

## **Drawing haunting in space: critical approaches to systemic amnesia in Spanish southern shores through art-base practice**

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In her extraordinary essay *Gore Capitalism*, Sayak Valencia affirms that “contemporary history is no longer based on the experience of survivors, but rather on the vast numbers of dead.” (Valencia 28). Therefore, contemporary history is one of a vast number of ghosts.

The story I am about to tell is one of many dead and many different ways of dying. Corpses and living dead, dismembered bodies and people without names, disposable flesh and disposable lives. Accordingly, this is a story of hauntings, of ghosts, of specters, of systemic leaking, of vampires, of addictions. How one dies may take different forms, but I argue, that death, in every one of its shapes, starts by the body. As such, I understand the haunting as *in-carnated*, originating *in the matter* of the body.

All throughout my artistic practice, the haunting emerges when the individual or the community has been reduced to what Agamben names *bare life*, that is, when the person or the group are diminished to their biological body and they are robbed of the potential and capacities of humanity (Agamben). This is the moment when certain people can be legally and/or morally killed or disappeared by the dominant system, and when others may be kept alive but exploited, tortured, imprisoned, un-acknowledged, de-humanized, turned into data.

*Bare life* is not about being barely alive, but about living under the conditions in which those in power have the *sovereign* right to kill, or, as Achille Mbembé describes it, “the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die” (Mbembé 11). Bare life

and the right to kill are two of the core characteristics of the biopolitical regimes theorized by Foucault, who described Francoism as a biopolitical dictatorship (Foucault).

Expanding Foucault analysis, Achille Mbembé describes our current political system as Necropolitics, the politics of death, in which certain lives in certain spaces are disposable. One of those spaces, according to Mbembé, is that of the borderscape.

The *Frontera Sur* is according to the International Organization for Migration the deadliest border in the plane in 2017. I am not certain about the truth of this statement when considering the people missing in deserts, seas, crossings, trucks, that never get to be found and therefore counted in other borderscapes. Also, I am all for changing this statement to something like “The Frontera Sur is the border where the EU migration policies kills a large number of people every day” or “The banality of evil is back in Europe.”

During my residence in Tarifa, the southmost town of peninsular Europe, I established two walking paths that I followed every day. The morning path consisted of an eight km walk along Los Lances beach, on the Atlantic shore. With an exceptional location in the Gibraltar straight, Tarifa has beaches both in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic shore. It is possible to stand on the road that leads to the Isla de las Palomas and have the Atlantic to the right and the Mediterranean on the left. Los Lances beach is the one preferred by Northern European windsurfers and kitesurfers who have turned Tarifa into a hotspot of surfing culture. Because of its size and the sea currents, Los Lances is also where most migrant boats arrive. Though I never saw any boat landing, I did see old abandoned wooden boats, the new ones are rapidly removed by the police. I also saw clothes and shoes and ropes and fishing nets and water bottles and plastic bags. I saw a constant stream of different police agencies: border police, municipal police, state police, etc. I also saw migration-policing radars on the upper hills of the town, fences all around the harbor, and police ships much larger and faster than the Red Cross boats stationed on the marina. I also saw postal trucks and grocery shop trucks entering the fortress in Isla de las Palomas, the site of

one of the most infamous Francoist jail for political prisoners and currently, the Tarifa detention centre for migrants.



Mano lanzada desde un helicóptero. Dibujo de la serie Las Cosas que se quedan.

When the levant wind takes over Tarifa, it is excruciating. The inescapable noise that never stops, the millions of sand grains hitting your skin, the windows, the walls, entering through every single crack. It is truly maddening. Inside the Isla de las Palomas, Francoist prisoners used to become mad because of the Levant wind, many died or killed themselves. Nowadays, this is the place where migrants are forgotten for years, inside a panoptical stone-made fortress with a crazy-making wind. Nobody talks about the Levant as a torture strategy, but it is. The European kitesurfers, on the meantime, fly higher than the walls of the prison, merely a dozen of metres away from the cells.

