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The glocal dimensions of the Holocaust in Spain. The fictionalization of Francisco Boix's Mauthausen camp experience

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ABSTRACT


This paper provides an analysis of the Holocaust memory that is emerging in Spain, focusing on the graphic novel *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen* by Rubio, Colombo and Landa and the film of the same name directed by Targarona. In terms of form, the two works invest the Holocaust with an American aesthetic, while, at the same time, displaying strong local overtones. The result is controversial because it diminishes the particularity of the traumatic event by broadening its meaning beyond world Jewry. Yet, the visibilizing function is sharpened: the two works zoom in on the largely unnoticed destiny of Spanish Republicans.

KEYWORDS

Mauthausen; Spanish Republicans; Francisco Boix; Holocaust Americanization; Holocaust Hispanicization

Introduction

First-hand accounts of the Spanish experience in Nazi camps emerged well before the turn of the third millennium.¹ However, these testimonies, with the exception of Jorge Semprún's fictionalized contribution to Holocaust memory, garnered little to no attention until the second part of the 2000s. Spaniards' reluctance to delve into the memory of the fatal destiny experienced by Republicans caught in the Nazi *Lager* system can be explained, Georgina Blakeley argues, by the distancing of the different branches of the State from 'their responsibilities in the areas of truth and justice for the victims of the civil war and of Francoism.'² Attempts to make a connection between the national collective imagination and the memory of the Holocaust have been additionally deferred due to Spain's supposed neutrality in World War II. What is more, scholars such as Baer and López and Weisz claim that the process has been further delayed because antisemitism is deeply ingrained in the country.³ The result is that this crucial historical episode was largely absent from the Spanish public arena until the Ley de la Memoria Histórica [Historical Memory Act] was passed in 2007 under the Socialist government of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero.⁴ This meant, in turn, that Spain remained, as Samuel O'Donoghue notes, isolated from 'commemorative practice elsewhere in the Western world.'⁵

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Now the situation has been reversed, to the point that the memory of the Holocaust is vividly present in public discourse.⁶ The heated debate that was sparked in 2005 when historian Benito Bermejo unmasked Enric Marco – who had become a Spanish hero by claiming to be a survivor of Flossenbürg concentration camp – is revealing of the paradigm shift regarding awareness of this memory in Spain.⁷ This shift echoes other significant changes in Spanish society, such as gaining EU membership in 1986 and adopting the Euro currency in 2002, with Alejandro Baer and Pedro Correa noting that ‘the country’s Europeanization also involved belatedly catching up with Western Europe’s historical legacy and memory of fascism.’⁸ This new attitude towards the past may also be traced back to what Margalida Capellà Roig has termed ‘la rebelión de los nietos’ [the rebellion of the grandchildren].⁹ That is to say, to the wave of social movements – the most visible of which was organized around the activities of the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica [Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory] – that appeared in the early twenty-first century with the intention of mobilizing public opinion and placing pressure on politicians to bring justice, reparation and truth to the victims of the Civil War.

In the cultural domain, this shift in Spanish memory dynamics has led artists to remember aspects of Spanish identity and of Spaniards’ relationship with their past, including the fate of Republicans, who, while not being targets of the Nazis’ Final Solution, were ‘victims of the policies and practices of the Nazis and witnesses to the Holocaust.’¹⁰ In effect, an increasing number of Spanish-produced artistic creations – ranging from films and novels to a flamenco performance – engage with the relatively little explored links between Spain and the Holocaust.¹¹ This paper will attempt to gain insight into the form and function of the memory that is emerging in Spain around this topic. Besides this, the paper sets out to examine how Spain’s Holocaust-related memory production is affected by the ways Holocaust memory is unfolding within the global context as well as to analyze these works’ unique national features and to explore the implications of adding local perspectives to the genocidal picture.

In order to do so, I will focus on one of the figures who have received the greatest attention both from scholarly circles and from mass-produced popular culture: Francisco Boix, the Spanish press photographer who was deported to Mauthausen in January 1941 and the sole Spaniard to have been called as a witness at the Nuremberg Trials. In particular, I will explore the manner in which key events of Boix’s camp experience are fictionalized in the two most recent approaches to this survivor’s life story: a graphic novel entitled *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen* (2018) by Salva Rubio (script writer), Pedro J. Colombo (illustrator) and Aintzane Landa (colorist), which was first published in France (2017), and Mar Targarona’s film of the same title, which premiered in 2018.¹²

The analysis will reveal that the interplay between the two works goes far beyond sharing a title and year of release. First, even if these representations are the manifestations of well-defined conventionally distinct media, they are connected because the visual-verbal mode of representation is an integral part of the manner in which the works communicate. The works are further connected in terms of form because they rely on commonly accepted tropes of Holocaust Americanization as a rhetorical strategy to soften the harsh reality of life in the camps and make it more palatable to the public;¹³ also because they include concerns and cultural referents that are distinctly Spanish, thereby bearing the imprint of a localized Holocaust commemoration. Second, they

are bound together by the desire to integrate the specific experience of oppression encountered by Spanish Republicans at Nazi camps into the global memory of the Holocaust. The kind of Holocaust memory exhibited by these works, thus, involves broadening the meaning of the Jewish injunction *Zochar!* [Remember!] – the testimonial imperative that has traditionally inspired Holocaust works – to include the memory of non-genocidal crimes and of non-Jewish victims. This is a deeply contentious issue because it diminishes the particularity of the traumatic event and raises the possibility of an economics of suffering.

Francisco Boix, the eyes of the Spaniards in Mauthausen

Prior to considering the particulars of the approaches taken by the graphic novel and the film to the role played by Francisco Boix in the high-stakes operation to capture the horror of *L'univers concentrationnaire*, it is important to look at the various aspects that have influenced the fictional narrative on this real-life figure and his heroic feat.¹⁴ Interesting and attractive in itself, the story about risk-taking behavior for the sake of preserving photographic evidence of Nazi violence has been made all the more compelling because multiple and conflicting versions have vied for attention. Benito Bermejo, whose seminal book *El fotógrafo del horror. La historia de Francisco Boix y las fotos robadas a los SS de Mauthausen* has informed the two representations studied here, puts Boix center stage, as can be inferred from the title.¹⁵ Not only does this independent historian refer to the author of the famous photographs by his full name but, by focusing almost exclusively on him, he also presents events as being the action of one man alone. In David W. Pike's version of events, Boix did not play such a large role. The historian argues that the participation of Antonio García was similarly important, but his contribution was brushed away as part of a silencing plan conceived of by the PCE [Spanish Communist Party], whose leaders were on bad terms with García.¹⁶

There are a number of reasons that may explain why a collective effort has resulted in unequal recognition for each of the parties involved. One of the main reasons why Boix has won high praise is because his efforts to ensure that justice was served went beyond his painstaking obsession inside the camps with saving visual testimonies for posterity. Through his maneuvers, the French magazine *Regards* published a selection of the photographs he saved, one of which appeared on the front page.¹⁷ Furthermore, he was the sole Spaniard to serve as a legal witness at the Nuremberg Trials. Boix's meticulousness in providing precise details concerning dates, locations and personalities was key in ensuring the prosecution of several major Nazi criminals; most notably, as Stanley points out, Heinrich Himmler.¹⁸ Another factor that has played a part in granting a privileged status to Boix is his personality traits, which were in sharp contrast with those of García: whereas the former is described as acting in ways that gave him a magnetic quality, the latter was, according to Pike, a complaint-prone individual who outspokenly formulated his criticism against the Communist Party.¹⁹ Finally, Boix's early death at the age of 30 has also contributed to solidifying the legend surrounding his heroic actions and to earning him the reputation as the eyes of Mauthausen.

