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*Chapter*

## **WOMEN'S PROFILES: FIRST GENERATION OF SPANISH CIVIL WAR REPUBLICAN EXILES WHO RETURNED TO SPAIN**

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## ABSTRACT

The Spanish Civil War displaced half a million people outside of Spain and exiled more than two hundred thousands across the world, concentrating them into refugee communities in France, Mexico, Argentina and the Soviet Union, among others. In the field of Spanish diaspora studies, much of the research has focused on the exiled acculturation experience, and to a lesser degree, the repatriation back to Spain. Exceedingly, the gender-based research has focused on the individual woman and her specific narrative. We endeavored to broaden this by categorizing the women's repatriation experience through grouping them by their country of exile and comparing their collective returns. We created two databases, the first contained exile individuals found in literary mediums, while the second was generated via an online questionnaire, filled out by descendants of exiles. In total, we aggregated 100 women; 83 in the former and 17 in the latter database. We selected the top four countries of exile, accounting for 80% of individuals, and analyzed the migratory and social-political data points. We concluded that the French and Mexican profiles were more representative of their historic exile populations than the Soviet Union and Argentinian ones.

**Keywords:** women, Spanish Civil War, Republican exile, refugees

## INTRODUCTION

The Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) uprooted more than half a million Spaniards into neighboring countries—the vast majority into France. A quarter of the exiles were women and children (Moreno and Ortuño 2013, 168). Within a year of departing Spain, in 1939, more than half had returned on their own or were forcibly repatriated by the French government (Soo 2014, 17). For the two hundred thousand that remained in exile, the diaspora experience would last decades. These women would become the first-generation of peninsula-born exiles who were directly displaced by the warfare and its post-war aftermath. An unknown number would eventually return to Spain, either to visit or to resettle permanently. On average, this return trajectory lasted 27 years; almost three decades uprooted from Spain and its culture (Escobar 2019, 22). Upon their return,

the women encountered a new and foreign Spanish society and government; one that was often hostile to them (Richards 2002, 97).

While the study of the Spanish diaspora is well-established, the return phase or ending of the exile period is not so well investigated. The general study of exiled Spanish women has primarily focused on their overall experience in the receiving countries, and their acculturation or the lack-there-of in them (Alted 2008, 61). Additionally, the repatriation to Spain was seen as the end to the refugee period. However, in the last two decades, the study of Spanish exiles has extended beyond the homecoming aspect and into the re-adapting experience of the individual (de Hoyos Puente 2017, 294, 299). As the Spanish-Mexican philosopher exile Adolfo Sanchez Vázquez stated in his 1951–1952 sonnet, *Uprooted corpse* (Desterrado Muerto), the exile does not end with the “return”; noting that the exile experience, prolonged through the passage of time, strands the individual in a “no-man’s land,” even when returning to one’s country of origin (Jorge Alonso and González 2017, 3).

This shift in focus, from exile to homecoming, was notably defined by Josefina Bustillo Cuestas and Alicia Alted Vigil, respectively, who established the return aspect of the diaspora as its own field (Bustillo 1999; Alted 1999). Returning to one’s own “home country” was no longer considered the end of the exile, but a continuation of the same experience. Other perspectives soon emerged: For example, the focus on the return experience of the children of war (González Martínez 2003), while others focused on categorizing the various types of returnees among exiles (Escobar 2019; Pozo-Guiterrez 2010). Further still are the individual women’s experiences regarding the exile understanding and to an extent their individual returns (Díaz Silva 2016; Munera Sánchez 2006). Although much has been done in the field, it is still an emerging one that lacks a coherent broad overview of the return experiences of women en masse; in part because documentation of women’s returns did not exist (documents were often in the husband’s name) or because individual returns were simply not noted for posterity (Bocanegra Barbecho 2015, 64; Alted 2008, 61).

