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Iván Iglesias (eds.)

Music and the Spanish Civil War



PETER LANG

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Introduction: Music Historiography and the Spanish Civil War

The Spanish Civil War has been the most important, decisive and traumatic event in contemporary Spain, but also one of the most iconic events in the recent history of the Western world. Since it broke out in 1936, it has conditioned many socio-political processes and has been regularly depicted in literature, cinema, painting and music, both inside and outside Spain. A vast amount of scholarly work has been done on the strife, far beyond that on any other topic in Spanish history and comparable only with that on global conflicts such as the two World Wars or the Cold War. However, musicology has not devoted a great deal of attention to the war of 1936–1939 until very recently.

This volume is the first collective book devoted to music and the Spanish Civil War. It responds to the recent focus on the relations between music and power, propaganda and the construction of identities, particularly in periods of conflict and during dictatorships. The analyses of music in Spain during the early Franco regime have repeatedly shown that it was during the Spanish Civil War that the construction and transformation of the musical discourses and practices of the prewar period took place. Contributions, drawn from musicologists, historians and anthropologists from Spain, Mexico, Australia, and the United States, explore the songs at the front, war soundscapes, propaganda and music policies, censorship, music in prisons, different music genres, exiled composers and critics, musical diplomacy, memory, and the Spanish Civil War as a topic in popular and contemporary music.

Historical Cultures and Narratives

In music historiography, as in most histories of other cultural expressions, the concept of the Spanish Civil War has undergone significant changes. Since 1936, memory, silence and myth have generated both consensus and disagreement about the war. The persuasive capacity of historical narratives has been transcendental since the very beginning of the

conflict. We are referring to what Hayden White called a “metahistory”, the way we narratively organize our accounts of the past as romance, tragedy, comedy, or satire.¹ In particular, the history of the Spanish Civil War has been told according to two main narratives, romance and tragedy, with profound consequences in music historiography. These narratives are not mere poetic or ideological acts: they have been framed within a specific historical culture, that is, the changing relationship that a group of people has with its own past, which involve people, institutions, places, objects, media, representations and performances.² Historiography and memory are “both regarded as intrinsic and mutually constitutive parts of historical culture”.³

During the Second Republic, various Spanish institutions and political groups developed their own myths about the State and the enemies of public order to justify their position. These stories, gradually radicalized, became fundamental factors in the outbreak of the war.⁴ After the coup in July 1936, it was not long before the military discourse (“war of independence” or “of liberation” against Communism) and the ecclesiastical (“crusade” in defense of religion) merged. The same dualism was found in the supporters of the Second Republic: against fascist foreign powers and against oppression by the privileged.⁵ When the Roman Catholic Church cast the Spanish Civil War as a transnational anti-communist crusade, the conflict assumed epic proportions.⁶

1 Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).

2 Jörn Rüsen, *History: Narration, Interpretation, Orientation* (New York: Berghahn, 2005).

3 Maria Grever and Robbert-Jan Adriaansen, “Historical Culture: A Concept Revisited,” in *Palgrave Handbook of Research in Historical Culture and Education*, eds. Mario Carretero, Stefan Berger and Maria Grever (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 76.

4 Rafael Cruz, *En el nombre del pueblo: República, rebelión y guerra en la España de 1936* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 2006).

5 Santos Juliá, “Los nombres de la guerra,” *Claves de Razón Práctica* 164 (2006): 22–31; Francisco Sevillano Calero, *Rojos: la representación del enemigo en la guerra civil* (Madrid: Alianza, 2007).

6 Giuliana Chamedes, *A Twentieth-Century Crusade: The Vatican's Battle to Remake Christian Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 178–183.

From 1939, the victory gave the new regime of General Franco the legitimacy to undertake a profound reconstruction of identity based on symbolic resources of the various political cultures that had supported the military coup.⁷ The dictatorship devoted itself to spreading the myths of “crusade” and “liberation,” two examples of the storytelling that Hayden White called “romance” in his metahistorical classification. According to White, romance is a heroic account of “the triumph of good over evil, of virtue over vice, of light over darkness.”⁸ The image that the Franco regime portrayed of the Civil War also involved a re-elaboration of contemporary Spanish musical history. According to this new account, the victory marked the end of the decadence and chaos of the Republican period and the beginning of a “restoration” of the glorious Spanish music, identified particularly with the sixteenth century—the so-called “Golden Age”—and folklore.⁹ Both represented Catholicism, nationalism and tradition, the three pillars of the culture of the early Franco regime.

