climate/ (Accessed: 29 January 2025).

Connerton, P. (2008) 'Seven Types of Forgetting', *Memory Studies*, 1(I). Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698007083889.

Costas, M.I. (1995) 'Así fue lo de la Franja (sobre el proceso de reordenación limítrofe entre la diócesis de Lérida y Barbastro)', in *Homenaje a Don Antonio Durán Gudiol*, pp. 441–456.

Dalmau, A. (2009) *Set dies de fúria*. Barcelona: Columna CAT.

Darder Solé, M. (2015) 'Fayón: el manifiesto adaptado: la reinterpretación del espacio rural urbano según José

Borobio Ojeda', *Identidades: territorio, cultura, patrimonio*, 5, pp. 137–161. Available at: https://doi.org/10.5821/identidades.8825.

Davies, A. (2012) 'Landscape and identities in the Basque Country', in *Spanish spaces: landscape, space and place in contemporary Spanish culture*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, p. 200.

Davis, M. (2005) 'Is Spain recovering its memory? Breaking the Pacto del Olvido', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 27(3), pp. 858–880. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1353/hrq.2005.0034.

Deleuze, G. (1991) *Bergsonism*. New York: Zone Books.

Deleuze, G. (1994) *Difference and repetition*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Deleuze, G. (1995) *Negotiations, 1972–1990*. New York: Columbia University Press (European perspectives).

Deleuze, G. (2016) *Foucault*. 10th printing. Translated by Seán Hand. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1983) *Anti-Oedipus: capitalism and schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze, G., Guattari, F. and Massumi, B. (2004) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London: Bloomsbury..

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (2008) *Kafka: toward a minor literature*. 9th printing. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press (Theory and history of literature, 30).

Diego, J.A. (2008) 'Del «desarrollismo» al «entusiasmo»: notas sobre el arte español en tiempos de transición', *Foro de Educación* [Preprint].

Domanska, E. (2006) 'The return to things', *Archaeologia Polona*, 44, pp. 171–185.

Dominicci-Buzó, J. (2021) 'The trans iconography from the Spanish Renaissance theater to Almodóvar's cinema'. *LGBTQ Research Symposium*, Boston University, 3 June.

Durant, S. (2016) *Fieldstones*. [Exhibition Installation] Available at: https://www.blumandpoe.com/exhibitions/sam_durant33 (Accessed: 28 March 2023).

Durkheim, E. (1994) *The division of labor in society*. New York: The Free Press.

Eileraas, K. (2003) 'Reframing the colonial gaze: photography, ownership, and feminist resistance', *MLN*, 118(4), pp. 807–840. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1353/mln.2003.0074.

Ellwood, S.M. (1987) 'Spanish newsreels 1943–1975: the image of the Franco régime', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 7(3), pp. 225–238. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/01439688700260321.

Erkonan, Ş. (2016) 'Photography and the construction of family and memory', pp. 257-272 in Kramp, L., Carpentier, N., Hepp, A., Kilborn, R., Kunelius, R., Nieminen, H., Olsson, T., Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, P., Tomanić Trivundža, I. and Tosoni, S. (eds.) *Politics, Civil Society and Participation: Media and Communications in a Transforming Environment*. Bremen: edition lumière..

Erll, A. (2011) 'Locating family in cultural memory studies', *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 42(3), pp. 303–318. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3138/jcfs.42.3.303.

Ernst, W. (2013) *Digital memory and the archive*. Edited by J. Parikka. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Escobar Fernández, I. (2023) 'Neither oblivion nor reconciliation: an analysis of post-Francoist Spanish historical memory and transitional justice', *Revista Historia Autónoma*, 22(1), pp. 97–120. Available at: https://doi.org/10.15366/rha2023.22.006.

Espluga, J. (2008) 'Una Franja, dues fronteres i diverses identitats socials amagades', *Mirmanda: revista de cultura*, 3, pp. 68–76.

Esteve, L.Q. (2018) '"Pelonas" y rapadas: imágenes-trofeo e imágenes-denuncia de la represión de género ejercida durante la Guerra Civil Española', *Hispanic Review*, 86(4), pp. 487–509. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1353/hir.2018.0037.

Esteve Santonja, S., Freixa Roca, M. and Luengo, I. (2024) *Els buits*. Spain: Nocturna Pictures and Vayolet Films.

Esteve-Del-Valle, M. and Costa López, J. (2023) 'Reconquest 2.0: the Spanish far right and the mobilization of historical memory during the 2019 elections', *European Politics and Society*, 24(4), pp. 494–517. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2022.2058754.

Expósito, M. (2013) *Walter Benjamin, productivista*. Bilbao: Consonni.

Fanon, F. (2002) *Black skin, white masks*. Reprint. London: Pluto Press (Pluto classics).

Federici, S. (2004) *Caliban and the witch*. New York: Autonomedia.

Federici, S. (2018) *Re-enchanting the world: feminism and the politics of the commons*. Oakland, CA: Between the Lines.

Feindt, G. et al. (2014) 'Entangled memory: toward a third wave in memory studies', *History and Theory*, 53(1), pp. 24–44. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/hith.10693.

Ferrándiz, F. (2008) 'Cries and whispers: exhuming and narrating defeat in Spain today', *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, 9(2), pp. 177–192.