The “vast number of dead” that Sayak Valencia writes about, do not simply die, as she proves in her essay, they are set to die or left to die at sea, in Isla de las Palomas, or in the greenhouses that produce the vegetables required by the worldly renown Mediterranean cuisine. In the Spanish Frontera Sur, a “vast number of dead” and therefore, a vast number of ghosts, cohabit among tourists, resorts, seaweed, greenhouses, back roads, highways.

The ghosts are those of the civilians raped, tortured, killed and thrown to mass graves by the Francoist army. The ghosts are also those of the drowned migrants who attempted to cross the Gibraltar straight from Africa to Europe smuggled in crowded patched boats, the last NGO rescue ship indefinitely docked by EU policies.

But the ghosts are also those of the ones who physically survived but were turned into bare life: those who lived under 40 years of National-Catholic necropolitical dictatorship, brought up in a fascist system legitimized by Western democracies; the queers who were systematically raped, tortured and used as guinea pigs even after the end of the dictatorship and who still until today have never been acknowledged; the Roma people who are systematically silenced, erased, persecuted, stigmatized, robbed of their cultural production, notably flamenco; the migrants and refugees who survived the crossing, who arrived in buses, in planes but who are systematically exploited by a Western liberal democracy that does not acknowledge their humanity.

“Any historical account of the rise of modern terror needs to address slavery”(21) states Mbembé, who describes slavery as “one of the first instances of biopolitical experimentation”(21). The slave is a *shadow* whose condition “results from a triple loss: loss of a “home,” loss of rights over his or her body, and loss of political status.”(Mbembé 21). The latter is equivalent to *social death*, that is to “the expulsion from humanity altogether”(Mbembé 21).

Giorgio Agamben also analyzes social death. In his influential book *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Agamben considers the Jewish refugees escaping from Nazi Germany. Following Hannah Arendt, Agamben states that the figure of the refugee proves the deception of the modern notion of human rights. He wonders why, if refugees are humans, their human rights are not acknowledged by the nations that are supposed to offer asylum. He concludes that in the modern nation-state system where citizen rights are prioritized over human rights, the humanity of the refugees is less important than their citi-

zenship. In other words, their human condition is dependent on their birth place, nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, etc.



Lata de cerveza aplastada. Dibujo de la serie Las Cosas que se quedan.

This raises the question, as Judith Butler poses it, “Who counts as human? Whose lives count as lives?”(Butler 20).If the body does not *pass* in the “host” society, if the person does not belong into the category of “citizen”, then the process of de-humanization that constitutes the bare life and social death occurs. Racism, colonialism, classism, ableism, homophobia, sexism, transphobia are all occurrences of this process.

The body is central in my work, not through its presence, but through the traces of its presence. The body remains in the objects I drew, the viewer’s body merges with the drawn tourists’ bodies in the photoshoot, the viewer’s body shadow walks among the shadows of the objects projected on the walls of the gallery. As contradictory as it may seem, it is through this strategy of present traces that I aim to expose the body matter of the ghost.

In my work, the ghost is never an ethereal abstract figure, maybe because I have seen too much along the beach, in the back roads leading to the vegetable fields, in the rabble of the concentration camps. I have seen too many pictures, talked to too many

people, listened to too many stories to believe that ghosts are immaterial. In my work, the ghost is someone with a body who leaves traces of their body presence. It is someone reduced to bare life by a necropolitical system that condemns the non-dominant bodies, the non-citizens, to death.

The death that, I argue, produces the ghosts, is not the physiological death. Many people die every day without becoming ghosts. The death that produces the conditions for the haunting in the Spanish shores, is that of bare life and social death.

What the migrants drowned at sea, the civilians killed by the Franco army, the migrants exploited in the greenhouses, the stigmatized Roma community, the political prisoners tortured in Francoist prisons, the women and queer survivors of a sexist ideology inherited from National-Catholicism, the asylum seekers jailed in migration centres, etc have in common, is that they have been robbed of their humanity, that they have *socially die*. It is after this death, that the haunting begins.