These musical emplotments about the war were maintained until 1943, helped by the relevance of the Falange and Spain’s political and cultural bonds with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Then, the Axis countries suffered severe military defeats that predicted the victory of the Allies in the Second World War. The high risk that Spain would become isolated from the victorious democratic countries forced the government to proclaim itself “neutral” once again, while Franco’s propaganda tried to distance itself from fascism. For this, the dictatorship needed a new conception of the war that had been the focus of the Western world’s attention between 1936 and 1939. Thus, from 1945 on, an image of the the war as a “collective error” that should be forgotten was forged. Due to the complex ideological base of the Francoist government, made up of Falangists, the military, monarchists, Carlists and ultra-Catholics, this

7 Zira Box, *España, año cero: la construcción simbólica del franquismo* (Madrid: Alianza, 2010).

8 White, *Metahistory*, 9.

9 Juan José Carreras, “Hijos de Pedrell: la historiografía musical española y sus orígenes nacionalistas (1780–1980),” *Il Saggiatore Musicale* 8, n° 1 (2001): 121–169.

account shared official status with the narrative of the war as “liberation” for two decades, gaining increasing prominence until it became predominant in the mid-1960s.¹⁰

The inclusive myth of the shared tragedy coexisted with the exclusive myth of the crusade for years. Even so, any agreement was still based on an asymmetrical logic of winners and losers, either through purification, as in the Falangist case, or through doctrinal forgiveness, in the ultra-Catholic case.¹¹ In fact, the state of war proclaimed in July 1936, legitimizing Franco’s systematic and continuous repression, lasted until April 1948. With the radicalization of the Cold War, Western propaganda generated a virulent anticommunism that strengthened the Francoist conceptualization of the Second Republic as an extreme leftist enterprise, luckily prevented, and the view of the regime as a protector of the Catholic faith. Discursive changes crystallized in the mid-1950s with the spread of the slogan of “collective mistake.” From then on, the infamous conflict of 1936–1939 finally received the name “Civil War” and increasingly became a taboo period of Spanish history.

The new discourse was reflected in the writings of those who were already emerging as the most influential critics of the dictatorship. In 1954, Enrique Franco, then already director of Radio Nacional, wrote in the magazine *Ateneo* an article entitled “Two shores and a bridge of silences in Spanish music.”¹² In it, Franco contrasted the fifteen years before the war with the fifteen after it and viewed the war as a black triennium without any musical activity, a bridge between two different eras. Another prominent Spanish critic of those years, Federico Sopena, repeated the omission in 1958 by not even mentioning the conflict in his *Historia de la Música Española Contemporánea*.¹³ This discourse of the

10 Iván Iglesias, “De ‘cruzada’ a ‘puente de silencios’: mito y olvido de la Guerra Civil española en la historiografía musical,” *Cuadernos de Música Iberoamericana* 25–26 (2013): 177–188.

11 Ferrán Gallego, *El evangelio fascista. La formación de la cultura política del franquismo (1930–1950)* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2014), 921; Michael Richards, *After the Civil War: Making Memory and Re-Making Spain since 1936* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 225.

12 Enrique Franco, “Dos orillas y un puente de silencios en la música española,” *Ateneo*, February 15, 1954, 10–11.

13 Federico Sopena, *Historia de la música española contemporánea* (Madrid: Rialp, 1958).

conflict as a “collective error” and the need for it to be forgotten were therefore generally adopted by the musical media of the dictatorship. However, it was also frequent in the writings of some illustrious exiles, such as Adolfo Salazar, in line with the policy of “national reconciliation” that was beginning to permeate many emigrants.¹⁴