Our objective is thus twofold. First it is our goal to introduce a broad gender perspectives on the homecoming aspect of these exiles to generate a starting point for future analysis of individual returnee women vis-à-vis their country of exile. Building upon Lidia Bocanegra Barbecho expansive online return analysis, we have set out to further analyze the timespan from 1936 to the present (Bocanegra and Toscano 2016, 242-244). We believe that such a wide-ranging overview and focus across the various decades following the end of the civil war requires a continuous revision. In order to accomplished this, we set out to distinguish both the key commonalities and differences among the exiled women with respect to the receiving country of exile. Using their quantifiable data, as well as their personal stories, we aggregated a general profile of the various types of returnees for the top four refugee receiving countries in our database. Lastly, we chose an individual woman that closely matched the general overview of their profile group to embody and add context to the general profile. We also profiled an individual from the RD-SN database so that their narrative becomes part of the historical and collective memory of returnee women.

## METHODOLOGY

### Databases

In order to identify and group the various individual female exiled Spanish returnees, two databases were designed and created. The data in the first database, the Returnee Data in Literary studies (RS-LS), is composed from records of exiled individuals mentioned by other researchers in the field, and whose work or subject has been published in various literary mediums (journals, newspapers, magazines, books, etc.). We then verified and cross referenced the data via supplemental records (primarily online), and entered all information manually. This database further includes the data found in the Exiliad@s Project, a crowdsourced online database (Bocanegra 2019). The second database was created from an online Google questionnaire that was publicized in exiled social

networks on Facebook and Twitter, directed at the descendants of exiled individuals that resulted in the Returnee Data in Social Networks (RD-SN). This database includes the data from the survey responses, and was lightly curated for accuracy and to eliminate redundancy. It is also a good case study for how the internet questionnaires can be used to distribute information, and to engage citizen participation to bring to light untold stories, while generating historical perspectives in the process.

We then divided the research period for our investigation (which spans decades) into two manageable chunks: the first spanned the years of Francisco Franco's dictatorship (1939–1975), and the second, the years after his death (1976–present). These help us to delineate the various returns and contextualize the different historical events around them. For instance, if the return took place during the rule of Franco, it meant a greater cost to the individual in terms of time, money and challenges navigating the bureaucracy prior to returning to Spain (Rickett 2015, 123). Although there is merit in further subdividing Franco's tenure into his first rule (1939-1959) and second rule (1960-1975), we felt it would add a needless layer of complexity to the general profile overview of the women (Alted 2001, 61).

To streamline queries and percentages while minimizing errors, we combined both datasets into one. This was facilitated by the fact that both were designed with the individual return experience in mind and thus contained similar data fields and content. In total, both databases contain the individual data points for 231 returnees. Males were then filtered out leaving 114 women; 100 first-generation and 14 second-generation returnees. The latter group was also filtered out leaving only the former.

We then further subdivided the data-fields into two types of information: quantifiable and subjective data. The former was specific to the timeframes of the exile, duration and subsequent repatriation or return year. The latter information was composed of particular data such as birth city; resettlement region or town (therein referred to as city); marriage status; educational background and reason for returning. Of note, subjective information could be incomplete or missing if the individual did not share them with us or could not be correlated elsewhere. Hence, only

the two largest available data percentages are included for this type of data. To illustrate, the status of marriage may only total 50% of the individuals, including those that were not married; hence, the other 50% was unknown. Lastly, we also included information like the level of education of the individual, which was subsequently separated into either a basic level or a post-secondary schooling, implying university or other specialized learning.

To finalize the group profile, we chose an individual woman from the RD-SN database, whose information had been authorized to share and best exemplified the profile group. In this way, we hoped to add another exiled individual story and experience to the general collective of known returnees and to the historical memory.

There were, however, two parameters that were not included in our analyses. First, we did not account for the type of return of these individual women: they could have been involuntary returns, clandestine, dead returns (the repatriation of remains) and so on (Escobar 2019, 25; Soo 2014, 13;). We felt that adding such parameters would further complicate the broad group profiles. However, two such classification were used in context (failed and political), to facilitate the group's description.

The second parameter that was not included, and which is a limitation in our survey, is a failure to take into account whether the exiled women had returned with their children; and if so, their children's age. Having children, young or adult, would have provided a deeper interpretation of the sacrifices undergone in the return process and explained the various decisions made once in Spain, i.e., work or resettlement city (Bahr 2001, 1241). This information was only indirectly captured for some women, and ultimately, we felt the data was insufficient for analysis.