Ferguson, R. and Alÿs, F. (2007) *Francis Alÿs: politics of rehearsal*. Los Angeles: Hammer Museum; Göttingen: Steidl.

Fernández, D. (2022) '1992–2012: infiltrats, talps i clavegueram policial', *Directa.cat*, 7 June. Available at: https://directa.cat/1992-2012-infiltrats-talps-i-clavegueram-policial/ (Accessed: 13 February 2023).

Fernández-Cebrián, A. (2023) 'Roots under the water: dams, displacement, and memory in Franco's Spain (1950–1967)', in *A companion to Spanish environmental cultural studies*. Woodbridge: Tamesis Books.

Fernández-Cebrián, A.M. (2017) 'Fábulas del desarrollo: capitalismo e imaginarios sociales en España (1950–1975)'.

Fisher, M. (2001) 'Gothic materialism', *Pli*, 12, pp. 230–243.

Fisher, M. (2009) *Capitalist realism: is there no alternative?* Winchester: Zero Books.

Flusser, V. (1990) 'On memory (electronic or otherwise)', *Leonardo*, 23(4), p. 397. Available at: https://doi.org/10.2307/1575342.

Flusser, V. (1984) *Towards a philosophy of photography*. London: Reaktion Books.

Fluxà, L. (2018) *Dissolution is the Best Solution for Pollution*. [Artwork] Available at: https://larafluxa.net/ (Accessed: 28 March 2023).

Font de Mora, P. (2006) *Joan Colom: Raval*. Barcelona: Fundació Vila Casas.

Foster, H. (2004) 'An archival impulse', *October*, 110, pp. 3–22.

Franco, F. (1939) *Palabra del Caudillo*, 19 de Abril de 1937 – 31 de Diciembre de 1938. Barcelona: Ediciones Fe.

Franco, F. (1959) 'Inauguration of the hydraulic works in Lérida', *Diario ABC*, 1 July, p. 1.

Fullola Fuster, J. (2009) *La Conca Lignitifera de Mequinensa (Ebre/Segre): Una societat rural minera (1860-1950)*. Lleida: Universitat de Lleida.

Funes Casalvázquez, N., Martín Barajas, S. and González Briz, E. (2018) *Grandes fracasos hidráulicos: embalses carentes de utilidad*. Madrid: Ecologistas en Acción.

Gabriel, M.R. and Álvarez, J.G. (2016) 'Photography, tourism and national identity in the first Francoism (1939-1959): Rafael Calleja and the construction of modernity', *Cuadernos de Turismo*, (Preprint).

Gallego, M. (2020) *Como vaya yo y lo encuentre*. Madrid: Editorial Libros.com.

García Figueras, T. (1939) *Marruecos: la acción de España en el norte de África*. Barcelona: Ediciones Fe.

García González, A. (2023) *Calla y olvida: violencias, conflicto vasco y la escucha vulnerable como propuesta feminista*. Iruñea-Pamplona: Katrakrak.

Genel, A.G. (2022) Feminidades transgresoras. [no publisher].

Gigliotti, S. (2003) 'Unspeakable pasts as limit events: The Holocaust, genocide, and the Stolen Generations', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 49(2), pp. 164–181. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8497.00302.

Gilroy, P. (2004) *After empire: melancholia or convivial culture?* Abingdon: Routledge.

Glissant, É. and Wing, B. (1997) *Poetics of relation*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Gómez-García, S., Martín-Quevedo, J. and Quevedo-Redondo, R. (2022) 'The sound portrait of a dictator: A study of Franco's image in Radio Nacional de España', *Media History*, 28(2), pp. 230–243. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13688804.2021.1914013.

González Martín, F. (1977) *Liturgias para un caudillo: manual de dictadores*. Madrid: Editorial Cambio 16.

Guattari, F. (2009) *Soft subversions: texts and interviews 1977 - 1985*. Edited by S. Lotringer. New edn. Los Angeles, Calif: Semiotext(e).

Guattari, F. and Sweet, D.L. (2009) *Chaosophy: texts and interviews 1972-1977*. Edited by S. Lotringer. Los Angeles, Calif: Semiotext(e).

Halbwachs, M. and Coser, L.A. (1992) *On collective memory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Available at: https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226774497.001.0001.

Hardt, M. and Negri, A. (2000) *Empire*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Haraway, D. (2016) *Staying with the trouble: making kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Haraway, D. (2018) *Cyborg manifesto*. Victoria, British Columbia: Camas Books.

Harvey, D. (1990) 'Between space and time: Reflections on the geographical imagination', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 80(3), pp. 418–434. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.1990.tb00305.x.

Hemer, O., Povrzanović Frykman, M. and Ristilammi, P.-M. (eds) (2020) 'Conviviality at the Crossroads: The Poetics and Politics of Everyday Encounters'. *Cham: Springer International Publishing.* Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-28979-9

Hernández Burgos, C. and Redondo Cardeñoso, M.Á. (2011) 'Más allá de las tapias de los cementerios: la represión cultural y socioeconómica en la España franquista (1936-1951)', *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea*, 33, pp. 71–93. Available at: https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_CHCO.2011.v33.36666.

Hines-Brooks, S. (2015) 'Una mirada a la transmisión familiar de la posmemoria en El corazón helado', *Hispanófila*, 173(1), pp. 201–215. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1353/hsf.2015.0034.