To be haunted and to write from that location, to take on the condition of what you study, is not a methodology or a consciousness you can simply adopt or adapt as a set of rules or an identity; it produces its own insights and blindness. Following the ghosts is about making a contact that changes you and refashions the social relations in which you are located. It is about putting life back in where only vague memory or a bare trace was visible to those who bothered to look. It is something about writing ghost stories, stories that not only repair representational mistakes, but also strive to understand the conditions under which a memory was produced in the first place, towards a counter-memory, for the future. (Gordon, *Ghostly Matters* 22)

Avery Gordon published “Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination” in 1997, in another era, before the popularization of the internet, smart phones, social media, before, as she reminds the readers of the new edition, 9/11 and the Global War on Terror with its “ghost airplanes, ghost prisons, ghost “detainees”(Gordon, *Ghostly Matters* xix).

Through interdisciplinary research, candid social commitment and poetic writing, Avery Gordon establishes the haunting as a political occurrence and the ghost as a social figure. Gordon defines the haunting as “an animated state in which a repressed or unresolved social violence is making itself known”( *Ghostly Matters* xvi), that is, the haunting emerges from the violent conditions created by the systemic necropolitical powers. The ghost is for Gordon “the sign [that] a haunting is taking place”( *Ghostly Matters* 8) and accordingly, the ghost is not “simply a dead or missing person, but a social figure”( *Ghostly Matters* 8). The haunting and the ghosts are therefore always political as they emerge as a consequence and a response to the systems of power: white supremacy, colonialism, heterocentrism, etc.



Dientes perdidos. Dibujo de la serie Las Cosas que se quedan.

Though those system have existed for a long time, Francoist regime contributed to reinforce them through the imposition of its National-Catholic ideology. These systems are also in place, under different shapes and masks, within the current EU migration policies. In that sense it is important to remember the everlasting capacity for power to mutate and adapt to new social environments. As Gordon puts it:

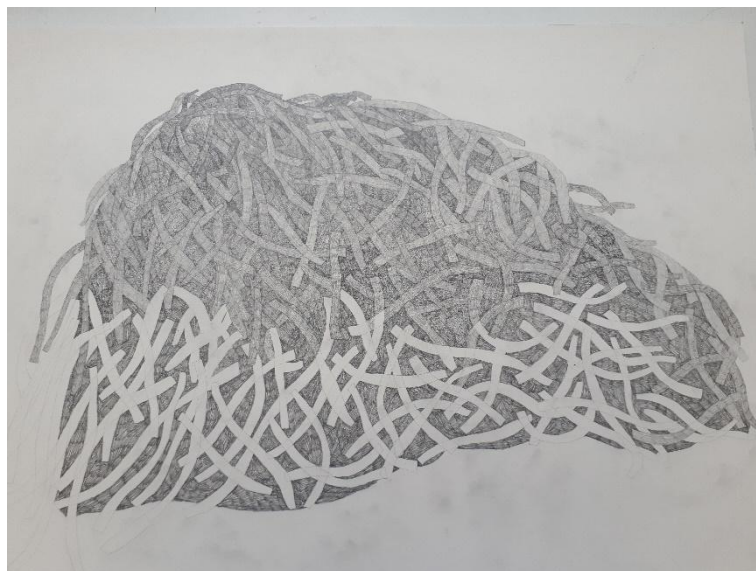
Power can be invisible, it can be fantastic, it can be dull and routine. It can be obvious, it can reach you by the baton of the police, it can speak the language of thoughts and desires. It can feel like remote control, it can exhilarate like liberation, it can travel through time, and it can drown you in the present. It is dense and superficial, it can cause bodily injury, and it can harm you without seeming ever to touch you. It is systematic and particularistic and it is often both at the same time. It causes dreams to live and dreams to die. We can and must call it by recognizable names, but so too we need to remember that power arrives in forms that can range from blatant white supremacy and state terror to "furniture without memories."*(Ghostly Matters 3)*

This sentence, "furniture without memories" that Gordon borrows from Toni Morrison's first novel *The Bluest Eye*(1970), is where, for me, the haunting emerges. I instantly question how any (I assume used) furniture can exist without the memories of the bodies that touch, manipulate, lay on them. This "without memories" is not casual nor accidental, it is an intentional act of erasure that, "to those who bothered to look"(Gordon, *Ghostly Matters 22*) reaffirms the silenced invisible body. According to Gordon, this "furniture without memories" is that "sad and sunken couch that sags in just that place where an



unrememberable past and an unimaginable future force us to sit day after day” (*Ghostly Matters* 4).