All of these factors have had an influence on the graphic novel and the film, both of which convey a rather romanticized and mythicized view of Boix. Indeed, despite the daily pressures and horrors of life in the camps, Boix is characterized as an

extraordinarily courageous and selfless hero who is willing to sacrifice his life for the group. The archetype to which the character conforms differs slightly from the graphic novel to the eponymous film: the latter shapes Boix following the literary conception of the *pícaro* whereas the former enriches characterization through the use of superhero imagery. Nonetheless, the character's glorified personality is revealed using the same method: action. Much narrative time is consequently spent on the various steps taken by Boix to preserve incriminating evidence. It is true that the film's timespan, which strictly covers the time from Boix's arrival at the camp to the liberation of Mauthausen, is made to stretch beyond May 1945 in the graphic novel. The latter thereby devotes a portion of the narrative to aspects of the hardships endured by Boix in postwar France and to his participation in the trials that brought Nazis to justice. Additionally, Rubio introduces a frame tale around the main plot. These framing vignettes, which pertain to the year 1948, narrate Boix's frustrated attempt to reunite with his sister Núria at the border between France and Spain. Regardless of this imbalance in narrative time, the plot elements in the two works are selected on the same grounds: to make Boix's mission to expose Nazi crimes their main focus.

Inasmuch as a visually driven approach to the story is favored in both works, it is not surprising that their narratives are articulated through media that are reliant on images. The types of images used for advancing the plot are different in one fundamental aspect, however: unlike in the film, images in the graphic novel are static. In addition to the connection afforded by their visual quality, these representations can also be brought together because they have a verbal dimension. Interestingly, verbal language is not only a key component of the overall information conveyed; it also plays a central role in providing a frame to interpret the images and in nuancing their meaning. It is this combination of words and images in the two works studied here that justifies their joint analysis.

While acknowledging that there are several distinctive differences regarding the aesthetic values of the two media, the gap between the film medium, a system which places emphasis on watching the message, and graphic novels, which involve decoding in reading, has been bridged by the revolution that propelled the transformation of popular comics into graphic novels, which affected publication format, production and distribution and audience expectations and served to free the medium from 'commercial and other restrictions.'²⁰ The medium is, in effect, being pushed beyond its traditional limits. Its works, which are now longer and adult-themed, foreground individual styles and present highly stylized artistic layouts, as in the case of *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen* by Rubio, Colombo and Landa. At the narrative level, they emphasize 'a dimension of storytelling that was hardly prominent in comics: the role of the narrator,' boosting their capacity to deal with serious and complex issues.²¹ The renewal of the type of story content that the medium can offer has, in turn, affected its generic range, which has expanded to include autobiography, reportage and historical fiction, among many others.²² It is possible, therefore, to conclude with Tabachnick that 'the graphic novel today has evolved into an exciting literary and artistic genre that is equal to any other genre of literature, art, or film in terms of its range and quality.'²³

Regardless of the possible aesthetic connections that can be made between graphic novels and films, each medium is distinct in terms of meaning construction. These differences are highlighted by Christian Metz, who defines the specific quality of film in

relation to other arts: it is composed of five forms of expression (sound effects, graphic traces, music, speech and moving photographic images).²⁴ Accordingly, the way in which the objective of presenting Francisco Boix as the eyes of Mauthausen is fulfilled in the two case studies presented here varies in certain aspects. In what follows, I will look into Rubio's, Colombo's and Landa's artistic style (drawing style, lettering, page layout, verbal expression and uses of color) and into aspects of Targarona's technical and artistic construction of the film to analyze the degree of (dis)similarity as regards their reconfiguration of Holocaust memory. I will specifically examine how the resulting model of remembrance is inflected by American popular culture forms as well as by Spanish concerns and topics.

The Americanization of Spaniards' Mauthausen experience

The manner in which Rubio, Colombo and Landa, on the one hand, and Targarona, on the other hand, give shape to their narratives is highly influenced by an idiosyncratically American aesthetic that is associated with Hollywood and mass media. This can be seen clearly in the use of the five characteristics of the Holocaust Americanization phenomenon identified by Joost Krijnen:²⁵ first, the adoption of accessible and digestible media; second, the selection of uplifting stories; third, the blurring of the boundaries between the historical and the fictional; fourth, the instrumentalization of the past for commercial and aesthetic purposes; fifth, the use of simulacrum.

First, the media chosen to narrate Boix's story correspond to two quintessential forms of American popular culture that are easy to access and to engage with, the graphic novel and film. Unlike many traditional media, such forms of communication include multi-literacies, which make these artistic ensembles capable of expressing a plurality of voices and thus of narrative intentions. The benefit of resorting to a multimodal approach for the meaning-making process is also that the simultaneous layering of modes (verbal, visual, auditory, kinesthetic) contributes to accessible communication and increases the possibilities of suiting different tastes. Ultimately, this makes these media potentially reach wider audiences, enhancing the chances of raising awareness about the Holocaust for people 'who otherwise would never take an interest in it.'²⁶

In this regard, it is worth comparing how the communication modes available to each artist result in a differing artistic treatment of the same event. For example, in her representation of a typhus epidemic outbreak that occurred in June 1941, Targarona intertwines two scenes of naked prisoners huddled together at Mauthausen's garage courtyard, where we see actors shivering and hear them coughing, with a shot of Nazis spraying barracks with DDT (a well-known pesticide).²⁷ That is to say, the high health implications of typhus fever are articulated in the film through body movements and aural elements, avoiding any explicit reference to the name of the disease. Rubio, Colombo and Landa, for their part, present a double-page spread of the courtyard almost entirely occupied by a huddle of naked bodies. This drawing, which is, incidentally, based on one of the incriminating photographs salvaged for posterity, includes four captions from the narrator.²⁸ Through his voice, readers learn about the exact date of the typhus outbreak and about the type of screening process (mass disinfection) through which the Nazis attempted to control the typhus menace.²⁹ Here, the combined forces of image and word are key to understanding to what extent epidemics made camp life

even harder. Therefore, each mode of communication heightens sensitivity to different aspects of the same event: sound and moving images are combined to serve as sensory stimuli and to facilitate an emotional connection with the story while words are used to convey factual data and bring the narrative closer to the documentary tradition.

