MONASH University

Looking for Lola:

Spanish Women and Historical Memory

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Abstract

This thesis explores the life and death of Dolores García-Negrete (1886-1940) and how she has been remembered. It seeks to explain her growth from a devout Catholic woman, wife and mother to the political activist for which she was arrested, tried and executed at the end of the Spanish Civil War. The thesis situates her life within the context of the social and political transformations that impacted on women's lives in Spain during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It argues that the changes to acceptable social roles for women made possible her late, public transformation into a vociferous defender of the Second Spanish Republic. The thesis further argues that her execution was the result of her transgression of the regressive gender norms espoused by the victorious Franco regime (1939-1975).

The thesis situates her life and how it has been remembered by her family and broader Spanish society within debates taking place in contemporary Spain about the role of historical and family memory. It seeks to understand why Dolores's actions were largely forgotten within the family. In retelling her story, the thesis seeks to provide greater understanding of the gendered nature of historical memory and to provide restorative justice as articulated through the 2007 "Law of Historical Memory."

Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or equivalent institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Signed

Sally Nena Hayward Baker

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Introduction

At dawn on the first of March 1940, Dolores García-Negrete – Lola - was taken from her prison cell to the local cemetery in a town in southern Spain, and executed by firing squad. She was buried in a common grave nearby. With her death came the final dissolution of a family respected for its local profile of social concern, political commitment and revolutionary activism. Also lost was the story of this prolific and remarkable family. Dolores was one of fifty thousand or more men and women who were killed during and after the Spanish Civil War because of their support for the Republican cause (Anderson "Singling out victims" 9). Her many children were imprisoned or fled into exile. Those who remained in Spain, like so many others, learned to live in "a maze of misery and silence" for the next forty years (Cobo Romero "Stability and Consolidation" 38). Seven months after her death, during the blitz of September 1940, I was born in a hospital in South London. Dolores was my grandmother.

It is now seventy-five years since the end of the Civil War and forty years since the end of the dictatorship. In the Transition from dictatorship to democracy a new constitution was enacted in 1978. The new constitution acknowledged some of the past, and since then, as Golob proposes, the country "has arguably moved well beyond its insecure transition to achieve a firmly consolidated European democracy". The avoidance of military trials, of the assignment of culpability or any serious attempts at restitution created "the 'deep freeze' [...] which produced the Spanish success story: reconciliation without truth, transition *without* transitional justice"(127, emphasis in original).

The death of the dictator and the end of the dictatorship in 1975 accelerated the move towards democracy and modernisation. The exposure of some of the stories of the past was becoming possible too as the archives of the war became available to historians (Boyd "Politics" 136). This was following years of silence, of reluctance to talk. Of his own ignorance, Emilio Silva,

journalist and instigator of the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica, recalled "Yo soy de aquella generación que, cuando acabó el franquismo, no supieron qué enseñar del tema, o no quisieron, y no lo tocaron. Lo único que leí yo en el colegio, fue en el año '75, que nos hicieron aprendernos de memoria el testamento de Franco. Yo iba a cumplir 10 años" (Labanyi "Entrevista" 144). This was an ignorance imposed by manipulation of the school curriculum. This manipulation was constructed to "control [...] the myths upon which the legitimacy of our institutions is based" as observed by José Álvarez Junco in the history wars of the 1990s (Boyd "Politics" 140). But there was also a fearful discretion which silenced the memories. Silva's grandmother "supo todo lo que paso a su marido, pero nunca lo contó, porque esa información transmitida a la cabeza de sus hijos, podía ponerlos en peligro." She like thousands of others did not speak because it was a question of fear "incrustado en el tuétano." For personal, professional and political reasons, "borrabas tu identidad, o la de tu familia" (Labanyi "Entrevista" 144). In a similar way the identity of the Castillo García-Negrete family was erased from the city of Jaén, and its once high profile continues to be only a poignant memory for its members, expressed in the letters of my aunt María-Victoria and my cousin Dolores – Loli – Castillo-Ramirez.

This was the fear, amongst the vanquished and their children, of further repression and punishment, which suppressed their memories and their voices. There was also a fear, perhaps more shadowy and even more suppressed, amongst the victors and their children, of a final accounting, of a suspended restitution owing to those victims who had been denied real justice under the Franco regime. "There was a widespread fear of reopening old wounds that the Franco regime had, for so long, expressly and explicitly prevented from healing" (Graham "Coming to terms" 31), including those wounds which were self-inflicted. Out of this fear, on both sides, grew the need for legislation. The collective amnesia was enshrined in law with the Amnesty Law of 1977, the year before the new Constitution. The "systematic avoidance of conflictual issues and the constant search for consensus amongst all parties" (Aguilar Fernández xviii) was depended upon to maintain the figment of the successful transition. When Silva insisted on founding the Asociación

para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica [ARMH] many were intimidated by the weight of the more recent past and fled from demands to – literally – uncover the dead and their stories. He recalled how "el lider del Partido Popular [PP], hablando de la memoria histórica, está diciendo constantemente que esto no importa a nadie, está llamando 'nadie' a miles de personas" (Labanyi "Entrevista" 154). Aznar, the leader of the right-wing PP, was expressing a hope that nobody really cared about these people but that if they did the law would silence them once again, recast them as nobodies. Señor Aznar was wrong, however. Thousands of people still care, and are not intimidated. My need to make my grandmother "somebody" is what led to this search for Lola.

The competing demands, moral, ethical, legal and cultural, of those dead people and their stories swung as if on a pendulum, currently, in 2015, pushed by the political expediences of the ruling PP [Boyd "Politics" 140-141]. The Amnesty Law was designed to protect the heirs of the Franco regime from responsibility for the crimes of the regime, which has invited continuing international condemnation (Reuters 10 Feb. 2012). The Law of Historical Memory, designed to protect the memory of the survivors and the dignity of the dead, has been the target of constant efforts by the PP to weaken it, for instance through disempowering Judge Baltazar Garzón and by withdrawal of the already limited state funding for exhumations (Labanyi "Multiple temporalities" 3-4).

The timing of my entry into this minefield was completely arbitrary. I had only a minimal interest in Spain, its music, its art, its food, thanks to my godfather, José-Luis Castillo, and it was the sudden revelation by my mother of the truth of my paternity - that he was in fact not my godfather but my real father - which kicked me into the pool of Spanish history.

I had been one of millions of tourists who had visited Spain in the sixties, and then again fifty years later, in the early twenty-first century, without any real awareness of its history. The Spaniards knew no more than the ignorant tourists, perhaps less. As Silva pointed out, his generation was deliberately kept ignorant, and his parents deliberately "forgot", adopting the

"*pacto del olvido*". Under Franco it was not advisable to ask too many questions about the past; it was better to leave one's memories in Golob's "deep freeze". But since the death of Franco and the "insecure transition" there had been moves towards re-visiting the past by Spaniards even before Silva's formation of the Association and the passing of the Law. Writing in 2001, Aguilar Fernández identified the paradox of a public which was being denounced in the daily press for its "collective amnesia [...] regarding the Civil War" at the same time that it was being "veritably inundated with literary and film works about the war." Memories of the past were creeping into Spain's awareness under the cloak of popular culture, and being transformed into history (xix).

The altercation over the Salamanca Papers, the *Archivo Histórico Nacional: Sección Guerra Civil,* certainly was instrumental in stirring the public interest in the war and its aftermath. The archives consist of enemy documentation collected by the Franco bureaucratic machine during and after the war. They had been made available to researchers during the transition, but now a controversy grew out of the refusal by the bureaucracy to return them to their legitimate owners - political parties, institutions, trade unions and private citizens, religious groups and the Freemasons. The controversy had been building since the transition and came to a head in 1996, quietened, and then climaxed in 2002 following the planning of a cultural event in Salamanca which was built around an exhibition of "documents looted by fascists from democratic bodies" (Strubell Trueta 8). With a significant input from Strubell Trueta's friend Paul Preston, public awareness of these documents and interest in many other archives around the country was awakened. It is indeed fortuitous that the opening up of so much of the archival material to historians and other researchers has taken place in the last fifteen to twenty years, and that so much has been made available through the Internet. Without access to these and to the considerable scholarship in Spanish history carried out by English speakers and published in English my own research would have been far more difficult if not impossible. It seems that the importance to English historians of the uncovering of the story is partly explained by the continuing interest in England in the exploits of the many English members of the International Brigades. A further explanation of Latin

American rejection of Spanish scholarship in the fifties and later was because of a prejudice as widespread as it was unjust: "everything published *over there* reeked of fustiness, sacristy and Francoism" (Mario Vargas Llosa, emphasis in original, cited in Treglown 8). Latin-American readers did not trust anything that originated in Spain. As we have seen in the dialogue between Labanyi and Silva, the hunt for the truth by Spanish descendants is a much more painful experience than mine, even if it is not such a linguistic challenge.

The quest to uncover/recover Dolores's story began with an early-morning phone call in September 2003 from my mother Mabel in England. She told me that my dad, Ronald Cook, was not my father, and that my father was the man I had always known as my godfather, Uncle Joe, late of Jaén, in Andalucía. I was overwhelmed by sensations of astonishment, awe, excitement and pride. I had always loved my Spanish godfather, and had many memories of his affectionate interest in me throughout my childhood. To know that he was in fact my father gave me a glowing sense of joy.

In 1939 he was still deeply traumatised, like thousands of other Republican exiles, by his experiences in the Spanish Civil War. He had to recover from the horrors of the forced flight across the Pyrenees, the weeks of hunger and cold in the camp at St Cyprien, the hazardous journey through France to England, and the anxieties of beginning a new life in England without a word of English (Castillo García-Negrete José-Luis 5-6). As Sharif Gemie points out, for these Republican refugees "the journey is a transition from a situation of relatively secure status to a situation in which almost everything appears uncertain" (5). At that time he probably had no idea, only fears, for the fate of the rest of his family, all of whom had supported the Second Spanish Republic. When he arrived at the house in South London in October 1939, Ronald recognised his depression and asked my mother, a cheerful and optimistic woman, to see if she could cheer him up – "... whatever it takes." He and my mother became lovers. I was born in September 1940, under skies crackling with the Battle of Britain, in the Nelson Hospital in Wimbledon. After he made his first visit to us in the maternity ward Joe went home and wrote in his diary: "Sin duda, ella es mi hija" (personal

communication from Mabel Cook). At my christening he gave me the name Nena, an Andalusian nickname, meaning darling girl. This was the beginning of a long and warm friendship, although one based on denial and secrecy.

When the war ended in September 1945 my idyllic world was severely threatened. Peace for me was a mixed blessing. I was about to start school, my little sister Tina was due to be born and Uncle Joe was about to leave the 'ménage-a-trois' – so described by Mabel to me – to marry the beautiful Teresa from Valencia and start his own family. The two families, with the two Cook girls and the three Castillo boys, continued their close friendship over the next twenty years, spending Christmas and holidays together, picnics in local parks, and visits to circuses, museums and markets. Many of the holiday snapshots of us were taken by Joe. There was a visit in 1953 of Uncle Joe's nephew, Federico Castillo, son of Pablo, from his home in Madrid. He had been sent to us in London to improve his English. He was thirteen to my twelve, and was tall, and cool, and very exotic, in spite of his fair hair and blue eyes. He came and went in weeks, not to be re-encountered for another sixty years. All I knew as a child of the history of Uncle Joe and Aunty Terry was that there had been a war in Spain, their side had lost and they would never be able to return.

Adulthood, marriage, parenthood: I was growing up and away from my childhood. There was still a strong tie between my "godfather" and me. When my daughter Zoë was born in 1964, we invited Joe's first born, José-Luis junior, to be her godfather. Luis was 17 and a warm intelligent young man. He enthusiastically took on the role and his younger brothers dedicated themselves as the "god-uncles".

We emigrated to Australia in late 1968, and over the next twenty-five years my life progressed with only a few hiccups. I lost touch with Luis and the god-uncles. Unlike Lola my marriage did not last. An occasionally expressed attitude by friends and acquaintances was that my interest in going back to study would work against the stability of my marriage, and as it was said, "University was a marriage hazard." English husband was exchanged for an Australian one, helping

the process of enculturation in the security and comfort of Melbourne's leafy suburbs. As my children, only two compared to Lola's fourteen, matured, I was able to look outside home and work and, thanks to the help given to women by the Whitlam government, I went back to university. At this time women were being seen as an untapped resource in Australia, and underqualified women were given every opportunity to raise our educational qualification levels to gain access to careers and professions previously closed to us. In Spain, in contrast, women at this time, in the 1970s, lived lives still bound by tradition although their material comforts were vastly improved as they moved into the twentieth century. Their educational and professional opportunities were still circumscribed by their domestic obligations. Equality of access to education for both sexes was not mandated until 1970 but results were not seen until several years after that (Flecha García 31).

Following my mother's revelation, on my next visit to London, I discovered that Joe had died, his widow Teresa was still in the flat where they had lived for fifty years, and that she was leaving two days later to return home permanently to Valencia. Her two sons, Luis and Pablo, were astonished and pleased to learn that they had a big sister, although "I don't think we should tell mum." Pablo gave me the key to the next step, our grandmother's name. When I googled it I found a photograph of her on a web site dedicated to the Spanish Civil War in Jaén, constructed by Luis-Miguel Sánchez Tostado, a local criminologist and historian. His publications include a multi-layered web-site, essays and chapters in a number of books, including the catalogue of an exhibition, *La Mujer en la Historia de Jaén* in 2008, and his own titles *Los maquis en Sierra Mágina*, prologue by Baltasar Garzón Real (1998), *La Guerra no acabó en el 39: lucha guerrillera y resistencia republicana en la provincia de Jaén 1939-1952* (2001), *La Guerra Civil en Jaén,* prologue by Paul Preston (2006), *Jaén en el exilio republicano* (2011), and *Rojos y fascistas: república, guerra civil y primer franquismo en Baños de la Encina (2013).* Sections of the web-site and some of his books include accounts of the Castillo family of Jaén and a biography of Dolores García-Negrete. [1]

[1] http://www.historiamujeres.es/vidas/Garcia-Negrete_Ruiz_Zarco_Dolores.html

She was born in Alcalá-la-Real, a provincial city in Jaén province, in 1886. She was convent-educated, and she married a distant cousin Federico Castillo at 18. They had fourteen children. My father was the sixth son. She died when she was 53, on the first of March, 1940.

In late 2009 I realised that the following March marked the seventieth anniversary of her death and made plans to go to Jaén. Señor Sánchez Tostado with so much knowledge of our family offered to be our guide, but a sudden and unexpected obstacle was thrown into our plans. Covadonga Rincón, the elderly mother of that same Federico Castillo last seen in London in 1953 sent a directive through Luis, who was coming with us, that on no account were we to meet Sánchez Tostado. As a very new member of the family I was in no position to ignore this venerable lady. It seems that fear was still working to conceal the story. Could there be other explanations though? Other factors I could not imagine? These were extra tracks in the story which might need to be navigated later.

However, while we were in Jaén we met the last surviving member of the family, my father's youngest sister. This was María-Victoria, born in 1926, and still living in the centre of the city. She is a small woman, with intense dark eyes and an intense manner. She was vehement in her refusal to entertain the idea of our meeting with "este buen caballero". We learned that there were three things for which she could not forgive Señor Sánchez Tostado: one, he was a liar; two, he sold his lies for money; and three, who asked him to write the story of her family anyway? The fear of shame and disgrace still hung about this elderly lady seventy years after the events. It turned out that the photograph of her mother included in one internet biography was not actually her, but a friend. Not a lie, but a mistake. Further, according to tía María, in early 1936 her father, Federico, was spending a lot of time in Madrid for medical treatment. It was rumoured that he was using his time there to plot the assassination of Calvo Sotelo, opposition minister in the Republican government. This had supposedly triggered the disaster of the Civil War and that therefore the Castillo family alone was responsible for this terrible event. It is true that a relative, *el teniente* José

Castillo, of Alcalá-la-Real, had been shot by falangists in Madrid on 12 July 1936, and that his murder had preceded the killing of Calvo Sotelo by only a few hours (Beevor *Battle* 57,[2] Thomas 196-197, Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 14), but there was nothing more than rumour to link grandfather Federico with a plot. Señor Sánchez Tostado was somehow to blame for this rumour, or at least for propagating it. Were these reasons enough to erect obstacles in our way?

The first of March 2010 was a sunny morning, but in the cemetery where our grandmother had died there was an atmosphere of neglect, despair, an aura of ruin while the human remains were being relocated to the new San Fernando cemetery across town. Walls of smashed and empty niches, weedy broken paths, drab faded bunches of plastic flowers, garish in the brilliant sunlight, created a depressing atmosphere. We were told that Dolores's remains had gone to the family mausoleum in the new cemetery, but not when. In 2008 a memorial was erected in the old cemetery on the site of the common grave, Fosa 702 (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 313), with the names of hundreds of the victims of the war. We searched the columns of names in vain. Her name was not there.

In both England and Australia war memorials were part of the landscape. The duty and the desire to honour the dead had been part of my childhood, with poppies in our lapels and the last post played on Remembrance Day. But without any direct family members being involved, Dolores - Lola - was the first relative I knew of who had given her life in a war. But her name was not there. It seemed it had been rubbed out of history, just a small hole in the picture. Could my interest restore some honour to her, honour which did not seem to be owed to her by her family?

At the new cemetery we found the family sepulchre, a model of restraint amongst so much monumental bombast. A base of white marble, not much bigger than a large double bed, has at its head a raised slab, like a bed-head, engraved with the two words "Castillo Rincón", and below them the silhouette of a cross.

[2] Beevor mistakenly refers to him as Castillo Sería, rather than Castillo Sánchez.

I had imagined a contingent of her descendants, from Spain, from Mexico, from France, England, and where-ever else the family diaspora had scattered them, meeting quietly and reverently at her grave side, to honour this woman for her idealism and sacrifice, a woman who gave her life for her beliefs seventy years before. But we were the only ones there, from England and Australia, milling around, not sure what would be the appropriate thing to do, but knowing that we were not doing it. We stood quietly contemplating this special place on this special day, and then came away.

The weather had changed during the day and we spent that wet evening with cousin Federico in a cosy restaurant in central Jaén. During the evening we discussed with him our different attitudes when talking about families and their history. He was adamant that a family's history was its exclusive property. Pablo insisted that "history belongs to everyone." Federico was unconvinced. During the evening Luis and Pablo told Federico of my true status, as José-Luis's daughter, their half-sister and his cousin. He was surprised but also welcoming. But although I was now admitted to the family circle it didn't shift his attitude of protectiveness about its history. He told me in May 2014 that he could not speak of the family history because, as he said, "I know the things that my parents and my uncles did not talk about." It seems that some history is for the text books and the rest is to be forgotten, to be "disappeared" through a collective amnesia. In this initial contact with a Spaniard who had lived through the previous seventy years in Spain I was puzzled by his reluctance to talk. He made it clear it was not failing memory but distaste. With my peaceful life spent in England and then Australia I had no idea how memory could be held hostage by experience. At least this family had not suffered a common feature of civil conflict - it had remained united against the common enemy.

The potential for intra-family conflict long after the war is wrapped up in the pain of resurrecting the old stories, the old shames and disgrace, and is demonstrated in the Labanyi-Silva interview. Silva tells Labanyi of "[u]na vez, una bronca familiar entre miembros de la misma familia,

que la parte que se puso en contacto con nosotros sí quería, y luego apareció una parte que no quería." As the exhumation began, one of the dissenting relatives broke down, but after being helped to understand the process and its purpose "al final acabó participando en la excavación" ("Entrevista" 148). Painful as the process of uncovering the truth continues to be it is a necessary operation, at least for those on the Republican side as they search for an honourable resolution. Silva tells Labanyi that the Lorca family is the only one he knows of which still withholds its permission to open the supposed grave of Federico. That was in 2007. In late August 2015, permission is still witheld.

From the city of Jaén we went to the village of Castillo de Locubín, the birth-place of Federico Castillo, our grandfather. The landscape was a monotonous undulation of olive groves, from horizon to horizon. The town itself is very steep, tumbling down the foothills of the Sierra Sur, some side streets giving up the pretence of being drivable and reverting to steps. We had hoped to meet Moisés Gallardo Pulido, the village historian, but we were disappointed as, not knowing we were coming, he was at work in the olives. After we got home Luis and I began a lively and productive correspondence with him. I re-established the correspondence with Señor Sánchez Tostado as well after a grovelling apology and clumsy explanation for my failure to contact him. Federico told tía María the truth about why I was there. I wrote to her and so began a warm correspondence, snail-mail: "!Que 'Tontísima' eres! ¿Cómo se te ocurre llamarme de Vd y con tanto protocolo? ¡Si soy tu tía!"(Castillo García-Negrete M-V 9 March 2010).

Because of the frustrations and disappointments of our first visit to Jaén I decided to return as soon as I could, and booked another flight to Madrid for May 2011. This second visit was more productive, although cousin Federico reiterated his refusal to talk about the past: "No me gusta hablar de la historia de la familia." In Jaén I visited tía María again with another cousin, Loli (Dolores), daughter of Federico, the oldest Castillo brother.

Luis-Miguel Sánchez Tostado showed me the family house in the very centre of Jaén, opposite the *ayuntamiento*. In the Central Archives Office he took dozens of photographs for me of the documents related to the Castillo family's time at the end of the war. One of these was Lola's death notice. Here was irrefutable evidence of her life, her death and her commitment. A reproduction of her prison entry document is on page 243 of the catalogue for the exhibition*, La Mujer en la Historia de Jaén*, curated by Juan del Arco Moya*.*

With Señor Sánchez Tostado – *este buen caballero* – I went back to the old cemetery of San Eufrasia. My guide explained that as the cemetery was sanctified ground executions took place outside against the cemetery walls by the headlights of the truck which had brought the condemned there. The corpses were taken by handcart into *el coralillo de ahorcados*, the place of the hanged (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 313). He showed me Lola's name engraved on the memorial, low down, near the ground. In our anxiety to find this evidence of our heroic grandmother we had simply missed it the year before. His publication *La Guerra Civil en Jaén* is an exhaustive work, covering the methodology of compiling the census of the victims of the war throughout the province; detailed accounts of some of the events which took place in the province; the *checas* and *paseos* in which the enemy tortured and executed their victims, on both sides; the bombings; the *fosas*; the "*coralillo de los ahorcados*", and descriptions of many individuals who suffered in the war. He also describes many aspects of the Francoist repression and its effects – on women, the years of hunger, the "suicides", executions and deaths in prison – and also the vain attempts to mount a rear-guard post-war resistance in the hills of Jaén. From this research, his knowledge of the experiences on both sides during the war years and long after is a precious resource. The contrast between the first visit I made to the city and the village of my family in 2010 and the second in 2011 is like dark and light. The first visit was superficial, puzzling and unsatisfactory, the second one of increasing understanding. The past is always there, under your nose or under your feet. If your purpose is not to see, then it is easy to miss the signs and relics of the past. If you are determined to see and to understand, a guide who has already made the journey and is able to map it is invaluable.

Castillo de Locubín is an hour's bus ride from Jaén and I finally met Moisés Gallardo Pulido. As one of the thousands of un- or under-employed young people of Spain, he finds work wherever he can, as a waiter in a local restaurant, as a casual labourer with the local council roads department and as a worker in the olive groves. Embedded within the village, known by everyone since babyhood, and knowing everyone, his family's commitment to the Republic was also well-known. Enthusiastic amateurs like Moisés bring life to the academic assessments of the past, and colour to the multiple layers of memory. His own grandmother had suffered intense humiliations from the Nationalists and his recounting of her shame, of her memory of the "Hunger Years" in the village, intensified the sense of living history and the enduring pain of its memory. Because there has never been a reckoning for the pain and injustice suffered on both sides, the distress continues, in silence.

In the two days we spent together he walked me round the precipitous streets of Castillo, showing me various landmarks in the family story, including a street corner where someone had been murdered many years before. My Spanish being slow the details were lost. The relatively palatial country house of the Castillo family, used by them until less than twenty years ago, is now abandoned. The house features a carved escutcheon on the imposing facade, and wrought iron balconies over the upper windows. Its frontage is directly onto the street, with no front garden or railings to protect it. The street door is large, solid, made of very thick wood with remarkable studs and decorative ironwork around the key-hole and a curious vertical gash, evidence of a frenzied attack. Was it to do with the murder? The details of the story again were incomprehensible, although I nodded and smiled.

Through this story are smaller stories of people who did heroic things, quietly, because it seemed to them to be the only thing to do. This is maybe what heroism is, that most of us are mostly ordinary most of the time, but the time comes when some of us find the ability to rise above our ordinariness and to do extraordinary things. Maybe this is what I recognise in the story of Lola's

life, that until the death of her husband and the outbreak of the Civil War she was an ordinary woman leading an ordinary life, no more than was to be expected. But when the world she had lived in began to change irreversibly, she found a strength of conviction which carried her beyond the ordinary and into a world of challenge, which ended in disaster, despair and death.

The picture Moisés was building for me was of a respectable and respected family, internally linked and flourishing for several generations until its full flowering in the marriage of Federico and Lola. The impact they had both had on the village where Federico had been born and in the capital of Jaén where he and Lola raised their large family was quiet but significant, reflecting their enlightened social views, commitment to social responsibility and dedication to the arts, politics, economics, and medicine. In Lola's lifetime Spanish women passed from the dark days of impotence through a hesitant progression of gains and losses. At the time of her death all progress for women was stopped. The military, political and social traumas of Spain's history since the early years of the nineteenth century culminated in the Civil War. Around these themes is my story, of the discovery of connection to a family which fought but failed to survive the trauma of the war and is still waiting to acknowledge and be acknowledged for its part in the war.

So I have the task of weaving the facts with my feelings about the facts, with the ongoing interactions with the people in the story, alive and dead, of putting this against the background of the changing lives of women in Spain, and of the workings of memory in such contested fora.

In telling the story of Lola's life and death only the edges of the picture are intact, the sure facts of her birth and her death. I have no knowledge of her childhood or adolescence. There are no diaries or school reports to throw light on her development, only the assumption that she grew up in a conventional Catholic family in southern Spain which gave her the preparation for her life as a devoted wife and mother. As is typical in studying women's history there are few personal documents by Lola or about her. "The diaries and letters written by women tend to be more intimate than those left by men" (Preston *Doves* 8). The implication is that this makes them less

important and consequently they are often passed over by archivists and researchers of political and economic history. Under the Franco regime the traditional role of women, "*puertas adentro*" (Mohammad 249), prevented them from adopting a more active role in their society, from considering their rights instead of their duties or feeling any sense of rebellion against their traditional role. "A través de toda la vida, la misión de la mujer es servir [… Dios] formó la mujer, para su ayuda y compañía, y para que sirviera de madre. […] como un complemento necesario, esto es, como algo útil" (Sección Femenina 29). The Sección Femenina's implacable view of women's God-given role in Spain, as servants of men, thus became a highly effective instrument of Francoism. As they were shepherded back behind the doors they, like women of earlier times and other places, found that the creation of documents about their lives became impossible under the demands of the domestic obligations they endured. Even those documents when they had been created were not usually archived. It is unusual that a non-celebrity family will have a store of useful archival material. Beyond the basic facts of births, deaths and marriages, the store will possibly include a stack of undated photographs, with or without names on the back, maybe some press cuttings and certificates of ephemeral successes.

In this the Parera-Castillo-García-Negrete family has been relatively well served over the century before Lola's death, particularly in photographs. Moisés showed me a treasure trove of papers, kept in his grandmother's house, some in large cardboard boxes, some in archive files, and the vast majority in a large trunk. I learned that these had been given to him by Angelita Parera Castillo, another distant relative. Her branch of the family still carries the old family name, which can be traced through historical documents to the early years of the sixteenth century.

She had also given Moisés a handwritten diary kept by her brother Federico Parera Castillo in the first months of the Second Spanish Republic to which we will return in Chapter 3. We are fortunate in having found Moisés, but he has his own problems with how to manage the priceless

archives he holds. His experience has warned him not to trust anyone, except perhaps this visitor from Australia.[3]

The family's good reputation, with individual members who were admired and loved, was enhanced by its location in a small village. Such a family might well have faded from notice in a larger theatre like the capital city, although this was not the case with the Castillos. But specific information about Lola, beyond her birth, marriage and death, is missing. Only two other sources exist to throw light on her individual desires and accomplishments: a radio "harangue" on behalf of the Winter Campaign, at the height of her political life, and the transcript of her trial, at its depth.