Hirsch, M. (2012a) *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust*. New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press.

Hirsch, M. (2012b) *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Hobsbawm, E.J. (1983) *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Husni Bey, A. (2019) *On Difficult Terms*. [Artwork] In: Downey, A. (2015) Dissonant Archives Contemporary Visual Culture and Contested Narratives in the Middle East. London, New York: I.B.Tauris & Co. Ltd.

Huyssen, A. (1995) *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*. New York: Routledge.

Iker, C.A. (2007) *ETA 1958-2008: Medio siglo de historia*. Euskal Herria: Txalaparta.

Jameson, F. (2003) 'The end of temporality', *Critical Inquiry*, 29(4), pp. 695–718. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1086/377726.

Jones, D.H. (2016) *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*. Abingdon: Routledge. Available at: https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315772653.

Jump, M. (2012) 'The role of archives in the movement for the recovery of historical memory in Spain: La Rioja: A regional case study', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 33(2), pp. 149–166. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/00379816.2012.722415.

Kafka, F. (2015) *Letter to the Father/Brief an den Vater* - Bilingual Edition. New York, N.Y.: Schocken Books.

Kaika, M. (2006) 'Dams as symbols of modernization: The urbanization of nature between geographical imagination and materiality', Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 96(2), pp. 276–301. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.2006.00478.x.

Klenz, S. (2016) *He Only Sees the Black and White of It: Berlin Wall 14-07-1973*. [Photographic Series].

Koutras, K. (2024) 'The politics of film aesthetics: Filmosophy, post-theory, and Rancière', *Philosophies*, 9(50).

Krauss, R. (1982) 'Photography's discursive spaces: landscape/view', *Art Journal*, 42(4), pp. 311–319.

Kuhn, A. (2002) *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination*. London: Verso Books.

Kwon, M. (2000) 'The wrong place', *Art Journal*, 59(1), pp. 32–43. Available at: https://doi.org/10.2307/778080.

Labanyi, J. (2001) 'Coming to terms with the ghosts of the past: History and spectrality in contemporary Spanish culture', Arachne@*Rutgers: Journal of Iberian and Latin American Literary and Cultural Studies*, 1(1). Available at: https://doi.org/10.14713/arachne.v1i1.7.

Lacalzada de Mateo, M.J. (1994) *La otra mitad del género humano: La panorámica vista por Concepción Arenal.* Málaga: Servicio de Publicaciones y Divulgación Científica de la Universidad de Málaga.

Larrión, J. (2008) 'El orden de la desmemoria: La condición social de la memoria fragmentada, las memorias combativas y la ignorancia de nuestro tiempo pasado', *Revista Anthropos: Huellas del Conocimiento*, 218, pp. 68–84.

Lee, J. (2019) *Ashes to Ashes*. [Installation Documentation] Available at: https://www.brokenarchive.org/artist/jeewi-lee (Accessed: 2 March 2023).

Lee, M. (2013) *Luminous Depths*. [Installation] Available at: https://www.perrotin.com/artists/lee_mingwei/550/luminous-depths/48702 (Accessed: 28 March 2023).

Leen, C. (2018) 'Building momentum in Koshirakura', *Architectural Review*, 26 March. Available at: https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/building-momentum-in-koshirakura (Accessed: 31 March 2023).

Lempi, V. (2024) *Intervista a Fritto Misto, Interni Magazine*. Available at: https://www.internimagazine.com/features/intervista-al-collettivo-fritto-misto/ (Accessed: 20 January 2025).

Lobejón Santos, S., Castro, C.G. and Gutiérrez Lanza, C. (2021) 'Archival research in translation and censorship: Digging into the "true museum of Francoism"', *Meta*, 66(1), pp. 92–114. Available at: https://doi.org/10.7202/1079322ar.

Lowe, P. (2018) 'Traces of traces: Time, space, objects, and the forensic turn in photography', *Humanities*, 7(3), p. 76. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3390/h7030076.

Macé, J.-F. (2012) 'Los conflictos de memoria en la España post-franquista (1976-2010)', *Bulletin hispanique*, 114(2), pp. 749–774. Available at: https://doi.org/10.4000/bulletinhispanique.2150.

Macià, C. (2020) 'El cas de Mikel Zabalza i l'ombra sinistra de la tortura', *Directa.cat*, 28 September. Available at: https://directa.cat/el-cas-de-mikel-zabalza-i-lombra-sinistra-de-la-tortura/ (Accessed: 13 February 2023).

Madariaga, M.R. de (2002) *Los moros que trajo Franco*. Madrid: Alcaná Libros.

Malefakis, E.E. (1970) *Agrarian Reform and Peasant Revolution in Spain: Origins of the Civil War*. New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press.

Mancho-Iglesia, A. et al. (2022) 'La memoria de los afectados por casos de "bebés robados" en la Web: El archivo audiovisual de la asociación Bebés Robados Aragón', *Documentación de las Ciencias de la Información*, 45(2), pp. 157–162. Available at: https://doi.org/10.5209/dcin.81152.

María, R. and Rosa, M.D. (2017) 'Resistencias emocionales: Espacios y presencias de lo íntimo en el archivo histórico', *Arenal*, 24(2), pp. 407–439.