In my own work, I chose to depict these “furniture” as objects from diverse categories that may be found at the beach and where the traces of the body also remain: beer cans, glasses, shoes, boats, cigarette butts, broken chairs, etc... We drink from cans, we use glasses to see, we board on boats to migrate, we walk with shoes, we smoke cigarettes. The relation between the object and the body is direct and concrete: for instance, if we were to look for it, we may find DNA on the cans, on the boats, on the cigarettes. If we were to try on the shoes, we would physically feel the weight, the posture, the movement, the shape of the person who wore them. Erasing the memory of the body from the shoe is impossible, except, as in the case of the migrant boats, the shoe is itself remove from view, hiding the shoe and the reasons that brought the shoe to the beach in the first place: the person who wore it, the sea crossing, the migration journey, its roots in European colonial history, the European neoliberal migration policies that put an end to it.



Montaña de algas endémicas. Dibujo de la serie Las Cosas que se quedan.

If the shoe remains, the traces of the body remain and the ghost remains. If the shoe is removed, the traces of the body are removed but the ghost remains. This is what the Spanish border police has failed yet to understand when they remove the boats from view. As long as there is an “unresolved social violence” Gordon asserts that the ghost will “[make] itself known”(Gordon, «Some Thoughts on Haunting and Futurity» 3).The ghost does not only respond to a past or present violence but it “prompts a something-to-be-done”(idem3), an action from the witness of the haunting. Indeed, the ghost demands “a counter-memory, for the future.”(idem).

This brings me to an important reflection in my work, which is that of victimization and complex personhood. Gordon’s understanding of the haunting, though pointing at the violence of the system, does not reduce the ghost to a victim. Instead she proposes to apply the notion of “complex personhood”( *Ghostly Matters* 4-5) to everyone involved in the haunting: the ghosts, the witness and those in power. “Complex personhood” for Gordon means that everyone is engaged in multiple social dynamics, imaginaries, stories, memories and forgettings. Therefore, no one is exclusively and, in all contexts and relationships, a victim. This obviously does not mean that people are not victims of the white supremacist EU migration system, or were not victims of the Francoist torture apparatus, but it does acknowledge that one is victim of a system but one is not a victim in essence. The essentialization of victimhood does negate the complexity, the resilience and agency inherent to every human. To the contrary, recognizing the “complex personhood” of those living the “unresolved social violence” acknowledges their humanity.

The media coverage of the migrant sea crossing abounds in pictures of migrant dead bodies on the beach. We all have seen these iconic images, printed on the papers, posted on social media, re-staged by activists and artists alike. Though I recognize the emotional efficiency of these pictures, I also judge them as problematic, which is one of the reasons that I have consciously avoided the presence of full dead bodies in my work. The

only body parts that appeared are not drawn from pictures of contemporary migrants, but of archival documents from the Spanish War. Similarly, of the thousands of archival pictures, I have refused to draw any identifiable body part, for example the face. This is a decision I have taken out of respect for the dead person and their relatives, and also out of concern, with the role that art can play in the revictimization of non-dominant identities and communities. I question what it means to show an image of a dead body in a gallery, what are the power dynamics between the position of the person who died (for example a Senegal boy crossing the Gibraltar Straight) and that of the viewer (in a heated gallery in Canada), what else can we really learn about the person from the image other they died, where is the rest of the story?

Instead I decided to do many drawings of many objects that may be read in different ways. Because this is also my experience at the beach.

The shoe that I drew may be the shoe of a migrant who drowned at sea, it could also be the shoe of a fisherman, and the shoe of a tourist who lost it while they wander bare foot and the shoe of my own childhood memories. A wooden boat is an abandoned migrant boat and an old fishing boat. A bottle of water with a label in Arabic is the remains of a crossing and the remnants of a picnic in Tangiers and a piece of trash from a greenhouse. Every object carries many memories and many possible stories. This strategy allows me to recognize the limitations of storytelling when dealing with impossible stories.



Test de exposición de la serie Las Cosas que se quedan.

