

SPAIN

Two members of EAAF traveled to Spain on three separate occasions to advise the human rights organization, The Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory (ARMH) (*Asociación Para la Recuperación de la Memoria Historica*) on the forensic investigation of mass graves from the Spanish civil war and the General Franco era. They also participated in related conferences.

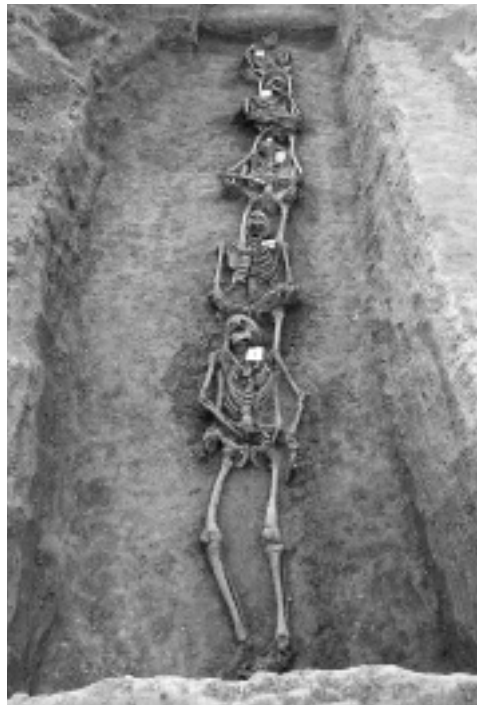
BACKGROUND

The Spanish Civil War was fought between Nationalist and Republican forces from 1936 to 1939. The Republicans fought on the side of the Popular Front government, which was in power in Spain at the time. The Nationalist forces were led by General Francisco Franco.

Once the Nationalists defeated the Republican forces, Franco led Spain during a 36-year military dictatorship. Those who died fighting for the Nationalists were given funerals and honored with monuments, while approximately 30,000 that died fighting for the Republicans were left in unmarked mass graves spread throughout the country.¹ In recent investigations, historians estimate that up to 130,000 Republican sympathizers were also executed during the dictatorship.² Numerous others were reportedly imprisoned or exiled, including 5,950 prisoners who were sent to the notorious Castuera concentration camp, where survivors have testified of mass executions. The number of deaths in this camp is unknown.³

During Spain's transition to democracy in 1977, two years after Franco's death, the main political groups agreed to avoid using the Civil War as an issue for political or ideological disagreements. While proponents of the policy referred to it as the "pact of reconciliation," those who felt the past should be investigated called it the "pact of silence." The policy included an official general amnesty that prohibited appeals for justice for the human rights abuses that occurred during Franco's rule.⁴

The Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory (ARMH) (*Asociación Para la Recuperación de la Memoria Historica*), a Spanish nonprofit established in 2000 by the United Left party, has been trying to build public support to investigate abuses that occurred during the Franco era. Much of their work includes identifying and exhuming mass graves from the Civil War, with the goal of returning the remains to family members.⁵



Human remains found in a mass grave in Berlangas de Roa. Photo courtesy of Javier Ortiz, ARMH.

The ARMH's first exhumation took place in October 2000, when a team of volunteer archaeologists exhumed a grave containing the remains of thirteen civilians who were reportedly murdered in 1936

EAAF 2005 ANNUAL REPORT • 139

by an armed group acting under Franco's orders. As of May 2003, twenty-six mass graves reportedly had been found,⁶ and a reported 570 cadavers have been exhumed in the regions of Castilla-Leon, Basque Country, Castilla-La Mancha, Asturias, Cantabria, Galicia, Extremadura, Andalucía and Cataluña.⁷

The ARMH estimates that there are approximately 600 mass graves scattered throughout Spain of up to 30,000 people who were not properly buried. According to ARMH, some of the mass graves may contain up to 3,000 people.⁸ Reportedly, the location of the remains is difficult to determine because of the way the repression occurred. Typically, civilians were murdered during *paseos* ("outings") in the middle of night by Franco supporters who came to their homes and kidnapped them.⁹ These killings often took place in outskirts of small villages, and in many cases the perpetrators knew the victims.

Spanish Judge Baltasar Garzón, well-known for his efforts to prosecute Pinochet and former junta members from Argentina, has called for the establishment of a truth commission to investigate human rights violations committed during Franco's dictatorship.¹⁰ In addition, elected in March 2004, Prime Minister José Luis Zapatero of the Socialist Worker's Party, whose grandfather died fighting for the Republicans during the civil war, established a commission to investigate human rights abuses during this period and to explore the possibility of setting up a truth commission.¹¹ This is a marked change from the policies of previous administrations, which did not investigate this period.¹² The public has also reflected this increased interest in investigating the past. In June 2004, hundreds of people gathered at one of the civil war battlefields to remember those who died during the civil war, and to call for the exhumation of the mass graves.¹³



A skeleton found in a grave site in Valdedios at the request of the ARMH shows possible evidence of a bullet wound in the cranium. The skeleton will be removed from the site for a laboratory analysis before any confirmation of cause or manner of death can be made. Photo courtesy of the ARMH.