Mariano, S.S. (2018) *La transición sangrienta: Una historia violenta del proceso democrático en España, 1975-1983*. Barcelona: Ediciones Península.

Martín Gaite, C. (2017) *Usos amorosos de la posguerra española*. Barcelona: Anagrama.

Massumi, B. (1996) *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Massumi, B. (2002) Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation. Durham: Duke University Press.

Mbembe, A. (2002) 'The power of the archive and its limits', in *C. Hamilton et al. (eds) Refiguring the Archive. Dordrecht: Springer*, pp. 19–27. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-010-0570-8_2.

McManus, S. (2018) 'From past to present, melodramatically: The politics and ethics of democracy in early transición Spanish cinema', *Journal of Film and Video*, 70(2), pp. 21–29. Available at: https://doi.org/10.5406/jfilmvideo.70.2.0021.

McTighe, M. (2012) *Framed Spaces: Photography and Memory in Contemporary Installation Art*. Hanover: Dartmouth College Press.

Merewether, C. (ed.) (2006) *The Archive*. London: Whitechapel Gallery / Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Misteris amb Sebastià D'Arbó (2014) *Les llums de Faió 2a part*. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCnxOSYMye0 (Accessed: 15 January 2024).

Misteris amb Sebastià D'Arbó (2016) '*152 Les llums de Faió*', YouTube. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zyL-qKdw7ro (Accessed: 27 November 2020).

Moncada, J. (1997) *Estremida memoria*. Barcelona: La Magrana.

Moncada, J. (1999) *Calaveres atònites*. Barcelona: Edicions 62.

Moncada, J. (2011) *The Towpath*. London: Harvill Secker.

Moreno Andrés, J. (2020) 'A la aparición del desaparecido: Fotografía familiar y violencia política', *Discursos Fotográficos*, 16(29), pp. 160–178.

Moreno Andrés, J. (2021) 'Etnografía de una ausencia: Los sentidos de la fotografía familiar en la transmisión de la memoria traumática', *Disparidades: Revista de Antropología*, 76(2), p. e023. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3989/

dra.2021.023.

Moret Coso, H. (1998) *Indagacions sobre llengua i literatura catalanes a l'Aragó*. Calaceit: Institut d'Estudis del Baix Cinca.

Moret Coso, H. (2016) 'A propòsit de la literatura catalana a l'Aragó', in El repte d'investigar sobre la Franja d'Aragó. *Zaragoza: Prensas de la Universidad de Zaragoza*, pp. 145–162.

Mouffe, C. (2007) 'Artistic activism and agonistic spaces', *Art and Research: A Journal of Ideas, Contexts and Methods*, 1(2).

Muñío, D.V. (2017) 'The imprisonment of homosexuals during the Franco regime and their coverage by the social security system', *IUSLabo*r, (1).

Nelson, C. (1997) 'The aura of the cause: photographs from the Spanish Civil War', *The Antioch Review*, 55(3), p. 305. Available at: https://doi.org/10.2307/4613532.

Olick, J.K. (2007) *The Politics of Regret: On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility.* New York: Routledge.

Olick, J.K. (2019) 'Collective memory: The two cultures', *Historical Expertise*, 4(17), pp. 22–49. Available at: https://doi.org/10.31754/2409-6105-2018-4-22-49.

Orlow, U. and Shelter Press (2019) *Soil Affinities*. Available at: https://www.brokenarchive.org/artist/uriel-orlow (Accessed: 2 March 2023).

Ortega, A. T. (2020) *Cartografías Silenciadas* [installation]. In: Rodríguez Mattalía, L. (2020) 'Repolitizar la memoria: creación artística actual en torno a la represión franquista', *Escritura e Imagen*, 16, pp. 357–377. Available at: https://www.memoriafotograficadelaguerracivil.uji.es/libro/cartografias-silenciadas/ (Accessed: 30 January 2025)

Palacios González, D. (2023) 'Marxism in culture: The economy of mass graves', *Institute of Advanced Studies*, University College London, 17 November.

Pallasmaa, J. (2005) *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*. Chichester: Wiley-Academy.

Pecchioli, C. (2008) *Chalk Line (Linea di gesso)*. [Performance Documentation] Available at: https://www.brokenarchive.org/artist/caterina-pecchioli (Accessed: 2 March 2023).

Pérez-Sánchez, G. (2004) 'El franquismo, ¿un régimen homosexual?', *Orientaciones*, 7, pp. 29–50.

Phillips, C. (1982) 'The judgment seat of photography', *October*, 22, p. 27. Available at: https://doi.org/10.2307/778362.

Phu, T. and Brown, E.H. (2014) 'Epilogue', in *Feeling Photography*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Pons, L. et al. (2017) *El repte d'investigar sobre la Franja d'Aragó: Jornada de l'Associació Internacional de Llengua i Literatura a Saragossa* (28 d'octubre de 2016). 1st edn. Zaragoza: Prensas de la Universidad de Zaragoza.

Preston, P. (2003) *The Politics of Revenge: Fascism and the Military in 20th-century Spain*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Preston, P. (2004) 'The answer lies in the sewers: Captain Aguilera and the mentality of the Francoist officer corps', *Science & Society*, 68(3), pp. 277–312. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1521/siso.68.3.277.40298.