The apparent absence of any redemptive feature in Lola's story is a drawback but not to the extent of hobbling my progress. I started the project hoping to find answers to questions I still hadn't formulated. I hoped to develop an understanding about the evolution of a revolutionary, to make sense of the political, social, economic and emotional threads which contributed to her shift from middle-class housewife to the President of the local branch of the Mujeres Antifascistas. I wanted to know this woman whose genes I carry but who is a stranger to me, in time, space and experience.

It is now my task to link everything together: the documents of generations back, the information I have been receiving for the past four years, my observations from my visits to Spain, and the whole process of research and writing, and to integrate it with my experience of writing this story. There was a century between the unexplained death, some kind of martyrdom, on the street corner in Castillo in 1839 and Lola's judicial execution in Jaén in 1940. The difference in the family attitudes towards the two victims is emerging and it is complex. One was a distant hero, a martyr, the other something of a shameful embarrassment. In linking my story to hers, there is a possibility of redemption, of recognising that her life and death might become honoured and

[3] Much of this material with explanatory articles by Gallardo Pulido has been published on the *Pueblos de España* website: http://www.pueblos-espana.org/andalucia/jaen/castillo+de+locubin/

celebrated by her own family and by other strangers. It would be a quiet triumph to be able to restore her memory to an honoured position similar to that of her ancestor.

This project uses the tragic story of Dolores García-Negrete and her family, the Castillo García-Negretes, to reveal the wider and more optimistic story of the advances made by women in Spain. Their advances are also indicative of the advances made by the whole of Spanish society.

The first chapter tells the story of the Parera-Castillo family of Castillo de Locubín, where in the tumultuous 1830s Lola's great-grandfather held the position of mayor. It follows the generations of the family to 1905 when Lola's marriage to Federico joined two branches of the family. In these years women continued in their time-honoured position as background material to the history of the time, although expressing noisy dissatisfaction with this role in some industrial confrontations.

Chapter 2 describes the early years of the twentieth century and the births of the many children in the Castillo-García-Negrete family. It also looks at the growing strength, and consequent setbacks, of women's movements issuing from different political cradles until the declaration of the Second Republic in 1931.

In Chapter 3 women's concerns receive a boost through the Constitution of 1931 and they seem to be about to enter a modern Europe. At the same time the Castillo family struggles to accept tragedies of ill-health and loss.

The fourth chapter outlines the traumatic years of the Civil War in which the forces of the Left, of liberalism and republicanism, confront those of reaction and tradition. The Castillo family is firmly committed to the Left and with its defeat the family is dismembered. After 1939 women's emancipation in Spain is a lost ideal.

By the time we reach our conclusion all that the Castillos valued and fought for is crushed as they face trial, exile, imprisonment and death. I uncover the fate of my grandmother,

disremembered by her family out of fear and a culture of silence and I try and understand the particular threat that Lola embodied that may help explain why she was executed when so many others, younger and more active, were spared.

This is her story.

CHAPTER 1

1839 – 1905: The Roots of Recalcitrance

The young ladies are throwing stones at a saint. They are elegant, convent-educated, and one of them has a deadly aim. Her stone hits the statue's navel fair and square. The young lady, Lola – Dolores García-Negrete – at 17, is barely out of the schoolroom but she should, according to tradition, be married within a year. And so it turns out. On 2 April 1905 she married a distant cousin, Federico Castillo Estremera. The story of their family will provide context for an exploration of the changes in women's lives in Spain in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Their blood connection went back over four generations. Brother and sister Santiago and Francisca Parera Fernández were born on the cusp of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Santiago married Rosalía Rico, and Francisca – Paca – married Manuel Estremera. The two families grew up as neighbours in the village of Castillo de Locubín in southern Spain. The family tree is prolific and sprawling. Branch after branch produces large broods. To the Pareras are added García-Negretes, Castillos, Piédrolas and others. Paca's daughter Flora was Federico's mother. Santiago's daughter Rosa was Lola's grandmother.

Where does the history of a family begin? How do you choose the starting date? At best it is the point at which a particular thread begins, and at worst it is a point chosen at random, maybe just a calculated coincidence. Often, it is the line where the family stories die out, where no more is known or told. My choice includes all of these.

My account of the family story is framed by two murders neatly separated by a century. Both were at the hands of Spanish reactionaries. The first was in 1839. Santiago Parera was ambushed

and shot on a street corner of Castillo de Locubín. The second murder was the shooting of his great granddaughter Lola in 1940 at the cemetery walls in Jaén.

During the one hundred years that separate these two deaths, the lives of Spanish women underwent some profound, if uneven, social, political and economic changes. As we will see in this chapter, these changes began slowly, with little generational change in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. This chapter examines the roots of recalcitrance, the factors that led to a change in women's social, political and economic roles in nineteenth-century Spain. It focuses on attempts to improve the conditions of women and their status within Spanish society. It considers how the traditional perception of a woman as the *ángel del hogar* restricted women's involvement in society to set roles, and shows how these roles were challenged by female social reformers. The chapter outlines the progress of change for women from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century, in particular in their education and marital status. Lola was herself directly influenced by these changes, and an understanding of them is important, as they created the circumstances in which her later rebellion took place.

The Parera family was fortunate in having intelligence and sufficient resources to escape the grinding poverty of the villagers around them, but, driven by a measure of "noblesse oblige", the family did not ignore its social conscience. It was shaped by it and its members would suffer death, exile and silence because of this commitment. To comprehend this commitment it is necessary to understand the Spain of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in which they lived.

The deep poverty which the peasants of Andalusia and elsewhere experienced was a result of Spain's natural difficulties and social inequality. In the north the soil was poor, leached by rain over millions of years, and in the south, it was rich and fertile, but suffered drought-like conditions (Brenan 91). Social inequality in southern and south-western Spain was enshrined through the system of latifundios, the large, landed estates ruled by often absentee upper-class landlords (102). In Jaén, the main olive industry is a monoculture demanding unskilled hard physical labour by the

day-labourers at particular and limited periods of the year. By its very nature the olive industry exacerbated the social stratification, granting more power to the already powerful and more children to the already powerless. In the 1780s the poor in Andalusia were described as

> 'simple labourers, who have only temporary and precarious occupation and live the rest of the year in poverty, plunged in inaction, for lack of remunerative work. Their wives and children are without work at all, piled up in the towns and large villages, live on charity [...] in a wretched starvation – which does not correspond to the fertility of the soil and certainly is not caused by their idleness.' This is an exact description of the state of affairs today. (Brenan 122 n.2)

Little had changed between 1780 and 1940, according to Brenan. In the face of the interests of the latifundists, and the violence and intimidation of the *caciques*, their political agents and local enforcers, social reform was almost impossible. It was against this state of affairs that both Santiago and Lola railed one hundred years apart.

In rural southern Spain where they lived, social injustice was built into the maintenance of a substratum of illiterate labourers and their families. Brenan makes unfavourable comparisons between English landlords of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the latifundists. The Spanish landlord was more concerned with his own comforts and life in Madrid than in improving his estates which he visited rarely and as if venturing into "some distant colony" (119). In addition, by reducing the areas of land under cultivation and "by taking advantage of the unemployment so caused he could knock something off the wages and so 'reduce the rebellious workers to submission'" (119). This was the basis for profitability on many of the estates (119). As a result of the time-honoured "steady competition between landowner and labourer, the first to see how little he can pay, and the latter to see how little he can work" (121) it is scarcely surprising that the attitude of these rebellious workers towards their landlords was of hatred and contempt (122). In

contrast, in Brenan's view, the English landlords were held in esteem by the community and "remained popular figures and impartial administrators of justice on the bench" (10).

The latifundist system made rural Andalusia a "notoriously recalcitrant region [...] the home of many of the century's intellectuals, the heart of republican insurrection, and the earliest theatre of rural anarchism" (White 235). The roots of its recalcitrance, republicanism and anarchism are buried deep in the natural challenges of climate and soil aggravated by the injustices of its social and economic profile. "[C]ompared to the northern and eastern parts of Spain ... [s]ocial divisions in Extremadura and Andalusia have been particularly sharp, marked by great disparities of wealth and power, as well as a finely differentiated peasantry" (Rees 174).

Santiago had been the mayor of Castillo twice already, in 1833 and 1835. He represented the liberal, more compassionate side of politics, trying to alleviate the misery of the *jornaleros* – day labourers – and their families through political, social and economic reform. In early July 1839 he was once again a candidate in the municipal elections. His papers had been lodged with the town hall. According to his widow's statement, corroborated by his sister Paca, Santiago was ambushed and shot in the late evening outside his house where Paca was suckling his baby son, Federico (Rosalía Rico's "Declaración").[4]

He died two days later. The bloody clothes in which he died were kept until the early years of the twenty-first century, as if they were the relics of a martyr. Angelita, my father's cousin, was the last of the Parera Castillos to live in the family home, and she and her husband burnt the clothes

4 Santiago's sister suckling his son on that fateful night, either as a regular arrangement or an occasional favour, is an indication of the closeness of this family, through blood and milk. The concept of 'hermanos de leche' was based on actual experience. Wet-nursing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries throughout Europe was an accepted practice (Davis FA. Taber's cyclopedic medical dictionary. Philadelphia: F.A. Davis Co; 1993). It was often the only economic choice an impoverished country woman might have (Shubert 42-43). Familial wet-nursing was preferred, to avoid health and hygiene dangers.

as part of the final cleansing of the house only a few years ago (Gallardo Pulido personal communication).

The account of the murder of Lola's great-grandfather raises a number of issues. His violent death was widely believed to be the result of a political conspiracy. In the statement made the morning after her husband was shot, Rosalía Rico named the suspects as some local men, and a hitman from another village. The fee for the job was 5000 reales de vellón. Throughout Spain liberal reformers confronted entrenched interests, and *caciquismo*, the management of local politics through corruption and intimidation, was endemic (Smith 116-117). The tensions were chronic. The situation was acute. Santiago died. His death-bed chivalry became part of the family story.

His widow Rosalía was a brave woman, not afraid to name those she and others believed to be responsible for the murder. She was forthright and clear in her statement made before Licenciado Don Antonio Sánchez Cañete, on the morning of 7 July 1839. · She was presumably an intelligent young woman to have attracted the eye of Santiago who was himself a leader in his community. Yet, she was unable to sign her witness declaration. "Al intento y con la protesta de que mi hija firmará este escrito a mi nombre porque yo no lo sé ejecutar." She was illiterate, along with a very high percentage of rural Spanish women of the time. Her intelligence may well have been similar to his but she had never been given the tools of literacy and so remained permanently marginalised, unable to participate fully in Spanish society.

Six different women were named or referred to in Rosalía's declaration, either as beneficiaries of the murder or having some influence or knowledge of it. The role of women in the village was of unofficial witnesses and commentators. In the hours between the shooting and the death a neighbour, Ana Montoya, entered the room where Santiago lay dying and leaning over him said "¿no se lo decía a usted?" According to the deposition of his widow, she had indeed warned him some days before to be careful. It was well-known how the village was divided and took sides. The

women, although their presence is rarely documented in village life, certainly knew what was going on and who to watch, and when to warn.

Neither literacy nor women were highly valued in Spain at that time. From childhood, girls were regarded as of little worth. In many agrarian societies, like Spain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the provision of education for women was of minimal importance. They needed to be sequestered, kept safe from the outside world until they could be handed over to someone else to worry about, as a wife rather than a daughter. The birth of a daughter meant future economic pressure to nurture a child who at maturity was to be given away, at some significant cost to the family, to be someone else's angel of the hearth.

For women, education for servitude – brutal or genteel – was provided by the schools, convents and *institutos*. The Catholic Church had an unassailable grip on virtually all education, certainly at the primary and lower secondary levels. It had an "absolute, superior and inalienable right" to a monopoly over education (Boyd *Historia* 23). It suited the dynastic politicians at the beginning of the twentieth century who saw its economic value and that it "reinforced the social order by stressing class harmony and Christian resignation in the face of social inequality" (25). The Marist teaching manual, the *Guía del maestro* of 1928, promised to "give the child the means to achieve his natural destiny in this world and his supernatural one in the next, that is, the salvation of his soul." His education would be "appropriate to his needs and his social position" (25). An influential minority of Catholics recognised that education was their strongest tool if they were to maintain a docile compliant constituency. They differentiated between "instruction" that is the mechanics of literacy and trade training, and "education", which they saw as character, values, beliefs and behaviour. To this group, which included the religious orders and the ultra-conservative Carlists, "illiteracy and ignorance were preferable to instruction that could not be reconciled with the basic tenets of the faith" (23). This presumably referred to enlightened instruction. It was believed that God gave his approval for the continuation of a system which advantaged the wealthy

at the expense of the poor, but did promise to recompense the poor after their death. If any presumed to question this, they were either not believed or, as was the case with Dolores Ibárruru, offered exorcism (Ibarruri 49-50). The creation of a compliant, poorly-educated population made the job of ruling very much easier. The tools of enquiry were restricted. Thinking was a proscribed activity. The catechism provided the sum total of all necessary knowledge.

For women, this meant that every aspect of a girl's rearing and education was to help her to become the *perfecta casada*, the *ángel del hogar*. These two notions of accepted feminine behaviour were developed in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries respectively. In 1583, Fray Luis de León published his *La perfecta casada*, in which he advocated

> Porque el servir al marido y el gobernar la familia, y la crianza de los hijos y la cuenta que juntamente con esto se debe al temor de Dios y a la guarda y limpieza de la conciencia, todo lo cual pertenece al estado y oficio de la mujer que se casa, obras son que cada una por sí pide mucho cuidado, y que todas juntas, sin particular favor de cielo, no se pueden cumplir. (León 165)

Three centuries later, in 1877 Julián López Catalán, a prolific and well-respected pedagogue, developed León's idea of the *perfecta casada* further, turning her into an *ángel del hogar*, which he defined as "un ángel de amor, consolador de nuestras aflicciones, defensora de nuestros méritos, sufridora paciente de nuestras faltas, guardiana fiel de nuestros secretos y celosa depositaria de nuestro honor" (*(In)subordinadas* 207). This prescriptive role for a woman continued to confound her growth into a fully articulated autonomous human being, from the depths of the nineteenth century until well into the twentieth.

There were few, if any, practical options for a woman. She was supposedly naturally weaker than a man and thus unable to sustain the demanding work of study and professional responsibilities. So she accepted her role, conforming to social, cultural and sexual expectations,

largely dictated by the Church. *La perfecta casada* had served her country well for three hundred years.

As Mary Nash argues, there was a large degree of "cultural pressure to force women to adapt to the current gender codes [which] led to an internalization of these patterns of conduct, facilitating the female consent to the pre-assigned gender roles" ("Challenging" 76). Education for women in Spain was designed to reinforce their subordinate position in society and to keep them in subjugation and slavery, however genteel. Davies reminds us that

> [t]he legal status of married women was similar to that of minors, the deaf and dumb, the mad, and the incapacitated. Marriage was 'legal slavery' (Scanlon, 126) yet cultural and social pressures were such that most women desired it; they subjected themselves voluntarily. (Davies 22)

Few women were able to contest not only their men but also the overwhelming "norms of nature" and above all, the directives of God. Given the results of the transgressive behaviour of so many thinking Spanish women in the 1930s, and their ultimate fates, Lola included, it seems that the warnings were well-founded. Any woman who deliberately placed herself beyond the pale and questioned the authorities would be exposed, despised, feared or pitied. To break free from this whale-boned straitjacket of convention or even to question it, would, in the words of Fray Luis de León, condemn her as "no es ya mujer, sino alevosa ramera y vilísimo cieno, y basura lo más hedionda de todas y la más despreciada" (León 31). According to Nash, the women who challenged the gendered status quo were "implicitly threatened with disaster". For Nash, "The pressure of this symbolic violence can thus explain the practice of consent by women and the sustenance of traditional norms of gender conduct" ("Un/Contested" 30). Internal and external pressures exerted a constant squeeze on any attempts to break out.

By the time Lola and her older sister, Marta, were born, the *ángel del hogar* was the dominant model of acceptable feminine behaviour for women of their social class and standing.

Their parents, Carlos García-Negrete and Marta Ruiz-Zarco, had married in 1882 and their two daughters were born, Marta in 1884 and Lola in 1886. Their young lives were marked by tragedy. Their mother died of appendicitis in 1888 and Carlos's sister María Asunción took over their rearing. Their education came from the convent of the Poor Clares and it created docile young women who saw their only destiny as devout wives and mothers, to become *perfectas casadas* and *ángeles del hogar* (Castillo Ramirez personal communication).

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, illuminating the education of Marta and Lola, the *ángel del hogar* represented a resignation and self-righteous sacrifice which reinforced Spain's domestic self-satisfaction in spite of its political failures and territorial losses in the American war of 1898. Pilar Pascual de Sanjuán, playwright and educator, had first published her description of the *ángel del hogar* in *Epistolario manual para señoritas* in 1877 and it was still being published in the 1920s, relegating women to the house. In the 1918 edition she reiterates that "[t]he woman, especially, seems destined by Providence to live retired in the modest home, perfuming it with the essence of her ignored virtue, embellishing it with her simple grace" (Nash "Challenging" 76). In this way the Spanish woman who sought emancipation was besieged in a construction of cloying self-abnegation, much of it constructed out of their own will, as "they subjected themselves voluntarily" (Davies 22).

Attitudes to women's roles in society were not that different in the emerging revolutionary politics of the nineteenth century. The political theorist and philosopher Pierre-Joseph Proudhon advised a young man contemplating marriage "to dominate his wife and be the master" because, as he saw it, "[m]aternal functions rendered the female brain incapable of serious thought" (Collins 31). The domestic model based on woman's subordination to man applied to society as a whole. Anything less, according to Proudhon, would lead to the total disintegration of society.

While conservative attitudes towards women – both on the left and right of politics – dominated, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century the so-called "woman question"

came under increasing scrutiny (Offen 88). For example, in the late eighteenth century Mary Wollstonecraft in England and Josefa Amar y Borbón in Spain had focused on the subjugation of women, blaming it not on the natural inferiority of women to men, but rather on the denial of an education, locking them into an infantilised existence. In *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) Wollstonecraft urged that "the divine right of husbands [...] be contested in this enlightened age like the divine right of kings" (83). She advocated day schools for all children, that boys and girls should be taught together and that through plenty of outdoor exercise both should "develop robust bodies alongside intelligent minds" (Brody 81). Wollstonecraft's revolutionary ideas horrified many liberals including Horace Walpole who called her "a hyena in petticoats" (84), an image that was echoed almost 150 years later at Lola's sentencing, discussed in Chapter 4.

In Spain in 1786, even before Mary Wollstonecraft published her *Vindication*, Josefa Amar y Borbón decried the servitude of women and argued for their emancipation through education in *Discurso en defensa del talento de las mugeres* (sic) and *Discurso sobre la educación física y moral de las mujeres* (1790). In a challenge to the Catholic church's domination of education, she not only disapproved of the convent education that girls like Lola and her sister Marta received, she also questioned the very existence of convents and, like Wollstonecraft, she raged against "men reserving all honours, awards, and recognition for themselves and wishing to deprive women of their intellects" (Chaves Tesser 13).

An interest in women's education was not the exclusive domain of women, however. *La Real Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País*, founded by Carlos III in 1764 to develop economic and educational reforms, was also concerned with women's education. As a recent president, José García Latorre commented:

> Es curioso […] que una de las primeras preocupaciones […] fuese ya para aquellos tiempos, su preocupación para con la mujer, en especial para con las niñas […]con lo cual se pretendía

que posteriormente las mujeres se pudiesen ganar el sustento sin la dependencia masculina. (García Latorre[5])

This interest came from the king himself, who "ordered the society […] to admit ladies, who took charge of a school for girls," which at the time "was an innovation" (Herr 181).

In Jaén, where a chapter of the *Real Sociedad* was established in 1786, elementary and trade schools were set up in calle Bernabé Soriano, the same street where the Castillo family would live. Using the local esparto grasses, basket-making was developed for the regional olive industry. In the hands of the women, using skills learned in the Society's workshops, a cottage industry flourished, producing sandals, belts, hats and other consumables as well as harvest baskets. It is still flourishing. It was also instrumental in establishing the first secondary school in the province in 1842 (Cruz Rodriguez 210).

These tentative steps towards improving women's position in society were, however, limited by the death of Carlos III and the advent of the French Revolution. This abrupt halt to social reforms set up a pattern of "oscillation between reform and reaction [in] educational development throughout the nineteenth century and indeed to the present day" (McNair 17). This conflict between liberal reforms and reactionary rectification would affect women's education in particular. In 1838 in Jaén new educational regulations established three main points: 1) that the education of girls was a private matter; 2) that it was for moral rather than knowledge-based education; and 3) that it must be differentiated from the education of boys (Cruz Rodriguez 206).

Such an education did little to address the appalling illiteracy rate of Spanish children, described as "escalofriante" in Jaén where in 1868 78% of women were illiterate and 67% of men (208). Nevertheless, a significant shift in attitudes towards education had occurred with the 1857 Ley Moyano, the aim of which was to provide compulsory education for children up to nine years

[5] http://www.realsociedadeconomicajaen.com/indice.htm >

old. According to the legislation, three levels of education were established: elementary, administered by the local council; secondary by the province; and university, firmly under state control. Girls were to have separate schools. Normal or teacher training colleges were to be set up in larger centres, only for male teachers, however. Control of education was centralised through directors appointed by the king. In spite of the fact that the Ley Moyano provided the shape of Spanish education for well over a century its provisions were not closely followed and its effectiveness in addressing the illiteracy rate was minimal: the overall illiteracy rate was still 38% in 1930 and the upper age for compulsory schooling was not increased to 14 until 1970 (Shubert 36). The ratio of teacher to student around 1900 was 1: 154, and even worse in some urban areas (Boyd *Historia* 10).

The Ley Moyano was not particularly concerned with the education of girls and women. As Boyd points out: "the curriculum prescribed for the lower primary schools in the Ley Moyano was an undemanding one, aimed at producing useful, docile workers; until 1901 the official elementary program consisted of religious doctrine, sacred history, and the three Rs, together with 'notions of agriculture, industry or commerce for boys and embroidery for girls'" (11). Even in the more privileged classes girls' education only prepared them for the default future, to be the perfect wife in a bourgeois home. Piano-playing was later added to the curriculum.

Education for girls, in secondary and higher levels began to improve following the 1868 revolution, known as *La Gloriosa*, when liberal Spaniards triumphed against the conservative supporters of Queen Isabel II and proclaimed the First Republic a few years later. Secondary education was a relatively new idea in the educational landscape in Spain. It was the great innovation of the Liberals to bridge the gap between primary education and university and an indication of the level of modernity in a society (Cruz Rodriguez 210). But improving women's educational levels was seen primarily as contributing to an improvement in their fulfilment of their domestic responsibilities (Shubert 35).

Sofia Tartilán, a writer and historian of the mid-nineteenth century, recognised the imbalance in a marriage leading to the "moral divorce" between educated husbands and non-educated wives but also feared that if women entered the professions it would lead to chaos (Shubert 36). Nevertheless, women did begin to enter professions. Two sisters in Jaén, Natalia and Áurea Galinda Ortega, for example, requested permission to take the primary teachers' exam on 30 September, 1872. It was seen as the breaking of a tradition and it was the first time that women were permitted to sit the exam (Cruz Rodriguez 209).

Although various figures like Amar y Borbón had advocated for improvements to women's education and for greater social and professional opportunities for women, it was only with the advent of the First Republic of 1873-74, that the issues of women came to be debated among the ruling political class.[6] For example, in 1869, Francisco Pi y Margall, later to become the president of the First Republic, advocated for an improvement in women's legal status as he believed that this would indicate a move towards a greater civilising of Spain. According to Nash, Pi y Margall "was a fervent advocate of the ethical and cultural renovation of Spain and within that framework admitted the civilising and educational authority of women within the family. The notion that women were a vital civilising influence in society was crucial to the gradual legitimation of feminism." Pi y Margall, however, drew back from any further endorsement of women's emancipation, fearing that it would have negative effects on the health of families (Nash "Rise" 249).

There were some, however, who could see that "the health of families", of such concern to Pi y Margall, was built on an almost parasitic exploitation of women, particularly poor women. One such observer was Pedro María Barrera Lanzas, native of Jimena de la Frontera, and author of *Las*

[6] These debates were part of a broader reform agenda that included the separation of Church and State; the abolition of slavery; the limitation of child labour; and the establishment of a system ensuring free and compulsory education.

mujeres españolas, portuguesas y americanas published in 1873. In this work Barrera Lanzas, described the *mujer jiennense*:

> lo más abyecto de las desheredadas, la mujer vive en un lamentable abandono intelectual (...) Si se me pregunta en quien está la culpa de tan grave falta [...] acaso la sociedad en general es la verdadera responsable […] los mandamientos de la mujer se reducen a dos: ser honrada hasta la pared de la enfrente, y a tener su casa y familia como una taza de plata (…) creen que una mujer no tiene necesidad de saber otra cosa que barrer la casa, lavar, planchar, zurcir, y remendar la ropa, hacer calceta, economizar el aceite del candil y guisar con poco lumbre. (López Cordero 200)

In this scathing account of an impoverished woman's life, Barrera Lanzas provided a corrective to the romantic notion that happy families revolved around happy mothers, whose only mission and only reward was a happy family. The only silver cup any peasant would have ever seen at that time was the sanctified chalice used in the Communion service. The woman's sphere of influence, if it could rightly be described in such lofty terms, was localised and only affected her family members. Her duty to them was a holy responsibility, like the handling of the chalice. She ministered to her family as a priest to his flock, but without any guarantee that she would receive the respect that the priest would demand. In this world, a girl's education could safely be neglected because the economic discourse held that her contribution to the economy was negligible, confined to the kitchen, the bedroom and the *huerta*.

Although the First Republic was a failure, following the restoration of Alfonso XII in 1874 there was a recognition of the need for social change. Major political reforms to the Constitution of 1876 included universal male suffrage, and religious tolerance. Nevertheless, the constant battle continued between *progresivos* on the Left looking for the emancipation of the *pueblo*, and *moderados* on the Right wanting to preserve their continuing servitude.

An important change for women's education, albeit indirectly, was the establishment of the *Institución de Libre Enseñanza* [ILE] in 1876 by a group of intellectuals at the Central University of Madrid. The aim of the ILE was to modernise and liberalise education for all children. The *libre* of the title implied, not an education without fees, but an institution free of pre-ordained values. "The Institute was 'much more than a school' [...] It was an atmosphere of intellectual and moral enlightenment; and a belief in the regeneration of Spain"[7] (Valis 180). It did not specifically contribute to the education of girls, more to a better education for all children, and girls were included. As a co-educational establishment the institution was radically different from all other Spanish schools, and historically from all other styles of teaching in Spain. Giner de los Rios promised that its aim was "the nurturing of a new elite, to rid Spanish society of stagnation, frivolity and inauthenticity [...] 'to redeem the Patria and return it to its destiny'" (Boyd 32). In contrast to the traditional rote method, the curriculum at the ILE included the "knowledge of national language, literature, history and art, along with manual training, music and games" (33). Learning was achieved through activity, conversation, exploration, and, like the educational reforms of Friedrich Froebel and María Montessori in Germany and Italy respectively, was centred on the needs and interests of the child.

The second half of the nineteenth century in Spain also heralded the emergence of some unwavering voices in the on-going debate about women's place in this deeply unfair society. One of the early major contributors to these debates was Concepción Arenal Ponte (1820-1893), an outspoken prison and hospital reformist whose wide interests included the suffering caused by deportation to the penal colonies in Australia. Her many publications on the role of women provided an invaluable body of work in favour of women's emancipation. They earned her the reputation of the founder of feminism in Spain. Amongst many other works growing out of her

[7] This image of a past Spain with all its real and imagined glories, the splendours of El Cid and the Reconquista, was consistent with much of the rhetoric of the Nationalists**.** Franco himself was seen by the Right as the reincarnation of El Cid (Preston *General Franco* 21*)*.

general interest in the marginalised were *La mujer del porvenir* (1868), *La educación de la mujer*, (1892)*, El estado actual de la mujer en España* (1895) and *La mujer de su casa* (1883). In *La mujer del porvenir*, for example, Arenal challenges the notion of *la perfecta casada* arguing that it is a serious mistake to teach a woman that her sole mission in life is to be a wife and mother. In *La educación de la mujer* Arenal argues that living up to the ideals of the *perfecta casada* tells a woman "that she can be nothing by herself and [that she has] to annihilate her moral and intellectual self." She particularly took aim at early marriages, arguing in *La mujer del porvenir*, that many women married not for love, but for "fear of being in the abandonment and poverty (sic). The consequences of bad marriages are fatal to society and even if they are well matched, a [young] girl, neither physically nor morally should become a mother. When she is not yet fully formed the new beings are weak and weaken her. From early marriage comes early old age and weak offspring" (González-Aja n. pag). Arenal offers a profound critique of the treatment of young women as solely to become mothers and argues that this attitude does harm to society as a whole.