In *Venus in Two Acts* Historian Saidiya Hartman shares the painful challenge of writing the story of a little girl, Venus, who died (was killed) on board of a slave ship. Her name only appears once in the archive (notes taken during the judicial process against the captain of the ship) which raises the question of how to tell her story, what is appropriate in the framework of History, and, again, the violence of the archive:

And how does one tell impossible stories? Stories about girls bearing names that deface and disfigure, about *the words exchanged* between shipmates that never acquired any standing in the law and that failed to be recorded in the archive, about the appeals, prayers and secrets never uttered because no one was there to receive them?(10)

To this challenge, Hartman answers with a methodology that she names “critical fabulation” which simultaneously serves “to tell an impossible story and to amplify the impossibility of its telling”(11). Hartman describes “critical fabulation” methodology as a “recombinant narrative”(12) composed of several strategies, notably the interweaving of past-present-future, the “refusal to fill up the gaps”, “the respect of Black noise”, i.e. superposition, opacity, non-sense, the awareness that visibility only happens in disappearance and the acceptance of the “inevitable failure”(Hartman 12) of ever reaching the factual truth.

As Saidiya Hartman, I am interested in telling these impossible stories, the stories that cannot be proven according to traditional historical, sociological or scientific methodologies. Indeed, the stories of haunting, ghosts, vampires, leakings, living dead that inhabit my work cannot be narrated as historical findings finally unrooted from archival records. Though I am fascinated by History and archival documentation and I use a lot of these sources in my work, my intention is to understand what these records tell us about the haunting and about the system that created the conditions for the haunting. In that sense, using these sources allow me to create the space, the details, the connections that will bring the impossible story into view. What is seen, though, is not the story *as* truth, but the impossibility to fully apprehend it. My work resonates with Hartman’s narrative strategy of critical fabulation and with Hirsch notion of post-memory: these are fragment of stories, traces of events, flashes of memories, embodied recollection, things we feel more than things we know. As such, the haunting is systemic but also particular to each of us. The meanings and stories we create from these drawings depend on our positionality, our life experiences, our knowledge, our emotions and our imagination. Contrary to the archive, where records exist independently of the researcher, embodied memories require the presence of the viewer and their interaction to emerge.

My work positions the body of the viewer as an agent and site of memory and echoes Taylor's statement that "people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by "being there", being part of the transmission"(Taylor 20).

Though visually absent from the exhibition, the body is central in my work: the viewer interacts with the cardboard tourists' bodies, they may choose to merge their bodies with them, they walk among the things that are left, most of these things carry on traces of bodies (cigarettes, beer cans, bottles, boats, etc.) or are in fact body parts (hands, teeth), the first room is hot and bright, the second is dark, forcing our eyes to adapt.

In *The Archive and The Repertoire*, performance scholar Diana Taylor reminds us that there are other forms of knowledge outside the written word of archives and History, and points out to embodied memories that manifest in the repertoire: "the repertoire [...] enacts embodied memory— performances, gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing—in short, all those acts usually thought of as ephemeral, non-reproducible knowledge"(Taylor 19-20). Taylor states that performance, which she defines as "embodied practice [that] offers a way of knowing"(Taylor 143), is intimately connected to the experience of ghosting because "performance makes visible (for an instant, live, now) that which is always there: the ghosts, the tropes, the scenarios that structure our individual and collective life"(20).

The emergence of ghosts through the embodied action offers the possibility of "an alternative perspective on historical processes"(Taylor 20). Accordingly, Taylor presents performance as an "act of transfer"(1) that challenges dominant discourses by "generat[ing], record[ing], and transmit[ing] knowledge"(20). Through her extraordinary analysis of performance in the Americas, Taylor positions the repertoire as the colonized subversive strategies of cultural resistance and knowledge transmission. The focus is set on how colonized, silenced stories continue to be transferred from one generation to the other by subverting dominant genocidal discourses.

Focusing on post-Holocaust Jewish families, Marianne Hirsh also develops her work on how traumatic memories of genocide are transmitted intergenerationally. Concur-

ring with Taylor, though using different terminology, Hirsch states that memory, contrary to History, is characterized by “the presence of embodied experience in the process of transmission”(Hirsch 111). She coins the term *post-memory* to “describe the relationship that the generation after those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma bears to the experiences of those who came before, experiences that they “remember” only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up”(106).