## **Countries**

We focused on the top four Spanish refugee receiving countries: The Soviet Union or United Socialist Soviet Republic (USSR), Mexico, France and Argentina (Rickett 2015; Pla 1994). These four countries amounted to

80% of the returns in our databases. We then ranked the profile groups by the number of returns and years in exile. For comparison purposes, we also paired them. The first pairing was the USSR and Mexico, which happened to be the chosen or ideal receiving countries for many politically-minded Republican and Communist refugees alike (Young 2014, 396). Together, these two countries accounted for 51% of the documented women in our database.

The USSR, Mexico and Argentina also have the distinction of being the only countries that officially helped the Spanish Republic during the Civil War (Bocanegra 2014, 30; Mejia Gonzalez 1986, 42-43). Once the fighting ended, both the USSR and Mexico broke diplomatic relations with the then new Franco Government, maintaining unofficial channels via their French consulates in Paris and only officially reestablish diplomatic relations two years after Franco's death in 1977 respectively (Garrido Caballero 2008, 413). In terms of returns, they were the only two countries that did not repatriate the Spanish children of war in the postwar period (Qualls 2014, 24; Garrido 2012, 244). These two countries are thus unique in how they managed refugee populations, and on a broader level, add a point of distinction as compared to other receiving countries and their exiled population.

The second pairing, to contrast the individual countries, was of France and Argentina. Due to its proximity to Spain, France was the default country of exile while Argentina was a chosen, and perhaps, the ideal country for the women that emigrated there due to cultural and / or family ties. In France, many of the refugees were at an impasse, unable to return to Spain, they could either stay in the concentration camps or join forced labor groups (Guilhem 2005;17). Argentina, due to its distance, required a greater social and monetary means (Martínes 2011, 7).

## **Terms**

There are many terms used to describe the different phases of the Spanish refugee experience—including the bellicose period, the exile

period and the return phase. We wanted to define our uses of these terms and how they apply to the individual returnees and their countries of exile. First, the term “repatriation” refers to individuals that were forced to repatriate or sought assistance to do so, lacking the mechanisms to do it themselves (Richmond 1993, 4). “Returnee” classifies those individuals that repatriated back to Spain on their own accord and means. Similarly, an “exile” is not an economic immigrant. The latter which is not addressed in this paper at all. We use the terms “exiled” and “refugee” synonymously for readability.

The next term is “child of war.” In the Spanish Civil War context, it defines those children that were sent outside of Spain en masse without their parents. It is estimated that 33,000 unaccompanied minors were sent to other countries for their protection (Alted 2003, 4). Most children of war were repatriated back to Spain at the request of the Franco government during the post-war period (Garrido 2012, 253; González Martínez 2003, 76).

There are also other more obvious terms. For example, the receiving country is one that accepted refugees. We also discuss the default country of exile, where people had no choice but be exiled into due to having no other option. Neighboring countries such as Portugal, France, Andorra or even Morocco are all examples of default countries of exile for the Spanish refugees. However, if the refugee had the means to do otherwise, they would move from the default country of exile (now a transitional country), to a second or possibly a third exile nation until reaching their chosen or desired country (De Haas 2007, 45). These transitions could last from months to years and it is only now that we can use such terms. For the individual exiles, they could not foresee the trajectory of their expatriation nor the duration of it. This was especially the case for the children of war in the USSR. They did not have the agency nor say in their displacement. Furthermore, they were educated to see the USSR not as their chosen or transitional country but rather something akin to a home base (Aguirre Herráinz 2015, 130; Qualls 2014, 3). They, along with the entirety of the Spanish exiles around the world, unknowingly thought their exodus would only last a short period of time.