Like others, Arenal saw education as fundamental to the emancipation of women. In *The Woman Question in Europe: a Series of Independent Essays* (1884), edited by Theodore Stanton, to which she contributed a chapter, Arenal lamented the situation of women's education in Spain:

> the condition of girls may be imagined. It may be said that girls do not go to school in Spain, or if they do it is only to learn to read badly and to acquire a superficial acquaintance with rudimentary studies, which the mistress, almost as ignorant as her pupils, can scarcely teach [...] Such an education, if indeed it deserves such a name, renders women unfit for any but the most material kind of work. They are seldom taught trades, they have no industrial skills, so that their labour is of an inferior quality.' In dismissing the education of girls in Spain as being woefully inadequate, she says that 'there may be exceptions, but speaking generally, the Spanish mistress ought to attend school herself.' (333-334).

Despite being considered the founder of feminism in Spain, Arenal was not a lone voice in the gendered wilderness. Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851-1921), for example, was deeply concerned with women's education. She gave an impetus for advances in female education in 1892 at the second pedagogical Congress held in Madrid. She spoke persuasively of the desperate need for girls to receive the same education as boys, addressing her male listeners directly:

> no puede en rigor, la educación actual de la mujer llamarse tal educación, sino doma, pues se propone por fin la obediencia, la pasividad y la sumisión. Aspiro, señores, a que reconozcan que la mujer tiene destino propio, que sus primeros deberes naturales son para consigo misma... que su felicidad y dignidad personal tienen que ser el fin esencial de su cultura. (Urruzola 101)

Forty years later in October 1931 Clara Campoamor addressed her male audience in the Cortes with a similar sturdy insistence on the rights of women. Others included Amalia Domingo Soler (1835-1909) and Ángeles López de Ayala (1858-1926), both of whom were feminist activists who published in the freethinking press and in their own periodicals. Although both were born in Seville, they did not meet until 1889 in Barcelona where they founded the *Sociedad Autónoma de Mujeres de Barcelona*. One of the driving arguments for these reformers was that a woman has her own destiny which she can only fulfil by achieving autonomy. This in turn depends on a liberal education which teaches her to recognise the facts of the world in which she lives, and to challenge and change them when they inhibit her growth.

If there was a struggle to provide women with education at primary and secondary level, it was also difficult for women who wished to continue their studies. During the 1880s the situation for women looking for higher education was fluid. The *Real Orden* of 1882 (16 March) allowed women who were pursuing higher studies at that time to continue, but this order was revoked as early as October and all women were ejected from the universities. Nevertheless, in 1888 permission was again granted for women to study in university, but only with the approval of the

authorities on a case by case basis (Cruz Rodriguez 209). These changes and backflips point to a lack of political consensus on women, but also to the fact that the debate was ongoing.

Whether permitted to or not by the State or by social convention, few Spanish women could consider going to university. This was particularly the case for women and children of working-class families. For such women, work was an economic necessity.

If there was a degree of fluidity regarding women's education, attitudes to them in the work-place were rigid. The only acceptable reason for a well-bred woman to work was in the event of being widowed and having no legitimate support for herself and her children. The possibilities of paid work for women in the village of Castillo de Locubín at the time of Santiago's murder in 1839 were either domestic work for a more affluent neighbour or the Church, or working in a family business. Their peasant background usually assumed that part of their domestic obligations was to support their husbands in the field as well as to provide the comforts of home. There were no professional opportunities, such as doctors, pharmacists, lawyers, teachers, engineers, clerks or administrators. The lamentable provision of education as we have seen made no allowance for young women who wanted to follow a career other than that of the perfect wife.

Women did, however, begin to enter the workforce in the growing industrial areas, like Catalonia, where the need for greater participation in the workforce opened up a number of other opportunities for women to work. Such opportunities were limited to young women before marriage, and widows or abandoned mothers with few other options. Legally, married women were barred from holding paid positions in businesses and the public service. This was based on the assumption that their filling of the position prevented a man, the breadwinner for another family, from fulfilling his obligations to his family.

The feminist movement on the Left of politics in Spain grew out of the women's involvement in the struggle for workers' rights. Indeed, women workers "were most common in those areas where anarchist unions were the strongest" (Ackelsberg 72). Women workers in the textile and

tobacco industries in the North became unionised and were highly visible in the strikes. Pamela Beth Radcliff describes women's political action in 1898 in demonstrations against the local *consumo* tax on food in Gijón in northern Spain:

> women continued to form links based on their role as providers of goods and services for their families, but the shape of the industrial city created a new form of solidarity rooted in the problems of neighbourhood consumption. As a result the traditional links that women formed became the fundamental building blocks for the neighbourhood community of the twentieth century. Thus, instead of a pre-industrial hangover, this blueprint for collective action was crucial to the formation of what would become one of the most powerful centers of oppositional culture, the working-class neighbourhood. (53-54)

According to Emilia Pardo Bazán, working class women were motivated by a strong, almost feral, sense of justice. In an 1890 essay in *La España Moderna*, she writes:

> Estas mujeres (las cigarreras) son en el fondo unas infelices; tienen un corazón de oro, y por bien se las lleva adonde se quiere. Pero existe en ellas tan desarrollado y vigoroso el sentimiento de la justicia, que pobre de aquel administrador a quien acusen de injusto. Son capaces, en un momento de alboroto, de hacerle pedazos. (Enders and Radcliff 170 n.16)[8].

Pardo Bazán recognises the emotional depths which can overwhelm women. But she also recognises the power of their sense of justice. Women's involvement in direct action and strikes grew more noticeable in the early years of the twentieth century, expressing their growing refusal to conform to the traditional roles ascribed to Spanish womanhood especially when it threatened their ability to fulfil those roles (Kaplan 101-13).

However, swept up as the new social movements were in the concerns of "the entire community of the poor", women's working hours and conditions did not become the subject of

[8] The full reference is given as "La Mujer Española" *La España Moderna* 17 [1890] 101-113.

legislation until many years later. The syndicates, or unions, had not previously been particularly interested in taking up their issues. Attitudes to women working outside the home were ambivalent. In 1881, just two years after the foundation of the *Partido Democrático Socialista Obrero* (Democratic Socialist Workers' Party), it was argued at their congress that women's work outside the home should be prohibited (Ackelsberg 49).

It is interesting that the philosophical ground of anarchic thought which later provided a fertile bed for proto-feminist ideas was so inimical in its inception. The gender discourse, where it could be heard, was that the woman's role was subsidiary to any other in the society in which she lived. Many women were unable to argue against this, having been trained since infancy to accept their own abnegation. In this world, women were disenfranchised. They had no recognised voice. What they needed was the vote. But it seemed a long way down the list of preferences for women living in poverty, servitude and ignorance.

The few women who raised their voices were not politically militant as much as socially and culturally active. Militancy and the strident voice had to wait a few more decades for at least one woman – Dolores Ibárruri – to emerge out of the working class in the north. This perhaps underlines the observation that the traditional lines of protest and militancy, the taking of public office, the raising of banners and shouting in the streets were not favoured by ladies of gentle birth. The women who *were* taking an active part in the political life of the nation were those women who were already involved in working outside the home, in mining, fishing and the other industries in the north. Other young women had left families unable to provide continuing support and were making their way in the commercial world. As they moved outside the confines of their homes they were finding their voice.

This passion to venture outside the comfort and safety of a bourgeois family world by questioning the social structure which supported it marked the Parera family in the nineteenth century and continued to burn in their descendants well into the twentieth century. Santiago was

not intimidated by threats. Neither was his great-granddaughter Lola. The link between Lola and Santiago passes through two intermediate generations.

In July 1839 Rosalía was left with seven children. The oldest was Rosa Parera Rico, aged 19, the signatory to her mother's declaration. Rosa's husband Ramón García-Negrete and their son Carlos, born in 1845, continued the family's commitment to public service as liberal mayors in the village, Ramón in the 1840s, and Carlos thirty years later, when still in his early twenties he was the Republican mayor of Castillo during the six years of intense political struggle between 1868 and 1874.

The failure of the family to gain immediate justice for Santiago's murder had led to a long-running legal *causa.* The bulk of the family fortune was spent over thirty years in the pursuit of justice for Santiago. There was no conviction or punishment for the crime although the names of the culprits were known to many from the beginning. A strange kind of honour protected the guilty. However, the continued retelling of the family story of survival and resistance to bullying power linked generation to generation in a conflicted pride. María-Victoria has described being shown the martyr's bloody clothes in the early 1930s, when she was still a very young child. They had been kept in the family home in Castillo de Locubín for one hundred years. She believed that the murder was part of "una semi-guerra entre los Carlistas y los Liberales" (María-Victoria Castillo García-Negrete, 4 August 2011). Santiago's story made him a martyr and confirmed the family's commitment to social and political liberalism.

This mission to gain social justice had been constantly frustrated through three generations and resulted in a pervasive and resigned paralysis, characteristic of Spain as a whole. This paralysis had its roots in a number of continuing causes, natural, economic, social, political and cultural.

Politically this struggle between reform and reaction had begun in 1833, following the conflict over the royal succession between Isabel II and her uncle Carlos. The *progresivos* supported the more liberal ideals of the 1812 Cádiz Constitution, including allowance for a female monarch

and reduced control by the Church. When the First Republic fell the *moderados* supported a return to the absolutist monarchy, a male on the throne, and control by the Church. It was a time of rage and turbulence. Spain was polarized.

The family was neither immune to these debates nor isolated from them. During the summer of 1873 during which violence erupted across southern Spain (Boyd *Historia* 42), the antagonism of the *moderados*, also known as the *alfonsinos*, to the Republic was so great that, in 1873, Carlos's home in Castillo was violently attacked, accompanied by shouts of "!Viva el niño Alfonso!" The front door still, in 2014, bears the wounds of that attack (See Appendix A). One of the gouges in its sturdy wooden planks is wide and deep enough to put one's hand through. Young Federico (Freddie) Parera Castillo, the diarist, looking back over nearly fifty years, wrote how the axe attack succeeded in frightening the two women who happened to be home at the time. One of the women, Anica Fuentes, a young servant of the family, was still alive nearly sixty years later. She remembered the incident clearly as she and Freddie celebrated the proclamation of the Second Republic. The pride of the Parera Castillos in their liberal and republican heritage was a shining strand in the weft of their story (Parera Castillo 16 April 1931).

Although during the nineteenth century a number of small, tentative, but nevertheless important changes to women's greater freedom in Spain had occurred, the little girls of the García-Negrete family in Alcalá la Real – Lola and Marta – would have most probably been shielded from them by the enfolding walls of the convent. Did they know of the painful gestation and birth of the political movements which gave shape to the class struggle to come? Were they ignorant of the lonely stance of some women for whom conformity was a betrayal of their humanity and intelligence? Their education in the 1890s revolved around the most basic of literacy and numeracy skills, enough to read and understand the bills from the butcher, the baker, and the dress-maker and to fill in their social diaries, to sew and embroider their trousseaux, and to maintain their roles as apprentice *ángeles del hogar* to become *perfectas casadas*. All we know about Lola as a school-girl

is from her granddaughter María-José, daughter of the oldest daughter Dolores: “she was good at sewing but not very good at playing the piano” (Vazquez Castillo personal communication 19 May 2011).

Lola and Marta absorbed their lessons well, so that when Lola visited the shrine of the saint with the prophetic navel, her hopes and dreams were centred only on her marriage. The fulfilment of her destiny was paramount. To question it was unthinkable. Her wedding day on the 2 April 1905 sealed her destiny for the next thirty years – to become the perfect wife (See Appendix A).

Chapter 2

The Silver Lining: Women in Early 20th Century Spain (1905-1931)

The period between the shame of defeat in 1898 of the Spanish-American war and the devastation of the Civil War became known as the Silver Age, a time of intellectual expansion and interest in ideas and movements from Europe, a little Enlightenment. A question that was repeatedly posed by Spanish intellectuals and political leaders of different persuasions was how was the old Spain, finally shorn of her last significant imperial possessions and international prestige, to take her position in a modern world? (Graham *Spanish* 2-3, Brenan 18, Thomas 16). The reassessment took the form of heightened analysis and response on an intellectual level and produced what became known as the Generation of 1898. It included the philosopher and writer Miguel de Unamuno, the Machado poet-brothers, and the political theorist and diplomat Ramiro de Maeztu, among others. Although these men demanded a total review of Spain's vision of itself, and a remodelling of its systems – Maeztu's first publication, in 1898, was titled *Hacia otra España* – they ignored women (Arkinstall 190). Even in the freethinking world of Spanish intellectualism, women, confined by gender and confined by class, and their contributions to cultural and social life had little currency.

It was during this period that Lola grew from adolescence to maturity. She was eighteen when she married her cousin Federico in 1905 and, while there is no evidence that she was totally absorbed in her domestic role, her history of pregnancy and parturition - twenty-three pregnancies in twenty-four years (Sánchez Tostado "Dolores" 400) – indicates her dedication to her role as wife and mother. Lola García-Negrete and her sister had received their preparation for their expected lives as *perfectas casadas* – their "dressage" or *doma* as Pardo Bazán described it in 1892 – at the hands of the Poor Clares in Alcalá-la-Real. It would have given the sisters the trappings of gentility – survival literacy and numeracy and some genteel skills for the salon. As young women the first of

the circuit of jumps to be mastered was the transition from maid to mother. While Lola was living the life of a devout Catholic mother, she "como tantas mujeres de su tiempo, educó a sus hijos en un ambiente cristiano (todos ellos estudiaron en colegios católicos […] en Jaén, y […] en Granada, y todos fueron bautizados y confirmados" (315), and she maintained a relationship with her confessor "el sacerdote Blas Moreno Covaleda" which continued at least until her trial in August 1939 (400, 402). At the same time other women were making examples of themselves, challenging the dogmas and indoctrination of nineteenth and early twentieth century Spain.

This chapter explores the debates about the role of women in Spanish society and how attitudes towards women's greater participation in this society were formed through political debate and action. What were these debates? How did expectations and opportunities, both educationally and professionally, change for women during the period from the "Disaster" of 1898 to the proclamation of the Second Republic? To what degree was Lola aware of these changes? Did she discuss them with her husband, Federico, and did she agree with them? Because of the silences that surround Lola, we will never know, but it is safe to assume that her transformation from housewife to revolutionary did not come out of the blue. Lola did not live in a political and intellectual vacuum. Given her later transgression of accepted gender norms, while outwardly *un ángel del hogar*, it is likely that the debates on the role of women in Spain had some impact. To make sense of these changes, it is necessary to have an understanding of the broader social and political context in which they took place.

The Disaster of 1898 would have had little impact on Lola the schoolgirl. However, as the wife of a self-consciously well-informed young man, socially, culturally and politically active, she would have been exposed to ideas and debates in her own home around the happenings of the day. In the first twenty years of the century there were thirty-three different governments, indicating an unstable central political structure (Brenan 23 n1).

The waging of a deeply unpopular war in Morocco and the increasing social imbalance particularly in Andalusia and Catalonia led to bloody strikes, riots and demonstrations. The growing power of the local anarchists, who had been led to hope for a final demise of both kings and priests (Thomas 60) culminated in the *Semana Trágica* in Barcelona in 1909 and led to the formation of the first nationwide workers' federation, the *Confederación Nacional de Trabajo*. Philosophical and intellectual debate backed by violent demonstrations were aimed at "achieving the goal of 'libertarian communism'" (Thomas 63).

The outbreak of the Great War in 1914 and the Russian Revolution of 1918, coupled with the continuing political turmoil in Madrid gave encouragement to the anarchists, unionists and communists who believed that "their hour was near" (Thomas 63). In an attempt to deflect the anger and disappointment of the country King Alfonso appointed Miguel Primo de Rivera as head of a dictatorship which only sharpened the divisions. He was a man of vision, who hoped to modernise Spain, but his vision and plans "lacked both judgement and luck [... were] overambitious and [...] resulted in enormous waste" ... which led to a "claustrophobic irritation" (Beevor *Battle* 19-20). Ultimately the dictatorship and the monarchy proved inadequate to the task of solving Spain's multiple problems and in 1931 the Second Republic was proclaimed as a possible solution. This incredibly fluid and dynamic situation in Spain would have been the subject of lively discussion in many households, particularly where the head of the house held a high profile across several local areas of interest and influence as Federico did. Lola was there, and would have heard much of this lively dialogue between her husband and his political colleagues. Some of these discussions led to fiery public meetings and arrests of family members (Sánchez Tostado *Exilio* 254). To get an understanding of the changing role of Spanish women and their contribution to political and social debate during this time is not always easy, given that their contribution has often been ignored or downplayed. For example, writing in 1994, the Hispanist Michael Ugarte asked, "Why aren't there any women in the generation of 1898?" (262). Studies on the Generation of 1898, dealing as they do with male intellectual after male intellectual, seem to underline his question. Nevertheless, recent

scholarship has begun to challenge the received wisdom. Christine Arkinstall, for example, observes that the inclusion by these men of only men in their ranks "speaks volumes of the prejudiced determination of cultural elites to overlook the significant engagement of contemporary women with the problems of Spain that characteristically defined that group: their critique of the Spanish-American war, the need to counter religious superstition and social inequalities with a scientific education, and their deep concern for the calamitous situation of the working classes" (190). By trivialising women's potential as contributors to Spain's renaissance, the problems which particularly occupied them were trivialised as well. So a profound response to those issues was sidelined. The Silver Age was to be an all-male phenomenon.

Another response to Ugarte's question could be that most of the women of Lola's class in Spain at this time, as at every other, were busy being wives and mothers. Few women fulfilling their expected roles in society had any time for extending their reach outside their domestic obligations. The marriage of Federico and Lola on 2 April 1905 can be claimed as part of the re-generation of this different Spain. In the early years of the twentieth century Federico was studying and establishing himself as a doctor, in Madrid and then home in Jaén, observing life around him and writing about it, and getting married a week before his thirtieth birthday. His busy professional, cultural and political life aligned him with those men of the Generation of '98, many of whom were his contemporaries. In his own, modest way Federico would contribute to a provincial Silver Age, with the invisible woman behind him.

According to Federico's sixth son José-Luis, his father as a teenager fell madly in love with his little cousin Lola. As he considered himself much her social inferior, he promised himself he would do something to deserve her hand. So he went to Madrid, and combining his work as a servant at a chemist's with his studies at University he took his degree in medicine (José-Luis Castillo García-Negrete 3). His determination was rewarded. Their first child Federico was born within a year of the wedding.

Amongst the enduring characteristics of the family was a sense of social responsibility and liberal politics going back at least to Lola's great-grandfather and Federico's grandfather Santiago Parera. During the 1920s the rise of fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany threatened European liberalism and caused many liberals to harden their position. So it was with Federico Castillo.

He was a man of many talents. In 1900 he had published a monograph, *Un Día en Guardia en San Juan de Dios,* that consisted of 64 approximately A6 size pages, about his experiences as an intern in the hospital. It demonstrates his strong powers of observation and gives us an insight into his political and social views as expressed through his clear and unsentimental view of people in every social stratum. For example, he had little sympathy for the nuns who brought ribbons and pretty pictures for the prostitutes in the venereal wards, hoping with these to save their souls, but caring little for the circumstances that had led them to prostitution in the first place. He wrote of his first impressions as he entered these wards:

> Después de unos momentos de vacilar […] me atreví a descorrer el cerrojo y entrar en la Sala 1ª, que parecía menos alboratada. […] Entre las mujeres públicas – y en esto no hay gran diferencias de las estadisticas de España a las del extranjero –, hay pocas que sepan leer, y muchas menos que sepan escribir. Esta ignorancia, tanto más lamentable cuanto que puede considerarse como una de las causas mas directas de la prostitución, vagancia, criminalidad y tantos otros vicios sociales, es aprovechada […] por una persona que explota su mayor o menor instrucción.
>
> Esta persona […] recibe el nombre de La Aparatista.
>
> La Aparatista es una enferma que a más del cargo de secretaria […] de sus compañeras, en virtud del cual cobra cinco o diez céntimos por cada carta que las escribe […].
>
> El aspecto que la sala ofrecía en aquel momento no podía ser más singular. Unas cuantas enfermas esperaban turno para dictar la carta para su respectivo amante – su novio, como dicen ellas–, junto a La Aparatista, que sentada encima de su cama, con las piernas cruzadas

> y la almohada por pupitre, escribía lo que cuchicheando le dictaba una enferma, […] más allá, en cuclillas sobre sus palanganas, se lavaban, con la mayor impudicia, otras cuantas enfermas, preparándose a sufrir la cura, y no pocas, echadas indolentemente en sus camas, contemplaban en silencio las espirales de humo que salían de sus cigarrillos. Aquel repugnante conjunto era retrato fiel de la vida que hacen estas desdichadas mientras están "de veraneo en San Juan de Luz", como llaman ellas a su cautiverio en el hospital de San Juan de Dios. (Castillo Extremera 16-19)

It is evident from this extract that Federico was able to see the bigger picture, to recognise cause and effect, and to express his compassion for these women who were denied the advantages he had. In describing details like the spirals of smoke and enjoying their ironic referral to their painful and humiliating treatment in the ward as holidaying in a luxury seaside resort his skills as social commentator and writer are luminous.

He joined the *Real Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País*, one of the first organisations to promote women's education, as discussed in the previous chapter; he edited *La Revista Sanitaria de Jaén* and established a general practice in Jaén, caring particularly for the poor. He worked as a pathologist and prison doctor. He was president of the Press Association in 1914. He wrote at least two plays which he produced in his exquisite little *Teatro Norte* in 1918 (*Generaciones de Plata*. "La familia Castillo García-Negrete").

Politically he aligned himself with his friend, and future president of the Spanish Republic, Niceto Alcalá-Zamora in the *Derecha Liberal Republicana*. He was thus seen as sympathising with the Republican anti-monarchist left-wing sector of Jaén. The Castillo family was beginning to present challenges to its image as a conventional cog in the machinery of *la sociedad de buen tono.* At the very birth of the Second Republic he spoke at a celebratory meeting in Castillo de Locubín (Parera Castillo 17 April 1931). He may also have attended the San Sebastián meeting with Alcalá-Zamora in August 1930 at which the provisional Republican government was set up.

In 1930 or '31 Federico *hijo* and his brothers Carlos and Emanuel joined *el Partido Comunista de España.* Obviously they had gained more from their education than the predictable outcomes of a conventional Catholic schooling. One of the attractions to communism for the Castillo family was its agenda to create an egalitarian democracy and to maximise the opportunities for the poor. In spite of the privileged life they enjoyed there seems to have been little sense of entitlement, rather, a sense of social obligation to recognise and remedy the deep inequities of their time and place, as evidenced by Federico *padre*'s decision to establish a medical practice dedicated primarily to providing for the needs of the Jaén poor.

Federico Parera Castillo, cousin and near-twin of José-Luis, both born in 1914, grew up in Castillo de Locubín. His diaries, eight school exercise books filled with the fluid handwriting of this sixteen-year-old school boy, provide a firsthand account of the politics of 1931 mingled with the passions and heart-aches of love and football by an adolescent blessed with a fluency of language and an urgency of expression. These little books give touching accounts of the interactions between the diarist and my Spanish family including my father, an apparently brash insensitive young man, the "mathematician" to Freddie's "poet" (Parera Castillo 8 May 1936).

They also include an extraordinary evocation of the ancestors which Freddie calls on to prove his worth as a lover, "Que si algún Parera faltase a una de las reglas de la caballerosidad las sombras de Santiago y Federico Parera, Ramón y Asunción García-Negrete y otros muchos de mis antepasados levantaríanse indignadas de sus tumbas y recordarían me las reglas" (2 March 1931). In 2015 such chivalry seems quaint, but it reflects the continuing pride felt within the family for its myth of nobility. As with medieval chivalry the construction of such a moral status was for the benefit of women, to woo and win them, to enfold them in the continuing myth of this doomed family. The constant effort to keep women in thrall to the greater myth of the "true" Spain was like a secret agenda, intrinsic to the traditional resistance to change. Inflecting this myth was the family's liberalism.

Fiery meetings were a feature of village life, and the village had its local heroes, forged over several generations. The Castillos were part of this story. On 18 April 1931 the Second Republic was in its first hours of life. Federico Castillo Extremera, "*el padrino*," born fifty-five years before in the village, godfather and uncle to Freddie, was returning home. Freddie wrote: "Como es jefe provincial Republicano, se cierran establecimientos y centros docentes, y se organiza una manifestación monstrua." El padrino and his son Carlitos were "colosal," in Freddie's excited words. The meeting was riotously in favour of the Republic, hoping that it would fulfil its promises to bring equality and freedom to the poor labourers:

> ¡Viva la República! ¡Viva la Libertad! Son los dos hermosos gritos que recorren hoy los ámbitos españoles. Los republicanos de corazón podemos hoy entonar un himno a la liberación del pueblo noble que ha sacudido el yugo de los caciques, que ha ido a votar en masa a las candidaturas republicanas-socialistas. […] Dios haga que triunfe esta hermosa causa y que surja la España Republicana, la España del porvenir. (14 April)

But he also gives an indication of the dilemmas faced by a young thinking person then: "He sido educado en un ambiente republicano-católico, y estas dos ideas, Catolicismo y República, se me van a convertir en Ateísmo y Anarquía" (3 May).

In spite of Freddie's hope in the new government for progress towards a democratic egalitarian Spain it was a far from simple picture. He equates the political confusion of the new government with the vacillations of his love-life as, on 26 April, he wrote: "Otro giro de la veleta; para el movimiento hecho por el Gobierno Civil." It was an apt comparison. His feelings of despair and exasperation were obvious when he declared the politicians to be just "los mismos perros sólo que con diferentes collares" (29 May). The "jaleo" is inevitable given the muddle of political parties – from left to right "Socialistas, Radicales-socialistas, Radicales, Republicanos-liberales, Republicanos-demócratas, Federales Independientes (campo republicano)…, Agrarios y Borbónicos

(campo monárquico). En la extrema izquierda dudo saquen diputados comunistas y sindicalistas" (10 June).

On 2 April, Freddie describes a "gran jaleo" at a meeting in the town hall in Castillo de Locubín, for the mayor's election. Following the vote in which "[p]or mayoría aplastante fue elegido D. José Álvarez y los 'Chamarizos' han quedado aplastados", the road-workers who had been imported for the meeting broke out into loud "Viva"s and applause for the winning candidate, Sr. José Álvarez, grandfather of the current *alcalde,* and there broke out "[u]n revuelo terrible, cinco o seis tíos que se tiraron por los balcones del salón de sesiones y varias herramientas que salieron a relucir", swearing death to the lawyer, Manuel Peinado, the losing candidate. Freddie and his friend Rafa only escaped injury by hiding in the mayor's office.

Further evidence of the family's commitment is in José-Luis's 1985 letter to the family. He tells how, in the muddle at the outbreak of the Civil War in 1936, he and a companion were mistaken by fellow Republicans for fascists because of their smart uniforms, "'You look like fascists and must be fascists'" (6). He and his companion were only saved from summary execution when he was finally recognised as the brother of Carlos, the lawyer for the Socorro Rojo in Madrid. We know that Federico, Manuel, Pablo and José-Luis himself joined the army under the sponsorship of the Communist Party (*Escuela Popular de Artilleria)*. There is scant evidence of their political growth, but nothing of their mother's at that time, only the accusation at her trial of being instrumental in the early stages of the party in Jaén. The absence of documents and details of Lola's life points to one of the problems of writing women's history and to telling Lola's story, little of which was recorded or remembered.