The transition to democracy in Spain (1975–1978) was politically based on this motto of war as a collective tragedy that needed to be forgotten. One of the great objectives of the period was to close the trauma that began in 1936, sealing the final reconciliation through silence.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the political discourse of tragedy did not involve a historiographical amnesia. On the contrary, during the Transition and the early years of democracy, many and varied academic studies on the conflict and the dictatorship were published.¹⁶ In addition, writers, filmmakers, singers and witnesses came forward to express the memories repressed during the dictatorship. However, even then, musicology did not deal with the Civil War. The oblivion of the conflict led to it becoming an inescapable chronological limit that separated Spanish music on those “two shores”. For example, in 1983 Tomás Marco divided his well-known and influential book on Spanish music in the twentieth century into two stages, “Before the Civil War” and “After the Civil War,” but the conflict was completely omitted.¹⁷ Four years later, in the proceedings of *España en la música de Occidente*, Casares Rodicio wrote that the war was, musically, “almost a natural division.”¹⁸

14 Javier Muñoz Soro, “La reconciliación como política: memoria de la violencia y la guerra en el antifranquismo,” *Revista de historia Jerónimo Zurita*, 84 (2009): 113–134.

15 Paloma Aguilar Fernández, *Memoria y olvido de la guerra civil española* (Madrid: Alianza, 1996).

16 Paloma Aguilar Fernández, “Presencia y ausencia de la Guerra Civil y del franquismo en la democracia española: reflexiones en torno a la articulación y ruptura del ‘pacto de silencio’,” in *Guerra Civil: mito y memoria*, eds. François Godicheau and Julio Aróstegui Sánchez (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2006), 245–294; Santos Juliá, “Memoria, historia y política de un pasado de guerra y dictadura,” in *Memoria de la guerra y del franquismo*, ed. Santos Juliá (Madrid: Taurus, 2006), 27–77.

17 Tomás Marco, *Historia de la música española. 6. Siglo XX* (Madrid: Alianza, 1983).

18 Emilio Casares Rodicio, “La música española hasta 1939, o la restauración musical,” in *España en la música de Occidente: Actas del Congreso*

Bridging the Gap

The consideration of the Spanish Civil War as a complete break in the history of music in Spain remained unquestioned until the very end of the twentieth century. In the 1990s, Gemma Pérez Zalduondo was the first scholar to write about the conflict as a period crucial to understanding the musical configuration of the Franco regime.¹⁹ That idea of the importance of the Civil War in the musical ideology and principles of the early Franco dictatorship appeared in the proceedings of the important conference *Dos décadas de cultura artística en el franquismo* (2001), which included an article by Gemma Pérez Zalduondo on music and artistic thinking between 1936 and 1956, and another by Elena Torres Clemente on the *autos sacramentales* during the war.²⁰ The first book to argue for a new musical periodization of twentieth-century Spain by suppressing the Civil War as a time boundary, even though it did not include any articles on music in Spain during the conflict, was *Música española entre dos guerras, 1914–1945*, edited by Javier Suárez-Pajares in 2002.²¹

The last twelve years have been prolific in collective studies that have begun to integrate the war into the history of music in Spain.²² Moreover,

Internacional celebrado en Salamanca, 29 de octubre-5 de noviembre de 1985, eds. Emilio Casares Rodicio, Ismael Fernández de la Cuesta and José López-Calo (Madrid: Instituto Nacional de las Artes Escénicas y de la Música, 1987), vol. 2, 264.

- 19 Many of her essential articles have been compiled in the book *Una música para el «Nuevo Estado». Música, ideología y política en el primer franquismo* (Granada: Libargo, 2013).
- 20 Ignacio Henares Cuéllar, María Isabel Cabrera García, Gemma Pérez Zalduondo and José Castillo Ruiz, eds., *Dos décadas de cultura artística en el franquismo*, 2 vols. (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2001).
- 21 Javier Suárez-Pajares (ed.), *Música española entre dos guerras: 1914–1945* (Granada: Archivo Manuel de Falla, 2002).
- 22 María Nagore Ferrer, Leticia Sánchez de Andrés and Elena Torres Clemente, eds., *Música y cultura en la Edad de Plata, 1915–1939* (Madrid: ICCMU, 2009); Gemma Pérez Zalduondo and María Isabel Cabrera García (coords.), *Cruces de caminos: intercambios musicales y artísticos en la Europa de la primera mitad del siglo xx* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2010); Gemma Pérez Zalduondo and Germán Gan Quesada, eds., *Music and Francoism* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013); Bruno Giner and François Porcile, eds., *Les musiques pendant la guerre d'Espagne* (Paris: Berg International, 2015); Beatriz Martínez Fresno and Belén Vega Pichaco, eds., *Dance, Ideology and Power in Francoist*