Furthermore, the exploitation of established Holocaust style imagery (prisoners with striped uniforms and shaven heads, carefully staged bodies covered with snow, the huge iron gate surmounted by the Nazi eagle and swastika, etc.) situates these works within a generic brand as mass-products that appeal to the familiar rather than incite debate. This is because the use of visual tropes that have come to function for Holocaust memory itself rearticulates the works on the basis of already existing representations, so that the audience remains within the security of the known and the works are divested of any deeper meaning. In addition to confirming Marianne Hirsch's contention, 'our memory does not consist of events, but of representations,' the confrontation with repeated tropes provides distance for audiences from the reality of the historical event.³⁰ The resulting effect is that the narrative is made more easily accessible – though this capacity to create engagement through historical distanciation raises moral concerns for those like Berel Lang who find fiction that is not premised on the basis of preserving historicity problematic.³¹

One example of this trend can be found in the representation of the gas-chamber atrocities. The two works studied here resort to the metonymies and synecdoches through which Jews' extermination at the hands of the Nazis have traditionally been visualized: smoking crematoria chimneys, lines of people standing in front of the gas chambers and stacks of leftover possessions, among others.³² That is to say, they represent Nazis' mass destruction of human lives in an indirect style that highlights the impossibility of gaining total knowledge of the Holocaust. There is, however, one particular case where Colombo and Targarona push this fragmentary code of communication to the limits. I am referring to the panels and the film scenes where a Jewish victim is visualized inside a gas chamber. In the graphic novel, a body, lying down, is immersed in a luminous orange flame and is depicted as it burns away.³³ The result is shown two pages after: the body, still surrounded by flames, has turned into skeleton ashes.³⁴ In the film, viewers gain access to a similar representation of genocide. It comes in the form of brief mental images that cross Boix's traumatized mind while he is having a sexual encounter with one of the camp prostitutes.³⁵ This approach to the Holocaust is highly problematic as it attempts to depict an aspect of the Holocaust of which, as Gérard Wajcman points out, 'we know of no single photographic image.'³⁶ The enactment of genocide, inasmuch as it means reversing the impossibility of images to illustrate the historic truth of the gas chambers, runs counter to the historical authenticity of the works.

Second, both Rubio and Targarona have chosen to approach the Holocaust through an uplifting story (the redemptive power of a collective deed), which they use to bring defiance, survival and regeneration into focus. Boix, who is to be counted among the lucky few, in that he is part of the 30% of Spanish Mauthausen internees who survived, is shown in both cases as summoning courage to stand up and fight against the Nazis, risking his own life by keeping a clandestine record of the photographic negatives made by the SS. The endings of both the graphic novel and the film confirm that the narrative, as in the case of *Schindler's List* (the epitome of Holocaust Americanization), seeks to stay on the side of the affirmation of life and survival rather than on that of death and

destruction. Throughout the different phases of the negative smuggling operation, there are instances of prisoners who die. Yet, the losses that occur are given symbolic meaning and purpose at the end, when resistance is presented as having an important moral outcome: the victory over the Nazis. Insofar as the idea of justice is made to prevail, the focus is shifted from perspectives regarding the Holocaust as a disruptive event to a position that places regeneration center stage.³⁷ This is particularly the case of the graphic novel, whose temporal frame covers the Nuremberg Trials. The film, while not focusing on this part of Boix's life, also highlights the historical and legal importance of Boix's testimony, as can be inferred from the decision to include a clip of his filmed deposition at Nuremberg as an epilogue.

Even if both artists place a great emphasis upon positive outcomes, they are not unmindful of the crude reality of life in the concentration camps. Mauthausen is presented as a place where the harshest means were used to dehumanize prisoners. More specifically, inmates are shown doing humiliating and backbreaking work while being systematically starved and forced to endure the bitter cold of winter. As far as the duress of extreme winter weather is concerned, the works use color purposefully: Landa furnishes her palette to produce varying saturations of blue and Targarona uses white tones, evoking thereby the coldness and inhospitability of the place. These color choices, which create the mood and set the tone of the story, only vary on rare occasions. For instance, panels turn green to signify hope during the football match at which prisoners smuggle the negatives out of the camp.³⁸ Similarly, the white tones of the film become reddish-orange during the sequences at the *Kommandant's* house to indicate danger.³⁹ Third, neither the graphic novel nor the film offer an immersive experience of the kind that is provided, for example, at the Anne Frank Exhibit at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, where visitors are presented with an 'in situ' reconstruction of the claustrophobic conditions of the hiding places used by Jews to attempt to escape from the Nazis.⁴⁰ In that sense, there is no overt attempt to convert the readers/viewers into participants in the events narrated. Notwithstanding, verbal and semiotic cues are used in order to build temporal proximity and emotional engagement. Colombo promotes readers' engagement by varying the size and shape of prisoners' eyes, eyebrows and mouths, which he uses to depict two major recognizable emotional states: expressions of helplessness and despair (dominant mood) and expressions of happiness (basically restricted to the panels recreating liberation and the frame tale).⁴¹ The film, meanwhile, exploits sound effects (continuous barking of dogs, commands in German, breaking glass, grunts, etc.) to communicate dramatic action.⁴² This creates a heightened-sensory affective effect (the audience's sensorium is filled by the film) that can be said to offer a kind of immersive experience.

Point of view, which, in both cases, lies with Francisco Boix, also plays a major role in favoring an encounter with the Holocaust that is emotionally-fueled. Rubio, Colombo and Landa open their graphic novel with a series of prose and visual clues that make it clear that the story is narrated from a first-person point of view: verbal cues include the use of the first-person singular of the verb ('he tardado,' 'estoy,' 'te prometi') and images are displayed so as to make readers experience events (Boix's arrival at the land border between France and Spain) through the eyes of Boix.⁴³ In addition to this, the speech bubbles and images through which the story unfolds mix with brown-colored captions, where Boix addresses readers directly to provide them with narrative

information. There are also blue-colored captions to indicate temporal dislocation between the action shown in the images and the captions' narration, as is the case when the introductory frame tale describing Boix's attempt to meet with his sister in 1948 abruptly comes to an end and readers are confronted with the image of a train arriving at Mauthausen. Similarly, Targarona uses cinematic language purposefully to allow the audience identify with the character. For instance, early in the film, when introducing the space of the *Erkennungsdienst* or camp identification service (a unit responsible for all photographing processing in Mauthausen), there is a subjective shot, whereby the audience starts watching events unfold as if seen directly through the eyes of Boix.⁴⁴ Although this type of shot is used for a limited amount of time (it finishes when Anselmo, the *alter ego* of Jacinto Cortés, looks into Boix's camera lens; i.e. into the audience), other conventions, including dream/fantasy sequences and reaction shots, are used in the remainder of the film to keep the audience close to Boix. The previously described scene of a functioning gas chamber crossing Boix's mind for seconds accounts for a dream/fantasy sequence.