Lola is invisible in Federico's public life. Most of her time would have been spent caring for her fourteen children, albeit with the substantial assistance provided by servants. A photograph taken around 1922 shows the whole family, mother, father and twelve children, ranging in ages

from 16 to newly born[9]. Following the expected norms, all the children were baptised and confirmed. All studied in Catholic schools, either in Jaén or Granada, 70 kilometres away. The girls attended the Teresiana Institute in Jaén, founded there in 1911 and offering an enlightened approach to education for girls. The advanced ideas of the family are recognised by their choice of this school, only recently established, for their daughters' education (Sánchez Tostado 400). Father Pedro Poveda Castroverde established the *Institución Teresiana*, in which "lay sisters dedicated to higher education for women within a Catholic context [...] established secondary schools and university residences that set a high standard of academic excellence that was disseminated throughout the peninsula by Poveda's journal, *Academia Teresiana"* (Boyd, *Historia* 63). The dilemma faced by any forward thinker was how to maintain his or her ties with the Church while departing from the orthodoxy which modernization demanded. The radical departure of the *Institución de Libre Enseñanza* from many of the most fiercely held beliefs of the Church made its philosophy and methodology difficult to meld into a Catholic education. However Poveda was driven not only by a deep desire to bring education to the poor but also to do it in the most effective way. He found that much of the pedagogical approach of the *Institución de Libre Enseñanza* was "not incompatible with Christianity". His Teresiana Institute, was "composed of only women who committed themselves to intellectual development in a determined way" (Montero 4). He did not regard the relationship between the modern world and the Church as one of inevitable conflict (Boyd *Historia* 63). While cynically his approach can be seen as little more than religious commitment combined with intellectual development in a bid to hold onto the church's educational advantages, the educational outcomes for women were nonetheless substantial seeing how little education women had received in the previous century. Despite the advanced ideas of the Castillos Lola's time would still have been largely taken up by her duties as wife, mother and household manager. There were still social strictures regarding women leaving the home unaccompanied, and

[9] See Appendix A

Lola García-Negrete was only ever seen outside the house with her husband, according to her granddaughter María-José Vázquez Castillo, "and he was very jealous" (Personal communication May 2011).

When Lola did leave the house it would have been to accompany her husband on his social and cultural outings, as an enhancement to his already considerably chic appearance. The tradition of the *paseo*, the evening stroll, was the time to show off one's *éclat*, fashionably dressed with beautiful clean children and their uniformed nurse-maids adding to the critical mass, to gossip with one's peers on the street, inspect new babies, offer advice and condolences where appropriate, and above all, to be seen. To all outward purposes, Lola was the *mujer fina, la perfecta casada, el ángel del hogar.* Her education was vindicated.

For more than thirty years Lola held her responsibilities like a silver cup and expected no recognition beyond her front door. Their home, comfortable, well-appointed and expanding, was in Calle Bernabé Soriano. On the ground floor by 1930 were the consulting rooms for the Castillo medical practice, *padre* and *hijo*. The family home was entered by a separate street door, leading into a lobby with a water-feature, like a small footbath, all lined with beautiful Arabic tiles. It is still there, as the foyer to the building which now houses a news agent and four apartments.

On the main floor, the front *salon* has a large bay-window which opens out to a pleasing view of the ornate local government building opposite. As María-Victoria recalled, seventy years later, in her letter of 25 March 2010: "Mi casa por dentro era muy grande ya que estaba incrustada en tenemos de tres casas a la espalda y laterales. Por dentro, de muebles, de zócalos y de cristales y patios, eran casi un palacio. Todo lo expelieron y algunos cosas yo sé en dónde están."

Reminiscing in 1985, my father José-Luis – not that I knew then that he was my father – describes the family as consisting of

> Federico, Carlos, Manuel, Pablo, Fernando, José-Luis, Lola, Salvador, Mercedes, Juan and Paco (twins), Carmen, María Victoria and Joaquín. And then Juan died, followed by Joaquín

> (1932 and 34) and then Mercedes, a most beautiful girl of 13 when she died in 1936 of rheumatic fever. Before those three deaths there had been at least two Christmases I remember when we were 21 in the family altogether. Us 14, our parents, 16, and 5 including the chauffeur, in permanent service. I am sure none of those 5 people could be spared. There was, for instance a woman just washing clothes and ironing all day, every day. (Castillo García-Negrete J-L 3)

One can imagine these bright educated young men gathering with their parents at the evening meal, wrestling with matters of conscience, political philosophy, how to help the landless peasants in the olive groves surrounding the city, the continuation of their own educations or just discussing the day's or week's events; the uncertain political system giving them plenty to discuss. The younger brothers and sisters undoubtedly absorbed the intellectual atmosphere and digested the radical ideas along with their paella and bread. Federico hijo is credited with launching the Jaén branch of the Communist Party. It formed part of the indictment at his trial in Jaén in 1940. As the first daughter in the family was not born until 1916, Lola was surrounded by males for the first ten years of her married life. Her sixth son remembers her with deep affection:

> We were a very happy family and we all adored our mother who was our friend and confidant. We played with her, joked with her, laughed with her, and were soundly spanked by her when we deserved it. We couldn't say the same about my father, who never put a finger on us but with whom I never had a conversation. Our only contact with him was when the young of us filed past him to kiss him goodnight. He was, or must have been, a very strict Victorian father transplanted to Jaén in the first quarter of the century. (3)

The "Victorian" father knew that the care, both physical and spiritual, of his progeny, was in good hands. He could present himself every evening for the obligatory kissing parade without needing to concern himself with the minutiae of child-rearing, all in the capable hands of Lola and her female support staff. It is intriguing that this lofty, uninvolved father was the same man who had written

compassionately of the wretched patients at the San Juan de Dios hospital and whose political career was built on a concern for the welfare and worth of those in the poorer classes. He was a man with a social conscience, but in his own home he was still able to apply that distance and dignity proper to the Spanish father which inhibited a close relationship with his children.

While Lola's daily life was perhaps typical of married women of the Spanish middle class during this period, there were other women who concerned themselves with more than their domestic and biological imperatives. There were women who thought, discussed, argued, shouted, marched, waved placards, studied, wrote, and organised with the objective of bringing Spain into a more enlightened place through countering the religious superstition and political barriers that led to the continuation of social inequalities. Part of the process of emancipation for women was a rejection of the religious dogma in which girls and women particularly were immersed. Once free of the weight of Catholic subjugation, these new women could turn their attention to the oppressed groups around them.

Amongst the social issues occupying women in Spain at this time was a "deep concern for the calamitous situation of the working classes" (Arkinstall 190). Women were becoming increasingly articulate in voicing their demands for a fair and free society, in some cases leading the protest. These women were not going to accept what someone else deemed was "appropriate to [their] needs and [...] social position". The "Christian resignation" and "class harmony" that was advocated in the 1928 *Guía del maestro* were only going to ensure more of the same oppression and inequality, doubly for women, from the ruling class and from their own men (Boyd *Historia* 25). Much of the unrest grew out of their own lived experience. Women workers in the textile and tobacco industries in the north became unionised and were highly visible in the strikes. Their greatest strength in these protests and demonstrations was their ability to shame the patriarchal organisations against which they were rallying, and this they did in some cases, actually achieving some of their objectives.

As we saw in Chapter 1, in the account of the *cigarreras* by Emilia Pardo Bazán in 1890 and in Radcliff's description of the women's political protests in Gijón in 1898 women were coming together in a fierce almost feral response to oppression. Their traditional networks and working-class neighbourhoods provided the foundation for later action.

This move towards collective, oppositional action was evident throughout the country. But class divisions continued to block a unified approach. The gulf between conservative, middle class women and their working class compatriots can be clearly seen in the events leading up to and during Barcelona's *Semana Trágica* in 1909. The loss of hundreds of soldiers through bad luck and incompetence in the Second Rif War (1909 - 1910) led to the recall of reserve troops in Barcelona in July 1909, as the working class people were once again to be sacrificed to protect the interests of the rich. Many of these working-class men had already served their time in the army and now had families depending on them and no chance of buying their way out of the conscription. One of the lasting images of this conflict that also points to the disjuncture between middle- and working-class women is that of well-dressed establishment wives on the docks in Barcelona bearing crosses and scapulas for the comfort of the conscripts being shipped off to Morocco for yet another pointless fight (Beevor *Battle* 14). The actions of these women recall the pathetic, symbolic offerings to the prostitutes of ribbons and pretty pictures that Federico criticised in his account of the venereal ward.

Recalcitrance was not amenable to religious bling, however. In July 1909 dialogue was impossible. Only military orders were audible. Barcelona erupted. The contempt with which the Church, the army and the politicians treated the exhausted conscripts and their families fuelled popular fury and led to a general strike called by the *Solidaridad Obrera* (Marín Silvestre 2). It didn't help the cause of the military that in the case of conscripts with more financial resources or personal influence they could buy their way out of their obligations (Brenan 34). Battle lines were

being inscribed on the ground and in the hearts of Spain, and nowhere more deeply than in the hearts of working-class women.

At the centenary in 2009 of the Tragic Week, called the Week of Glory by the working class, Dolores Marín Silvestre wrote:

> [Working women] were active in most of the workers' societies ... [and] in the labour press. Most of the most active among them worked as secular teachers and they spoke out boldly in favour of coeducation and the spread of scientific rationalism. It was doubtless within the ranks of free thought and the anarchists that the women found their opportunity to act politically, to write, speak and network. That is, a civic space in which they could act and raise their profile. And here women such as Teresa Mañé, Teresa Claramunt, Ángeles López de Ayala, Amalia Domingo Soler, Belén Sárraga and many others were to display their intellectual excellence, as did many other women who became reference points and models for their fellow women (Marín Silvestre n. pag.).

Still in Barcelona, in 1913 women in the textile industry were looking for greater fairness in their wages and hours. Their effective organisation was built on strong bonds of friendship and support within neighbourhoods, as was happening in Gijón in 1898. In the face of obstruction by their male co-workers and some members of their own union the activist women were driven to negotiate directly with the governor. Zein Nakhoda explains how, after nine months of strikes, demonstrations, street marches and petitions they won a Royal Decree which provided for a sixty-hour week and flexibility of working hours. The strike was not successful as the employers refused to abide by the law. However, in spite of this failure, their open and noisy activism was "concrete evidence of women's political consciousness and culture [... and] highlighted the relationship of working women to the preservation of the community and brought forward the political presence of women in city affairs" (5).

In Huelva in western Andalusia in the same year, poor women, wearing their rags as badges of authority and proclaiming their rage against the Rio Tinto mining company, an unconscionable and ruthless employer, emerged as agents rather than victims. In "Redressing the Balance: Gendered Acts of Justice around the Mining Community of Rio Tinto in 1913" Temma Kaplan points out that the efforts of the company – to blur the boundaries between work and home, not only by the physical proximity of the one to the other, but also by taking control of family and social life – actually worked to bring women into closer dealings with the company, particularly when motivated by a sense of injustice. The high-handed actions of the company also had the effect of forging stronger networks in the working classes: "thus it was not isolation [as previously thought] but tight bonds among people whose living conditions were intricately tied up with their working conditions which accounted for solidarity" (286). Rio Tinto's efforts to weaken opposition to its control ironically had the opposite effect. Kaplan quotes extensively from Juan Moro, a witness at a strike in November 1913, who had earlier identified the very anonymity of the women as endowing them with a power the men did not have, to express "the aspirations of a community that far transcends narrow, particularistic interests [...] represent[ing] the collective" (292). He even finds in their "shadowy figures [...] a mystical balance, to distribute justice where there was no justice" (292). It seems that the women acquired a powerful emblematic quality in their resistance to exploitation.

As well as striking at the authorities and rulers in their communities women also had a unique ability to shame those of their own gender and class when it was necessary. The strength of their purpose galvanised their actions in the mining villages, and the wives of strikers pursued the scabs and *their* wives through the streets to bring them round to supporting the strike and forging further bonds within the villages to confront the hated capitalists (Kaplan 293). What emerges as a common thread in these stories is the solidarity which grew out of the conflicts, based on the neighbourhood and shared adversity. The parish pump provided for women what the political podium did for men.

There was, however, a gulf between these working-class women with their violent physical confrontations over wages and conditions and the middle-class women with their Spanish feminism striving for emancipation and a better education. For working class women, "the feminist movement did nothing to relieve the drudgery of life in Spain in the 1920s" (Maier 34). If illiterate uneducated women outside the cities lost their fragile hold on economic independence, the desperate shift to the cities in search of work would almost invariably throw them onto the streets and into the kind of misery witnessed by Federico Castillo in the San Juan de Dios hospital. Their fight was not for emancipation from ignorance and illiteracy but for an escape from poverty and hunger. There was no time for them to establish the connection between the two. The idea of debate and genteel argument was a middle-class affectation, albeit of the enlightened women of the middle class. Nevertheless, both middle-class intellectualism and working-class action came together to challenge patriarchal assumptions about women's place in Spanish society.

In this Silver Age political enquiry and analysis produced formalised philosophies, policies and politics which opposed the dogma and established ideas of the "cultural elites". Encouraged by the radical ideas of the anarchists, socialists, syndicalists, federalists, republicans and freemasons, and in spite of the anxiety which their activism provoked, women were beginning to argue a feminist rationale. It was not an easy ride. André Lorulot, an influential anarchist of the early twentieth century gave a speech provocatively titled "Our enemy: the Woman" on 21 February 1921. In it he noted that misogyny was common among contemporary anarchists in the 1890s (Collins 31). But in spite of early negative attitudes to women as activists, the anarchists in fact provided an environment in which women's activism could flourish. As Beevor has pointed out, part of the anarchists' program, spread by "ascetic, almost saint-like characters", was to renounce alcohol, tobacco and infidelity (*Battle* 12). This alone must have appealed to women *en masse* even while it had nothing to do with feminism. But perhaps later it was the very resistance to their ideas which gave the women the strength to insist. They refused to allow their special concerns to sink into the background, overwhelmed by the demands of the noisier more belligerent men. Some were

emerging from the private domestic sphere to take up more influential roles in the public arena, like the secular teachers mentioned by Marín Silvestre above.

Anarchist women, through *Mujeres Libres* established in 1936, focused greatest attention on the problems that had always been of particular concern to women: "illiteracy, economic dependence and exploitation, and ignorance about health care, childcare, and sexuality" (Ackelsberg 5). Many of their demands were defined by their own gender's needs, and for their families and local communities for whose welfare they took full responsibility. But above all their demands can be encapsulated by Federica Montseny: "I considered that it was a revolutionary task to fight against all the prejudices that limited women's freedom [...] that any program for revolutionary social change that does not achieve equal respect and rights for women represents no change at all" (Fredericks n pag.).

Most of the feminist publications issued from Barcelona, the nursery for much free thought in Spain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This radicalisation had come about, according to Boyd, following "[t]he failure of moderate trade union tactics and the immigration of unskilled workers from impoverished areas [...which] had radicalized the Catalan working class and made Barcelona the urban stronghold of anarchism" ("Anarchists" 148). "The Idea" as anarchism was known by its adherents, would have been strengthened in this "Catalan California" - a place with an almost magical magnetic power, with the attraction of wealth beyond dreams, for the "army of landless labourers [...] from Murcia and Andalusia" which had built up since the 1880s (Ealham 5).

At that time there were several freethinking publications in Barcelona with names such as *La Alarma, Iniciales, El Desheredado, El Rebelde, La Revista Blanca, Solidaridad Obrera,* and a British anarchist magazine, *Freedom*, to which articles were contributed by prominent left-wing women, such as Federica Montseny (Fredericks n7, 8, 9. Nash *Mujeres Libres* 73*)*, Lucía Sánchez Saornil (73), and Amparo Poch y Gascón (*Ciudad de Mujeres* n. pag.*)*, Out of the protest movement a

number of important cultural organisations that contributed to women's emancipation were formed. In Barcelona, these included the Workers' Library (1909), the Cultural Institute and Library for Women (1910), the School for Women Librarians (1915) and the Nurses' School (1919) (Davies 21), while in Madrid and elsewhere between 1900 and 1920 the private sector opened a number of educational schools and institutions dedicated to the training and qualifying of girls and women in different professions. In particular, 1910 marked a significant shift in women's right to education: in March they were relieved of the requirement to consult the university authorities for permission to enrol at university, as discussed in chapter 1 and in September it was officially recognised that the different academic qualifications thus available to them would "enable women to undertake all professions related to the Ministry of Public Instruction" and would grant them "the right to work as professionals at *institutos*, universities and libraries, and archives and museums" (Flecha García 19-20). The many different centres opening in the next ten years offered training and professional qualifications in cultural, domestic, educational and nursing fields, allowing women to enter the working world as governesses, midwives, nurses, court reporters and typists. These opportunities came too late for Lola, but they point to a seismic shift in women's position within Spain of which Lola must have been aware.

Women were now able to attend university, and not just as students. In 1916 Julio Burrell, the Minister of Education, created a Chair in Romance Literatures for Emilia Pardo Bazán at the Universidad Central de Madrid. She was thus the first woman to be appointed to a Chair in a Spanish university (Partzsch 1). In 1915, with the support of the *Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas*, María Maeztu y Whitney founded the *Residencia de Señoritas,* a women's equivalent to *Residencia de Estudiantes* founded in 1910 (Capel Martínez 158). Both were modelled on the English college system and both were central to the flourishing of the Silver Age and were a vital part of Spanish intellectual and cultural life from the early years of the twentieth century.

The acceptance of the *Residencia de Señoritas* into the intellectual and scholastic life of Spain is an indication of the growing tolerance at this time of the concept of an educated female population. Carmen Magallón Portolés describes its functions as:

> dando alojamiento a las alumnas que iban a estudiar a la Universidad de Madrid o preparaban su ingreso en ella, así como a las que asistían a la Escuela Superior del Magisterio, al Conservatorio Nacional de Música, la Escuela Normal, la Escuela del Hogar u otros centros de enseñanza; también a otras que privadamente se dedicaban al estudio en bibliotecas, laboratorios, archivos o clínicas. […] Además de dar alojamiento, disponía de servicios como biblioteca, laboratorios, clases complementarias a las de la universidad, cursos de idiomas, y conferencias. Allí se orientaba a las alumnas a la lectura, la asistencia a conferencias y la relación social; se llevaba con ellas una labor de autorización, educando en libertad y en la valoración del trabajo intelectual. (39)

A further addition to the academic opportunities in Madrid for young women came

> [a]ños más tarde, […después de] la 1ª Guerra Mundial, [cuando] el Instituto Internacional […] con el apoyo del Comité de Boston del Instituto Internacional, en la Residencia de Señoritas se construirá el primer laboratorio de química dedicado en exclusiva a la formación científica de las españolas en este campo, el Laboratorio Foster. (43)

Despite these legislative changes, women were slow to take advantage of these improvements as the 1919-1920 enrolments show only 439 women university students in Madrid. In 1923 there were only some 300 girls studying in Institutes compared with over 30,000 boys (Davies 21). Centuries of prejudice and reluctance still needed to be overcome. While most young women were, like Lola, limited in their aspirations by their conventional rearing and education, the period from the Disaster of 1898 to the proclamation of the Republic saw a number of important and influential women who challenged the stereotypical and patriarchal roles ascribed to Spanish women by participating actively in the political and social debates of the times.

Among those educated – either formally or auto-didactically – and outspoken women who were challenging their traditional roles were María Maeztu y Whitney (1882-1948), Dolores Ibárruri Gómez (1895-1989), Margarita Nelken Mansberger (1894–1968), Victoria Kent Siano (1898-1987), and Clara Campoamor (1888-1972). Each of these women challenged established gender norms in their public lives and also in their support for emancipation, not just of women, but also of men. For example, Maeztu, the sister of the better recognised brother, Ramiro, advocated for secular education. At 22 she was appointed director of a newly established night school for adults in Bilbao. She worked tirelessly for the establishment of schools and educational centres for women, such as the *Liceo Femenino* (1926), as a means of overcoming women's exploitation. Margarita Nelken also contributed to this freethinking debate through her publications such as *La condición social de la mujer en España* (1922) and *La mujer ante las cortes constituyentes* (1931). We will consider their lives and contributions to the emancipation of Spanish women in more depth in Chapter 3.

Some working-class women too, despite their difficulties, were also carving out a spot in the public arena in which to articulate concerns particular to the social class from which they came. This is the case of Dolores Ibárruri Gómez and Clara Campoamor. Ibárruri was born into a poor mining family in the Basque Country while Campoamor came from a Madrid working-class family. Ibárruri began her life as a seamstress but soon immersed herself in progressive, left-wing politics. Inspired by the writings of Marx and using the pseudonym which would become her nickname, La Pasionaria, she wrote articles critical of the Church and became a fiery orator. Campoamor, like Ibárruri, started her working life as a seamstress before winning several public exams which enabled her to become a lawyer in 1924 at the age of 36. She was an energetic advocate for women's rights and suffrage, being particularly sensitive to the vulnerability of married women (Pérez 95) whom she defended through the legal firm she established. Her commitment to improving the situation for women is evidenced in her continued teaching in the *Escuela de Mujeres*

and in the *Casas de Pueblo* and in her founding in 1928 of the *Federación Internacional de Abogadas* in Paris which is still in existence (94-98).

While all the efforts of all these women can be described as political, several women became very active in electoral politics. Ibárruri, for example, joined the Communist Party in 1921 and was appointed to its Central Committee in 1930 (Ihrie and Oropesa 382). Victoria Kent was elected as a *diputada* for Madrid in the Constituent Cortés (Preston *Doves* 411). Maeztu became Minister for Public Instruction, thus consolidating her position in liberal politics before a personal disaster ended her political career in 1936 (Pérez 364).

The need and the ability for women to extricate themselves from the shadows expanded with the growth of anarchism and regional consciousness. But neither communists, anarchists nor socialists were confident that they knew what to do about the place of women in the new society. The difficulty which the Left had in relocating women in a modern Spain with rational and liberal values was to come to a head in the Republic as will be seen in the next chapter. The Right on the other hand knew with much more certainty where women belonged.

Spain could provide a nursery for radical feminism but it was very stony ground. No satisfactory models existed for incorporating liberated women into Spanish society. The Catholic model of womanhood throughout the nineteenth century was being challenged in very few cases. Through travel, reading, translation and cross-border debate a few women developed an alternative vision for Spain, Ibárruri, Campoamor and Maeztu among them. Their achievements needed to be consolidated through the formation of gendered organisations to support them and others and this was slowly happening. “The entry of women into politics was easier through new parties without established hierarchies and traditional power blocs” (Keene 329). But as we have already observed, even here it was not easy.

These women and many hundreds like them were discovering and honing their skills in the arts, social and cultural fields, and in politics. The establishment of organisations, clubs and

societies by and exclusively for women gave the rest of Spanish society warning that women would no longer tolerate the benign and systemic stifling which they had endured for so long. They were seen as expressions of the growing female consciousness and became tools for its cultivation. We can see this in the foundation of the *Liceo Femenino*, by María Maeztu in 1926. Based on a European model as a place where women could meet with others of their kind, intelligent, curious, and not amenable to "dressage", its aim was to provide women with increased opportunities in the world outside the home. It had sections devoted to the arts, science, social issues, international affairs, and it organized concerts, recitals, lectures, discussion groups, and exhibitions. As part of its social program it called for reform to the legal status of women, and improvements to their working conditions (Mangini "Lyceum" 126-127).

As a centre dedicated to providing a space in which women could explore the world outside their homes, the *Liceo* was growing and its gravitas attracted intellectuals and performers from inside Spain and outside (128). Its legitimacy was underscored by the position of Honorary President being shared by Princess Victoria Eugenia and María del Rosario de Silva, the Duchess of Alba. The success of the *Liceo* can be measured by the growth in membership from 150 in 1926 to 450 in 1929 and the establishment in 1931 of a regional branch in Barcelona. Naturally such a successful challenge in the upper echelons of the male-dominated society of Spain would not pass unnoticed. The conservative forces rallied to express their condemnation of such an insult to the decorum of Spanish society, seeing the club, its facilities and above all its members as posing a threat to marriage, family and the Church. Lesley Twomey quotes one priest:

> Society should lock them up as mad or criminals instead of allowing them to speak up in this club against all human and divine rules. The moral atmosphere in both the streets and homes would benefit from the hospitalization of these eccentric and unbalanced women (112).

The increasing education and participation of women in society during the first decades of the twentieth century was pushed primarily by men and women on the progressive side of politics. Nevertheless, women were finally granted the vote by the conservative dictator Miguel Primo de Rivera in 1929. Unfortunately, they did not have the opportunity to exercise this new democratic power as it was only to be in municipal elections and there would be none before his fall and shortly afterwards came the abdication of Alfonso XIII.

Meanwhile, as the dictatorship and the monarchy approached their demise at the end of the twenties the Castillo García-Negrete family was nearly complete. Lola's last baby, her fourteenth live birth, was Joaquín, born in 1928 or 29, when she was 43. Federico her first born was now in his early twenties, and just qualified as a doctor. We have seen that Federico padre was increasingly active in his political life and involved in the Republican movement with his colleague Niceto Alcalá Zamora. Following the signing of the Pact at San Sebastián in August 1930 Alcalá Zamora became president and head of state of the provisional government (Beevor *Battle* 28). Federico was elected as deputy to the Cortes on 28 June 1931 for the *Derecha Liberal Republicana* (DLR) with 127,372 votes and took up his seat on 11 July 1931 (Certificate of "*Elecciones de Diputados a Cortes Constituyentes*" number 325). In all of this, we can only speculate about Lola's attitude to his growing involvement with the cultural and social life of Jaén, the political and economic directions his life took him, and the medical practice on the ground floor of the family home, with his son Federico joining him in the practice. Whether Lola took an active part in it is unknown, but – given her subsequent vociferous support for the Republic – it seems reasonable to suppose that she took an interest in the dramatic political developments of the time. When her husband took up his seat

in the Cortes in July 1931 she probably accompanied him to Madrid, knowing her family was well cared-for at home. At the same time, her son Federico was active in the newly formed Communist Party branch in Jaén, requesting postage stamps, and giving advice to a syndicate on the coming election (copies of personal documents from Salamanca archives). Carlos, now a practising lawyer in Madrid, was so deeply committed to the Republican cause that when, on 15 December 1930, a revolt erupted at the Cuatro Vientos aerodrome in the course of which it was held for some hours for the Republicans by General Gonzalo Queipo de Llano and Major Ramón Franco (Casanova 16), he was arrested and imprisoned and threatened with the death penalty (Sánchez Tostado *Exilio* 254). Situating Lola in the midst of this buzzing political family, optimistically expecting the dawn of a new Spain, her emergence as a high-profile activist shortly after her husband's death in late 1936 is not so surprising.

In the next chapter the thesis follows the progress of Republican women who were active in the Second Republic, in the build-up to the Civil War, and the context in which they lived. It also describes the fortunes of the Castillo García-Negrete family as they drifted into tragedy and disaster.

Chapter 3

Women in Republican Spain (1931 – 1936)

This chapter considers the changing political and social status of Spanish women in this period. Despite the convoluted and unstable political climate in Spain between the declaration of Spain's Second Republic and the outbreak of the Civil War, the years 1931-1936 saw a greater involvement of women in public life, culminating perhaps in their obtaining the vote in 1931. The stories of women's lives provide another perspective on the political events and ensuing turmoil in Spain during this period although contemporary and early historians of twentieth century Spain showed little awareness of them. Gerard Brenan, writing his otherwise exhaustive history of pre-Civil War Spain, has no entry in his index for Women. They and their groups, so active at this time, are rarely if ever mentioned. This chapter then will examine women's participation in political life and the consequences of this participation on Spanish women's growing involvement in public life. These stories provide another way of understanding and coming to terms with these cataclysmic years.

The substantial political and social changes that women achieved during the period of the Second Republic occurred largely outside the established political organisations of the Left, including Spanish and Catalan Republicans, progressive Republicans, left-wing Liberals including my grandfather, right-wing Radicals, conservatives, Socialist intellectuals, and anarchists. These groups, with the exception of the anarchists, were focused on creating a strong government and state. This was considered challenge enough for the mainstream – and male-centred – political organisations. As a result of this fractured support for women's issues it was easier to relegate the whole thing. Women's groups struggled on alone.

The political situation in Jaén was then as volatile as in many other parts of Spain. According to Collier, in the non-mining regions of Andalusia, including the farming region of Jaén province,

"anarchism and communism resurfaced with vigor on the fall of the dictatorship in 1930" (64). This was probably when the three oldest Castillo boys, Federico 25, Manuel 23, and Carlos 22, joined the Communist party. Federico and Manuel were establishing their medical practices, and Carlos was starting his legal career. Given their conventional Catholic schooling their radical politics must have been nurtured at home. We have already seen the confusions and dilemmas awaiting intelligent young people as Freddie described his own vacillations between "Catolicismo y República [...y] Ateísmo y Anarquía" (3 May), and his fury at the politicians, just the same dogs with different collars (29 May).