several recent doctoral dissertations have specifically analysed music during the Spanish Civil War. Marco Antonio de la Ossa Martínez's ground-breaking thesis, completed in 2008 and published by the Spanish Society of Musicology in 2011,²³ has been complemented by dissertations such as Lidia López Gómez' about film music,²⁴ Atenea Fernández Higuero's and Yolanda Acker's on Madrid,²⁵ Nelly Álvarez González' about Valladolid,²⁶ and Juan Miravet Lecha's on Valencia.²⁷ In short, over ninety specific academic publications exist today, so we cannot say any longer that the Spanish Civil War is a gap in Spanish musical history. These studies have provided essential information about some key topics of the Spanish Civil War and represent a highly fruitful and interesting map of music during the conflict. However, some important topics and approaches still remain to be explored. We will focus on four of them, present in this book and particularly interconnected: propaganda, transnational trends, popular music and sound, and the memory and presence of the war.

Spain (1938–1968) (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017); Belén Vega Pichaco, Elsa Calero Carramolino and Gemma Pérez Zalduondo, eds., *Puentes sonoros y coreográficos durante el franquismo: imaginarios, intercambios y propaganda en clave internacional* (Granada: Libargo, 2019); Gemma Pérez Zalduondo and Beatriz Martínez del Fresno, eds., *Música y danza entre España y América (1930–1960): Diplomacia, intercambios y transferencias* (Madrid: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2021).

- 23 Marco Antonio de la Ossa Martínez, *La música en la Guerra Civil española* (Madrid: Sociedad Española de Musicología, 2011).
- 24 Lidia López Gómez, “La composición musical para el cine en la guerra civil española. Música, política y propaganda en cortometrajes y medimetrajes (1936–1939)” (PhD diss., Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 2014).
- 25 Atenea Fernández Higuero, “Música y política en Madrid, de la guerra civil a la posguerra (1936–1945): propaganda, instituciones, represión y actitudes individuales” (PhD diss., Universidad de Oviedo, 2017); Yolanda Acker, “Making Music in Madrid during the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939)” (PhD diss., Australian National University, 2020).
- 26 Nelly Álvarez González, “Espectáculo y propaganda en Valladolid durante la Guerra Civil: música, teatro y cine (1936–1939)” (PhD diss., Universidad de Valladolid, 2017).
- 27 Juan Miravet Lecha, “La vida musical en Valencia durante la Guerra Civil (1936–1939): Percepción de la vida musical valenciana a través de la prensa y otras fuentes documentales” (PhD diss., Universitat Politècnica de València, 2017).

Propaganda and Power

Most studies on music during the Spanish Civil War focus on propaganda, either on the songs of the front or the musical initiatives and propaganda of the Republican government and the rebel side, or the commitment and works of composers and critics such as Silvestre Revueltas, Manuel de Falla, Vicente Salas Viu, Nemesio Otaño, Ernesto Halffter and Conrado del Campo. As these works have demonstrated, music was understood by both sides as an important political field. Its uses mediated the meanings and experiences of the conflict in a very relevant way. Songs and anthems soon spread across and beyond Spain to become an integral part of everyday soundscapes. Additionally, the war led to continuous power struggles and to the reorganization of the musical field in the rear-guard.

In their essay, Luis Díaz Viana and Ignacio Fernández de Mata examine the treatment of popular songs as an instrument of propaganda. They show that, beyond obvious ideological discrepancies, there were many coincidences in the attempts to appropriate popular songs by the elites of both sides, who shared a paternalistic conceptualization of “the people.” Igor Contreras Zubillaga’s chapter focuses on the creation of overtly political music in order to establish a categorization of propaganda works. With this aim, he analyzes three examples composed by Nemesio Otaño, Ernesto Halffter and Conrado del Campo for the rebel side.