Choosing to narrate action through the eyes of one of the participants who partakes in the events contributes to narrative engagement, as it promotes personal identification and this ultimately creates a feeling of closeness (even of presence). Yet, steps taken to build a meaningful relationship with the narrator are in some sense problematic. For example, the graphic novel and the film make Boix their sole focus of interest, granting him greater authority than the rest of his comrades. The result is that the historical role of other participants in the collective action being narrated is minimized. Moreover, the centrality given to Boix's persona may lead the audience to falsely assume that his camp experience was fairly representative of camp life in general, which was not the case.⁴⁵ What is more, he held an exceptional position. Regardless of whether his national or ethnic origin eased his camp experience, Boix's inherent cultural capital (basic German and photography skills) made his everyday life easier. No matter how rudimentary his German might have been, knowledge of the language was, as pointed out by Malgorzata Tryuk, vital for surviving the concentration camp: 'communication and information were crucial in order to obtain – illegally – the bare necessities, such as food and clothing, as well as to avoid illness, overwork, and the brutality of SS guards.'⁴⁶ Similarly, because of his familiarity with photography, he was soon exempted from work at the nearby quarry, and granted a position at the *Erkennungsdienst*, where conditions were much better. Indeed, Rubio has Boix acknowledge this the moment he is transferred to the identification department: 'Además, me dieron uno de esos puestos privilegiados en el *Erkennungsdienst*, o servicio de identificación' [Additionally, they gave me one of the privileged positions at the *Erkennungsdienst*, or identification service].⁴⁷

Fourth, there are signs that both works are intent on giving an accurate representation of the historical period and the milieu in which the brave act of smuggling negatives and photographs out of the Mauthausen camp was carried out. Rubio, for example, supplements his fictionalized version of Boix's feat with a glossary of terms related to the Holocaust, which includes terms such as 'Appellplatz' and 'Luftwaffe,' as well as with texts that provide further context on some of the most relevant aspects of the Mauthausen concentration camp.⁴⁸ One of these historically-informed co-texts is 'Los prominenten, los detenidos en puestos de responsabilidad' [Prominenten, prisoners who had positions of authority], where readers are informed that these prisoners, who lived in

Barrack 2, ‘tuvieron más oportunidades de sobrevivir que los demás’ [had a greater chance of survival than other prisoners] because they arrived at the camp early and occupied ‘puestos de responsabilidad que les aseguraban mayor alimentación’ [positions of authority that provided access to additional food].⁴⁹ Targarona, for her part, includes an intertitle providing historical context at the beginning of the film and shows a clip featuring the real Boix testifying at the Nuremberg Trials when the credits roll.⁵⁰

Notwithstanding, the way that events are visualized reveals that historical accuracy, by which I mean the intention to stick to reality and to deprive the representation from vested emotional interests, takes second place. It is the existential-subjective dimension of prisoners’ camp experience and/or aesthetics – true to other examples of Americanized Holocaust representations – that are given high priority. As far as the graphic novel is concerned, Brenneis brings up the melodramatic episode in which Boix beats up Paul Ricken, the SS officer who supervised the identification laboratory, to make an argument about how Rubio sacrifices reality by drawing inspiration from the art of American comic books. This, she argues, results in Boix’s characterization as ‘an untouchable superhero.’⁵¹ The red tones chosen by Landa to accompany the implausible plot narrated in these panels are also reminiscent of the aesthetics of classical American comics. The comic book aesthetics is further exploited at other points in the narrative through red or yellow comic book lettering font for sound effects.⁵² Similarly, Targarona has acknowledged that she ‘wanted cinematography of great quality;’ what is more, that ‘she can’t stand the idea that relates making a historical film and automatically adding grain and killing color.’⁵³ That is, the director privileges, probably in the name of popular resonance, aesthetics over the historicity of the event.

Fifth, in their quest for historicity, these works adopt the same authentication strategy: to enact the photographs that visualize Nazi horrors as well as those taken by Boix in the days immediately following liberation. Both Colombo and Targarona pull from photographs that exist outside the narrative and that served as *prima facie* evidence of the crime. These recreated photographs are woven into material molded melodramatically, so that the perceived difference between the referent (original/historical source) and the representation (reproduction/fictive recreation) is blurred and, in turn, the principle of accuracy is subverted. Inasmuch as the story of the large Spanish contingent within the Mauthausen concentration camp is kept alive through a ‘false claimant to being’ or, using Baudillard’s term, through ‘simulacra,’ the images can be said to have a parasitical nature.⁵⁴ They challenge assumptions of authorship, originality and uniqueness. The problem of credibility is made worse because the photographic source material is invested with the melodramatically sanctioned message communicated by the speculative narrative pattern that accommodates the recreated photographs. Indeed, since the audience is not informed openly about which parts of the message pertain to the known and which to the speculative, the kind of suspension of disbelief required is double-edged.

The Hispanicization of Spaniards’ Mauthausen experience

As has been outlined above, the pattern of representation at work in the two fictional approaches to the life of Francisco Boix under discussion here bears a strong resemblance to the Holocaust discourse developed in the United States. Interestingly, these

Americanization trends exist side by side with a Spanish worldview and interpretative logic. This perspective is seen in that the works feature various stereotypical traits of Spaniards, adding local color to the traditional domains of Holocaust representation. As will be noted below, the portrayal of the spirit of comradeship among the Spanish prisoners is especially revealing in this regard. Moreover, the picaresque tradition – a narrative fashioned on the idea that human will (represented in the acts of the *pícaro*) is the product of a particular social environment – is evoked to explore the complex moral terrain that Primo Levi termed the ‘gray zone;’⁵⁵ i.e. that zone of ambiguity where, as explained by Catherine Mooney, ‘individuals can become morally tainted by the system.’⁵⁶ Room is also left for the representation of football and vaudeville shows, two activities greatly cherished by Spaniards that helped to keep prisoners’ morale high. All in all, these topics push the forms of Holocaust memorialization away from the traditional tropes, symbols and narratives associated with the global understanding of the phenomenon of Nazi atrocity. The form of Holocaust memory is thereby expanded and transformed into what Krijnen terms a “glocal” affair;⁵⁷ in other words, into a memory that adapts globally standardized topoi of the Holocaust into Spain’s local memory discourse.

One of the things that made Spaniards’ way of giving meaning to their lives in Mauthausen different from other groups’ struggle to survive under Nazi terror was the fact that Spanish prisoners, to whom Nazis referred by using the derogatory term ‘Spaniaker,’ developed an emotionally-anchored form of community whose structure was premised on the group rather than on the self: comradeship.⁵⁸ Pike goes as far as to argue that it was because Spaniards’ actions, emotions and ideas were shaped by collective principles that they ‘coped with KZ life better than any other national group.’⁵⁹ Regardless of whether or not the Spaniards truly ‘came out of this supreme ordeal the best,’ comradeship proved particularly beneficial for the group because it privileges – in contrast to the individuality that imbues intimate relations (friendship) – corporate identity (political strategizing in this case), assigning the highest value to interdependence and solidarity.⁶⁰