The Archbishop of Toledo and Cardinal Primate of Spain, Monsignor Segura, was similarly and passionately exasperated, but for different reasons. He had already issued a violently anti-Republican statement in a letter to *El Sol* just two weeks after the declaration of the Republic which earned him a term of exile from Spain, reported in *TIME* magazine 29 June 1931. This and other provocative comments so enflamed the Republic's supporters that "[d]ozens of churches and convents were destroyed, especially in Andalusia" (Brenan 236). Freddie described the conflagrations in Málaga seen by a friend who had fled the flames: "desfilar por las calles a las turbas que llevaban arrastrando a varias imágenes y muchos vestidos con los ornamentos sacerdotales" and the personal turmoil it caused him: "En un principio me alegré; pero fue solamente una hora la que tuve comunista. Después me avergoncé de haberme alegrado del mal del prójimo y más habiendo mujeres y niños entre ellos" (12 May 1931).

Freddie's immediate observations, with his emotional responses, enrich the telling of this tragic story, and remind us that these hectic events were actual and unfolding as people tried to live their day-to-day lives, with no-one really knowing what was going to happen next. The real and personal stories, if they are documented and survive, animate the history of historians and provide them with the guts of the experience.

Party names were changed. Alliances were formed between parties with deep idealogical differences and sometimes political and personal antagonisms, such as that between Azaña and Largo Caballero; leaders were being consolidated in senior positions and despite their profound differences from their followers. Issues and loyalties became more and more confused. Brenan's Chapter XI provides a disturbing account of the fractures, conflicts and confusion within and between parties which led to what he calls this "witches' cauldron" (230). The challenge for the Constitution was to create "a reforming regime with an explicit and self-conscious view of what modernising Spain should entail. [It would be a] secular state operating according to the rule of law with an admittedly ill-defined sense of social justice [which] would open the way for an educated body of citizens to enjoy 'European' prosperity and freedom" (Vincent "Review").

The new Constitution represented a real attempt to replace medieval feudal systems and attitudes with modern European ideas, a late Enlightenment. But the rate of change to Spanish life was like re-aligning the foundations of a building without disturbing the structure above. As Mary Vincent points out above, the manifesto was inadequate to the task of creating knowledgeable and prepared citizens ready to join a modern Europe. "The country" as Brenan describes it "was split, both vertically and horizontally, into a number of mutually antagonistic sections" (229). What became manifest was that the country was riven politically, regionally, spiritually and socially. This translated into a deeply fractured body-politic with "the revolutionary forces of the Right and of the Left [...] confront[ing] one another, with only a weakened Republican party to separate them" (232). With its "ill-defined sense of justice", the state looked increasingly unstable, unable to manage the tensions between the objectives of a Constitution, designed to be secular and modernising, and the interests of the Catholic Church, which intended to retain as much of its power and influence as it could, the Army and landowners with similar agendas, and the mass of workers and peasants. These tensions were reaching the point of rupture. The goal of joining a modern Europe was problematic anyway as Europe itself in the 1930s was similarly "riven politically, regionally, spiritually and socially". As Beevor points out, "the cycle of fear and hatred [in Europe] risked

turning inflammatory rhetoric into a selffulfilling prophecy, as events in Spain soon showed" (*Second World War* 3).

The new Spanish Constitution overturned the power of the supernatural authority but was unable to replace it with an equally clear and confident authority. Just as problematic was the absence of a consensual process of government, never before a feature of Spanish politics, requiring intelligence, wisdom and determination on both sides, the government and the governed. Any fair and democratic contract between them seemed impossible. The polarised state of politics between Left and Right was summed up by Freddie's observation that "les dan náuseas los contrarios" (Parera Castillo 29 May).

Articles 24 and 26 of the new Constitution, which indirectly had a positive impact on Spanish women allowing them greater control over their lives, were particularly sickening to those on the Right. They were designed to reduce the powers of the Church and the clergy by withdrawing state funding, special legal privileges and rights over education and facilitated the dissolution of the religious orders. Most particularly "[t]he property of the Religious Orders may be nationalized" (Article 26). The outrage of the Right and of the Church was explosive. Beevor describes the resistance the Church mounted from a position of unshakeable conviction of its own moral and spiritual status. The bishops denounced the separation of Church and state and the suppression of religious education in schools (*Battle* 26), and Cardinal Segura declared that in Spain you were "either a Catholic or nothing at all" (*Battle* 27). In a stroke, their historical, political and economic rights and privileges evaporated. Power is never surrendered willingly and the Spanish Catholic Church had little practice in compromise or negotiation.

The Constitution discussed the mutual rights and duties of the Spanish people and their governing body. An educated citizenry had to include women. Women were now being offered the most radical changes to their lives. Religion was relegated to a personal and private expression of opinion and protected as the right of an individual *but no more*.

In 1931 when the Second Republic was declared, Spanish women had not yet been given the right to vote, although they were allowed to stand for and accept election to the Cortes. The socialist writer and playwright María Lejárraga (also known as María Martínez Sierra) warned how "the Spanish clergy [...] each parish, each confessional, is a forum for fiercely anti-Republican propaganda." Many priests had a vested interest in weakening the Republic and Lejárraga's fear for the Republic was that "the only religious duty that is universally understood by the devout Spanish female is to do whatever the priest says" (Mangini 27). At the time when Thomas published *The Spanish Civil War,* in 1961, he noted that "Spanish women are much more religious than men" (47), with the statistics to prove it, that "in Andalusia, only 1 per cent of men attended church" (n.2). Things would probably not have been much different thirty years before. Monsignor Segura had no doubt of the devotion of the *beatas* and other women in his congregation and he believed that their spiritual power could be harnessed as a weapon against the Republic through a "crusade of prayers" (Jackson 31-32). In 1928, the dictator Miguel Primo de Rivera had seen women as a conservative bloc, "less inclined towards political radicalism" when he granted them the vote (Kiely 3), and therefore as a bulwark against any radical or liberal shift in the electorate. In contrast Segura failed to anticipate how women, once enfranchised, could likewise be politically employed to the advantage of the Church, and he had always opposed the idea of votes for women.

In his diary of 30 April, eight months before the new Constitution, Freddie commented on the plan to give the vote to everyone over the age of 23, including women. "¡Buena competencia!" he says. He also applauds granting women the right to take part in the competitive examinations "a notario y registros. ¡Buena competencia!" - a young man not frightened of the future.

But the demand for female emancipation by the planners for the future collided with the fear of masculine manipulation. On 1 October 1931 two of the new women deputies in the Cortes, Clara Campoamor and Victoria Kent, clashed on the floor of the chamber in debating Article 36*:* "Los

ciudadanos de uno y otro sexo, mayores de veintitrés años, tendrán los mismos derechos electorales conforme determinen las leyes" (*Constitución española de 1931*).

In her maiden speech, a historical first, Clara Campoamor of the *Partido Radical* warned the male deputies that their continued exclusion of women from voting was a violation of natural law. She told the assembly:

> No dejéis a la mujer que, si es regresiva, piense que su esperanza estuvo en la dictadura; no dejéis a la mujer que piense, si es avanzada, que su esperanza de igualdad está en el comunismo. No cometáis, señores diputados, ese error político de gravísimas consecuencias. Salváis a la República, ayudáis a la República atrayéndoos y sumándoos esa fuerza que espera ansiosa el momento de su redención. (*El País* 1 October 2006)

Campoamor demanded that the law-makers must accept the women's voice, radical or reactionary, as a legitimate part of their democratic heritage, whether they liked it or not. Her direct challenge to the male deputies in the chamber echoes the challenge of forty years before from Pardo Bazán. The argument against her was put by Victoria Kent of the *Partido Republicano Radical Socialista*, her pragmatism battling Campoamor's idealism. She argued that Spanish women, while in principle being equal to men, were at that time unequal to the weight of political enfranchisement. In taking this position Kent put herself in direct conflict with her party. She predicted that giving women the vote would result in a swing to the right, that she would lose her seat and that the Republic would be weakened (Offen 323). In all three points she was to be proved correct and clearly understood the risky nature of the debate.

Judith Keene describes the risks inherent in the conflict in many otherwise revolutionary and liberal-minded men, who held "along with a theoretical commitment to sexual equality [...] a deep ambivalence to the notion that women could be the equal of men" (336). The debate was complicated by the competing attitudes of the Church and the Liberal reformers. Opinions in the Cortes were so conflicted that, despite the philosophical rigor and logic with which Campoamor

argued, not to mention the passion, many Socialist deputies whose party officially supported the move and who actually agreed with her philosophically either voted against Article 36 or could not stomach what she demanded and left the chamber, 189 deputies out of the total of 470.

However, the Article was passed, by a margin of 161 to 121, and women got the vote, theoretically inviting them out from under the clerical shadow and "[i]nto the clear air of the plaza" (325-347). But two years later the results of the 1933 elections bore out Kent's fears. There was a significant swing to the right: Kent and Campoamor both lost their seats and the Republic was weakened. In attracting a large part of the blame for this shift Campoamor's political career was virtually over. She was relegated to the fringes of the Radical Party and she fled Spain as the Civil War began (Pérez 97).

Kent also suffered from the results of the 1933 elections although her skills were not immediately lost to the Republic. She had been appointed Director of Prisons in 1931 by Alcalá-Zamora who had telephoned her after the debate with Campoamor and offered her the position. She continued reforms begun by Concepción Arenal, but was dismissed in 1934 as her liberal agenda was seen as being too soft. Manuel Azaña in his memoirs wrote of her "she is the only one of the three women MPs who is nice." But of her role as Director of Prisons "she has been a failure [...] too humanitarian [...] not gifted in taking charge [...] no discipline [...] the prisoners running away at will"(Kershaw and Kimyongur 74).

While Article 36 gave all adults over 23 equal voting rights, Article 40 removed barriers in employment, private or public, based on gender and opened them up to merit. Divorce was protected by law, not thundered against by divine disapproval, and available with equal access to husbands and wives. Suddenly women were granted the same privileges of adulthood as men – the right to vote, the right to work, and the right to divorce. In 1931 both Nelken and Kent articulated the view that Spanish women were unready for full suffrage and that to give them the vote would "endanger the very survival of the fragile republic" (Offen 324). The traditional position held for

many generations was that women lacked the necessary intellectual abilities and judgement to vote responsibly (326), and that their low educational levels, the high level of illiteracy and the devout and unquestioning acceptance of their confessors' advice would further empower the clerics (331).

In Spain's hierarchical society there had previously been a rarely questioned acceptance of the structure and one's own place in it. Through the *turnos pacificos* the monarchy and the dictatorship retained the political decision-making role for the whole country, and by analogy for the family. Now, the new Constitution was designed to create a democracy, in which all members became participants in the game and had to learn the rules and develop the necessary skills to play it. This was not only for the *patria* but for the *familia*, and for the family to reflect back a model of that society. In a country where married women were historically treated as little more than legal minors, the idea of equal rights within marriage was revolutionary. Before the Second Republic, even an unmarried woman or a widow had greater property rights than a married woman. Article 43 of the Constitution states: "La familia está bajo la salvaguardia especial del Estado. El matrimonio se funda en la igualdad de derechos para ambos sexos, y podrá disolverse por mutuo disenso o a petición de cualquiera de los cónyuges, con alegación en este caso de justa causa."

For the courts to recognise this equivalent power was to underline the radically different position that the wife now occupied under the new Constitution. She could, with "just cause", seek freedom from an abusive or neglectful relationship. This new concept also implied that the old traditional image of marriage with its sacred and eternal vows, consecrated by God, was no longer valid. This was deeply threatening to the position of the Church vis-á-vis its control of its members and to the more conservative elements of society. As we have seen, Monsignor Segura, Cardinal Primate of Spain, had already urged women to mobilise in a "crusade of prayer" in defence of the rights of the Catholic Church. Battle-lines were being marked out.

Theoretically the wife now had the same responsibilities politically and symbolically as her husband. How would she accept them? Without an integrated program of education and

preparation for her new role it may have been for many a bewildering and even unwelcome extra burden. For many women, unprepared for this precipitate lurch into civic adulthood, the Church with its clear and familiar directives and sanctimonious support represented safety, security, continuity with what they already knew. For women like Lola García-Negrete the tensions must have been challenging. As we have seen, her whole life had been that of a good Catholic mother, educating and baptising her children and maintaining her relationship with her father-confessor Blas Moreno Covaleda. The choice of the *Institución Teresiana* liberal Catholic school for her girls suggests that she and Federico saw education for girls as potentially more than preparation for marriage, and that their investment in this new institution was almost daring. It is impossible to determine whether in fact she felt dismay or anxiety about the radical changes which were being made in her spiritual life.

The Left, the liberals, the revolutionaries, the republicans, all had their own ideas about women and their emancipation, which could only be realised with strong and effective political support. But the leaders of all the major parties and the trade unions considered women's demands to be of secondary or even less importance, as we shall see, and that an involvement or interest in politics was "unsuitable" for women (Rodríguez Ruiz 295). The power of this gendered myth held even the liberals and freethinkers in its grip. Politically the seeds of feminism fell on stony ground, even in the most progressive parties. In the political movements which were otherwise dedicated to destroying political and social oppression and hierarchies, many women were driven to protest the treatment they received from men, subjugating them at work and at home.

Martha Ackelsberg reveals how,

> [a]lthough many anarchist men might have been committed, in theory, to a sexually egalitarian movement (and, ultimately, to an egalitarian society), for too many of them these commitments ended at the door of the home or at the entrance to the union hall. As one woman, born and raised in an anarchist household lamented: 'When things reached the

> house, we were no better than anyone else…. There was much talk about the liberation of women, free love, and all that. Men spoke from platforms about it. But there were very very few who actually adopted women's struggle as their own, in practice…. Inside their own homes they forgot about it.' (10)

The anarchists looked to the Second Republic for land-reform in an egalitarian society. But to achieve this utopian dream they could only offer their "characteristic ... mixture of high-flown rhetoric, sketchy theory and intensive practical activity [unequal to the] grim political reality" (Willis 3). The social revolution was unlikely to persuade men to give up "the privileged status they had so long enjoyed; it was ingrained in them just as being inferior was ingrained in women" (Bowder 9).

It was this debilitating concretion, in both genders, which spurred a group of women from the anarchist union *Confederación Nacional de Trabajo* to establish their own section, *Mujeres Libres,* in 1936. "Those disguised troglodytes of anarchists [...] those 'valiant ones' [...] are revealing their true fascist colours, and they must be unmasked" (Nash cited in Ackelsberg 76). We are not told when this was said or by whom, but, encouraged by the radical directions for women promised by the Constitution, it clearly formed part of the impetus to the women to break away. Lucía Sánchez Saornil and Mercedes Guillén Comaposada met in Madrid where they found a shared empathy in their attitudes to women and the poor. Together with Amparo Poch y Gascón from Madrid and Soledad Estorach from Barcelona they attracted approximately 30,000 members. This strong feminist movement engaged in the double struggle for women's liberation and the social revolution which it saw as equally important and inextricably linked.

Federica Montseny i Mañé was another anarchist woman who particularly articulated this struggle. Her education had followed the progressive methods of Maria Montessori and Federico Ferrer i Guardia. In the twenties she worked with her parents to publish the free-thinking journal *La Revista Blanca* and contributed many novellas to a weekly publication, *La Novela Ideal,* which

"según el franquismo, envenenó a tres generaciones de españoles" (Rodrigo and Moa 211). According to Gretchen Bowder in her thesis on Montseny and the *Mujeres Libres*, Montseny saw the fight in terms of the personal and individual, virtually ignoring the lessons of history, while the *Mujeres Libres* "saw women in terms of the gender role and violence to which history had subjected them" (2). In 1975 Montseny told Shirley Fredericks that "[a]ny program for revolutionary social change that does not achieve equal respect and rights for women represents no change at all" (n. pag.). With hindsight she recognised that emancipation could only come from a fusion of individual stories with the flow of history.

Comintern, the Communist International in Moscow, was another group of which much was hoped for and by women but little achieved. The Executive Committee in Moscow had seemed determined, ever since its own Women's Section began in 1920, to undermine and trivialize its work. It closed the Section's magazine in 1925 after 25 issues (Sproat 31) and by 1930 the Section had been dissolved completely as it had proved itself "incapable of training women to be strike leaders or activists against police violence and strikebreakers" (Marie 278). In 1930 women were of minor interest to the communists. Moscow saw no value in promoting women's issues, at home or abroad.

East and west faced each other in mutual fear and distrust. During the twenties and early thirties the Soviet Union had enjoyed very little worthwhile contact with Spain, which was "all but impenetrable to official Soviet access" (Kowalsky 77). Internecine squabbling had led a Comintern official to observe that, while Spain had "an excellent proletariat", it had only "a few little groups, but not a communist party" (Payne 20-21). During the first two years of the Republic diplomatic relations between Moscow and Madrid constituted "a series of frustrated and ultimately lost opportunities" (21). In 1933 the Spanish Republic maintained normal diplomatic relations with every country in the world except the USSR (Alvarez del Vayo 25). The outbreak of the Civil War and the emergence of the Nationalist enemy galvanised the "little groups" into "Communist units

who distinguished themselves by their impetuous fighting" (Casado 96), but threw women's issues well down the agenda, if not off it completely.

Communism, one of the political extremes to which Campoamor had alluded on 1 October 1936, was represented in the Cortes by Dolores Ibárruri. In the twenties she was the most prominent Spanish female member of this group, which was "not [yet] a communist party". On the declaration of the Second Republic she moved to Madrid to edit *Mundo Obrero.* Her high profile and aggressive militancy led to her arrest and imprisonment in September 1931 and again in March 1932. She was a recalcitrant prisoner. Unlike so many of her fellow inmates she did not accept either the overriding interests of "class harmony" nor demonstrate "Christian resignation in the face of social inequality." She led hunger strikes aimed at the release of political prisoners and demonstrations including singing the Internationale in the Visitors' Room and demanding better pay for prison work. Like so many of her sisters in revolution her driving force was an unquenchable need to right the wrongs of the social inequities on which Spain had built its wealth. In prison she found herself living with the victims of these wrongs and was energised further by sharing their fate. Her war was a class war against those who would use any means to protect their privilege.

She continued her political writing while in jail and once released she was elected to the Central Committee of the *Partido Comunista de España* (PCE) at the 4th Congress held in Seville on 17 March 1932. In 1933 she founded *Asociación Mujeres Antifascistas* as an entity of the PCE to unite women who opposed the encroachment of fascism and the terrors of war.

Lola, recently widowed, would join this association in Jaén in 1937 and become its president within months (Checa Godoy 196 n.21, Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 402). The details of her recruitment into the party are not known, but the short time between her apparent anonymity as Federico Castillo's wife and her promotion to the presidential podium of the local PCE suggests that she had been known and respected within the party for some time. With her older sons, Federico, Manuel

and Carlos already actively involved in the PCE, accepting military commissions in the Republican army, or like Pablo, Fernando and José-Luis enrolling in the *Escuela Popular de Artilleria* as affiliates of the party, and with Ibárruri almost certainly visiting Jaén (personal communication, Juan López, resident of the family house May 2014), Lola's political interest in the PCE was highly likely, from some years before she was widowed. Or was she, like Pilar Primo de Rivera, the founder of the Sección Femenina of Spain's fascist party, La Falange, one of those "mujeres que llegan a la toma de la palabra para continuar la obra de 'su hombre' [in this case her husband and not her brother] desaparecido" (Lavail 368). It is impossible to say.

When Ibárruri visited Moscow as a delegate of the 13th Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in late 1933 she was inspired by what she saw there. The recent elections in Spain had shown a frightening swing to the right, Europe was becoming more and more polarised, Hitler had become chancellor of Germany and the threat of universal fascism was coming closer. Ibárruri wrote of Moscow as the "most wonderful city on earth [... shaping] the earthly dreams of freedom of generations of slaves, outcasts, serfs, proletarians [... and guiding] the march of humanity toward communism" (Cross and Miles n. pag). Her international profile was enhanced by her attendance at the first *Rassemblement Mondial des femmes contre la guerre et le fascisme* in Paris.

The failure of the miners' strike in Oviedo in October 1934 did not discourage her. She was indefatigable in her program towards emancipation of the working classes and her triumph came in 1936 when she was elected to the Cortes as one of two communist *diputados* from Asturias.

It is possible to see Ibárruri's undoubted courage as an activist as issuing from a sense of zealotry, of her mission to release the prisoners as symbolic of her greater mission to free the millions of Spaniards trapped in poverty and ignorance. This would account for the courage of other women with lower profiles tucked away in the provinces, like Lola and the many other

exceptional women whose stories are told in *La Mujer en la Historia de Jaén* (306-380), who may have felt inspired when given the opportunity to make a difference.

Like the communists, the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE) saw the Republic as opening up new opportunities for their rise to power. But despite their official sanctioning of Article 36 to give women the vote the Socialists had never had much respect for women in politics. As Paul Preston expressed it: "to the rather staid old guard, Margarita Nelken was an embarrassing nuisance" (*Doves* 362). This artist turned politician representing the PSOE was one of the three new women deputies to enter the Cortes in 1931, with Clara Campoamor and Victoria Kent. Outspoken, articulate and educated, she earned the mistrust and dislike of the Cortes, based on her assertive if not aggressive manner, her non-Spanish background, her erudition and her physical charms. Even within the progressive parties medieval attitudes were deeply entrenched. Preston observes that "in the first third of the twentieth century, Spanish men did not take kindly to being challenged by independent women who provoked their political and sexual fears as Margarita Nelken did" (299). Although her objective was "a future of greater justice and greater kindness" within this "patriarchal Socialist party, she was a woman who did not know her place" (362).

In spite of her strong feminist position, she did not support giving women the vote at that time. She agreed with Kent, in strongly advocating education before emancipation. She was well aware of the devotion of Spanish women to the Church and feared its influence over them. Her political career path was obstructed by her colleagues in both the PSOE, and later in the PCE. Nelken was disappointed in Largo Caballero's leadership of the PSOE and consequently joined the PCE, where in competition with Ibárruri she lost the selection battle. According to Preston, Ibárruri's value "as a woman" was recognised and exploited by the Comintern (351), while Nelken, in spite of or because of her incendiary speeches, was regarded with suspicion by her own party, the PSOE, and later by the PCE. She did not know her place indeed, either with the Socialists or the Communists. A woman's voice should be gentle and low, and never in conflict with men. The party

did not know what to do with two strident women in its midst. One was enough. Through all the debates, conflicts and arguments across and within all the different political groupings on both sides of the divide was that old and "deep ambivalence to the notion that women could be the equal of men" (Keene 336).

In one telling photograph Nelken is surrounded by her companions in the Socialist party. She is centre front, smiling and vibrant, and they, all male, look almost universally glum if not sour (Mangini 40). If these men were her political *compañeros* how much more to be feared were her political enemies? Misogyny, then as now, was particularly spiteful when directed towards politically successful women. Yet, in spite of her unpopularity among her colleagues, Nelken was once more successful and returned to parliament in 1933 in the very elections in which Clara Campoamor and Victoria Kent lost their seats.

The progressive education for women that Kent and Nelken advocated for before women could be granted the vote was beginning to take place in the women's clubs and associations which sprang up in the years before the Civil War. For example, the *Unión Republicana Femenina*, founded by Campoamor in November 1931, aimed to "preparar a la mujer para el ejercicio de sus deberes cívicos, activos y pasivos en defensa de la República mediante cursos y conferencias sobre temas políticos y de cultura en general" (Martínez Sierra 31). This association grew out of the meetings held at the *Liceo Femenino*. María Rodrigo Bellido, musician, teacher and graduate of the ILE and Pura Maórtua de Ucelay joined forces with Campoamor to promote "la cultura en la mujer". It seems that with the coming of the Second Republic women were emboldened, moving from a theoretical exploration to a more practical exercise of their growing self-awareness, and realising that to have the responsibility of the vote demanded – and facilitated – an increased civic, political and social consciousness – "De estas mujeres, cuya inteligencia emana tanto de su Corazon como de su cerebro, ¿no es verdad que puede esperarse un resurgimiento cultural asombroso?" (Aguilera Sastre 69).

An intellectual and educated class of women needed to place their political emancipation on a platform which reflected their social status, such as the *Liceo Femenino.* This was the kind of milieu in which Lola lived, not educated in the classroom but by exposure to the political growth of her husband, and now maybe watching with trepidation or wonder as her sons became increasingly politicised and committed to the Communist cause, the most effective anti-fascist grouping of the time. Other women's groups grew out of a more working class ambience. Boots on the ground contrasted with hats and gloves. In 1931 the *Asociación Femenina de Educación Cívica – La Cívica* – was formed by María Lejárraga who had, as well as warning against the power which the Spanish clergy exerted over the women in its confessional, drawn attention to the terrible physical conditions endured by the peasant men and women in her audience. Its objectives, drawn up by Lejárraga and published in the *Heraldo de Madrid* on 14 June 1933, were to "despertar a las mujeres de la clase media, mucho más dormidas e ignorantes que las del pueblo, a la consciencia de una responsabilidad ciudadana". In this Lejárraga was probably right. Apart from the "eccentric" ladies of the *Liceo Femenino*, señoras and señoritas living in the comfort and security of their husbands' or fathers' homes would have been less confronted by the reality of their powerlessness – and better compensated for it – than the working class women who confronted this powerlessness every day. Contentment if not complacency would have blocked critical analysis of their situation and the will to do anything about it. Lejárraga reached out to her target group through street flyers and newspaper inserts with titles such as *"La situación política a traves del temperamento de las damas republicanas españolas"* published in June 1933 by Sara Guerrero Echeverría. Her efforts were like "*un murmullo constante*" in Madrid, stirring up the women in her sights (Rodrigo 247).

The success of *La Cívica* is indicated in its membership which reached fifteen hundred by 1936. The members, many of whom, "carentes de estudios universitarios", were drawn from a wider social range than those of the *Liceo Femenino* (Aguado Higón 165), would be introduced to radical new ideas, such as collectivism, pacifism, internationalism, social problems, different forms of government. There were short courses and lectures about sexual biology, astrology, law,

medicine, neurosis, abolitionism, administration, music, art and sport. There were visits to museums and excursions outside the capital to festivals, concerts and theatrical performances. With the growth of associations for women at all social and education levels, the political networks strengthened and spread (Aguado Higón 165). Lejárraga herself succeeded in gaining a seat as PSOE deputy for Granada in the elections of November 1933, going against the trend to the Right (Mangini 36). In protest at the government's violent suppression of the Asturian miners' strike in October 1934 she resigned.

María Lacrampe Iglesias worked with Lejárraga to use *La Cívica* to arouse "el sentimiento hondo de la amistad y de la solidaridad, que aún perdura en las que todavía vivimos" (248). She believed that ignorance was the principal cause of the discrimination against women. Her commitment to the Republican cause as well as to female emancipation would cost her dearly in later years as we shall see.

The women's clubs and associations achieved their purposes. They were to be, and became, social centres where women could simply meet each other for friendly contact, as described by Aguilera Sastre and Mangini. They were to provide space for more formal meetings where questions and ideas could be explored and articulated. They became centres of culture, a scaffolding for understanding the society in which the women lived. They offered the space and the facilities for the development of propaganda, and opportunities to make plans for neighbourhood mobilization and joint action. Despite their largely apolitical nature they challenged the complacency of the right wing.

These years of emergence for women, some seizing their new opportunities and some retreating to the safety of home and hearth, were also the years of Federico's parliamentary career. Taking up his seat in the Cortes on 11 July 1931 he and Lola lived at 10, calle del Prado in Madrid, a narrow street of 18th-century houses in a former bohemian zone known as the Barrio de las Letras. This was a well-chosen location as it was a leisurely walk of only four minutes from the Cortes.

It was also a good place for Lola to live, close to the Puerta del Sol, the Prado museum, the Parque del Retiro, the Ateneo, the Liceo Femenino and the shops. The programs and spaces available through the Liceo and the Ateneo would have given her ample opportunity to increase her understanding of the political and social issues of the time and to mingle with other enquiring women. During the first two years of the Republic the program to realise "the earthly dreams of freedom", of drastic political, legal and social reforms introduced by the new Constitution had been constantly challenged by the Right. Agrarian and educational reforms, and the planned emancipation of women threatened the social and domestic fabric of Spain, as Monsignor Segura had warned. Women were being enthused or poisoned, depending on your point of view, with progressive and liberal values – *vide* their clubs, their demonstrations, their publications. As the 1933 general election approached women were advised in early November, through the pages of the *Gaceta Regional,* that unless they voted correctly communism would come "which will tear your children from your arms, your parish church will be destroyed, the husband you love will flee from your side authorized by the divorce law, anarchy will come to the countryside, hunger and misery to your home" (Vincent *Catholicism* 210). Then as now, the politics of fear were deeply effective.