Something particularly interesting about Hirsch’s definition of post-memory is that post-memory does not function as a factual recording tool of past event, instead, it is built on “imaginative investment, projection, and creation”(107). In her very poetic writing, Hirsch argues that post-memory, which she also calls “no-memories”, are “communicated in “ashes of imagery” and “broken refrains,” transmitted through “the language of the body [...]”(109). Along with Saidiya Hartman’s “critical fabulation”, Hirsch’s insightful depiction of post-memory has been very influential in the development of a fragmented narrative strategy in my own work.

Nevertheless, and this is where my research has to adapt to a complex understanding of haunting, both Taylor and Hirsch focus on memories or embodied practices as acts of transmission despite dominant powers. In the case of the Spanish haunting, bodies are *possessed* by the Francoist regime through an embodied systemic leaking. Though obviously there was resistance to this process, in the context of Spain the embodied practices and performance are largely vampirized by the Francoist discourse.<sup>1</sup>

In their inspiring article “A Glossary of Haunting”, Eve Tuck and C. Reed describe Reed’s installation *Dark Water* as a response to the homonymous Japanese horror movie by Hideo Nakata. This installation and the movie focus on the presence of a leak: “Nakata’s simple device of the leak expresses the horror of walls transgressed, physical structures

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<sup>1</sup>As someone born in the Transition, between Franco’s death (1975) and Tejero’s military coup d’etat (1981), I find my own statement extremely challenging and sad. It does bring me memories and experiences of my own Franco’s haunting, both in myself and in those around me.

made permeable and violated of their visual promise of protective boundaries”(Tuck & Ree 645). Though, in the movie and the installation the leak manifest itself through architectural sites, for Tuck and Ree it is clear that the boundaries that are crossed and changed through the leaking are indeed our personal (physical, emotional, cultural, etc.) boundaries. Who we are is impacted by the leaking through a process they named “mutual implication”: “Mutual implication, or *nos-otras*, is a way of describing how the colonized and the colonizer “leak’ into each other’s lives” (Torre & Ayala, 2009, p. 390, citing Anzaldúa, 1987) after centuries of settlement.”(649).

Though Tuck and Ree note that the colonized also leak into the colonizer’s lives (a process also known as *transculturation*[Taylor 10]), in the case of my research, I use the leaking as an infiltration from top to bottom, from dominant to dominated, from Franco to the Spanish social body.

One of the consistent characteristics of the way the haunting and the ghosts is thought and expressed in Spanish scholars is through its relationship to the body. Though they remain experiences of the in-between, their existence is anchored in the flesh and their presence remains strongly embodied or tie to bodily actions. Indeed, the notion of leaking and mutual implication is key in all the Spanish authors and artists I have studied: it is not possible to consider the current political situation without understanding Franco’s haunting or leaking into present Spanish society.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, the leaking is expressed not through an architectural metaphor, as Tuck and Ree do, but through a full bodily experience as in this extract from Teresa Vilarós’ “El mono del desencanto”:

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<sup>23</sup>“Se ha olvidado que la democracia española desciende directamente del franquismo. No se recuerda que sus espacios, sus signos y sus actores han sido formados por las escuelas y las formas de vida de aquellos sombríos años, por sus mismos cuadros políticos y élites intelectuales.” [We have forgotten that the Spanish democracy descends directly from Francoism. We don’t remember that its spaces, its signs and actors have been formed in the schools and in the life ways of those dark years, by the same politicians and intellectual elites] Eduardo Subirats, “Contra todo simulacro”, cited in(Vilarós, *El mono del desencanto. Una crítica cultural de la transición española (1973-1993)* 49) Vilarós, *El mono del desencanto. Una crítica cultural de la transición española (1973-1993)*, 49.