Local histories are significantly broadening our knowledge of power struggles and of the mechanisms and consequences of propaganda. In this volume, Yolanda Acker documents the numerous orchestral concerts held in Madrid during the strife and examines how they served the purposes of the Republican cause. In addition, Atenea Fernández Higuero explores the changes that took place at the Madrid Royal Conservatory during the conflict and reveals the violence and power struggles that arose at the institution and that were closely linked to pre-war tensions. For her part, Olimpia García López explores the musical life of Seville during the war, its functions and spaces of socialization, paying particular attention to the musical initiatives promoted by the Falange and the Catholic Church, as well as to the visits of national and international musicians to the city. Finally, Nelly Álvarez analyses the propagandistic uses of anthems in another leading city of the rebel side, Valladolid, to give an expressive strength and epic connotations to the ideology of the

rebels, mobilize people, exacerbate patriotism and to give the impression of a solid union that was not so real in practice.

Transnational Trends

From its very beginning, the Spanish Civil War attracted the interest of foreign scholars. In October 1938, the British historian Arnold Toynbee wondered if the conflict was a civil strife or an international war waged on Spanish territory.²⁸ In regard to this, Helen Graham has stated that “the war itself belongs not only to Spain but to Europe, because far more than a civil war, it was *the war* in Spain –the first round of a European contest fought to determine the future of society and politics across the continent.”²⁹ David Jorge has recently gone further, positing that “Spanish Civil War” is a designation that harmfully limits the responsibility and the course of the conflict inside Spanish borders, and has advocated for a more inclusive name, “war in Spain”, which makes evident the fundamental role of external factors.³⁰

In effect, thanks to studies of exile and diplomatic relations, our knowledge of Spanish music and musicians outside Spain during the Civil War and the Franco dictatorship has markedly increased in recent years. This volume contains some contributions on this crucial topic. Walter Aaron Clark’s essay offers a microhistory of the causes of exile through the little-known early life and career of Celedonio Romero, one of the leading guitarists of the twentieth century, using his experiences in the 1930s and 1940s as a lens through which to view the difficult situation that many Spanish musicians faced during the Civil War and early Francoism. The chapter shows the frictions between ideological beliefs and economic necessities that compelled Romero, from a Republican family, to give concerts for the Falange and Franco before leaving the country in 1957 for a new life in Southern California. Consuelo Carredano’s chapter

28 Arnold Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs. Vol. 2: The International Repercussions of the War in Spain (1936–1937)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938), v–vi.

29 Helen Graham, “Writing Spain’s Twentieth Century In(to) Europe,” in *Interrogating Francoism: History and Dictatorship in Twentieth-Century Spain*, ed. Helen Graham (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 1.

30 David Jorge, *War in Spain: Appeasement, Collective Insecurity, and the Failure of European Democracies Against Fascism* (New York: Routledge, 2020).

addresses the circumstances and the strategies of different organizations to provide asylum in Mexico to a large group of Spanish musicians who fled to France. Mexico was the only country with an official policy of attracting Republican refugees and, in turn, Spanish composers contributed to one of the most brilliant musical periods of that Latin American country over the next decades.

In addition to this internationalization, we also need a transnationalization of music during the Spanish Civil War. The conflict needs finally to be embedded in its European and global contexts. By that, we do not mean mere multi-national projects, which do not necessarily imply changes in conventional criteria and models. A real transnational endeavor requires overcoming both the stereotype of Spanish exceptionalism and the centrality of nation-states in historical narratives, in order to understand the war, its meanings and affects, in a global way. In her chapter for this volume, Beatriz Martínez del Fresno analyzes the imaginary created around Spanish dances at the *Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne* (Paris, 1937) in relation to the politics of the Spanish Republican government, which appeal to the solidarity of neighboring countries in its fight against Fascism, but also within the frame of a new international sensitivity towards popular traditions and their intersections with modern art.

