

The Intergenerational Transmission of Memory: The Legacies of Spanish Republican Exile

Description of the proposed study:

The study focuses on the communication of memory among the first, second and third generations of Spanish exiles in Mexico, United Kingdom and France. The loss of home, the separation from relatives and friends, or simply the disappearance of a sense of belonging to a community and of feeling safe in the world, was transmitted to the children in a series of everyday gestures and rituals that were part of family language and life.

Thus, a series of powerful internal images emerged as emanations of the exiled parents' experiences, which in turn were treasured by the children to the extent that they came to constitute their own repository or personal archive. Many of these images were based on the telling of stories repeated so many times at home by parents and close relatives; others came from family photo albums and the rest were images provided in the schools that were founded and maintained by Spanish exiles, particularly in Mexico, a prolific arsenal of knowledge, traditions and customs which facilitated the emergence of a strong feeling of nostalgia for the lost homeland.

To this end, the project explores the role of family storytelling, photography, and material objects in the process of transmitting this memory: these mechanisms prompt acts of recognition and self-discovery that are part of a conflicting search for identity.

Principal Investigator

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<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/languages/jato-monica.aspx>

How to participate?

If you would like to participate in this project by contributing with your own testimony, email me at the following address: m.jato@bham.ac.uk