The two works make a direct acknowledgement of the effective intragroup relationship developed between the members of the Spanish contingent; however, the different stylistic properties of graphic novels and film lead each artist to overcome the limitations to show human values differently. In the graphic novel, Colombo depicts the question of camaraderie among Spanish prisoners through the artistic decision not to individualize the facial physiognomies of the different characters (the members of the Spanish contingent can hardly be distinguished from one another), creating a collective appearance.⁶¹ This way, these prisoners’ aspirations of serving a common purpose are highlighted. Targarona, who relies on actors for her portrayal and cannot, thereby, strip away all the externals of physical appearance (even if a certain degree of homogeneity is achieved through having characters wear the striped pyjamas uniform and having their heads shaved), resorts to a different strategy to explore the nature of comradeship: body language. In particular, the film includes a lot of buddy hugging and patting to show that the members of the Spanish group embody the culture of comradeship.⁶²

In addition to the language of likeability, emotional closeness among Spanish prisoners differed from the forms of relatedness entertained by the members of other national groups in that it was founded on a platform of political discourse that welcomed any and

all individuals who shared the goal of fighting the fascist enemy. It transcended thus the nation as its frame of reference. While not denying that shared nationality (as well as shared language) was a bonus in the development of a closely-knit community among the members of the Spanish contingent, their relationship was not exclusively mediated by the state. This may well be explained because they had been declared stateless by Franco and, in consequence, had ambivalent feelings towards their homeland. Tellingly enough, liberation is described in the graphic novel as a sweet moment filled with great sorrow. In addition to being overwhelmed by feelings of exhaustion, guilt and fear, which they shared with other survivors, Spaniards faced an extra harsh reality: ‘La historia de guerra de los demás había terminado. Pero no la de los españoles. No podíamos volver a nuestro país, ver a nuestras familias, vivir en paz’ [The war experience was over for all other prisoners, except for Spaniards; we could neither go back home and see our families nor live in peace].⁶³ The distressing effects of Spaniards’ specific trauma are made even more pronounced because Landa supplements Rubio’s verbal description with color choice. She purposefully breaks away from the bright yellow-orange tones employed to depict the time after liberation and resumes the cold blue-gray palette that dominates in the portion of the narrative that revolves around camp life. The implicit suggestion is that Boix remains symbolically and emotionally trapped in Mauthausen.

The representation of social life provided by these two works stands at a remove from the dominant narrative on prisoner societies inside Nazi concentration camps, which tends to provide a dichotomous understanding that views the community of inmates as a group directly opposed to the perpetrators. More specifically, it blurs the moral attributes ascribed to the oppressors and the oppressed – though the two social groups are clearly distinct. This ability to reject a neat, dichotomous division lies largely in the personal story of the man who serves as a basis for the narrative: inasmuch as Boix, as Estrada notes, ‘spent most of his captivity at Mauthausen within the relatively privileged space of the photography identification lab,’ where he was entrusted with functions that no longer belonged solely to the prisoner society, the ground is laid to explore the Levian area of moral behavior;⁶⁴ that is, ‘that network of human relations [that] could not be reduced to the two blocks of victims and persecutors.’⁶⁵ The lack of distinct dividing lines between both groups is explicitly addressed in the graphic novel, where a connection is established between the hierarchical position imposed on certain prisoners by the Nazis and the privilege found among the *Prominenten* living in Barrack 2, to which Boix was transferred soon after his arrival: ‘[...] como llegamos tan pronto al campo, tomamos estos puestos. Y pudimos enchufar a otros españoles’ [since we arrived so early at the camp, we took these positions and we set other Spaniards up].⁶⁶ While neither Boix nor any of his fellow countrymen are portrayed as exhibiting the range of debased moral actions that the regime transferred to the members of the *Sonderkommando* – who in the film are shown through the character of Popeye as capable of significant brutality – it is made clear that Spaniards living in this barrack belonged to a system of patronage through which they could prolong their lives.⁶⁷

Therefore, the life experience of the Spanish prisoners assigned to Barrack 2 is used to show the dilemmas that were engendered by the structure of the camps; specifically, the degree to which Nazi mentality corrupted the conduct of the victims and how inmates ended up prioritizing moving through the ranks over moral feelings. This seems to me

one of the most interesting aspects of the contribution of these two works to the global memory on the Holocaust. In regards to this matter, the graphic novel and the film direct their attention – albeit through the use of different strategies – to the basic rule underlying the perfidious system of coercion established by the Nazis: with greater power comes greater benefits; and to the idea that this structure of power forced prisoners to move into corrupt practices to survive. The graphic novel relies on the informative power of words to offer details about how the perverse logics on which camp life was constructed negated morality: ‘Respetaban [los españoles] las normas, pero usaban la corrupción reinante para hacer favores y situar a españoles en posiciones clave’ [They respected the rules, but used widespread corruption to give favors to Spaniards and secure key positions in the camp].⁶⁸ Targarona, by contrast, advances this aspect of the narrative through the montage of images. An example is to be found when Boix and Fonseca conspire to switch the identity of José Pino, who is shown (this scene is intertwined with the scenes at the identification laboratory) at the camp infirmary dying from tuberculosis. With this deception, they attempt to save the life of Cristobal Rosales – a party member to whom Nazis had assigned the category of *Nacht und Nebel* [night and fog] and who was thus a targeted prisoner.⁶⁹ Leaving aside the lack of cultural sensitivity associated with living out stereotypes about Spaniards being a corrupt people, the problem is that socialization at the camps is presented through the eyes of a prisoner group, the *Prominenten*, that is not representative of the general conditions for the larger part of the prisoner population; that is to say, those outside the hierarchy, who made up the core of the camp and were prime candidates to succumb because they were in no position to make what Lawrence Langer has termed ‘choiceless choices.’⁷⁰

Furthermore, these works add an interesting perspective to the ever-growing body of materials that shape Holocaust memory by making Boix conform to the image of a *pícaro* who lives by his wits and by shaping the narrative according to what the Dutch scholar Fonger de Haan sees as the three main aspects of the picaresque narrative: struggle (striving for well-being under the difficult conditions of camp life), observation (relating the concentration camp experience of the Spanish contingent in Mauthausen) and social criticism (exposing the crimes of the Nazis through photographic evidence).⁷¹ The particular way in which the picaresque pattern is incorporated differs, however, from the graphic novel to the film. In their presentation of how this *pícaro*-prisoner acts in concentration-camp society, the former *tells* whereas the latter *shows*. For example, when dwelling on the time Boix spent working as a translator, Rubio provides readers with a verbal description of his professional practice to characterize him as a trickster:

Mi trabajo era traducir los insultos que los alemanes decían a los españoles. No me gustaba hacerlo, así que traducía a mi manera.

¡Dile que es un rojo asqueroso! ¡Levanta y trabaja o te reventaré a patadas! ¡Traduce!

¡Venga, hombre! Levanta o el cabrón este te va a joder, pero bien. ¡Ánimo!

[I had to translate the insults to Spaniards by the Germans. I didn’t like to do this, so I translated freely.

Tell him he is a filthy red! Stand up and work; otherwise I will kick the shit out of you! Translate into German!