In the elections of 19 November 1933 there was a massive swing to the Right. Frightened, unified and re-invigorated the right-wing reclaimed its lost ground. Against this, without the support of the Socialists or the Anarchists the Left was devastated. Many of the left-wing deputies, including Federico, lost their seats and returned home.

Thus began what is known on the Left as the Bienio Negro and a slowing if not reversal of the reform program. It was referred to by the Right as the two years of rectification. This period, from 1933 to 1935, was "marked by disintegration. From time to time one individual or another would attempt vainly to halt the terrible and ... irreversible process ...[but] ...they lacked the energy, luck, self-confidence and perhaps the magnanimity necessary for success" (Thomas 118).

In celebrating the swing to the Right which seemed to be the result of the women's vote, a note of complacency can be detected in a comment in the press of Ciudad Real: "La derecha podía proclamar su satisfacción en las páginas del Pueblo Manchego: 'Dios suscitó frente a esta agresión constante y provocadora al hombre y a los elementos necesarios: José María Gil Robles y el voto de la mujer'" (*Ciudad Real.es* "Elecciones de 1933"[10]). José María Gil Robles was a prominent conservative politician, regarded by Preston as a legalist fascist, who, in response to "the need for right-wing unity to annihilate socialism", unified groups from the Right to form the *Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas* (CEDA) to affirm and defend the principles of Christian civilisation (Preston *Coming* 64).

The contemporary assumption that it was largely "the feminine ballot" which was responsible for the swing was echoed by Brenan writing in the early forties, and was reinforced by Thomas in 1961 and Payne in 1967. In their newly-enfranchised state women certainly brought a different dynamic to the vote. Brenan comments that "[i]n the middle classes many of the women whose husbands voted Republican followed their priest's direction and voted for the Right. But in the working classes it was different: here the women were just as anti-clerical as the men and the Socialist vote therefore did not suffer" (266). This is how it was perceived for some time after the events. However, Gerard Alexander, writing in 1999, offers another interpretation. In a careful analysis of the parties which had benefited from the doubling of the franchise in 1933 Alexander was able to use more sophisticated recording and reporting methods not available until the late seventies to describe the electoral behaviour of the population and where the votes had gone. By extrapolation he is able to apply this explanation to the earlier election results. He admits that the statistical evidence for the earlier period was very sketchy and nowhere provides conclusive figures for the difference between men and women at the ballot box. But he is very clear that there is no reliable evidence that the women's vote was the decisive factor in the swing to the right. The

[10] http://www.ciudad-real.es/historia/ccm/siglo20-05.php

evidence in fact suggests that men tended to vote for the more extreme parties, the far right, the CEDA, and the far left, the Communists. Women were more inclined to support the more moderate parties, vindicating Miguel Primo de Rivera's sense of how women might vote. In fact the men's vote in total put them further right than the women. This tendency echoed what had been observed in other European countries between the two world wars (Alexander 357). The prevailing attitude to women and their political understanding was that they were "[r]uled by their emotions and weak in reasoning capacity, [and therefore] they were generally assumed to surrender their vote to the better judgment of others" (350). These "others" were naturally their husbands, but even more their father confessors.

Some others who knew they were blessed with better judgement were those men who joined the Falange, a Nationalist party inspired by fascism. It was formed in 1933 by José Antonio Primo de Rivera, son of the dictator. He dedicated himself and the Falange to violence as a sacred duty: "[T]here is no option left except fists and guns" (Díaz-Plaja 373). The Falange and its supporters would have seen little wrong with the idea that women needed the judgement of men to master their emotions and to provide the reasoning capacity they lacked. Women as a bloc were to be manipulated and could be mobilised in the service of an idea of Spain, and in so doing could promote an alternative vision – albeit very traditional – to that of the Republican left.

Ironically, noting the condemnation by the Right of alien influences on the Left, the Falange was modelled on German Nazism and Italian fascism with distinctive alien uniforms, salutes, regalia and insignia. Its clear message of violence within an authoritarian structure drew enthusiastic support, with its numbers growing from 75,000 in 1936 to a million by 1939 (Fraser 315). José-Antonio, at its head as an almost transcendent figurehead, expressed the common view on many subjects, including women. In a newspaper interview with Luisa Trigo in February 1936 he articulated what many other Spaniards felt about women and the vote at that time: "I have no faith in the vote of women." But in addition neither did he have faith in men as voters: "I can affirm more

than ever my opposition to [universal] suffrage, as much for women as for men" (Lavail 356). The women's vote, he felt, would do "no more than double the masculine vote, with their defects; not having, therefore, [in their suffrage] any significance in the future of Spain" (357). He went on to express contempt for the effect women have on men: "Women will only make cowards of them." His belief in an unquestioned elite which alone could govern the nation – "Los jefes tienen siempre razón" (Thomàs n. pag.) was also held by his sister Pilar. In her dedication to the fulfilment of his vision she would, however, challenge his scornful opinion of women, even contradicting her own low opinion of women's power.

She led the rise of Right-wing women's organisations in response to the democratic movement for progress towards social and gender justice, which threatened the authoritarian philosophy of the Right. Women were highly visible in their resistance to change and the secularization of society, for instance in protesting the removal of the crucifix from schools and the ban on teaching the catechism (Articles 3, 26, 27). The organisations which developed out of the provocations of the Second Republic employed propaganda methods which appealed to the most deeply-held values of their members. *Acción Nacional* depended on a string of one-word rhetorical short-cuts to mobilise a wide audience: "el lema de 'Religión, Patria, Familia, Orden, Trabajo y Propiedad'" (Rodrigo 256), "Religión"- for the *beatas* and Catholic devotees, "Patria"- for those who believe that only traditional patriotism can express their loyalties, "Familia" – for those who have invested all their emotional commitment in their family, "Orden" – for those who prefer their lives to be ordered by others and "Trabajo y Propiedad" – for those who can imagine their society only as a highly structured and hierarchical system. In such a system any challenges to these conventional values are threatening and subversive, and any suggestion of radical change deeply suspect. *Acción Nacional* and *Asociación Femenina de la Renovación Española* were established early in 1933. These, with *Juventudes Católicas Femeninas, Acción Popular* (Catholic), *Renovación Española* (a monarchist group led by Calvo Sotelo) and *Acción Femenina Tradicionalista* also appeared to provide a bulwark against the fear of creeping socialism and even more of communism.

As the intermediary between the women of Spain and the Falange, Pilar Primo de Rivera provided model and inspiration. After she had insisted on attending the early meetings of the Falange (Richmond 6), her brother allowed her to found the *Sección Femenina* in June 1934. It fiercely protected the domestic role of women, maintaining the myth and ensuring, as Pilar urged, that "women will be cleaner, children will be healthier and houses will be tidier" (Domingo 322). José Antonio had emphasised at a public meeting in April 1935 that women were not to be diverted from their "magnificent destiny [which was] ... a life of submission, service and abnegation" (Preston *Comrades* 115). "The watchword was to be female subordination" (Preston *Doves* 234). It should not be overlooked, however, that José Antonio's attitude to women held a contradiction which was echoed in the official line of the Falange on women, that while their role was to nurture and support the family in the home, they also had an important extra function in approaching strange men to solicit funds for the party and overcoming "su propia timidez" (Lavail 359), and in appealing to other women to give their vote to the party because "better results would be achieved with women's votes than with men's" (356).

Her brother's execution by Republican soldiers early in the Civil War made him into a martyr to the cause and spurred his sister and many others, men and women, to greater efforts in their pursuit of victory for the Right. She understood that the triumph of the "new" Spain depended partly on the resurrection of the traditional women, who, she insisted, "never discover anything. They lack creative talent, reserved by God for virile intellects. We can do no more than interpret what men present to us" (Domingo 322).

Rosario Sánchez López points out in her study of the *Sección Feminina* that the attitudes of the *donas* of the residual aristocracy and the majority of the bourgeois ladies were dictated by those of the late nineteenth century – "the Victorians". Their good works in society were sweetened by charity, and the role of "Lady Bountifuls" left them no room or desire to involve themselves in

political *travesuras*. The Catholic Church indeed "abhorred the role of the Catholic woman in public and emphasized solely her maternal and conjugal role" (31).

This emphasis on the traditional values of the devout angel of the hearth was a powerful tool of the Church, melding together Catholic, traditionalist-Carlist and Falangist ideals. Julio Prada Rodríguez explores the origins of the feminine counter-revolutionary mobilization against the Republic's anti-clerical policies, the formation of conservative and falangist women's sections, and their use as propagandists and agitators in maximising the reach of the rebellion. This inspirational model, with the Virgin Mary providing an unassailable standard, was later exploited by the Franco regime, turning the mundane and difficult experience of Civil War in which all women struggled, into what amounts to a holy mission. Helping them was the renewed discourse of conservatism with endlessly repeated slogans and phrases such as "Nuevo Estado", "Abnegación", "Sacrifico", "autodisciplina", "exacto complemento del hombre", "consagrar la existencia al servicio de la Unidad, la Justicia y el Imperio" (Prada Rodríguez paragraph 19). As we saw earlier these highly emotive rhetorical devices are designed to leave the audience with no-where to go. To deny the "Nuevo Estado" is to be old-fashioned, backward-looking; to reject "Abnegación" and "Sacrifico" is to be selfish and unwilling to dedicate one's self to the great battle; to resist "autodisciplina" is to be self-indulgent, chaotic; to refuse to be the "exacto complemento del hombre", "consagrar la existencia al servicio de la Unidad, la Justicia y el Imperio" is to put one's self outside the safe construct of the traditional idea of the Patria, to be beyond the pale. To deny any of them is to expose one's self as a traitor. This was the armory most useful in the on-going crusade in opposition to *"las otras"*, to the *"no españolas"*, the heathen aliens invading their midst. The endlessly repeated slogans and phrases acted as a mantra for women to maintain their solidarity with their vows and their loyalty to Church and Patria.

The Bienio Negro for the Left in the political arena was also a bienio negro for the Castillo family as the tragedies which were to come gradually took shape. On 27 May 1931 Freddie records

the death of "Quinito" or Joaquín, "él de la madrina," after an attack of meningitis. He was Lola's last baby, just two when he died. Within a few years, Juan de Díos died, aged ten, and Mercedes died in 1936, aged 13 (Castillo García Negrete J-L 3). Following his return to Jaén, Federico moved into the local *ayuntamiento* as a town councillor. The youngest child of the family, María Victoria, remembers the day in 1935, when she was nine, when her father announced to the gathered family that he would not be with them one year on. He had recently been diagnosed with throat cancer. That following year, until his death in Madrid, was spent divided between his local council duties in Jaén and journeys to and from Madrid for treatment.

The local elections of February 1936 signalled the renaissance of the Popular Front. This was an uncomfortable coalition of leftist groups: the socialists in the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE) and the *Unión General de Trabajadores* (UGT); the communists in the *Partido Comunista de España* (PCE); and, in opposition to them, the *Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista* (POUM). The republicans were themselves internally factionalised, with *Izquierda Republicana* (IR) and the *Unión Republicana* (UR). The anarchists had their *Federacion Anarquista Iberica* (FAI), and their union the *Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo* (CNT). Allied to the leftist groups but with their own separatist agendas were the regionalists in Galicia, the Basque Country and Catalonia. Unity and cohesion within this alliance was dogged by "the ghosts of decades of labour wars and political infighting" (Graham *Spanish Civil War* 67). The rightists saw their political gains of the previous two years slipping away and became increasingly militant. In preparation for their return to power plans were prepared to eliminate, "without scruple or hesitation those who do not think as we do" (Emilio Mola in Preston *The Spanish Civil War* xiii). Some army officers, including Francisco Franco in the Canaries, began to finalise the plans for their own *pronunciamiento.* Arms were stockpiled in barracks throughout the country. A blacklist of those significant figures in the army who supported the Republic was drawn up by the ultra-rightist *Unión Militar Español*, linked to *Renovación Española*, the party of Carlos Calvo Sotelo, who, in his early forties, was the leader of the opposition and fiercely anti-Republican.

The Castillo family by 1936 had been deeply traumatised by the deaths in the family of so many young ones, including that of Freddie the diarist, at eighteen years old, with so much talent and promise for the future. Federico *el padrino* was making regular visits to Madrid for treatment for his cancer. By April his cousin *teniente* José Castillo Sáenz de Tejada was a marked man. He was a Mason, a member of the Union of Military Antifascists and had killed a falangist who happened to be a cousin of José Antonio Primo de Rivera. In the following months street violence in Madrid escalated as the extremists from both sides confronted each other (Thomas 191). Days before his marriage on 20 May his *novia* was asked, "Why are you marrying a man who will soon be a corpse?"(196). His name was the second on the blacklist (Preston *Spanish Holocaust* 127). He was shot on the streets of Madrid on the evening of 12 July by a group of falangist gunmen and died shortly afterwards. In revenge, the grieving and enraged colleagues of Castillo kidnapped Calvo Sotelo and executed him (Thomas 197, Beevor *Battle* 56).

In spite of, or perhaps because of the turmoil on an international, national and local scale there is no evidence that Lola took any active part in what was happening before the death of her husband. Her support of her husband and her care for him in his illness and death in November 1936 most probably obstructed any independent action she might have taken. In this devotion and dedication she could have been a model for the Sección Femenina. But she was clearly aware of the stirrings towards women's emancipation which was happening all around her so that, following a respectable period of mourning, she was able to throw her considerable social clout into the fight and, if not already committed to them, to join the various political parties and associations in Jaén.

Chapter 4

Women in the Spanish Civil War 1936-39

This chapter considers the effect that the Civil War had on Spanish women and the reciprocal effect that Spanish women had on the Civil War. They went from wives to warriors and back to wives as the needs of the country changed. According to their pre-existing life-experiences and philosophies they chose vastly different ways to respond to the crises of the rebellion and the war.

As we have seen, the Castillos, García-Negretes and Pareras had a long history of social and political activism. The family ghosts would remind its members of their duty. But it is hard to believe that Federico Castillo, dying of cancer in 1935 and 1936, would have had the interest or the energy for political conspiracies, and watching his physical decline in a city shuddering from the first clashes of the Civil War must have been deeply distressing to Lola. Federico died in Madrid in November 1936 and Lola returned to Jaén. A quiet life as a respectable widow awaited her. But she betrayed (or exceeded?) such expectations. The family had come from petit-bourgeois stock, and had earned its financial security and social respect through its own efforts. On Lola's side were school teachers and village mayors, and on Federico's side were shopkeepers and confectioners. The women knew their place, which was to support their husbands and sons. In 1936 the oldest sons were already officers in the Republican army, affiliated to the Communist Party. They were little different from many other middle-class families who had put their strength and support behind the Second Republic and rejected the violent uprising and its assumption of entitlement.

From the beginning of 1936 neither earthly nor heavenly powers seemed to be on the side of the Spaniards. Drought then devastating rains wiped out the olive and cereal crops and the workers in the agricultural sector faced hunger if not starvation (Brenan 120). The Right feared that if they did not precipitate action then Moscow would. Franco declared "I will save Spain from Marxism

whatever the cost" (Graham *Spanish Civil War* 33). There was violent action in the towns, pueblos and latifundias where peasant men and women expressed the simmering resentments against generations of oppression, and the sluggish pace of the social revolution. The landowners, and beneficiaries of the old order expressed their fear and loathing of any change. The Conde de Alba de Yeltes, a latifundist in central Spain shot six of his estate workers as an example to the others, not to step out of line (Beevor *Battle* 271). In the time honoured tradition of nineteenth-century Spain, a military coup was planned to overthrow the Second Republic.[11]

On the morning of 18 July, the signal to rise against the democratically elected government, in the eyes of the "golpistas" the puppets of an alien enemy, was heard all over Spain. The Catholic Church had warned against the "Judaeo-Masonic world conspiracy" (Beevor *Battle* 43). Those on the Right, calling themselves the Nationalists, claimed that their cause was that of "Christianity, order and Western civilisation against 'Asiatic communism'" (267). But the uprising directed by Francisco Franco in Morocco was inconclusive - which is to say a failure. The hammer blow to the enemy and acceptance of the new regime by the pueblo, resulted instead in a muddle. Following the failed coup violent fighting erupted. In Madrid rebel army officers were being transported by Republicans through the packed Puerta del Sol to prison. The Republican crowd was noisy but nothing more. Andrés Marquez, a Republican youth, watched with amazement. "What would have happened if at that moment the crowd had known that Republicans, whose only crime was to have wanted to be free, were being hunted down like wild animals in towns where the military had triumphed?" (Fraser 80). However in the frenzy Republicans were not always so restrained. On 11 and 12 August 1936 two trains from Jaén transporting Nationalist prisoners were attacked outside Madrid and the prisoners were massacred by a band of Republican supporters. The Bishop of Jaén, his sister and the Dean of the cathedral were murdered on these *trenes de la muerte.* Sheer chance

[11] According to Brenan the nineteenth century had seen "a great many pronunciamientos of this sort – on an average one every twenty months" (1).

dominated much of the violence: a group of passengers on the first train was initially selected for shooting on the basis "*abajo todos los que tengan gafas*", presumably on the assumption that people with glasses were readers, were most likely educated and therefore culpable (Sánchez Tostado 147).

In Andalusia most of the south and west had welcomed the rebels. Nevertheless in Seville the Foreign Legion and the Moroccan forces went through working class neighbourhoods, indiscriminately murdering men, women and children in their homes, administering "'brutal punishment' to crush working-class resistance" (Preston "Assassin" 40). The governor Queipo de Llano exercised total control over the military and civilians. Arthur Koestler described the governor's "obscene nightly broadcasts", spittle oozing and a "flickering glow in his eyes", which whipped up fear and hatred against the "*comunistas y anarquistas*" (Koestler *Spanish Testament* 34). The governor poured contempt on "*los rojos cobardes*" and especially their wives. He described them as "*berreen*" and "*pataleen*" - which will not save them from the "real men" in contrast to the "faggots" they have been with before. He "gloatingly recited the exploits of the columns [of Moorish soldiers] rejoicing in the rape of left-wing women and the murder of their husbands" (Preston *Doves* 354). In the first six months of the war more than 3000 of these "cowards" had been killed, either on the orders of the governor, or in extra-judicial killings. Koestler interpreted the governor's glee as "a perfect clinical demonstration in sexual psychopathology". In the hot-house atmosphere of civil war this seam of sexual psychopathology is never far from accounts of abuse and degradation of women. The Moroccan *regulares* used rape as a routine method of social control (Beevor *Battle* 35, 102) and accounts of Republican atrocities against nuns became almost routine. Such outrages were guaranteed to enflame passions and rouse retaliations. Women rarely cause war, but they are often its victims.

Francisco Franco assumed leadership of the new Nationalist regime on 1 October, 1936. He shared many attitudes with Generals Mola, Queipo de Llano, Count Gonzalo de Aguilera and other

senior Nationalists: the proletariat was a slave class; sewers had been an unfortunate introduction to Spanish culture allowing the survival of these "slaves" beyond infancy (Preston "The answer" 26); and giving women both equality and the vote were very bad ideas. In the words of the good count: "I know all about women. There'll be no more nonsense about subjecting a gentleman to court action. If a woman's unfaithful to him, he'll shoot her like a dog. It's disgusting, any interference of a court between a man and a wife" (Whitaker 108). Contempt for liberal and progressive ideas and the lack of any kind of empathy with others goes partway to explaining the ruthlessness of their program of repression and revenge.

The indiscriminate slaughter was a tragedy made even worse by the loss to Spain of some of its best people. Federico García Lorca, sympathetic to the Republic, was murdered almost by accident in Granada (Beevor *Battle* 103).[12] Ramiro Maeztu Whitney, older brother of María, was a significant political theorist, and a member of the Generation of '98. His philosophical direction was towards the support of the monarchy and the traditional values of Catholicism. He was shot as a reactionary by the Republican forces. In *The Spanish Holocaust* Preston calculates that approximately 200,000 men and women were executed during the war, 20,000 Republicans were shot after it ended, and tens of thousands of civilians and refugees died in concentration camps and prisons (xi). This slaughter denied Spain immeasurable cultural, intellectual and social benefits for generations to come.

Sánchez Tostado shows that these vicious reprisals from both sides, not least against women, became part of life in the province of Jaén. In the remaining months of 1936 Republican supporters there murdered thirty-two women. The youngest was 17, the oldest was 70. None was executed as the result of due legal process. Many were violated and tortured before death. Some were murdered because they were relatives of known Rightists. Nine more were killed in 1937 and

[12] His biographer Ian Gibson ascribes his murder by Fascists as due in part to his support of the Popular Front. Although his family reversed its initial refusal to allow the exhumation of his supposed grave, no remains have yet been located (*Spanish News Today* 5 December 2013 Web).

three in 1938 (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* Tabla: Mujeres víctimas 217). The retaliation by the Right was equally dreadful and uncontrolled. However, the Republican government went to great lengths to stop the runaway slaughter and by the end of 1936 it was virtually under control, whereas from the beginning of the conflict until well after the victory by the Nationalists in 1939 Republicans and their supporters were still being arrested, tried and executed, a great many without due judicial process. This repression became part of the system of government through fear (Cobo Romero 38).

Perhaps one of the internal betrayals most deeply felt by the traditionalists was that of Spanish women, traditionally seen as the custodians of social and cultural stability, but, once radicalised, disputing the hierarchy which scaffolded society. Willis quotes from the Anarchist newspaper *Spain and the World* of 24 November 1937 how the "Transformation of Spanish women" was to deliver them from "backwardness due to Arabian influence and the domination of the Catholic Church, maintained by masculine authority and female resignation." This was now giving way to a "magnificent and painful awakening" (Willis n. pag). For its own protection against such treachery society established and honed the process of denunciation and legal extermination. It would become one of the most effective methods of social control by the Francoists in the early years of the post-war and is described in detail in Anderson's *Singling out victims*. This legal extermination through terror and secrecy echoes some of the methods of Stalin's Russia. Preston calls the process a systematic genocide, like the Nazi holocaust which attempted to exterminate the Jews (Preston *Holocaust* xi).

Most odious, in the Nationalists' view , were the "milicianas". In "'Milicianas' and Homefront Heroines" Mary Nash shows how the changing representation of women in Spain in the recruitment posters at this time reflects the social turmoil. Women's normal peacetime expectations were challenged and "the war enveloped them and their families in a bloody struggle for survival" (Preston *Doves* 4). Many women on the Republican side were defending not only their homes and their pueblo, but were also fighting for the Spain they wanted for their children. These were ideals

shared by Republican and Nationalistwomen, but the means by which they were to be achieved were very different: Republican children were to enjoy a future of liberal and democratically acquired freedoms; on the Nationalist side the future was to be as dictated by the past, traditional, hierarchical, imposed by an infallible divine authority. That these ideals could also be important to atheists, even to communists, must have been incomprehensible to the Catholic Nationalists, driving them to speechless rage and hatred. The rhetorical flourish was used on both sides: Ramiro Whitney, facing the firing squad, said '"You do not know why you kill me, but I know why I'm dying: for your children to be better than you!" (González Cuevas 359). In his dying words he reiterated the desire of his libertarian mother and sister but his vision of the future was through a different lens.

Young idealistic women emerged from quiet backgrounds in defence of the Second Republic. Inspired and excited by the prospect of a new freedom, they cut their hair and donned the one-piece overalls, or *monos*, of the working class. In her 1974 memoir *Quan érem capitans,* Teresa Pàmies exulted, "The important, momentous change for us were the pantalones which allowed us to jump on trucks, ride a bicycle, climb up lamp-posts, [...] help uncover the ruins [...] after an air-raid" (Nash *Milicianas* 237). Their philosophical ideals and their trousers added an extra spring to their step. Social disruption opened new doors for self-expression.

A particular image of the resistance in Barcelona is still charged with potent meaning. A young girl, proud, almost arrogant, in her blue *mono*, carries a rifle, and stares into the lens. This was Marina Ginestá, member of the *Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya*. She became the poster girl for the young revolutionaries. She remembered how that picture "reflects the feeling we had at that moment. Socialism had arrived, the [usual] customers of the hotel had left. There was euphoria. We temporarily set ourselves up at the Colón, we ate well, as if the bourgeois life were ours, and we had moved up a category very quickly" (*Telegraph* 8 January 2014). This is the image of a confident young woman revelling in her new power. But as early as 3 October 1936, this posing was criticised

in the *Diari Oficial Del Comité Antifeixista*: "Women who show off with blue overalls in the city centre have confused the war with a carnival. More seriousness is needed. And an end to those magazines which publish photos of women armed with a gun who have never fired a gun in their lives" (Nash "Milicianas" 238). Nash points out that none of these images of the bellicose warrior-maiden used in numerous Republican posters in the early weeks of the war were realistic representations of flesh-and-blood women taking up arms. They were not even intended to recruit more such fighters. They were to remind men, particularly those tardy to enlist, what their duty was. The *miliciana* actually strengthened male stereotypes by challenging men's role as fighters. Women's "proper" role was to shame the men into going to war (239).

The power of this image to move, despite its artifice, is perhaps explained by Marina herself, sixty years later, when she muses that the magic of that time was a combination of "the mysticism of the proletarian revolution and the Hollywood image of Greta Garbo and Garry Cooper" (*Telegraph*).[13] Nationalist posters used comparable rhetoric. The woman acts as muse for the male soldier. His role is warrior, hers is inspiration. His is agent, hers is witness. His destiny is death with glory, hers is grief and suffering. Any rearrangement of this traditional picture was seen by the Right as a major threat to the self-image of Holy Spain. Women like Lola, who substituted a transgressive embodiment of Spanish womanhood for their traditional role, were an affront to all that was respectable. The woman who rejected her role as *la perfecta casada* was a traitor to her country, her faith, her class and her gender.

This attitude is blind to the feminist movement, whose demands sank beneath the onslaught of war. As Offen points out, "In the tense and agitated environment of civil war, the Anarchists and the Socialists were not alone in placing feminist claims in second place... a sacrificial maternalism [replaced] an independent womanhood" (Offen 326). Women were expected to – and did – put

13 In April 2014 in Madrid I was given a lapel badge with the photograph reproduced against a background of the Republican flag. It was given to me by Marisa Mediavilla Herreros, a feminist active in the establishment and maintenance of the Biblioteca de Mujeres in Madrid.

their personal needs after those of their community, leaving no room for selfish feminism. Any agitation of this kind was a distraction from the main objective, to defeat fascism. This dilemma became increasingly polarised and politicised as the different parties saw their focus on the ultimate goal being diverted by intellectual debate as we shall see in the anarchists' dialectic.

The difficulty that so many men, if not all, had in accepting this New Woman, this Woman as Warrior rather than Wife, was that it involved their own revolutionary relegation from being the boss to being the partner. It is why many anarchist and libertarian men in Spain in the nineteen-twenties and 'thirties were able to adopt the theory of the emancipation of women but not the practice. Martha Ackelsberg reveals the anarchists' attitude to the role of women in their utopia. One of these women was Soledad Estorach who was still seething in 1982, when she recalled "most [men] were just as happy to have a compañerita who didn't know as much as they. That bothered me a lot - made me furious. Practically turned me into a raving feminist!" (Ackelsberg 72 n 34). At meetings and rallies, the rhetoric of gender equality had the ring of truth, but indoors, in the kitchen and the bedroom, it was too radical and uncomfortable to change the habits of generations. External and internal dissension weakened the opposition and fractured its view of the target. This dissension was just one of the many differences in attitudes which divided the parties from each other, splintered them from within and produced ambiguous attitudes in individuals. The revolutionary ardour which recast women as warriors was cooling. Orwell writes of his own experience in Barcelona in early 1937:

> there were perhaps a thousand men at the barracks, and a score or so of women ... [but] the militiamen had to be kept out of the riding-school while the women were drilling there because they laughed at them and put them off. A few months earlier no one would have seen anything comic in a woman handling a gun (11).

A few months earlier there had been nothing funny about a woman with a gun. Several of the communist female fighters rose to leadership positions in the militias and in the Republican army.

They had gone to the front as soldiers and earned respect and promotion for their bravery and leadership. Mika Etchbéhère, a Jewish Argentinean who arrived in Spain with her husband Hipolito to fight with *Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista*, rose to become a division commander and fighter in the Republican army. In her unit men filled the same auxiliary roles as women, as well as their military duties (Lines 170). Lina Odena, who led her troops with energy and courage, rose to the rank of commandant of a militia unit. She died in September 1936 under Nationalist fire, reconnoitering behind enemy lines (171-2). Fidela Fernández de Velasco Pérez fought on the front in successful actions at Madrid and Toledo only leaving the combat zones when she was injured. Even then she continued to operate as a secret agent, working in enemy territory until the end of the war (172).