De la expulsión a la aspiración, del vómito a la succión, la transición española se instala en el cuerpo español, en nuestro cuerpo, como quiste canceroso e invasivo, como ancestral serpiente o antiguo vampiro que en un eterno retorno de lo mismo, regurgita y chupa, chupa y regurgita. (*El mono del desencanto. Una crítica cultural de la transición española (1973-1993)* 51)

From the ejection to the sniff/ambition, from the vomit to the suction, the Spanish transition settles into the Spanish body, in our body, as a cancerous and invasive tumor, as an ancestral snake or an old vampire who in an eternal return of the same thing, regurgitates and sucks, sucks and regurgitates” [my translation]

This leaking through the body emerges in the context of “la siniestrabiológica imperial-nacionalfranquista” (Vilarós, *El mono del desencanto. Una crítica cultural de la transición española (1973-1993)* 17) [the sinister Francoist imperial-national biopolitics] where historical memory of the Spanish war and the dictatorship needed not only to be forgotten, but for society to be “disincarnated”, to have their soul separated from the (social) body. Teresa Vilarós uses multiple figures to evoke the *desencarnado: el fantasma, el vampiro, el caníbal, el adicto, el zombie*, the transplanted body, the cyborg are some of them. (*El mono del desencanto. Una crítica cultural de la transición española (1973-1993)* 55)

All these social metaphors have in common the liminal position of the living dead and their direct relationship to Franco. In fact, for Vilarós, Franco or the Francoism “alimentaron el cuerpo del país, fueron fuente única, surtidor que de forma inescapable y minuciosa, perversa si se quiere, de año en año, de mes en mes y de día a día dirigió el fluido vital de la sociedad española” (*El mono del desencanto. Una crítica cultural de la transición española*

(1973-1993) 55)[Franco or Francoism fed the body of the country, were unique source, pump, that in an inescapable and meticulous way, perverse if you want, year to year, month to month and day to day directed the vital fluid of Spanish society].

Accordingly, Franco's leaking simulates a feeding tube or a full blood transfusion that consistently replaces the vital fluids from the body of Spanish society. Therefore, Franco is not only a *fantasma* overshadowing Spanish society, as many authors have stated,<sup>4</sup> but in fact, Franco's haunting takes the form of an inescapable systemic leaking. In this systemic leaking, individuals are transformed into living dead or *desencarnados* through a constant, inescapable, transfusion of Francoism (those rejecting it were sentence to physical death). Indeed, such is the amount of the leaking (40 years of it) that by Franco's death, he has become part of every Spaniard born during and after the regime. Spanish society has indeed become *possessed* by Francoism.<sup>5</sup>

One of the key elements to understand the current social and political situation in Spain is to make sense of how this process of possession not only affected those on Franco's side (who were already convinced by his National-Catholic biopolitics and therefore welcome to turn into "Una, Grande y Libre"<sup>6</sup>[One, Big and Free] with him), but as well, those who resisted him in life and even, the new generation born in the Transition (1973-1993) and the Democratic period (1993-).

The disturbing leaking becomes apparent in Franco's last days, when in Vilarós' words, he becomes the "Franco-cyborg"(Vilarós, «Banalidad y biopolítica: la transición

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<sup>4</sup>Juan Carlos Ibañez, though critical of these statements, summarizes different scholar positions on the matter: "the figure of Franco as the origin of the social conflicts and cultural specters affecting contemporary Spain; the persistence of the myth or shadow of the dictator over present-day decentralized Spain [...] and/or the vision of the transition to democracy as an experience of collective amnesia and the erasure of memory." Ibañez, 'Memory, Politics, and the Post-Transition in Almodóvar's Cinema', 156.

<sup>5</sup>Catalan poet Gabriel Ferrater, who committed suicide in 1972, expresses the possession in this simple verse: "quan el cucs faran un sopar fred amb el meu cos, trobaran un regust de tu" [when the worms make a cold supper with my body, they will have an aftertaste of you]. Gabriel Ferrater, "Posseït" cited in Vilarós, El mono del desencanto. Una crítica cultural de la transición española (1973-1993), 69.