Preston, P. (2007) *The Spanish Civil War*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Rancière, J. (2003) *The Future of the Image.* London: Verso Books.

Reig Cruañes, J. (2009) 'La construcción de la memoria dominante durante la dictadura', *Pasajes*, 31(Invierno 2009-2010), p. 15.

Resina, J.R. (1987) 'The link in consciousness: Time and community in Rodoreda's La plaça del Diamant', *Catalan Review*, II(2), pp. 225–246.

Rodríguez, J., Garcia, G. and Bou, D. (2023) 'Dani, el segon talp d'estat per espiar l'activisme', *Directa.cat*, 30 January. Available at: https://directa.cat/dani-el-segon-talp-destat-per-espiar-lactivisme/ (Accessed: 13 February 2023).

Rodríguez, M.P. and Félez, J.L.A. (2013) 'Educar para el matrimonio en femenino: Modelos y prácticas en la literatura de posguerra', *Athenea Digital*, 13(2), pp. 36–46.

Rosón, M. (2015) '"No estoy sola": Álbum fotográfico, memoria, género y subjetividad (1900–1980)', *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, 16(2), pp. 143–177. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14636204.2015.1069078.

Rosón, R. (2016) *Género, Memoria y Cultura Visual en el Primer Franquismo: Materiales Cotidianos, Más Allá del Arte*. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra (Grupo Anaya).

Rosón, M. and Douglas, L. (2020) 'The things they carried: A gendered rereading of photographs of displacement during the Spanish Civil War', *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, 21(4), pp. 459–483. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14636204.2020.1842082.

Rossler, M. (1981) 'In, around, and afterthoughts (on documentary photography)', *October*, 18(2), pp. 35–45.

Rothberg, M. (2019) *The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press (Cultural Memory in the Present).

Rubin, J.S. (2018) 'How Francisco Franco governs from beyond the grave: An infrastructural approach to memory politics in contemporary Spain', *American Ethnologist*, 45(2), pp. 214–227. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.12633.

Ruiz Torres, P.J. (2010) 'Los discursos de la memoria histórica en España', *Revista de Historia Contemporánea Hispania Nova*, (8), pp. 39–74.

Sánchez Esteban, R. (2016) 'Tres vaguistes del 29M, detinguts per la policia en "donar la cara"', *L'Accent - Informació i Comunicació Popular dels Països Catalans*, 14 April. Available at: https://laccent.cat/tres-vaguistes-del-29m-detinguts-per-la-policia-en-donar-la-cara/ (Accessed: 13 February 2023).

Sánchez Soler, M. (2018) *La Transición Sangrienta: Una Historia Violenta del Proceso Democrático en España, 1975-1983*. Barcelona: Ediciones Península.

Sánchez-Biosca, V. (2003) 'La memoria impuesta: Notas sobre el consumo actual de imágenes del franquismo', *Pasajes*, 11, pp. 42–49.

Sauer, K.E., et al. (2023) 'Healing through Remembering: Sharing Grassroots Experiences of Peace, Reconciliation and Healing in the Great Lakes Region of Africa', *Centaurus Perspektiven Sozialer Arbeit in Theorie und Praxis*. Springer.

Schmidt, E. (2014) 'El colonialismo como clave: Discurso africano y transición española en la obra de Fernando González', *Hispania*, 8(3), pp. 240–259.

Scotini, M. (2014) *Disobedience Archive (The Park)*. Salt Beyoglu.

Sedira, Z. (2010) *Image Keepers*. [Photographic Series] In: Downey, A. (2015) Dissonant Archives Contemporary Visual Culture and Contested Narratives in the Middle East. London, New York: I.B.Tauris & Co. Ltd.

Sheehan, T. (2014) 'Looking pleasant, feeling white: The social politics of the photographic smile', in Phu, T. and Brown, E.H. (eds) *Feeling Photography*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Smith, D.E. and Gordon, A.F. (1999) *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. 2nd edn. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Available at: https://doi.org/10.2307/2653923.

Smith, S.M. (2014) 'Photography between desire and grief', in Phu, T. and Brown, E.H. (eds) *Feeling Photography*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Solé i Barjau, Q. (2008) *Els morts clandestins: Les fosses comunes de la guerra civil a Catalunya (1936-1939)*. Barcelona: Editorial Afers.

Song, H.R. (2014) 'Visual fictions and the archive of the Spanish Civil War', *MLN*, 129(2), pp. 367–390. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1353/mln.2014.0028.

Sontag, S. (2003) *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York: Picador.

Soto, J.A.F. (2013) 'La construcción del lugar: La plaza en los pueblos del Instituto Nacional de Colonización', *Historia Agraria*, 60, pp. 119–154.

Stoler, A.L. (2002) 'Colonial archives and the arts of governance', *Archival Science*, 2(1–2), pp. 87–109. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02435632.

Stucki, A. and López de Abiada, J.M. (2004) 'Culturas de la memoria: Transición democrática en España y memoria histórica', *Iberoamericana* Editorial Vervuert.

Sutton, J. (1998) *Philosophy and Memory Traces: Descartes to Connectionism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swyngedouw, E. (2007) 'Technonatural revolutions: The scalar politics of Franco's hydro-social dream for Spain, 1939–1975', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 32(1), pp. 9–28. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2007.00233.x.