Stand up, man! Stand up or this bastard will fuck you up! Come on!].⁷²

Targarona, for her part, exploits the picaresque genre's focus on individualized scenes of everyday life, to present several situations where Boix tricks the Kapos and the SS in order to provide for others and for himself. For example, during the birthday party at the house of the camp *Kommandant*, we see Boix approach Anton Poschacher – a local Nazi leader who employed well-built boys to work at his industrial companies outside the camp – to offer to take a photograph of his family and thereby gain his favor.⁷³ He then recommends Anselmo Galván (the youngest prisoner amongst the Spanish contingent) to be a *Poschacher* worker, placing the boy in a position that allowed him to participate in the process of hiding negatives. Earlier in the film, we see Boix instructing Anselmo to stand in the middle of the line when waiting for his ration of soup, as this would increase the chances of getting served some potato and meat.⁷⁴

It is the implications of using the Spanish picaresque literary tradition to discursively frame these Holocaust narratives (rather than the specific formal strategies used to invest the content with a picaresque quality) that deserve greater attention, however. One interesting thing about surrounding Boix's camp story with a picaresque ethos is that this serves Rubio, Colombo and Landa, on the one hand, and Targarona, on the other, to draw upon new levels of representationality in Holocaust memorialization. By featuring the camp story of a *pícaro*-prisoner that serves the Nazi masters, they manage to place Boix in places that do not correspond to the places occupied by the great majority of marginals that made up the camp population (the identification laboratory or the house of the *Kommandant*, for example). This way, the two works incorporate aspects of the social reality of Nazi camps that remain absent from other Holocaust representations, especially those focused on the Jewish experience. Most significantly for my purposes here, through picaresque, new motifs (the charismatic traits of the *pícaro* as a person who uses trickster wit to survive and who criticizes the evils that come under the observation opportunities facilitated by his privileged camp position) enter the Holocaust genre discourse. This creates a nuanced, locally-colored portrayal of camp life, surrounding Holocaust representation within the global context with Spanish overtones. Yet, as this brings picaresque conduct (cheating, compromising and cajoling) into the appalling scenario of the concentration camp, it introduces elements of disturbance into artistic engagements of the grim realities of life for prisoners in Nazi camps.

From a moral perspective, Boix's actions are depicted in all cases as being propelled by the pursuit of a lofty desire: to elevate himself above the extremely miserable situation (hunger, cold weather, lack of hygiene and privacy, hard labor, humiliations, unreliable fellow prisoners) in order to survive and be able thereby to testify on behalf of those who were murdered. In this manner, the merciless battle to stay alive and the acts of the instinctual trickster are glorified. That is to say, a correlation is established between heroism and the centrality of Boix as a historical persona. Yet, the glorification of the heroic qualities of the *pícaro*, in ruthless disregard of those prisoners who did not get involved in forms of disruption intended to subvert the system (underground activities, for instance) or who had given up all hope of survival and did not show public signs of dignity and self-respect, is problematic because it establishes a binary moral model: 'us and them, friends and enemies, courage and cowardice, hero and traitor, black and white, absolute good and absolute evil.'⁷⁵ It is easy to see how prisoners belonging to

the second category are depicted as devoid of the positive characteristics bestowed upon the hero, so that they do not win the support and sympathy of the readers/viewers, becoming cowards and traitors.

This is the image that emerges, for example, of Moreno, the character who plays the role of Antonio García in the graphic novel. He is explicitly described as being ‘un hombre extraño, silencioso, infeliz, algunos decían que siempre asustado’ [a strange silent unhappy man – some said he was always scared].⁷⁶ His behavior, moreover, is publicly undermined (Boix calls him ‘cobarde de mierda’ [Fucking coward!]) because he admits to not being ready to pay the ultimate price for Boix’s plan and prefers to save his own life: ‘Solo quiero sobrevivir. Es mi derecho. Así que vais a parar lo que estáis haciendo o tendré que informar a Herr Ricken de que ...’ [I just want to survive. It is my right. So either you stop your plan or I shall inform Herr Ricken that ...].⁷⁷ Valbuena, the character who takes on the role of Moreno in the film, is likewise a thoroughly flawed and unlikable character; he is also looked down upon as a coward and appears in the role of an SS informer:

Valbuena: ¿Qué haces? ¿Se puede saber qué estás haciendo?!

Boix: No podemos quemar las pruebas de lo que han hecho.

Valbuena: Si Ricken se entera ...

Boix: ¿Si Ricken se entera, sabrá que has sido tú! ¿Sabes lo que les hacen los del Partido a los chivatos como tú? Les cortan los huevos y esperan a que se vacíen enteros.

Valbuena: Suéltame por Dios ... suéltame ...

[Valbuena: What are you doing? What the heck are you doing?!

Boix: We cannot burn the evidence of what they have done.

Valbuena: If Ricken learns ...

Boix: If Ricken learns about this, he will know it was you! Guess what the Party does to informers? They cut off their testicles and wait until their scrotum is empty.

Valbuena: For God’s sake ... let me go ...].⁷⁸

Such characterization is problematic because it misses, as Burnet argues, the fact that the set of social, political and economic conditions that came together in Nazi camps gave way to ‘complex decisions and behaviors’ that cannot be artificially divided into two categories.⁷⁹

As regards the treatment of the lively cultural life that developed in Mauthausen, it is also guided by a local sensibility. The graphic novel intersects a plotline about a football match bringing the SS and the Luftwaffe together to draw attention to the powerful role football played in the Nazi camps and to the contribution of Spanish prisoners to making this form of entertainment part of the cultural activities inside Mauthausen. Through the vaudeville genre, a popular theatrical form combining song, dance and short sketches, Targarona’s film showcases some of the best-known Spanish artistic traditions as well as religious beliefs. In effect, the theater production – a revue called *El Raja de Rajaloya* – put on by Spanish Republicans to entertain the SS officials while Boix leads the

smuggling operation is a cultural potpourri that mixes *jota* singing and *flamenco* dancing.⁸⁰ It is also worth mentioning that the camera zooms in on the lead actor prior to the commencement of the performance to show him crossing himself, highlighting that Catholicism is the primary religious faith of the Spanish people.⁸¹ A distance is consequently set out regarding the most common trend in Holocaust representation, which in the great majority of cases integrates Jewish culture and faith into its narratives. Furthermore, the centrality of the Spanish guitar is signaled by including this instrument in the band that plays live music.

Conclusion

This article's tracing of two fictional approaches to Francisco Boix's Mauthausen camp experience has involved looking at how words and images work together to communicate and transmit the story of the Spaniards who were victims of Nazism. The analysis has revealed that language and visual elements complement each other, generating a multiplicity of meanings. There are times when the graphic novel and the film give readers/viewers raw verbal-linguistic information in order to didactically offer specific historical data; for example, to report on the death toll of Spanish Republicans in Mauthausen.⁸² This way, the narratives are brought close to the documentary form. In most cases, however, verbal information is enhanced by sensory input, creating an active and 'lively' form of Holocaust remembrance that rejects a single agreed-upon master narrative. By adopting artistic media which prioritize the expression of personal experiences, feelings and ideas over an objective, truthful account of the past, Rubio, Colombo and Landa and Targarona stick to reigning modes of representation to reenact the Holocaust. In addition to this, they reshape the event through popular American tropes (survival, heroism, subjectivism, among others) that make the Holocaust more digestible, attracting and mobilizing larger audiences.