COMPLETED EXHUMATIONS OF GRAVES FROM THE CIVIL WAR IN SPAIN

Year	Location	Province	Month	Exhumation Team Leader	No. Individuals
2000	Priaranza del Bierzo	León	October	Julio Vidal	13
2001	Fresnedo	León	September	Julio Vidal	4
2002	Piedrafita de Babia	León	July	M.L. González	7
	Cabañas de la Dornilla I	León	July	Jesús Tapia	2
	Cabañas de la Dornilla II	León	July	Jesús Tapia	3
	S. Pedro de Olleros	León	July	Jesús Tapia	2
	Onamio	León	July	V.Carlon - M.L. González	1
	Caleruega	Burgos	September	M.L. González	4
	Candeleda	Avila	October	Javier Ortiz-J. Jiménez	3
	Meneses de Campos	Palencia	October	Julio del Olmo y Carlos Sanz	9
	Zaldibia	Gipuzkoa	September	Jesús Tapia	2
	Arrasate	Gipuzkoa	October	Fco. Etxeberria	2
	Nava del Rey	Valladolid	December	Julio del Olmo	3
2003	Nava del Rey	Valladolid	February	Julio del Olmo	2
	Palacios de Goda	Valladolid	February	Julio del Olmo	8
	El Bohodón	Avila	February	Julio del Olmo	1
	Aranda	Burgos	May	J.M. Carretero	81
	Lomas	Palencia	April	Julio del Olmo	3
	Trigueros del Valle	Valladolid	May	Julio del Olmo	2
	Recas	Toledo	May	V. Carlón-M.Luz González	7
	Puente Compasquillo	Valladolid	June	Julio del Olmo	19
	Cabañaquinta	Asturias	June	J.A.Gutiérrez	2
	Otero de los Herreros	Segovia	June-July	M. Contreras	5
	La Horra I	Burgos	July	Jimi Jimenez	6
	La Horra II	Burgos	July	Jaime Nuño	6
	La Horra III	Burgos	July	Jaime Nuño	10
	Valdediós	Asturias	July	Javier Ortiz	17
	Pardamaza	León	July	V. Carlón-M.Luz González	2
	Vadocondes I	Burgos	August	Julio del Olmo	3
	Olmedillo de Roa	Burgos	August	L. Herrasti	8
	Velilla	Valladolid	August	J. del Olmo	3
	Pepino	Toledo	August		12
	Ricosende	Ourense	September	J. Jiménez-Javier Ortiz	1
	Villager de Laciana	León	September	Mª Luz Gonzalez	1
	Gordadiza del Pino	León	October	J. Jiménez-Javier Ortiz	2
	Alburquerque	Badajoz	October	M.Casado - D.Peral	15
	Vadocondes II	Burgos	October	Fco. Etxeberria	6
	Aldeaseca	Avila	October	Julio del Olmo	7
	Boecillo	Valladolid	November	Julio del Olmo	2
	Ampudia	Palencia	November	Julio del Olmo	9
	Andoain	Gipuzkoa	November	Fco. Etxeberria	1
	Boecillo	Valladolid	December	Julio del Olmo	2
2004	Ampudia	Palencia	January	Julio del Olmo	3
	Quintanilla de Abajo		March	Julio del Olmo	7
	El Bosque	Cádiz	April		13
	Paredes de Nava	Palencia	May	Julio del Olmo	
	Guaza de Campos	Palencia	May	Julio del Olmo	9
	Elgeta	Gipuzkoa	June	Jesús Tapia - Jimi Jimenez	9
	La Guijarrosa	Córdoba	June	foro	17
	Santaella	Córdoba	June	foro	5
	Osuna	Calalunya	June	Joseph Arimany	7
	Benegiles	Zamora	July	Javier Ortiz	3
	Villamayor	Burgos	July	Angel Fuentes	45
	Melke	Segovia	July	Julio del Olmo	5
	La Lobera	Burgos	August	Ignacio Fernández	50
	Arnado	León	August	V. Carlón-M.Luz González	3
	Piedrafita	León	August	Germán Delibes	
	Uclés	Cuenca	August	Angel Fuentes	1
	Baltanás	Palencia	September	Julio del Olmo	17
	Sobrado	León	September	Javier Ortiz	1
	Berlangas de Roa	Burgos	October	Lourdes Herrasti Jimi Jiménez	5
	Roa	Burgos	October	Lourdes Herrasti	6
	Mutriku	Gipuzkoa	October	Lourdes Herrasti	1
2005	Villasana de Mena	Burgos	May	Javier Ortiz	8

Table by Javier Ortiz, ARMH.