Tagg, J. (1988) *The Burden of Representation*. London: Macmillan Education UK. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-19355-4.

Raad, W. (2000–2003) *My Neck is Thinner than a Hair*. [Mixed Media Installation] Available at: https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/atlas-group-raad-my-neck-is-thinner-than-a-hair-engines-t11912 (Accessed: 18 October 2022).

Tejerina, B. (2018) 'Social movements in the political transition: Inheritances, singularities, and transformations of social mobilisation in the 1970s', *Debats: Annual Review*, 3, pp. 65–79.

Tembeck, T. (2020) 'Exposed wounds: The photographic autopathographies of Hannah Wilke and Jo Spence', *RACAR:*

Revue d'art canadienne, 33(1–2), pp. 87–101. Available at: https://doi.org/10.7202/1069550ar.

Terdiman, R. (1993) *Present Past: Modernity and the Memory Crisis*. Ithaca, N.Y. and London: Cornell University Press.

Vanderveke, B. (2013) *The Mussel Feast*. London: Peirene Press.

Varela-Guinot, H. and Vale, M. (1990) 'The legalization of the Spanish Communist Party: Elites, public opinion, and symbols in the Spanish transition', *International Journal of Political Economy*, 20(2), pp. 28–44.

Viestenz, W. (2017) 'The town assembled: The social interference of quasi-objects in Camí de sirga', *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, 18(3), pp. 275–290. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14636204.2017.1338252.

Vilanova Vila-Abadal, F. (1998) 'Imagen y represión del "rojo separatista": Algunos ejemplos de la izquierda catalana en 1939', *Espacio Tiempo y Forma*. Serie V, Historia Contemporánea, (11). Available at: https://doi.org/10.5944/etfv.11.1998.2955.

Vinya, C. (2021) *Història de l'Esquerra Independentista*. 1st edn. Manresa: Tigre de Paper.

Wilke, H. (1978–1981) *So Help Me Hannah* [Photographic Series], in Tembeck, T. (2020) 'Exposed wounds: The photographic autopathographies of Hannah Wilke and Jo Spence', *RACAR: Revue d'art canadienne*, 33(1–2), pp. 87–101. Available at: https://doi.org/10.7202/1069550ar (Accessed: 2 March 2023).

Wilke, H. (1991–1992) *Intra Venus* [Photographic Series], in Tembeck, T. (2020) 'Exposed wounds: The photographic autopathographies of Hannah Wilke and Jo Spence', *RACAR: Revue d'art canadienne*, 33(1–2), pp. 87–101. Available at: https://doi.org/10.7202/1069550ar (Accessed: 2 March 2023).

Yeste, E. (2010) 'La transición española: Reconciliación nacional a cambio de desmemoria: El olvido público de la Guerra Civil', *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea*.

Ysàs, P. (2000) 'El estado de las autonomías: Orígenes y configuración', in *Actas del III Simposio de Historia Actual*, pp. 101–126.

Zaatari, A. (2012) *Time Capsule*. [Film Still] In: Downey, A. (2015) *Dissonant Archives Contemporary Visual Culture and Contested Narratives in the Middle East*. London, New York: I.B.Tauris & Co. Ltd.

Zapater, P. (2017) *Fayón: 50 años de una historia sumergida por el embalse de Ribarroja*. Available at: https://www.heraldo.es/especiales/fayon-50-anos-de-una-historia-sumergida/ (Accessed: 22 February 2022).

Zouggar, S. (2018) *Refracted Memories* Installation from "Memory of Violence". [Installation] Available at: https://www.brokenarchive.org/artist/sofiane-zouggar (Accessed: 2 March 2023).

Zschomler, S., et al. (2024) 'A Toolkit to Support Researcher Wellbeing: Practical Strategies for UK Research Institutions, Funders, and Researchers in the Context of Emotionally or Ethically Challenging Research'. *University College London: Institute for Global Health*. Available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/global-health/sites/global_health/files/res-well_toolkit_0.pdf



Box 20: Roser Pepita and Odilia extending a patterned fabric inside the river.



APPENDIX

The Ethics of Working With Personal Photographic Archives Within Contested Histories

An essential process within my practice-based research has been developing an ethical framework to underpin the transition of my family's archive from private to public, or, in other words, the becoming-archive of this personal photographic collection.

Particular pressures exist when developing research or art using personal stories as a primary source, especially one investigating the history of previous generations. Even though the work may have value to other family members, as it organises and deepens the family history, there are certain trepidation and risks. Besides the pressure of creating work of enough quality, there are ethical questions concerning the risks of reiterating past harm or generating new harm. This is particularly relevant in contexts of historical contestation or in violent pasts shaped by fascist regimes, whose defenders may use symbolic or physical violence as a tactic: often without distinguishing between institutions, those in power, or ordinary people. The risk incurred when connecting individualities or groups to a particular political discourse cannot be determined with certainty; researchers/artists cannot guarantee that a particular political position will not be granted to their work even if there are no clear indicators.

Considering this, the aim of my ethical framework has sought to develop an attunement to the context and needs of my family, collaborators, archival material and myself. An attunement founded in the awareness of the generational and territorial distance through which I am engaging with this history, as the third generation from the event of the displacement of the population of Faió, who grew up in a city, Barcelona. Additionally, this ethical framework departs from an awareness of my particular political positionality, which I briefly outlined in my introduction.