Therefore, the standpoint in relation to the Holocaust taken by the two works under scrutiny here is that the meaning of the event is not fixed but rather fragmented and contested. More specifically, the Holocaust is understood as a reality that 'take[s] shape in different ways in different times and in different parts of the world.'⁸³ This memory in the plural is seen in the fact that Holocaust remembrance is made to transcend the framework of Jewish memory to offer a broad definition of the event, one that lends itself to accommodate the Spanish experience. This is controversial, to say the least. First, because the focus does not lay on the Jews as a unique class of Nazi victims but rather is extended to include exiled Spaniards forced to work for the German war effort as well as those, like Francisco Boix, who were deported to Nazi concentration camps. Second, because the Holocaust is not exclusively defined in terms of exception (a crime historically and experientially unparalleled). What is more, its meaning is extended in ways that undermine its description as an act of genocide (acts directed at the deliberate and systematic destruction of a particular group of people); as a matter of fact, immoral behavior and Nazi actions based on political beliefs are also incorporated into the definition. An inclusive definition of the Holocaust is not to be equated, however, with submersion of the Jewish experience. Here, there is no attempt at bringing together the experience of Jews and non-Jews: the focus remains squarely on Spanish victims throughout. Nor are there any moral claims weighing up the suffering of the

different groups imprisoned in Mauthausen. Justification for a broadened definition of the Holocaust is to be found in the aims of the works, both of which seek to visibilize the experience of Spanish Republicans deported to Mauthausen and, in particular, the story of Boix.

The advantage of using a definition which accommodates as many of the victims and situations as possible is that it leaves room for different responses, experiences and memories, highlighting the complexity of the event. In effect, this examination of the fate of Spanish Republicans offers a more comprehensive analysis of the nature and effects of the Holocaust, so that the final balance is, in my opinion, positive. For example, the 'privileged' position of the Spanish contingent in Mauthausen is used by Rubio, Colombo and Landa as well as by Targarona to examine the relationship between victims and victimizers, which is a part of the reality of life in the camps that Jews, because they were targeted for extermination, were less likely to experience. Prisoner-SS contacts serve, moreover, to draw attention to the question of the individual as a decision maker within the morally ambiguous nature of the 'gray zone.' In short, the integrational model moves away from a one-dimensional explanation to present the landscape of Nazi persecution as a complex and multifaceted reality.

Considering that the works focus on the experience of Spaniards who ended up in Mauthausen, the promotion of a narrative that establishes claims of intimacy through invoking the national literary picaresque tradition is a clever move. By resorting to an internationally known cultural heritage artifact (the *pícaro* novel), which is inherently and intrinsically motivating for the intended audience, the function of the work is placed center stage, i.e. to visibilize a lesser-known aspect of Holocaust history. Interestingly, this local version of the Holocaust, shaped by Spanish values and concerns that are wholly relevant to Spanish audiences, is interweaved with a global orientation, which shows that the two representations are concerned with internationalizing the history of Spaniards caught up in the Nazi inferno and that they endeavor to tell a vastly international tale. Their narratives are expressed through media that act as a promotional platform to engage larger audiences because they rely on presentational forms that are potentially entertaining and compelling. This is not to undermine their capacity to produce awareness of the event, but to acknowledge that they use modes of communication which are particularly effective at inducing affective reactions that attract and retain attention; they fail, however, to accurately capture all the angles of an event as complex as the Holocaust, at times distorting historical facts. The recreation of a gas chamber in use is a case in point.

In conclusion, these two responses are leveled with the logics behind Saul Friedlander's *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, which was ground-breaking in the sense that it advocated for producing an 'integrated history' whose focus lay on how the Holocaust was experienced rather than on facts; and also with Michael Berenbaum's attempts to broker a compromise between uniqueness and universality: 'the examination of all victims is not only politically desirable but pedagogically mandatory if we are to demonstrate the claim of uniqueness.'⁸⁴ These works' greatest contribution lies in incorporating a part of the Holocaust that has gone largely unnoticed into the global Holocaust memory, a function which they fulfill by relying on similar artistic media and on a form of remembrance that mixes Americanization trends with Spanish cultural ones. All in all, they offer a 'glocal' Holocaust experience.

Notes

1. Early first-hand accounts of the Spanish Holocaust experience include the following works: “Yo he estado en Mauthausen: Carlos R. del Risco relata en exclusiva para ‘Arriba’ sus siete años de aventura en el exilio” (1946) by Carlos Rodríguez del Risco; *Lo que Dante no pudo imaginar. Mauthausen-Gusen (1940–1945). 7000 muertos españoles en el infierno nazi* (1980 [1946]) by Amadeo Sinca Vendrell; “Nit i boira” (1947) by Mercè Rodoreda; *K.L. Reich* (1946) by Joaquim Amat-Piniella; *Le grand voyage* (1963) by Jorge Semprún; and *Triangle bleu* (1969) by Mariano Constante Campo.
2. Blakeley, “Misplaced Faith?,” 153.
3. Baer and López, “The Blind Spots of Secularization,” 203; and Weisz, *Jews and Muslims in*, 81.
4. Mate, “Presentación,” 5; and Baer, “The Voids of Sepharad,” 95.
5. O’Donoghue, *Rewriting Franco’s Spain*, 142.
6. Baer and Sznajder, *Memory and Forgetting in the Post-Holocaust Era*, 65–66; Weisz, *Jews and Muslims in Contemporary Spain*, 97; and O’Donoghue, *Rewriting Franco’s Spain*, 142.
7. For a comprehensive list of the newspapers and magazines that focused on the fraud when Benito Bermejo unmasked the impostor and on the responses triggered by Enric Marco’s invention, see Russell, “The Holocaust as Trope,” 101.
8. Baer and Correa, “Spain and the Holocaust,” 404.
9. Capellà Roig, “La rebelión de los,” 25.
10. Brenneis, *Spaniards in Mauthausen*, 5.
11. The following is a list of Spanish Holocaust-related works that appeared between 2007, the year in which the Ley de la Memoria Histórica was passed, and 2020, which marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Nazi concentration camps: *Mauthausen: memorias de Alfonso Maeso, un republicano español en el holocausto* (2007) by Ignacio Mata Maeso; *Un español frente al Holocausto* (2010) by Diego Carcedo; *Entre bestias y héroes: los españoles que plantaron cara al Holocausto* (2011) by Diego Carcedo; *El ángel de Budapest* (2011) by Luis Oliveros; *El impostor* (2014) by Javier Cercas; *El triángulo azul* (2014) by Laila Ripoll y Mariano Llorente; *El encierro de Ana Frank* (2014) by María Juncal; *La encrucijada de Ángel Sanz Briz* (2015) by José Alejandro González Baztán; *Deportado 4443* (2015) by Carlos Hernández de Miguel; *Memorias de Bastian* (2016) by Hugo A. Egido; *El cartógrafo* (2016) by Juan Mayorga; *El último tren a Treblinka* (2016) by Mireia Gabilondo; *Mauthausen. La voz de mi abuelo* (2018) by Pilar G. Almansa.
12. It is probably no coincidence that the edition in French, which preceded the publication in Spanish, was published in Brussels, the metropolis of European graphic novels. Rubio, Colombo and Landa, *Le photographe de Mauthausen*.
13. On the tropes through which the Holocaust has been marketed for mass consumption, see Rothe, *Popular Trauma Culture*, Chap. 1.
14. First published in 1946, *L’univers concentrationnaire* is one of the first accounts describing the institutional logics and social mechanisms of the Nazi concentration camp system. David Rousset’s emphasis, as noted by Annette Wieviorka, is on presenting the system “no longer [as] simply a repressive tool like [a] prison, but a world apart governed by its own laws.” Wieviorka, “L’expression ‘camp de concentration’,” 10.
15. Benito Bermejo’s research is relevant not only because it informed these two works, but especially because his study, a first version of which was published in 2002, served to draw attention to the figure of Francisco Boix, “who had remained virtually unknown to Spanish historians”. Estrada, “Audiovisual Production on the Republican Deportation,” 524.
16. Pike, *Spaniards in the Holocaust*, 205–206.
17. Gant, *Revisiting Centres and Peripheries*, 50; and Stanley, “Stills of Mauthausen,” 41.
18. Stanley, “Stills of Mauthausen,” 39–40.
19. Pike, *Spaniards in the Holocaust*, 306.
20. Tabachnick, “From Comics to the,” 30.
21. Baetens and Frey, *The Graphic Novel*, 10.