There were many other courageous women fighters from the communist ranks such as Margarita Ribalta who got herself reassigned from the relative safety of headquarters to combat duties (172-3). Argentina García, captain of the machine-gun company of the second Asturias Battalion, similarly could barely wait to recover from her wounds received at Oviedo to return to the front. Trinidad Revolto Cervello, Teofila Madroñal and Aurora Arnáiz also assumed leadership roles which built on their martial and educational skills. All these women took pride in the acquisition of skills never previously assigned to Spanish women and were acknowledged to be as brave and skilful at the front as their male counterparts (173).

Anarchist women also fought with energy and effectiveness. In August 1936 Anita López, leader of Mérida's committee of defence, led her troops in an unsuccessful yet "ferocious resistance" against Colonel Asensio's forces (Beevor *Battle* 133), and this "soul of Anarchist resistance" (Thomas 360) was executed with the rest of her committee. Pérez Collado, Carmen Crespo and Casilda Méndez were all milicianas who fought with valour and also took on, albeit reluctantly, extra duties which were considered "women's work", like sewing, cooking and laundry. Some knew that this was what was expected and needed, and that they had the necessary skills.

Whether they were appreciated is not recorded. In some units the men were adamant that they would not do "women's work" and the women had to take on this extra responsibility. Méndez for instance took on the role of cook for her unit but also participated in other tasks, fighting and building fortifications (Lines 173-174).

Unlike either the communists or the anarchists, the socialists at no time welcomed women into their militias as they "rejected the notion of the radical militia woman from the very beginning" (176). This was consistent with their conventional attitudes to women's emancipation. Since 1891 the "woman issue" had virtually disappeared from the socialists' agenda (Pérez 670). There were a few milicianas with a socialist background, but there were no Socialist militias as such.

Lines mentions forty combatant milicianas by name, and many other anonymous women, describing their contributions to the armed conflict while also in many cases providing the traditional female support of cooking, cleaning, mending and nursing. She also describes the deaths of several, in some cases self-inflicted to avoid the horror of capture by the Nationalists. Spanish women like these, the milicianas and soldiers who rejected their traditional roles as wives and mothers were characterised by the Right as traitors and whores, their indignation whipped to a frenzy because these "Reds" were appropriating the very same images, "Religión, Patria, Familia, Orden, Trabajo y Propiedad", to defend their actions as the Nationalists used to sanctify theirs (Rodrigo 256).

The warrior women could be seen as an unfortunate aberration, but the women's associations, clubs and secretariats, established over the previous twenty-five years, marked a quantum shift from individual impotent women easily lost in the general noise of society to the growth of powerful and demanding networks whose voices became increasingly difficult to ignore. The women's groups which emerged at this time are proof of women's abilities in the face of not only political chaos but of insidious misogyny. They ignored and overcame the mockery of the men supposed to be their companions and mobilised themselves. Even so, often the women's group had

to be disguised as a sewing circle to avoid the anger of fathers and husbands (Low and Breà Ch 14 n. pag.).

A unity of sorts was achieved for Republican women when the *Agrupación de Mujeres Antifascistas* was founded by La Pasionaria in 1933. This was a coalition of the most important of the women's associations on the Left whose single goal was the defeat of fascism. It included groups from Madrid and Barcelona. It used overtly political strategies to push forward its feminist agenda and it drew its adherents from a wider base than simply the *Partido Comunista de España* (PCE). Its members held widely progressive political aspirations, and its militancy was more developed than other women's organizations. It established schools, soup kitchens, libraries for soldiers, and relief centres for refugees from the Nationalist-controlled territories. According to its General Secretary, Encarnación Fuyola, the Civil War was not the right time to fight for women's rights but this fight would come in its own time, after the threat of fascism was ended. "Luchamos ... por la defensa de las libertades democráticas ... porque son las únicas que garantizan nuestros derechos de mujeres, nuestro derecho a intervenir en la vida política y social del país" ((Nash *Rojas* 121).

During the Spanish Civil War the *Unión de Muchachas, Unió de Dones de Catalunya* and the *Aliança Nacional de Dones Joves* were all integrated into the *Agrupación de Mujeres Antifascistas*, becoming a key movement, since the Republican government entrusted it to attend at the battle fronts and to provide aid to the combatants (Nash "Milicianas" 239). Its membership reached more than 50,000 members and there were 225 separate groups. Many of the achievements of these left-wing women's groups were gained in the face of little encouragement from the men. In fact in these issues, men seemed to move to the right, becoming traditional and less than free-thinking. The sneers and mockery of the *milicianos* towards the *milicianas* (Orwell, Nash) was indicative of a far deeper fear and resistance to the idea of emancipated women that was held as much by members of the political Left as it was by those on the Right.

The communist *Agrupación de Mujeres Antifascistas*, the Women's Secretariat of the *Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista* (POUM) and the anarchist *Mujeres Libres* had each been formed to provide structure and order for the women of Spain to unite against totalitarianism and fight for the democratic freedoms which the Second Republic promised. The differences between the communist and the anarchist womens' groups were their central foci: the communists were focused on the political battle between Left and Right, and the anarchists on the cultural battle between men and women. The contribution that the *Mujeres Libres* made towards the education and emancipation of women was radical. Although they rejected the feminist label, which was "strictly middle-class", these "free women" were "thoroughly and unrepentantly feminist in their aspirations and activities" (Offen 326). They empowered women in the context of a working class movement and revolutionary change (Ackelsberg 163).

But the progress of the *Mujeres Libres* was made more difficult by the distrust of the *Confederación Nacional de Trabajo* and the *Federación Anarquista Ibérica* towards it. Nash has described the paradoxes and contradictions facing revolutionary women, who "have to fight on two levels. First they must fight for their external freedom. In this struggle men are their allies in the same ideals in an identical cause. But women also have to fight for their inner freedom which men have enjoyed for centuries. And in this struggle women are on their own" (*Defying* 85).

The organisers in the anarchist movement saw the growing *double* struggle of women against the *triple* enslavement of "ignorance, capital and men" as splitting the agenda and diverting focus away from the main objective, which was to defeat fascism. We also see here that there existed two battlegrounds and three targets for the women which added to the confusion of direction. Again and again Ackelsberg details the opposition the women of *Mujeres Libres* faced from the men in the movement. Women and their struggle to instigate change continued to invite mockery. Their enemy was not only the fascists, but also frequently their own political and personal partners. When they requested affiliation with the *Confederación Nacional de Trabajo* (CNT) on a

similar footing to the youth movement it was refused. In an interview Ackelsberg conducted with Mercedes Comaposada, one such rejection is described in detail. In 1937 Maríano Vazquez, national secretary of the CNT, told her and Lucía Sánchez Saornil that they could have '"millions of pesetas" for organising, education, and recruiting, on condition that

> "you also work on issues that are of interest to us, and not just on women's matters". At that, Lucía jumped up and said "No. That would put us back into exactly the position we started from – the reason why we started this organisation in the first place!" And I agreed with her – I still do. The autonomy was essential. If they wouldn't allow that, then we would have lost the main purpose of the organisation. (44)

This dissent within the anarchist movement, between men and women, was simply one more fracturing of the antifascist struggle. Its counter-productive effects on women's concerns are explained by Nash:

> The different cores of the [communist] Association of Antifascist Women ... played a decisive role, as did the anarchist organization Free Women... This plurality of responses in the antifascist resistance reflected the strong polarization that existed within the Republican forces and the Left during the war. This was why the programs and strategies of the different women's organizations had visibly contradictory ideas, not only in the political context but also regarding the role of women, despite the fact that in practice there was substantial consensus on fundamental points such as work, education, and women's mobilization in the antifascist struggle. Despite the political cohesion that was created in Republican society by the fight against Fascism, there emerged no common project among women's groups, nor any unified vision. ("Women's Role" 538)

The challenge which the anarchists saw in the rise of the communists and the antipathy which this caused may even have its roots in the origins of the two movements. Anarchism, as discussed in Chapter 2, was a particularly Spanish expression of free thought and Andalusia, "this

notoriously recalcitrant region", was "the earliest theatre of rural anarchism" (White 235). Spanish communism in contrast was imported – "Asiatic communism" (Beevor *Battle* 267) - and therefore an easy target for xenophobia. When it became a serious feature of Spanish political life in the early twenties it brought with it an organisational strength which contrasted with the anarchistic soft chaos it was supposed to work with. Always it was better organised, and its humanitarian and universal values hid its underlying agenda, as suspected by many on both sides of the conflict, to establish a bridgehead in a Spanish communist state, in its campaign towards a communist world, supporting, in Ibárruri's own words, "the march of humanity toward communism" (Cross and Miles n. pag).

Its humanitarian face was the *Socorro Rojo Internacional*, formed in Moscow by Comintern in 1922. It flourished in Barcelona and Madrid from 1936 goaded by fascist aggression. It offered emergency medical help and also educational programs with longer-term objectives. To continue the theme of factionalism and disunity, *Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista* set up its own *Socorro Rojo del POUM.* The drive to differentiate between the groupings on the Left enfeebled their efforts to fight the Right. But the recruiting poster used by *Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista* shows a shared vision, uncontested, of how the decision-makers on both sides of the political conflict imagined women. The nurse cradling the wounded soldier refers closely to the image of the grieving mother and dying son found in Michelangelo's *La Pietà.* Women were useful as mute players in the psychological drama of the war and for the background tasks of ministering and mopping up; however, their personal campaign for emancipation was subsumed in the greater struggle.

The achievements of right-wing women were equally hard-won. The membership of the *Sección Femenina* became more actively involved in political action after the uprising of July 1936. Under Pilar's dedicated leadership the *Sección Femenina* moved into the political arena in the elections of 1936 and its members visited Falange prisoners in Republican prisons and provided

support for their families. Membership grew to 50,000. Through *Socorro Blanco,* the Nationalists' answer to *Socorro Rojo,* some members became involved in clandestine support for the activists in the Falange, carrying messages and guns hidden in their skirts (Lavail 358).

For Lola adjusting to her new role as a widow and now a political activist, her world would have become increasingly politicised and dangerous. The bombing of their city on 1 April 1937, three weeks before Guernica, would have been devastatingly traumatic as five tri-motor Junkers bombers bombed civilian targets, killing 157 men, women, and children, with many hundreds injured (Cuevas Mata 61-64). In this context her sons' commitment, and possibly her own, to the communist anti-Nationalist cause clearly took hold. A primal urge to protect one's home would have been as strong as an intellectual fervour to defeat the forces of reaction.

The Republicans in Jaén executed 128 Nationalist prisoners as an application of the *Ley del Talión* (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 203). Antiaircraft refuges and sirens were hurriedly installed around the city. Shiny organ pipes taken from the cathedral were assembled in the towers of Santa Catalina, now the *parador*, to give the impression that the city was protected. As later bombardments on the city were aimed solely at the railway station the ruse may have worked (199). [14]

Lola did not put herself in the conflicted position of some of the revolutionary women, like Soledad Estorach who was almost converted into "a raving feminist" by the obstructive antics of her compañeros. From the sketchy but entirely plausible picture we have of their relationship Lola was Federico's "compañerita" who didn't question the relativity between their two worlds, his external, political, cultural, social, and hers internal, domestic, conjugal, maternal. This purely speculative but very defensible scenario of their daily life suggests that she would have shadowed him, not questioning his political decisions, because they fitted with what was the family liberal tradition,

14 As the captain of an antiaircraft battery, my father may have been involved in these defence-building exercises, while his mother committed herself to the political fight at home and in the meeting halls.

which she honoured as much as he did. Was it then a sense of obligation to his memory which drove her after his death to take on the role of a revolutionary, or a need to do all she could to help her own boys at the front? Was it expectations placed on her by some of the forceful and energetic activists in the Castillo circle described by Sánchez Tostado, as had happened with Mercedes Sanz Bachiller on the sudden death of her husband, Onésimo Redondo in Valladolid (Preston *Doves* 233)? Or was it an objective and irrepressible horror of the nightmare which loomed? Again, at present there is no evidence to support one of these motives more than another. It is indisputable that she waited a very short while after Federico died in November 1936 before committing herself to the cause.

Before his death she was a silent consort, but we have her own words to describe her sudden entry into political activism. At her trial in August 1939 she said "Ingresé en el partido comunista a principios de 1937 sin que hasta entonces haya profesado tales ideas, aunque siempre he sido amiga de los pobres y de la familia liberal" (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 400).[15] But she was driven and she drove others in the fight against fascism. Lola became politically prominent in women's anti-fascist groups, raising her profile at the ultimate cost of her life.

Her early commitment to the communist cause is recognised in a report in the Jaén *Diario Democracia* by Antonio Morales Jiménez ("Argos")[16]. In October 1937 at the offices of the *Socorro Rojo Internacional* and of *Amigos de la Unión Soviética* he saw:

> un abanico de filigrana. … lo que me llegó al alma fue su dedicatoria: "de una madre de once comunistas, siete de ellos en el frente". En efecto, la señora de Castillo Extremera no pudo enviar otro regalo a la URSS. … como esta madre hay muchas en España. Madres de camaradas marxistas, madres de republicanos, madres de anarquistas… En esta tarjeta

15 ATMT nº 2 de Sevilla, PSU nº 15.255 fol. 4.

16 "Argos" was the first of the hundreds executed by the Franco regime, dying on 11April 1939 (Sánchez Tostado 319).

> emotiva, sentimental, poemática, va un saludo emocionado de las madres jiennenses. Saludo escrito con lágrimas y acaso con sangre. (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 405)

By this stage, Lola had become the president of the local *Mujeres Antifascistas,* president of the Jaén branch of the Partido Comunista de España , and a member of the *Sindicato de Mujeres de la Union General de Trabajadores* in the neighbourhood of San Ildefonso. This suggests the possibility of a longer standing involvement with anti-fascist women's groups than we can find evidence for.

To help the soldiers at the front in the harsh sierra winters, a *Campaña de Invierno* was established and set up by *Socorro Rojo Internacional* (SRI). Lola's connection to the SRI was reinforced by her son Carlos who had been the lawyer working for the organisation in Madrid for some time (Castillo García-Negrete, J-L 6). As the provincial president Lola organized numerous lotteries, raffles, auctions and charity sales to raise funds in support of the work of the SRI (See APPENDIX A).

In one of these auctions she acquired some furniture and sets of dishes, for which, when the war was over, she would be denounced by their previous owner Teresa Messia Aranda. It seems obvious that in her economic position Lola's efforts were to contribute to *Socorro Rojo* rather than "*robar mobiliario ajeno*" (406). Public auctions and charity raffles had always been the province of the Church and it must have been galling for the devout of Jaén, as in other Spanish cities, towns and villages, to see their pious fund-raising methods corrupted by and for the Reds.

In the meagre record of her activist life – two radio broadcasts, a newspaper report on her gift of the *abanico de filigrana* to the Communist Party, and the transcript of her trial – her *arenga* via Radio Jaén on 21 December 1937 is the most extended opportunity we have to hear her own voice. Her task was to urge donations to the *Campaña de Invierno* in advance of the severe winter weather. Her forecast of "las nieves, los hielos y las escarchas, de los cierzos y los relentes que congelan la vida" is poetic in its effectiveness, piling cold on cold, to bring home the pain and misery of the men at the front. In contrast, is the warmth of her call, "un llamamiento al corazón de las

esposas, madres e hijas para que se acordasen de los que pasaban frío en el frente al objeto de que facilitasen ropas". Her message is particularly for the women of the town, reminding them that the strength of their love and care will help their men and boys "siente el calor de la solidaridad con la que la retaguardia cuida de procurarle" and is represented in the collection of warm clothing and food for the men, knowing its enormous benefit, emotional as much as material, to the combatants.

She adopts a quietly persuasive tone – "¿No ha pensado nunca, camarada, en la tragedia que supondría un eventual avance enemigo? ¿En lo que sería de ti sometido a la ferocidad fascista?" She does not labour the point, knowing her audience, and that they well understand the danger they face with a Nationalist victory. Living in a provincial capital city which was unswerving in its loyalty to the Second Republic until the very end, Lola would have known she was amongst friends and supporters for her call. But she does insist that her listeners should feel the sacrifice of their protectors in the trenches –"Pues bien, no olvides que el combatiente, en las trincheras, brinda diariamente su vida por evitarte hasta la zozobra de que pueda acaecer semejante calamidad y corresponde a su ingente sacrificio, prestando tu modesta ayuda a sus apremiantes necesidades." She does not spare her audience from the knowledge that the failure of their campaign, to resist the fascists, will risk not only the ideals and values for which they are fighting, but also their very freedom and lives. She describes how important is the knowledge of a strong and supportive rearguard to the morale of the fighters, how they are strengthened by the sense that their suffering is understood and will be alleviated by the efforts of their friends, families and companions just a few miles behind the front, while they fight and suffer at the front to resist a fascist victory and an *invasión devastadora, humillante, tiránica* (404).

She aimed her oratory at the lowest workers, at office employees, at unions, political parties, and other organisations, to establish committees to provide help and support for the war effort which was to protect them all from the crushing defeat of the fascists. Her final words were for the women of Spain: "Y tú, mujer española, ejemplo universal de sublimes abnegaciones, no puede

faltar tu decisivo concurso en esta magnífica campaña por el triunfo definitivo de la soberanía del pueblo, la redención del trabajo y el libre desenvolvimiento de las ideas humanitarias" (403-404). Her use of the image of Spanish women as exemplary victims of their own sacrifice highlights the power of this model to galvanise women – and men – to support the cause yet again. Her use of words usually associated with holy crusades – "*sublimes abnegaciones"* – bore fruit. On 31 December 1937 Lola congratulated and thanked her listeners for their generosity in sending 50,000 packets of tobacco, 200,000 *piezas de dulces*, 6000 litres of *aguardiente* and an unspecified number of overcoats. This time however she rejected her political role to emphasise her maternal one: "con toda el alma de una madre que tiene en los frentes a siete hijos dispuestos a dar la vida por la redención de España única y eterna" (404-5). A few days later in the freezing temperatures of the sierras in winter, these gifts would have represented a small but welcome source of comfort.

During 1938 the balance of the war swung to the Nationalists. The only international support for the Republicans was from Russia and individual foreign sympathisers in the International Brigade. Germany and Italy continued to provide military aid to the Nationalists. The battles fought between the two sides, although frequently indecisive, drastically depleted Republican resources and had a devastating effect on morale (Fraser 480). The tactics of targeting civilian populations and the extensive use of German and Italian military hardware led many commentators to call the Spanish Civil War a dress rehearsal for the Second World War (Graham *Spanish Civil War* 110, Lannon 91, Preston *Spanish Civil War* 5). Beevor (*Battle* 166-167, 222-223, 315-317) and Preston (*We Saw* 425) and many others offer a raft of evidence of German and Italian intervention.

Certain cities, like Madrid, Barcelona, Almeria and Jaén, continued to resist, but the pressure on them was becoming terminal. Spring and early summer of 1938 saw the front line spread eastward from Jaca, Huesca, Saragossa and Teruel as battle after battle was won by Franco's forces. In April a psychological and strategic triumph was achieved when the Nationalists reached the

coast at Vinaroz, splitting the lines of communication between Barcelona and Valencia (Beevor *Battle* 364).

Politically the communists, the socialists and the anarchists continued to oppose each other (Beevor *Battle* 371-374). Accusations of treachery and defeatism were part of the discourse. The struggle in Catalonia for autonomy added to the dissensions within the Republic. Personal survival became more and more the driving force, and the ideals of the original Republic and its Constitution faded as internal squabbling increased. By July 1938 the Nationalists had taken three-quarters of Spanish territory, while the Republic held on to the furthest north-eastern corner of Catalonia and the south-eastern sector, stretching from Madrid to the coast, from south of Granada to north of Valencia.

The Battle of the Ebro which lasted from July to November 1938 was the turning-point. During this time the international brigades were forced to withdraw and La Pasionaria made a moving speech to them in Barcelona thanking them for their sacrifices and exhorting them to remember Spain when they returned home and to come back to celebrate the Spanish Republic's victory. But her opening words were for the women of Spain, with whom she placed the responsibility of carrying the story of the International Brigades to the future: "¡Madres!... ¡Mujeres! Cuando los años pasen y las heridas de la guerra se vayan restañando; cuando el recuerdo de los días dolorosos y sangrientos se esfume en un presente de libertad, de paz y de bienestar; cuando los rencores se vayan atenuando y el orgullo de la patria libre sea igualmente sentido por todos los españoles, hablad a vuestros hijos; habladles de estos hombres de las Brigadas Internacionales" (Domingo 277-278).

By early 1939 Franco's forces were closing in on Madrid. In the south the lines were approaching Jaén. The divisions on the Left became deeper and more vicious. On the communist side, the alliance with the anarchists had been entirely opportunistic. In September 1936 General Vladimir Gorev on his arrival from Moscow predicted that "a struggle against the anarchists is

absolutely inevitable after victory over the whites. The struggle will be very severe" (Beevor *Battle* 478). Recognising the threat that this alliance with a predatory Russian presence meant, the Socialists under Colonel Casado realised that any hope of a negotiated surrender to Franco depended on separating themselves from their erstwhile partners. They had to *anular la influencia comunista* (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 407) and deliver up as many of them as possible for retribution. The Socialists rebelled against the Republican leadership under Negrin and made a pact with the Francoists which did not ultimately help them as Franco refused to make any concessions, "pero los sublevados sólo querían la rendición absoluta y no admitían condiciones de ningun tipo" (234). His objective was to root out and destroy any past present or potential enemies of the "new" Spain which he was determined to build as like the old, pre-Second Republic as possible (Beevor *Battle* 372).

On 28 March 1939 Franco's forces entered Madrid and were welcomed hysterically by their supporters, hitherto hidden as the fifth column, at last able to emerge from their hiding places and wave the red and gold flag of the "true" Spain. On 29 March the Nationalists took Jaén and many more prisoners. The promise that no harm would come to those with clean hands was shown to be a farce (Anderson "Interests" 40) and whoever trusted it did so at their own risk. Franco having declared on 31 March that "La guerra ha terminado" the purging began with "los intelectuales, los dirigentes políticos y sindicales, los líderes obreros y los militares leales a la República" (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 235).

Franco addressed the nation on 3 April and reminded it that the war was not yet over, contradicting his declaration of a few days before (235). He told them that Spaniards needed to be continuously alert against the internal and external enemies of the Patria, in the name of the fallen and of God. Invoking these two powerful forces Franco gave his countrymen no room at all for doubt, for dialogue. As the supreme dictator he held total power. Backing him up, as he pointed out in March 1939 were "the hundreds of thousands of our dead who will rule" (*Azul*, 28 March 1939).

Colonel Casado himself fled Spain as the Nationalists mopped up the last resistance on the east coast (Beevor *Battle* 441).

The supporters of the Republic, where possible, fled across the border onto ships and trains to Russia, to Mexico and to England, or into French POW camps (Sánchez Tostado *Exilio* 77, 83, 84, Beevor *Battle* 425, Thomas 895-896, Gemie 34, Robeson 17 August 1939). The decrees issued from Franco's headquarters made clear that concessions and negotiations were not on the agenda: "la postura de Franco es inamovible" (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 234). Triumphant parades were staged down the Avenida de Castellano (Beevor *Battle* 445). Now began the serious work of re-instating the Spain Franco desired and "la represión se fue institucionalizando y continuó desarrollándose un implacable proceso de depuración política y social" (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 238). Those already in captivity were sentenced to death or to long periods of imprisonment.

The resistance began bravely but the new networks of social and political control were so strong and intrusive that its members were systematically betrayed and delivered to the regime. "Madrid era barrida calle por calle en busca de enemigos de la patria con un odio sin precedentes" (Fonseca 104). As it was in Madrid so it was in other cities, towns and villages throughout loyalist Spain. Peter Anderson's work on the post-war repressions in Pozoblanco "In the Interests of Justice?" tells how, when the time came to prove one's own allegiance to the "new" Spain, a relatively easy and safe way was to turn on your neighbour, and denounce him or her, or them. "People were to be invited to come forward and denounce 'criminals' for prosecution" (31). Prisoners were returned to their home towns or villages to facilitate denunciations by neighbours (32). People who were denounced had to prove their innocence rather than the denouncers having to prove their guilt (35). A denunciation was proof enough of guilt (40). The denunciations and betrayals came like an avalanche. The devastated and vanquished supporters of the Republic were reeling with the rapidity of their fall. Their despair and fear can be gauged from the sixty suicides in

one day in Alicante as the refugees realised they were not going to be able to escape by sea (Sánchez Tostado 235, Fraser 503).

The most hated by the Nationalists were those with the highest profiles. In Sánchez Tostado's account of the final desperate convulsions in Jaén, the fury and cruelty which was unleased is nightmarish.

> La inmediata posguerra fue exageradamente cruel. Es difícil encontrar un pueblo, por pequeño que este sea, en el que no se produjeran torturas o víctimas sobre todo en zonas, como la provincia de Jaén, donde la fidelidad republicana se mantuvo hasta el último día. La etapa del primer franquismo es sinónimo de una represión marcada por el revanchismo y las venganzas personales donde se sucedieron las delaciones, las detenciones y los pelotones de fusilamiento. Los consejos de guerra constituyeron el relevo en tiempo de "paz", del exterminio practicado por los militares y falangistas en tiempos de guerra. (238-239)

In Anderson's account, the story is the same. He explored the scope, methods and motives for the huge number of denunciations in southern Spain, particularly those areas which had taken longest to fall to the Nationalists. He found that in many cases "bereaved relatives" gave their motivation as "justice for God and Spain", that their actions were aimed at the destruction of the "red hordes" and that they were acting not out of revenge but "in the interests of justice" (39).

"En provincias como Jaén los comunistas fueron encarcelados" (Sánchez Tostado 234). It was in the course of such an avalanche of self-righteous betrayal that Lola and her sons Federico, Manuel and Salvador, and some of their political colleagues were detained, not by the Nationalists but by the Socialists. "El 5 de marzo de 1939 los socialistas, tras el golpe de efecto del Coronel Casado, dieron orden de anular la influencia comunista y ese día, tanto Dolores como sus hijos, fueron detenidos en su propio domicilio junto a otros comunistas."[17] (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 407). During the life of Federico Castillo the family house had been a centre for *tertulias.* After his

[17] Diario Democracia, 21 de octubre de 1937, fol. 21 y vto.

death meetings continued to be held there. Amongst regular visitors were Cristóbal Valenzuela Ortega, provincial secretary of the PCE from 1937, executed 3 August 1939, José Aroca Núñez, Communist councilman and previous provincial secretary, executed the following day, and Lupiañez o Julio Gómez Blanes, professor of languages of the Institute and a close friend of Lola's husband (403). It seems that the Socialists in Jaén were poised for the arrests as they happened on the very day of Casado's coup, although the Nationalists did not enter the city until 29 March (Thomas 890). María-Victoria Castillo's recollections (see below) confirm this.

Lola found herself marked for special attention even before Jaén fell. The particular danger which threatened her, an upstanding citizen, well-known in the city and the province because of her position as the wife, now widow, of a respected doctor and politician, was precisely because she *was* an upstanding citizen, widow of a respected doctor and politician. Anderson comments on the emotional value of the testimonies of widows particularly of mayors and politicians: "the Falangist mayors nominated such women as witnesses in the knowledge that both their high social standing and their status as widows made them prime examples of the 'upstanding citizens' the investigating judge asked to provide testimony" (38). As one such Lola had disappointed their unacknowledged expectations. She should have been one of them, denouncing the red hordes, but not only was she not, but she was avowedly their enemy, even allied with the reds. She was denounced by a falangist agent, Amador Luque Heredia (del Arco Moya 458 n. 480).

The formal denunciation after their arrest was documented on 12 April 1939.[18] With Federico *padre* dead and Lola imprisoned the house was acquired by the authorities. Her daughters were evicted. María-Victoria who was 13 at the time wrote of the experience of this sudden loss of their home. She and her sisters, Carmen, 17, and Dolores, 23, were given enough time to pack a small bag each and then the door was closed behind them. She wrote:

18 ATMT, Nº 2 de Sevilla PSU, nº 15.255, fol. 2.

> Cuando nos echaron de mi casa en nombre del partido SOCIALISTA DE ESPAÑA estuvimos 3 días en la calle pero a paso rápido para que pareciera íbamos a tritios concretos y no sé un notara que deambulábamos… Pedimos asilio a familias conocidas y todos lo negaron o no abrieron las puertas… Al 3° día nos agredamos de una familia muy humilde que habían estado en mi casa sirviendo como cocineros, niñeras, limpiadores … y eran tan buenos como desordenado. Nos acogieron y nos trataron muy bien, pero nosotros no estábamos ajusto. (Castillo García-Negrete María-Victoria 25 May 2010).