This has been an ongoing process, instead of the imposition of an existing framework. My approach is closely aligned with the concept of a politics of care, by which political praxis and discourse production include everyday and social reproduction. In my work, this is structured through notions of participation within memory processes[1], conviviality[2] and well-being within research[3].

An overview of this process might be useful to other researchers. I have divided it into the ethics of working within a family, the ethics of developing collaborative work and some considerations that have emerged as a result of this process.

---

1 See Sauer, K.E., et al. (2023) 'Healing through Remembering: Sharing Grassroots Experiences of Peace, Reconciliation and Healing in the Great Lakes Region of Africa'

2 See Hemer, O., Povrzanović Frykman, M. and Ristilammi, P.-M. (eds) (2020) 'Conviviality at the Crossroads: The Poetics and Politics of Everyday Encounters'. Cham: Springer International Publishing. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-28979-9

3 See Zschomler, S., et al. (2024) 'A Toolkit to Support Researcher Wellbeing: Practical Strategies for UK Research Institutions, Funders, and Researchers in the Context of Emotionally or Ethically Challenging Research'. University College London: Institute for Global Health. Available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/global-health/sites/global_health/files/res-well_toolkit_0.pdf

THE ETHICS OF CONDUCTING PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH WITH FAMILY MATERIALS

The first word that comes to mind when thinking about these ethics is consent, as the creation of a series of structures that ensure my family are actively aware of the types of use of the family photographs. From the beginning of my research, I have communicated the direction of my work.

In the beginning, as I was discovering the materials within the archive, I provided a general explanation outlining my interest in notions of personal and collective memory, with the archive as a primary source. Since then, I outlined the different research paths and practice forms of the research, particularly as it pertains to the flooding of Faió and memory transmission within the family. My awareness of family conflict has enabled me to discuss the most complex personal elements present within the archive, in ongoing conversations during the writing of the thesis. Conversations with my mother, for example, helped me navigate the complex balance between relevance and exposure, following her request to have certain aspects of their personal history removed. These conversations have offered guidelines to assess what to exclude and include in each moment, whilst maintaining the core of my ideas intact. Several drafts helped assess and revisit these decisions.

I have shared research materials through conversation and within a zine containing a condensed overview of the research and my positionality. This was of notable importance before the interview designed with Gaia Crocella, as a tool that provided sufficient information for them to determine their participation with awareness of possible topics and perspectives. During the interview, as I outlined in Chapter 3, they were provided three general questions that enabled them to guide the conversation according to their own agency. This open-ended approach was designed with the idea that whenever possible co-production should be a part of the practice. In other words, it acknowledges and intensifies the co-production at the core of this project, which is already embedded in the work with the archive.

Additionally, the majority of my practice, but especially my initial practice, ensured there would be limited or no faces in images, either through the focus on objects, places or trees, or through the distortion and obscuring of identifiable features. This responds to the awareness that there would be consequences or ethical questions that would only emerge as the project matured. Therefore, despite having my family's support, I decided to withhold their images whenever possible, for as long as possible. This was sustained by an iterative approach to my practice, which enabled continuous reflections and refinement of ethical and aesthetic questions.

An essential realisation during this process was the coexistence and entanglement of the role of researcher and daughter/niece. This was especially apparent as I was planning the *Memory Meal*: I realised that if I attempted to maintain a distance to only occupy the role of researcher, that would impose a particular performance and affect, resulting in discomfort or self-consciousness. Knowing my family did not want to be examined like the subject of a study, it was important to integrate the closeness of our relationship within the construction of the event, which aligns as well with Crocella's practice. On the other hand, at times, this required a reconstruction of research distance, directed towards me. For example, if an argument had emerged in the lead-up to the event, putting at risk its continuation due to a fall-out, it would have been necessary to reinstate a certain distance and detach from the outcome of the argument, instead of using the closeness granted by our relationship to convince them to continue. It is worth noting that having to navigate this possibility reveals

something applicable to research that does not involve family members, which is that all researchers care about their work, and the work becomes personal, even when it is not personal from the beginning.

Lastly, an essential part of the ethics of this work is tending to the relationships outside of the research. Tending to the material memory of a family, to its images, is a great responsibility which can take many forms. Using it for research risks becoming an extractive practice, due to its role within an individual artistic practice or career. At the same time, it leads to an awareness of a depth of emotion, pain, joy, and history that has marked the lives of the people around me. Caring for the relationship seeks to return any resulting knowledge; to reembody this knowledge for my community. This is not straightforward nor to be taken for granted within a family. Within families can exist ongoing conflict, fractures or separations. Therefore, tending to family relationships can take many forms but the work of caring for this relationship, however this might be, is a necessary extension of this ethics.

THE ETHICS OF COLLABORATION

During this research, I have developed a long collaboration with Gaia Crocella and Julia Schauerman. These collaborations depart from a particular dynamic or gesture: the invitation to work within my family's story. This point of departure invites the collaborator to the ethical framework stated above. It also adds the complexity of making sure each collaborator can fully bring their practice into the process, instead of being in service to my expectations of the work.