A mass grave site in Valdedios under excavation at the request of the ARMH. *Photo courtesy of the ARMH.*

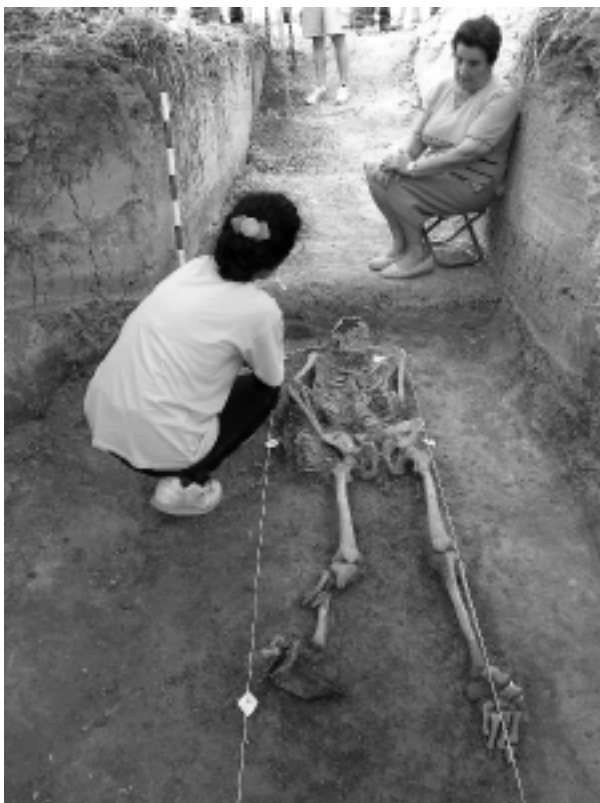
Academic and Advisory Activities

In 2004, EAAF members Luis Fondebrider and Patricia Bernardi traveled to Spain separately on three occasions. In May, Fondebrider participated in the conference, “Forensic Anthropology in actual reality: Disappearances, violations of human rights, terrorism and mass catastrophes,” organized by the Canary Bio-anthropology Institute, Autonomous Organism of Museums and Centers — Cabildo de Tenerife and the Archeological Museum of Tenerife. Approximately 60 members from the Spanish security forces and forensic experts attended the sessions. Presentations included Forensic Archaeology and Anthropology, Forensic Odontology, Mass Disasters, Pathologies in Bones and Lessons from the investigation of human rights cases in Argentina and Guatemala.

EAAF was first contacted by the ARMH in 2003 for advice on its work in Spain. The ARMH thought the

Latin American experience with independent forensic teams working on the investigation of human rights abuses was worth exploring.

Fondebrider’s second visit was to Madrid in September 2004 to continue advising the ARMH on their exhumations of graves from the civil war era and to participate in a colloquium, “What to do with Memory? Reflections for the Inter-ministry Commission for the Recovery of Historical Memory,” organized by the ARMH. Other participants included Jose Antonio Martin Pallin, magistrate for the Supreme Tribunal, Monserrat Sans, a lawyer representing the ARMH in the Working Group on Forced Disappearances in the United Nations, and Dr. Francisco Echeverria, forensic doctor and professor at the University of Basque Country who has participated in numerous exhumations from the civil war in Spain. During this trip, Fondebrider also met with the President of the ARMH, Emilio Silva, to discuss how EAAF could support their work.



A relative of a disappeared person at an excavation site in Berlangas de Roa. Photo courtesy of Javier Ortiz, ARMH.

In November 2004, team member Patricia Bernardi was invited by forensic doctor Manuel Polo and the municipality of Valencia to speak at the “Third Forum Valldigna for the Mediterranean” in Valencia. The round table was organized to discuss Spain’s investigation of its past including cases from the civil war and similar cases. Bernardi participated in the forum, *Identity and Patrimony: In Search of the Future Plenary Session: Archaeology, Anthropology and Forensic Sciences: A Forum for Understanding*, and made a presentation on archaeology and human rights. Dr. Francisco Echeverria made a presentation on archaeology and forensic anthropology related to the Spanish civil war.

ENDNOTES

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4. Valls, Rafael. “The Civil War and Franco Dictatorship in Spanish Secondary School History Textbooks” Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs. www.cceia.org/page.php/prmID/200.
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