Lola was released shortly before the Franco forces entered Jaén on 29 March, but then re-arrested in August. We do not know why the authorities gave her this short period of freedom, but during this time she did not feel in danger because she had "no blood on her hands" (Vázquez Castillo personal communication). Franco's advice - "Si no has manchado tus manos con delitos comunes ven" (Sanchez Tostado 238) sounded reassuring. In the meantime her sons who had also been released fled to Alicante in hopes of escaping entirely. In fact they were eventually caught in Valencia and returned for trial to Jaén and sentenced to thirty years each, Salvador being then twenty-one years old (Sánchez Tostado *Exilio* 268).

Lola's trial took place on 26 August, 1939. She was accused of "una adhesion eficaz, clara y evidente a la rebellion marxista" and, along with her sons, charged with being amongst the leading forces for communism and of the local disruptions (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 407-8). The case put by the military was that the death of her husband, the trials of the war and the influence of her sons had turned her from a good woman into "una verdadera hiena con numerosa prole." The family, so far as we know, made efforts to provide her with a defence. Carmen and Dolores were living as refugees in the home of an ex-member of the domestic staff. Lola's father confessor, Blas Moreno Covaleda, was called to give evidence at the trial and described her as a devout and exemplary Catholic who had "perdido la razón" following her husband's death (402). Some nuns who had worked with her to provide relief for right-wing prisoners in Jaén were begged to speak in court in

her defence but they were too frightened to do so (Castillo Ramirez personal communication). Other conservative voices heard in the trial asserted that she had been "una muy buena persona". A report by Miguel Osuna, Falangist Secretary of Public Order of the Civil Governor "(quien, por cierto, no se prodigó precisamente en emitir informes favorables de los republicanos que estaban siendo procesados)", on 15 April 1939 remarked: "La referida Dolores durante el periodo rojo repartía ropas a los más necesitados e incluso a los detenidos de carácter derechista en la cárcel provincial" (405). She answered her accusers defensively, recognising the dire situation she was in: "Ingresé en el partido comunista a principios de 1937 sin que hasta entonces haya profesado tales ideas, aunque siempre he sido amiga de los pobres y de la familia liberal" (400). Her humanity and generosity were broad. Despite this the court sentenced her to death. Perhaps it was because she was a woman of good standing, who stood for the wrong things. In so many ways she embodied the ideal of womanhood promoted by the Sección Femenina and eventually enshrined by Franco. But this good woman had disdained the rhetoric of the Right, remaining faithful to the family's liberal values of social responsibility and democratic commitment.

She spent six months incarcerated in the jail of Santa Ursula, the women's prison in Jaén, and her oldest daughter Dolores had hoped that the tachycardia from which she suffered would give her release rather than the execution by firing squad to which the military court had condemned her (Vázquez Castillo personal communication).

In March 2014 a handwritten letter, date-marked "Jaén 19 April 1939," was found in a suitcase in South London. The paper is brown and fragile after 75 years. The letter was written by two sisters, Dolores and Carmen, to their brother José-Luis. Dolores reassured him that "a pesar de todo estoy contenta", that a military man was living in their house and that they were with some erstwhile servants, that "nosotras estamos bajo la protección de Falange a la que estamos muy agradecidas por el trato que nos dan", that "María está en Castillo con tía Marta, pues en estos últimos días se quedo muy delgada." After explaining that she and Carmen were dreaming about

getting work and earning their own living, she expresses gratitude for their situation and declares that "estamos en España que según palabras de Falange es ahora nuestra madre." Of their own mother – "Mamá está en la carcel. Pero no te preocupes. Cuando podemos le llevamos algo de comer y se pasa el día hacienda media." They were not to know that a year later she would be dead.

This letter stands in stark contrast to the testimony of María Victoria and was clearly written in the climate of fear that pervaded Spain at the time. Both Dolores and Carmen would have been aware that anything they wrote would pass before the censor's eyes (Bowen 137) - and "the Spanish censorship system was particularly strict" (Morales Ladrón 60) - before going into the Red Cross clearing system and thence to José-Luis (American National Red Cross 28-29).

Dolores and Carmen made a perilous journey to Franco's headquarters in Salamanca to petition for mercy for their mother. The request was in vain, as were so many others on the same mission (Castillo García-Negrete, María-Victoria personal communication). Franco took an unassailable position. In a speech on 31 December 1939 he spoke of the "many victims [who] cry out for justice that no honourable Spaniard, no thinking human being, could stand aside from the painful duty of punishment" (Preston *Holocaust* 472). Through a convoluted and confused argument, what Sánchez Tostado calls "El colmo del absurdo"(407) and "una extraordinaria paradoja histórica"[19], the crime of "support for military rebellion" was levelled against those people who had opposed the military rebellion of July 1936. Under the decree of 13 September 1936 by the Burgos Junta, early in the Civil War, those who supported the Republic and opposed the Nationalists were liable to have all their property confiscated. These included "Jews, Freemasons, vegetarians, nudists, spiritualists, and Esperantists" (Preston *Holocaust* 37). The Castillos, like many other families, were caught up in the broad terms of the decree and would become its target at the end of the war.

19 electronic version of *La Guerra Civil* omitted from hard copy page 408

The odium with which neighbours of the family turned on them is described in a letter from María-Victoria:

> Mis hermanos y mi madre estaban todo en el cárcel y en Jaén no se hablaba de otra cosa que de la familia Castillo, levantando todos los "Bulos" = mentiras. Por ej: que mi madre había tirado los Santos por la ventana y que en mi casa se mataba a los fascistas (los fascistas entraron a Jaén el 2° día que llevábamos en la calle). Mi casa por dentro era muy grande ya que estaba incrustada en tenemos de tres casas a la espalda y laterales. Por dentro, de muebles, de zócalos y de cristales y patios, eran casi un palacio. Todo lo expelieron y algunas cosas yo sé en donde están.
>
> Luego, cuando se llevaron los Rayos al hospital[20], la gente se amontonó en la puerta de la casa y decían que era la silla eléctrica con la que mi familia mataba a los fascistas… Los bulos y las mentiras circulaban por Jaén y estaba de moda la frase de "¿sabes de lo último que nos hemos enterado que hacían los Castillo?" Y ¡Fíjate por donde! (25 May 2010).

Maria-Victoria, in spite of the seventy years since it happened, has forgotten very little.

At the time of her imprisonment, Lola said: "de la cárcel saldré a hombros o al patíbulo" (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 408). At seven in the morning of 1 March 1940 Lola García-Negrete Ruiz Zarco was collected from the convent-prison by truck and along with four or five other prisoners she was driven to the cemetery of San Eufrasio de Jaén. Here they were lined up against the outside walls of the church and executed. Her corpse was then transported with the others through a side door in the cemetery wall, and thrown into the common grave in the unsanctified area of the cemetery. Sánchez Tostado describes how "a las siete en punto de la madrugada, cuando fue apeada del camión junto a la cantera del cementerio, el oficial que comandaba el piquete, en un descuido de la mujer, le disparó un tiro en la cabeza, seguramente para ahorrarle sufrimientos y evitar el

[20] The two doctors had an x-ray machine in their consulting rooms, which gave the onlookers further fuel for gossip.

disgusto de sus hombres." In a further secretive sign of this respect, the blood stain on the stones where she fell was left untouched for many years after by the workers who knew her story (408).

Lola's granddaughter, María-José Vazquez Castillo, wrote of the execution that her mother's boyfriend – her own father – was able to separate the body from the others and bury it somewhere else. The likelihood of this taking place under the noses of the cemetery authorities seems highly improbable until we encounter the section *Identificación de las fosas comunes* in *La Guerra Civil en Jaén*. Apparently some families were able to come to secret arrangements with the cemetery manager Tomás Úbeda ("Vejeto") for the separation of their relative from the common grave. These bodies were interred separately with a stone marking the head so that the family might return at some future date, and rebury their relative in more dignified circumstances (306-317).

If this was the case with Lola, the details of any removal and reburial are either lost or remain the close secret of the surviving family members. Out of the "maze of misery and silence" (Cobo Romero "Stability" 37) which entombed the Castillo women who remained in Jaén – Dolores and María-Victoria, a quiet resilience emerged. Privileged with intelligence, education, love, and a proud heritage, these women learned to live quietly under a regime which had tried to destroy them. In this they resembled thousands of other women and their families across the country. In the final chapter we will consider the process of discovery and recovery of the objectives of Republicans, feminists and liberals which had been lost in the holocaust of the Civil War.

It is difficult and painful to speculate on the reasons why Lola, very much a home front heroine, acknowledged even by the Rightists for her humanitarian aid to prisoners from both sides, received a death sentence, compared with others, women and men, who had possessed much higher profiles and yet received only prison terms, her own sons included. However, the history of her political connections was vital to the court case: "La denunciada y sus hijos constituyen uno de los principales elementos responsables de la revolución roja por su nivel intelectual y buena

posición económica y su incontenible odio hacia todo lo que representa orden social y tradición" (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 401).

It was not what she and the family had actually done but rather that with all the social, cultural, educational and economic advantages they had enjoyed, they should only ever have been supporters of tradition and of an authoritarian regime, which the Nationalists represented. Lola had disappointed the expectations of the "respectable" body of Jaén society, and hence had to be treated like a traitor to be erradicated.

Conclusion:

Remembering Dolores 1940 – 2015

The defeat of the Second Republic was a disaster for the Castillo family. By 1940 Lola's sons had either been arrested and sentenced to imprisonment for up to thirty years or they had fled to Mexico or, like my father, to England, while her daughters had been evicted from the family home. Lola herself was executed by firing squad on 1 March 1940 after almost a year's incarceration. As discussed in the previous chapter, she had had ample opportunity to escape her arrest, but decided to stay with her daughters in Jaén, believing that, as she had no blood on her hands, she had done nothing wrong. The events of 1936-1940 are undoubtedly the most traumatic in the history of the family, just as they are for Spain more broadly. Yet, as is typical among many Spaniards, there is a reluctance to speak of the past. My aim in this conclusion is twofold: to reflect on why Lola was executed, when others were spared; and to consider the factors that have hindered her memorialisation. As has been argued throughout this thesis, just as Lola's life has been shaped by the transformations of women during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, both her death and how it is (dis)remembered are intricately linked to the changing place of women in post-War Spain.

With the victory of the Nationals the gains made towards women's emancipation through the 1931 Constitution and by the Second Republic were reversed. A generation of progressive female activists was exiled, executed or marginalised. High-profile political figures were quick to leave. Margarita Nelken fled to Mexico; Dolores Ibárruri to the Soviet Union; Victoria Kent to France, then Mexico before settling in the United States; and Federica Montseny resided in France until her death, returning only once to Spain in 1977. Other prominent progressive women also chose exile: Clara Campoamor lived in Switzerland through the Second World War and died there in 1973; the founder of *La Cívica* María Lejárraga lived in France, the United States, Mexico and finally

Argentina, while her co-founder María Lacrampe Iglesias was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment, but was released in 1943 and banished to the Catalan town of Manresa.

A few other women, most famously the *trece rosas rojas*, continued to struggle against the regime. Born and bred in Republican and liberal families, these thirteen women, aged from 16 to 29, did not accept that the war was over. Their efforts, however, to salvage some of the ideals of the Second Republic and to rescue some of its defenders were short-lived. They were betrayed, arrested, received summary trials *en masse* and were executed within five months of the Nationalists' victory (Fonseca).

To the new regime, all the liberalising and democratising changes which the Second Republic had introduced for women were hammer-blows to the sanctity of what they saw as true Spanish womanhood. To this end, the Franco regime was relentless in halting the social and political advances that Republican women had advocated or embodied. Abortion, contraception, divorce, secular co-education, women's enfranchisement and many other reforms affecting women were either criminalised or banned. Women found themselves once again subjugated to the will of their fathers, brothers, sons, priests and ultimately to Franco as head of the national family.

Women did have a major role to play in the realisation of Franco's new social and political order. However, it was one that involved "service and self-abnegation, not personal empowerment" (Offen 328). A "new" identity was conceived for women and it was systematically imposed - or re-imposed - on them after 1939. In "Shaping Women: National Identity through the Use of Language in Franco's Spain," Mercedes Carbayo-Abengózar argues that the regime employed "cryptic and manipulative" language "to confine women indoors," able to see the world outside only "through the curtains or from a closed window" (75). This model of female behaviour returned women to the Spain of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Spain which the Second Republic had worked so determinedly to replace. In exchange for the retreat into the seraglio, women were

rewarded with the image of themselves as "the heroines of an essentialist national metaphor: women mothers of the nation" (75).

Women's roles in the post-war years and well into the dictatorship were thus defined by the old ideals of the angel of the home and the perfect wife, as discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis. This model of feminine behaviour was inculcated through the teachings of the Catholic Church, once again the State's official supplier of conservative education, and also through the *Sección Femenina*, the most important official organisation for women in Franco's Spain. By the end of the war, the *Sección Femenina* had more than half a million members and had provided significant support for the Nationalist wounded (Payne 187). Its post-war mission was to maintain this servitude of women for a greater cause, the rebirth of Spain.

The philosophy of this organisation was designed to return women, irrespective of their talent and capability, to the home. It was a "move away from that glimpse of equality and back towards a submissive home-making role" (Preston *Doves* 282). Franco himself gave unequivocal support to the *Sección Femenina* a month after the end of the war, when he set out its mandate "to organise training of all women, to equip them for life in post-war Spain" (Richmond 8). To this end, six months "voluntary service" was obligatory for all single women up to the age of 35 (Preston *Doves* 269). The head of the organisation was Pilar Primo de Rivera, whose mission was to dignify the domestic skills and responsibilities of women, raising them to an almost sacred level, without challenging the dignity of men. To realise this aim, welfare and educational programs were developed for, and instituted in, towns and villages all over Spain.

The duties of girls, women and wives were laid out precisely in a series of posters called *Guía de la buena esposa.* The text of eleven rules was written in 1953, possibly by Pilar but certainly approved by her (Pio Moa chapter 6). They prescribed the duties to be performed in preparation for the arrival home of the busy husband, to pamper and indulge him. One *Sección Femenina* pamphlet stated "homes today are important factors in the economy […] above this, homes have to

be […] the base of unity of national integrity and the mothers in them, are responsible for raising their children, as much in knowledge and love of God as in the service of the fatherland" (Cited in Davidson n. pag.). We could perhaps add "in the service of the father." However valid such political and social justifications might have seemed to the designers of the project, it cannot be denied that the guide's main effect was to maintain the peaceful indulged life in which Spanish men had been raised by their mothers, which the emancipation and education of women had threatened and which the men could see no reason to change. Sparkles and stars surround the text and give the rhetoric a dreamlike quality which obscures the reality of domestic drudgery. The dwindling of women back into the home was inevitable, and the gains made after so much effort to emancipate them during the Second Republic were lost.

The Francoist model of acceptable female behaviour gives us some insight into the reasons that may have led to Lola's execution. In some ways, the question of why Lola, a 53-year-old grandmother, somewhat overweight with tachycardia, was executed by firing squad, while her sons – fit, active and militant – in their twenties and thirties were sentenced only to imprisonment, albeit for up to thirty years, must be considered as almost unanswerable. Nevertheless, if we compare Lola's actions to those articulated and celebrated by the *Sección Femenina* we can perhaps understand the dangerous nature of her transgression for the regime.

It is clear that women like the *trece rosas rojas* and Lola García-Negrete de Castillo had not followed the expected trajectories as *perfectas casadas* and *ángeles del hogar* that had been laid down for them centuries before and reinforced for generations by their father-confessors and other Church dignitaries. However, although Lola's actions were outwardly similar to those of the famous *trece rosas rojas*, her "crime" was different. Not only did she transgress the conservative expectations of womanly behaviour by supporting the forces of social equality and democratic justice against the inundation of reactionary self-righteous indignation during the Civil War; she did so after a lifetime of seeming conformity. As we saw in the previous chapter, from the point of view

of the Franco regime, Lola was both mad and bad; a representative of how far good Catholic women had been "corrupted" by the values of the Second Republic.

Furthermore, Lola's transgression in the eyes of the regime was exacerbated by the rhetoric of sacrificial motherhood in which her actions during the Civil War were framed. This can be seen in the filigree fan which she donated to the *Amigos de la Unión Soviética* and in her radio address, both of which were discussed in the previous chapter. The fan, as described in the article by Antonio Morales Jiménez ("Argos"), contains Lola's description of herself as "una madre de once comunistas, siete de ellos en el Frente," while in her radio speech, she emphasised her motivations as coming from "el alma de una madre que tiene en los frentes a siete hijos dispuestos a dar la vida por la redención de España única y eternal" (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 404). Lola likewise used the conservative rhetoric of motherhood to further the aims of the Republic, calling on "tú, mujer española, ejemplo universal de sublimes abnegaciones" not to fail "el triunfo definitivo de la soberanía del pueblo, la redención del trabajo y el libre desenvolvimiento de las ideas humanitarias" (403-404).

In both these texts we can identify the particular potency of the role Lola played: that of the mother who does not count the cost of her sacrifice but gives up her children to fight for the Patria with pride and the confidence that her sacrifice is only a part of a country-wide movement which would have held Spain for the Republic and moved forward into an egalitarian democratic society. In her insistence on the concept of the sacrificial mother who willingly lays her own sons on the altar of Spanish peace she is identifiable with la Pietà. Was her crime that she had misappropriated the image of "la reina del hogar [...] the Franco regime's propagandistic glorification of motherhood" (Skupa 93)? It is possible to imagine that if she had been on the side of the Nationalists and acted on its behalf, the *Sección Femenina* would have held her up as the very model of conservative motherhood. Instead, she was executed and for many years was seemingly forgotten.

The secret of Lola's fate was hidden by the family members largely it seems because of fear and ignorance. Loli Castillo Romero, only child of Federico *hijo,* was in her teens in the 1950s when the truth of her grandmother's death was blurted out by another child. As she told me, her father had been the leader of the family politically since the death of Federico *padre*. Arrested and sentenced in 1939 at thirty-five he was released in 1950, and resumed his old life as a much beloved doctor in Jaén. His devotion to his patients, his generosity of spirit, and his distinctive figure zipping around Jaén on an old Guzzi motor-bike have been memorialised in the Centro de Salud Federico del Castillo in Jaén, a thriving active modern building with many clinics and consulting rooms when I visited it in 2011. According to his daughter, he never spoke of his mother and her death (personal communication, Loli Castillo Ramirez 2015). One of the reports presented to the judge at Lola's trial charged that "la denunciada y sus hijos constituyen uno de los principales responsables de la revolución roja por su nivel intelectual y buena posición económica y su incontenible odio hacia todo lo que representa orden social y tradición" (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 401). Federico may well have carried a share of personal guilt for his mother's fate, having been so involved in her entry into political activism.

The family's reaction to Lola's death was very different from the way in which they responded to the assassination of Santiago Perera, a century before. The martyrdom and heroism of Santiago, murdered for representing a dogged liberalism in the face of entrenched *caciquismo,* had been quietly commemorated by his descendants. His death and the struggle for justice were on an heroic scale, and were celebrated in the same sublime sense of the battle of good against evil. But in the case of Federico *hijo* and his mother Lola, and of the other brothers who fled, or suffered internal exile, their battle was simply snuffed out by the enemy's ruthless repression (Sánchez Tostado 231 - 426, Cobo Romero 208 – 368, Thomas 897 – 901, Beevor *Battle* 404 – 409).

There was nothing subtle about the mechanisms of oppression which destroyed the Castillo family, and which still keeps it in grudging silence. It must be acknowledged that the general

disruption and particular horrors which the Castillo family experienced, the sudden deaths of both parents, the jailing or flight of their brothers, and the public stigmatisation of the whole family and confiscation of their home might well have persuaded the remaining daughters, Lola and María-Victoria, and even their children to remain as camouflaged as possible. The silence that descended on the experiences of Lola, her sons and daughters, was not just imposed by the Franco regime; it was also, Jo Labanyi argues, a means of protection for a new generation, concealing from them that they were "hijos de rojos." It was thus "a strategy for survival" ("Languages" 24). To remain silent was to avoid the painful re-living of those events.

This strategy is still evident today. When I made known my intentions to learn more about Lola the family was transparently opaque. "We won't stop you but we won't help you," I was told in 2014. The trauma of the Civil War and the Franco regime is still keenly felt today. This is the silence of the grandchildren, which Labanyi notes "is a subject urgently requiring future research" (25).

As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, the question of remembering the past and honouring the victims of the Civil War and Franco dictatorships has been hotly debated since the late 1990s until the passing of the so-called Law of Historical Memory in 2007. During this time there has undoubtedly been a push to understand the past, to give names and faces to what are at times abstract debates. The work of the historians, academics, journalists, and writers, from Spain and other countries, has been and continues to be vitally important in the process of enlightenment, bringing an end to the long silence that has plagued Spain.

An important part of this memorialisation process has been the recognition of the experiences of women during the Civil War and under the Franco regime. Attention has naturally gravitated to the heroic martyrdom of women like the *trece rosas rojas*, in whose name a foundation was established in 2005 so that – in the words of Julia Conesa, one of the thirteen young women – "mi nombre no se borre de la historia" (Fonseca 24).

Lola's life too has received official recognition. In honour of her role as president of the local Anti-fascist women's organisation, the Jaén office of the Spanish Communist Party is named "Dolores La Bella" and its Homepage includes a biography and a photograph of her[21] (http://www.nodo50.org/pcej/). (Sánchez Tostado *Guerra* 399). Lola's name is also engraved in the memorial monument in the San Eufrasio cemetery and she is remembered on the walls of one street named after her in the Jaén barrio of San Ildefonso. While important, names do not tell the broader story of who she was and what she did and why she died.

My aim in this thesis has been to understand the factors that led to this middle-class doctor's widow being tried and executed for military rebellion. I have done so by framing her life within the broader transformations that Spanish women had experienced from the nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries. As I have argued throughout the thesis, these changes to acceptable social roles for women made possible her active public role in defence of the Second Republic during the Spanish Civil War. This process has not been without its difficulties. As is typical with women's history, there is a lack of written documents that can help to make sense of her life. There are second- and third-hand memories, the official court records of her trial and, most importantly, the transcript of her radio broadcast through which we can hear Lola's faint voice.

Remembering Dolores – Lola – requires one to overcome the complex layers of emotion, politics, time, ignorance and deliberate concealment. Complicating the memories of Emilio Silva, as he recalled in his interview with Labanyi, as for so many others, was the shame of his own ignorance and the painful memories of his grandmother (Labanyi "Entrevista" 144). There was also the guilt associated with the *borradura*, the more painful *raspadura*, which denied the lost loved ones their honest place in the family's memories, or, as explained by the forensic anthropologist Francisco Etxeberria, "at having done nothing to alleviate [their] parents' suffering" (Labanyi "Languages" 25). The letters written by the *trece rosas rojas* in their last hours to their families were

[21] The current webpage shows a photograph of a young woman who is not Dolores. A request to correct this mistake has been made to the branch office.

all the families had to hold onto. Their efforts to save and keep the letters for seventy years so that eventually they would become witness to the families' resilience and love is remarkable, given the wholesale purging which went on in those years, the dislocation of the Republican families and the many years of silence during which these papers were secretly treasured.

In Lola's case any letters she might have written to her children in her last hours have not survived. The only document to reach us from that time is that short letter written by her two girls, Dolores and Carmen, to their brother José-Luis in April 1939. That it found him eventually in London is a credit to the Red Cross tracing service of that time, and that I found it is a credit to the care with which he preserved it until his death in 1996.

The Instituto de la Mujer, the Biblioteca de Mujeres and the *Tesauro de Mujeres*, published in 2014, are the results of years of work by Spanish feminists like Marisa Mediavilla Herreros to restore women to the place they were approaching in the Second Republic. They represent a work of optimism focused on the future, and is on-going, supported by the government. To establish museums or places of memory simply to acknowledge that within those anguished years there is a story, in fact, countless stories to be told, through documents, letters, photographs, is more problematic. As Labanyi suggests, in order to understand how the people feel about, and are trying to come to terms with, their country's violent past "we need to look at what citizens' groups and institutions are doing [...] (in the case of institutions – specifically museums – it is largely a matter of what is not being done but could be)"("Politics" 120). It seems that the establishment of a museum to commemorate the Second Republic and the Civil War is not of great importance to the Spanish people. Even in Barcelona, that most independent of Spanish cities and most committed to the revolution, amongst its fifty museums there is not one which deals with that significant time in its history (Burgen n. pag.).

The work of the historians, academics, journalists, and writers, from Spain and other countries, is vitally important in the process of enlightenment, exposing the crimes, the pain, the

shame, and the long silence, which is neither deliberate "forgetting" nor the result of psychological trauma but a deliberate practical choice. This long silence could have grown out of fear of further retribution, or a political evasion of responsibility and an admission of inadequacy. Labanyi argues in "The languages of silence" that silence itself can "represent a form of witnessing and commitment" (23). Silence was a protection for a new generation, concealing from them that they were "hijos de rojos" and silence was chosen "as a strategy". It is also possible that the choice to remain silent was made to avoid the painful re-living of those events, "a strategy for survival" (24).

Ultimately there can be no tidy resolution of the enduring questions around Lola's story. The most bitter of these is why she, middle-aged and ill, was executed when so many others, like her sons, more culpable than she, more likely to be active in the future, were condemned only to imprisonment? Was it personal vindictiveness against her, for something as trivial as the "mobiliario robado" discussed in chapter 4? Was it criminal negligence by the military tribunals, under a ghastly pressure to get the job done, which condemned her, like many thousands of other men and women, to death *en masse*? Or is it, as I would contend, the threat to Franco's New Spain posed by a woman who embodied all the traditional Nationalist virtues as self-sacrificing wife and mother but who chose to put her status of mother at the service of the ideals of the Republic.

By asking questions, appearing in their lives, even for a few short weeks, I have perhaps raised some questions for Lola's family in spite of their refusal to participate in the unearthing of the story. I have had some revealing letters from my aunt María, and my two cousins Loli and María-José which helped me to put some personal warmth into the story. I have had hospitality and a tantalising glimpse of the inner workings of the family from my cousin Federico, "I know what my parents and the uncles felt and they would never talk of it." From the outermost edge of the family I only have an obscured and distant view of the family's story, but with this thesis I have raised the possibility of restoring Lola and her story to the family's memories of their antecedents and placing Lola's memory alongside that of her revered relative Santiago.

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APPENDIX A

Dolores ‘Lola’ Garcia-Negrete Ruiz Zarco, born in Alcalá la Real, Spain, in April 1886. Her father Carlos Garcia-Negrete Parera had been the left wing mayor of Castillo de Locubín in 1873 at the time of the street violence which accompanied the First Republic of Spain. When she was born thirteen years later he had retired from politics and become a school master.

Federico Castillo Estremera and his bride, Lola, on their wedding day in April 1905. He has a cigarette “cosido a sus dedos” and would die of throat cancer in 1936 at the age of 60.

Fifteen years later, Lola and Federico with twelve of their children. José-Luis is seated in the middle of the picture.

Federico Parera Castillo – Freddie – cousin of José-Luis Castillo Garcia-Negrete and diarist of the events of the declaration of the Second Spanish Republic 1931.

Lola in middle age.

During the Civil War Lola organized numerous lotteries, raffles, auctions and charity sales to raise funds for the SRI. It is possible to distinguish "SRI – Jaén" on the armband of one of the women (Sánchez Tostado personal correspondence 19-07-2011.) Lola does not appear in the picture. Perhaps she took it.

Reading anti-clockwise from arrowed image:
Federico born 1905; Carlos 1907; Manuel 1908; Pablo 1910; Fernández 1911; José-Luis 1914; Dolores 1916; Salvador 1919; Mercedes 1922; Carmen 1924; twins Francisco and Juan de Dios 1923. Central panel: Dolores García-Negrete; Federico Castillo Estremera; María-Victoria born 1926. Another son, Joaquin, was born in 1929 and died of meningitis in 1931. Juan de Dios died in 1932, and Mercedes died in 1936, around the time of the death of their father. These dates are from the 1931diaries of Freddie and the 1985 letter to the family of José-Luis. They do not entirely agree.

APPENDIX B

PARERA CASTILLO FAMILY TREE
With acknowledgements to Moisés Gallardo Pulido