Hosting is an appropriate analogy here, and in fact, it has become one of the structuring practices within our collaboration. Just as the host has a better knowledge of the layout of their home and the power to tell the guest which rooms not to enter, I have a higher degree of ownership and power over the archive. This makes it necessary to, borrowing Crocella's words, "reduce the barriers between curator and participant." (Crocella, 2024). Even though this has not been immediately possible at this stage of the archive's becoming-public, collaboration has been essential in this process.

Each collaboration has departed from a knowledge of each other's practices, particularly the frameworks that structure them, ways of working and aims for their artistic work. Throughout the collaboration, and especially in the early stages, unstructured long conversations about each other's work, trajectory, life, and anything else coexisted with discussions about the project and its potential expressions. Schauerman's sound-informed perspective brought a special awareness of the act of listening within a collaboration, which attuned us also to the act of echoing and interrupting. This enabled the identification of points of contact and generative differences; moreover, an awareness of each person's way of working and capacity ensures expectations were set according to everyone's possible involvement. As we met around the archive and each other's perspectives, these dialogues set the space for mutual pedagogy, incorporating each other's theoretical approaches, analysis and propositions. The resulting methodology "helped to engender plural perspective within the work and facilitated the telling of a complex story." (Schauerman & Tomking 2024, p52-53)

The ethics of this form of collaboration necessarily shift the work from outcome-based to process-based. It is worth noting that Crocella's and Schauerman's practices are founded on collaboration, and Schauerman's research examines the construction of collaboration directly. As a result, discussing collaboration became a part of our work, with special emphasis on expressing our views, limitations and navigating potential conflict. As we worked on *SURFACING* together, Schauerman and I spent days

together sitting in front of our laptops, going through hours of audio which I needed to translate so we could decide what was relevant. In that particular iteration, Crocella was not able to sit with us but we agreed she would contribute to the process as much as possible. We repeatedly sent her the materials we had put together for comment and adjusted accordingly, in dialogue with her. This was an important step in our collaboration: the shared experience of tiredness and stress enabled sufficient closeness to navigate emerging conflicts and differences; having sufficient time to develop the work enabled the rest necessary between long work sessions, to regenerate flexibility and communication. Additionally, we ensured that we were transparent about the differences in our involvement, reinforcing the shared ownership of the work.

In terms of dissemination of our work, we have decided together which exhibitions or spaces we want our work to occupy. Its dissemination also extends to the realm of writing, which poses a layer of complexity. As I mentioned, the point of departure of this collaboration is the story of my family and the history of Faió. This means I have written about this continuously and will continue to write about this. Similarly, Schauerman writes about this collaboration in the context of acousmatic storytelling and Crocella approaches it from the perspective of her ongoing role within Fritto Misto, a spatial collaboration with Carlotta Novella. This positions this collaboration within a constellation of other collaborations, positionalities and potential outputs which will change and develop in time. Given this, I proposed that writing be an area where each person develops their contributions individually, as an afterlife of the collaboration. Writing collaboratively in every context would be too time-consuming. Moreover, there is trust that each person's perspective will be respectful, and more importantly, that each difference in perspective is an addition to each other's arguments.

SOME CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT RESEARCHING WITHIN THE POLITICAL OF THE INTIMATE

Through the work with my family and collaboration I have given the archive context, positioned it as evidence, and placed it within a specific series of discourses and critical perspectives. I have framed my work as a work of navigating generative limitations within three fields: academia, the intimate, and the political. Each one of these fields demands a particular performance and privileges specific approaches and discourses.

Constructing a critical discourse that deals with intimate and political histories poses the risk of misplacing and dislocating elements that belong to each one of these different realms, especially since there exist hierarchies of knowledge, morals and power within each one of them. As this is a history of silencing, it is important to pay attention to the mechanism of legitimacy that might unintentionally subsume important aspects of this history within discourses or practices that are deemed relevant within the field. Fragmentation and the desire for certainty risk omission; in each field, a hierarchy of what is expected may determine what is left out.

In order to navigate these limitations I have resided in uncertainty and worked slowly to connect major and minor discoures within each field and examine them against the concrete context of the source material. This has allowed me to identify the tension that exists between them and has been productive in locating diversions of priorities, even instrumentalisation, within each of these environments. Being situated within the intimate, academic and political sphere has helped me conduct an ethics of care that is self-critical, reflexive and open to change.

As a result, two central concepts have emerged within the ethics of personal photographic collections turned public archives: rythm and expectations. The transition of a personal collection requires a specific rhythm, at times slower than might be expected. This might contradict the expectations we have placed on the potential of these materials. At the start of my research, I hope I could quickly position the archive within a collective discourse. Instead, the core of this research required working with the archive within the context of the family.

As reflecting, assessing and adjusting require time, processing the emotions that emerge from this work requires time. Time dedicated to this process is essential to ensure that the practices and discourses emerging from the work align with the ethics surrounding it. It is not merely about disseminating information, but about creating a set of social practices that ensure the information is properly digested and deployed in appropriate contexts, rather than being instrumentalised for manipulative purposes. This is especially important in the context of contested histories and in a historical moment when all information is cynically contested or used for institutional or corporate profit.

As a result, the ethics move from demanding the archive to constantly generate meaning and information, to creating a series of relationships around the archive - of looking, thinking, circulating, critiquing, feeling and making - that let the archive rest.