Popular Music and Sound

Popular music and sound continued to be important lacunae in the scholarship of the Spanish Civil War. Since the ground-breaking volume edited by Chris Ealham and Michael Richards in 2005,³¹ historians such as Eduardo González Calleja, Rafael Cruz, Xosé Manoel Núñez Seixas, Santos Juliá, Francisco Sevillano Calero, Antonio Cazorla, Miguel Ángel Ruiz Carnicer, Javier Rodrigo, Zira Box, Miguel Ángel del Arco and Claudio Hernández Burgos have analyzed the representations and symbolic constructions of both sides and the experience of ordinary people during the war. This new paradigm focuses on the everyday life of subaltern groups that have not until now attracted the interest of scholars, such as

31 Chris Ealham and Michael Richards, eds., *The Splintering of Spain: Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War, 1936–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

non-militant women or conscripted soldiers, “reluctant warriors” who represented ninety per cent of the militias and were much more numerous than the volunteers who have monopolized the attention of historians until recently.³²

In the last few years, studies by Pérez Zalduondo, Fernández Higuero, Álvarez González, Miravet Lecha, Díaz Olaya and Iglesias represented a qualitative advance in our knowledge of everyday musical life during the Spanish Civil War. A means of capital importance for music during the Spanish Civil War was the cinema, because films were seen both as a way of escaping and as a tool of political propaganda. Lidia López’s article in this volume examines the sound and meanings of the musical compositions created for the films and documentaries produced by both sides during the conflict and how they were used for ideological persuasion.

In the same way, the study of sound, noise and silence as producers of spaces, emotions and experiences, as well as both symbolic and physical violence, remains unexplored. In her chapter for this book, Gemma Pérez Zalduondo examines sound and silence at a decisive event for the symbolic construction of the Franco regime: the exhumation, transport and burial of José Antonio Primo de Rivera, the founder of the Falange executed at the beginning of the war, from Alicante to the San Lorenzo Basilica of El Escorial in November 1939. The author posits that the soundscape of these ceremonies can be understood as an emotional and aesthetic expression of the connection between the Falange and Catholicism that the Fascist party tried to project into the future.

Memory and Presence

The Spanish Civil War is not like any other topic of Spanish history: it has been continuously absent and present at once; it is a specter or a ghost, to use Jacques Derrida’s words.³³ As scholars, we must be aware of the coexistence of different memories and historical cultures, which cannot be reduced to simple oppositions. Michael Richards, Javier Rodrigo, Peter Anderson, Katherine Stafford and Miguel Ángel del Arco Blanco

32 James Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors: Republican Popular Army and Nationalist Army Conscripts in the Spanish Civil War, 1936–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

33 Jacques Derrida, *The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

have analyzed how the persistence of war memories has shaped social processes in Spain. Nevertheless, the role of music in this persistence is obvious but almost unknown. Repression, commemorations and renditions of the conflict have played a capital role in the inscription of the memories and traumas of the Spanish Civil War in minds and bodies.

In this book, Belén Pérez Castillo analyzes the consequences of the war and the Republican defeat on the bodies and minds of imprisoned musicians. She explores the role of music in the prisons of early Francoism, understood both as places of punishment and as tools of moral regeneration, to instill the ideological precepts of the new regime. From a different perspective, Pedro Ordóñez Eslava examines how the memories and representations of the Civil War have affected recent musical creation in Spain, from opera to flamenco and sound art. He explores the interweaving of different war memories in contemporary artists who make particular re-creations of the conflict that range from recognition to overcoming, from identification to trauma, from homage to subversion.

Some important limitations on writing about the music of the Spanish Civil War today derive from the naturalization of the duality romance-tragedy as the only possible dichotomy of emplotment. Both narratives limit our accounts of the conflict in comparative and global terms. Romance and tragedy are narratives particularly linked to the nation. If human rights, not national rights, are the way to the future of the historiography of the Spanish Civil War, as Antonio Cazorla has recently posited,³⁴ we need more transnational, cultural and popular approaches to the conflict. Music can shed new light on these new histories of Spain “as a country that exemplifies broader trends, rather than backing them”.³⁵ This is also crucial to help Spanish society come to terms with its past within an ongoing process of democratic consolidation. The present book is a point of departure of a collective and multidisciplinary work that will be decisive in calling into question our

34 Antonio Cazorla-Sánchez, “From Ideological to Humanistic Interpretations,” *Contemporary European History* 29 (2020): 257–260.

35 Giuliana Chamedes, “Transnationalising the Spanish Civil War,” *Contemporary European History* 29 (2020): 261–263.

narratives, viewpoints and concerns. It offers a complex and multifaceted vision of music as an active factor of social and cultural transformation in front of, behind and far from the lines, as an invisible weapon that forged collective identifications and changed the course of the war.