<sup>6</sup>"Una, Grande y Libre" is one of the main Francoist slogans to describe Spain: it helped the regime to reinforce national unity, imperialism and independence from foreign powers.

española y el nuevo orden del mundo» 36), a body kept alive artificially through machines and whose agony is continuously mediatized.<sup>7</sup> At this moment when anti-Francoist resistance could have exploded, not much really happened: “muchos, muchísimos, simplemente siguieron adelante con sus vidas de siempre.”(Vilarós, «Banalidad y biopolítica: la transición española y el nuevo orden del mundo» 37) [many, many, simply continued ahead with their lives as always].

Life and the Francoist apparatus go on after Franco’s death, largely due to the financial, social transformations achieved by Tourism. Spain has entered modernity thanks to the myth-alibi created by the Tourism: it is a new country where there is no need, and no time, to reflect on the insidious consequences of a civil war and 36 years of fascist dictatorship. Spain has changed without radically changing, policemen are still very where but now they are different: “No hay lugar para guardias estentóreos sino para aquellos silenciosos y eficientes que ya pululaban en los sesenta en el panorama civil y turístico [...]” (Vilarós, «Banalidad y biopolítica: la transición española y el nuevo orden del mundo» 36)[there is no longer room for strident policemen, only for those silent and efficient who swarmed around in the sixties in the cities and touristic landscape”.

The role of Tourism in the becoming haunting of Francoism is crucial. Tourism supported financially and ideologically the end of the regime, allowing for superficial changes that did not threaten the core of Francoism but helped to cement it in the Spanish landscape. Accordingly, it brought to the average Spaniard the potential of the European neoliberal modern paradigm. But reaching Europe, which is central in the Transition program, requires a simulacrum of peace achieved through the “Pact of Oblivion”.

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<sup>7</sup> On Franco’s death and the relationship to power, Foucault writes “[Franco’s death] is very interesting because of the symbolic values it brings into play, because the man who died had, as you know, exercised the sovereign right of life and death with great savagery, was the bloodiest of the dictators, wielded the absolute right of life for forty years, and at the moment when he himself was dying, he entered this sort of new field of power over life which consists not only in managing life, but in keeping individuals alive after they are dead” (Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 248).

This haunting has an even more threatening aspect due to its characteristic systemic leaking. If Franco, as Teresa Vilarós affirms, was the constant vital fluid that took over the bodies of Spanish society, one can expect that after his death, the bodies would regain agency. Nevertheless, that was not the case, not even among the anti-Franco movement nor the intellectual elite. The insidious systemic leaking much like the political apparatus, survived/s Franco-cyborg's physiological death. In this sense, Francoism opposes Agamben's living dead, by becoming a dead that stays very much alive.

Accordingly, Francoism leaking also appear in my drawings. It is part of the things that remain as direct or indirect legacies from the National-Catholic dictatorship: the systemic heterocentrism, the racist notion of "Reconquista" used by extreme-right political parties, the monuments and streets consecrated to the dictator, the mass graves, the razor-blade border fences, the radical church, the masses and festivals to the glory of the Franco's army, the stolen properties, etc.

Vilarós explains the stagnation of leftist thinkers as an embodied response to the sudden lack of vital fluid. Using the slang term for a violent symptom of abstinence, she names this state *el Mono* and argues that "Franco o el franquismo no fueron únicamente un régimen político; fueron también y quizá sobre todo [...] una adicción, un enganche simbólico y real" (Vilarós, *El mono del desencanto. Una crítica cultural de la transición española (1973-1993)* 55) [Franco or Francoism were not only a political regime; they were too and maybe over all [...] an addiction, a symbolic and real hook].

Vilarós' committed investigation with *el Mono* as a constitutive element of Spanish democracy brings light to the extent at which Franco's traces continue to flow in the blood of Spanish society. At the same time, the metaphor of Franco as an addictive drug (specifically heroin)<sup>8</sup> is useful to understand the current political situation: on one hand, as in any

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<sup>8</sup>Though out of the scope of this research, it is interesting to analyze the massive entrance of heroin in the country coinciding with Franco's death and the impact of this drug in the leftist movement. Vilarós' investigation on *el Mono* is built on parallelisms specifically to heroin addiction.

addictive drug, we are constantly haunted by the presence of its absence, and on the other, a small portion of the same drug can make us addicts over and over. With the rise of the extreme right in Spain, Franco's haunting certainly has the potential of becoming incarnated again.

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