22. Oziewicz, “The Graphic Novel,” 30.
23. Tabachnick, “From Comics to the,” 37.
24. In Bellour, *The Analysis of Film*, 24.
25. Krijnen, *Holocaust Impiety in Jewish*, 43–50.
26. Weissman, *Fantasies of Witnessing*, 148.
27. Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 00:44:10–00:46:09.
28. The original photograph, a copy of which is available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_192-207,_KZ_Mauthausen,_H%C3%A4ftlinge_bei_der_Desinfektion.jpg, can be found at the Fotoarchiv der K2 Gedenkstätte Mauthausen.
29. Rubio, Colombo and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 24–25.
30. Hirsch, “Surviving Images,” 7.
31. Lang, *Holocaust Representation*, Chap. 4.
32. By way of example, the metaphor of smoke to describe how Nazis disposed of Jews appears on page 10 of the graphic novel and in the image of the film shown in 00:34:59. Rubio, Colombo, and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 10; and Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 00:34:59.
33. Rubio, Colombo and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 36.
34. *Ibid.*, 38.
35. Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 00:36:35; 00:36:37; 00:36:44–00:36:46.
36. In Didi-Huberman, *Images in Spite of All*, 58.
37. Two poignant examples of visual responses to the Holocaust that focus on the potentially disruptive nature of the event are: Spiegelman’s *Maus. I: A Survivor’s Tale. My Father Bleeds History* (1986) and Nemes’ *Saul fia [Son of Saul]* (2015).
38. Rubio, Colombo and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 68–73.
39. Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 01:06:48–01:07:56.
40. Visit <https://www.museumoftolerance.com/visit/exhibits/visit-anne-frank-exhibit/> for detailed information on this immersive exhibit on the life and legacy of Anne Frank.
41. It suffices to compare Boix’s broad smile and well-proportioned eyes in the panels at the border between France and Spain with his large eyes wide open with terror when he learns about the kind of photographs taken by camp personnel as part of the record of life and death in Mauthausen. Rubio, Colombo, and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 1–3; 22.
42. An example of this is evident in the scenes running from 00:02:43 to 00:03:29. Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 00:02:43 to 00:03:29.
43. Rubio, Colombo, and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 1.
44. Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 00:05:38–00:06:08.
45. In *Spaniards in Mauthausen*, Brenneis refers to “the privilege certain Spaniards attained in the Mauthausen offices,” hinting that these positions were attained only by a lucky few. Brenneis, *Spaniards in Mauthausen*, 211.
46. Tryuk, “Interpreters in the Concentration,” 131.
47. Rubio, Colombo, and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 16.
48. *Ibid.*, i; and *Ibid.*, 113–168.
49. *Ibid.*, 131.
50. Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 00:00:55–00:01:20; and *Ibid.*, 01:38:09–01:38:24.
51. Brenneis, “Spain’s Mauthausen,” 286.
52. Instances of such lettering font can be found on pages 32 and 34, among others. Rubio, Colombo and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 32; 34.
53. In Mateus, “*The Photographer of Mauthausen*,” Para. 7.
54. Camille, “Simulacrum,” 32; Baudrillard, *Simulacres et simulation*.
55. For a critical study on the nature of the picaresque novel, see Blackburn, *The Myth of the*, 3–25; and Levi, *The Drowned and the*, Chap. 2.
56. Mooney, “The Ethics of the Gray Zone,” 31.
57. Krijnen, *Holocaust Impiety in Jewish*, 28.

58. In *Beyond Death and Exile: The Spanish Republican Refugees in France, 1939–1955*, Louis Stein provides insight into this group’s cohesiveness, claiming that “[a] number of French writers have spoken in glowing terms of Spanish bravery, comradeship, and unstinting loyalty to the anti-fascist cause.” Stein, *Beyond Death and Exile*, 372.
59. Pike, *Spaniards in the Holocaust*, 75.
60. *Ibid.*, 75.
61. Instances of how Colombo draws characters as almost undistinguishable can be found on pages 26 and 27 of the graphic novel. Rubio, Colombo and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 26–27.
62. Instances of body language showing comradeship and solidarity can be seen in Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 00:47:01–00:47:16.
63. Rubio, Colombo and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 84.
64. Estrada, “Audiovisual Production on the Republican Deportation,” 528.
65. Levi, “The Gray Zone,” 37.
66. Rubio, Colombo, and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 15.
67. Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 00:53:20–00:53:34.
68. Rubio, Colombo, and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 15.
69. Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 00:20:17–00:21:12.
70. Langer, *Versions of Survival*, 72.
71. In Dunn and Mariscal, *Spanish Picaresque Fiction*, 6.
72. Rubio, Colombo, and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 12.
73. Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 01:05:33–01:06:10.
74. *Ibid.*, 00:25:12–00:25:26.
75. Pollefeyt, “Victims of Evil or,” 69.
76. Rubio, Colombo, and Landa, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 17.
77. *Ibid.*, 42.
78. Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 00:32:36–00:33:00.
79. Burnet, “Accountability for Mass Death,” 208.
80. This is, as noted by Raquel García-Pascual, a hint to a documented event. Spanish Republicans, in effect, put on this theater revue for the purpose of Nazis’ entertainment on Christmas Day, 1942. García-Pascual, “Francoist Repression and Moral,” 462.
81. Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 00:47:22–00:47:25.
82. An example of this approach can be seen in Targarona, *El fotógrafo de Mauthausen*, 00:00:55–00:01:20.
83. Krijnen, *Holocaust Impiety in Jewish*, 80.
84. Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the*; Berenbaum, “The Uniqueness and Universality,” 6–8.

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