**RESULTS****Table 1. Women's averages for USSR and Mexico profiles**

USSR 26%	timeframe	Mexico 25%
1927	Year of birth	1914
9	Age at exile	26
1937	Year of exile	1939
39	Years in exile	31
45	Age at return	60
1976	Year of return	1969

**USSR**

At 26%, the USSR average profile is the most numerous in our database. It is the most homogeneous and yet the least indicative of the overall exiled experience per the receiving country. According to Dolores Pla Brugat, six thousand individuals took refuge in the USSR (Pla 2002, 104). Of these, 2,895 were children of war (González 2003, 76). In our database, of those who fled to the USSR, only two individuals were adults at the time of their exile, while the rest were children of war. For this reason, this profile group is more indicative of the children of war than of the overall exiled group. Thus, when averaging the group's quantifiable data, they are unlike the other profile groups. On average, members of this group were born in 1927. Ten years later, in 1937, the average age of exile to the USSR would be 9 years old. They would then go on to live the longest period of exile as compared to other groups, spending 39 years

outside of Spain and returning at the age of 45 in 1976. As a general rule, all Soviet children of war that wanted it had free access to university education; and 40% of them took advantage of it (Alted 2002, 149). However, our database only captured 19% as having a post-secondary education. Likewise, our data established that 27% eventually got married—a low number considering that typically more than 80% of the Russian population was married by the age of 30 (Scherbov 2004, 33). This is partially explained by Franco's policy of denying repatriation to Spanish women married to Russian men (González 2003, 85). For this reason, we believe our database group is not as representative of the general population of exiles.

As for their return timelines, no other profile group had such a clear split with regard to their return patterns. Firstly, 27% of these women repatriated during Franco's rule in a specific state-run repatriation program that lasted four years, from 1956–1959 (González 2003, 81). However and for this period, all the Soviet-Spanish returnees in our database arrived in 1956 and 1957. There were no other returns from this group until after Franco's passing, after which 42% returned on their own accord, starting from 1980. Because there is such a stark contrast between these two groups of Soviet-Spanish women, we felt it best to describe them separately as it highlights the exclusive circumstances of the children of war.

The women who returned from the USSR to Spain during the late 50s state sponsored repatriation were only able to leave after the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953 and the release of Spanish military prisoners (Lordache Cârstea 2019, 49). In its restructuring, the USSR in 1955 also voted for the inclusion of Spain in the United Nations' 109 resolution (Soo, 2014, 20; Alted 2003, 10). This allowed for both countries to repatriate the children of war—the first two voyages of which were captured by our database. The average age of the women who returned during these two years was 29 years old, and 50% of them were married to Spanish males (González 2003, 84-85). When surveying their reasoning for returning, 50% alluded to family motives; indicating either familial connection, the reestablishing of family connections, or their need to rebuild them. Thus, it comes as no surprise that the majority (84%) resettled in their city of

origin, presumably where their families still lived. However, Spain's economy was only then transitioning to an open market and only 17% worked (Powell 2015, 5; Aguirre 2015, 132). Subsequently, and perhaps due to the inability to find employment, having estranged familial ties or the continual government surveillance, the majority (83%) ultimately returned to the USSR within a year of their arrival. Many individuals would later move to Cuba or Mexico, and ultimately back Spain once more when the USSR dissolved (Young 2014, 396). Their original 1950s repatriation would be classified by scholars studying the Spanish refugee experience as a Failed return, for they did not adjust nor integrate back to Spanish society (Escobar 2019, 25; Pozo-Gutierrez 2010, 6). This academic classification would not necessarily have been seen the same way by the individuals refugees themselves, for in many of their accounts, they refer to their repatriation in 1956 as an educational experience (González 2003,84; Arce 2002, 224,228).

For the latter group, the 42% that returned after Franco's death, the data is inconsistent. At an average age of 59 years old, 60% of the women returned for political reasons while 16% for familial ones. This would dictate that a larger percentage of these women would move to larger cities rather than returning to their original ones. However, 10% resettled in larger cities and 15% in their original ones. It is evident that many of these women did not have their resettlement data accounted for and thus cannot be correlated with their reasoning for returning. However, it presents the first contradiction to the pattern affirming that the longer the exile period, the lesser the probability that a refugee will end up returning to their hometown (Escobar 2019, 27). This is because most Political Returnees moved to larger cities to affect some level of social change almost immediately after Franco's passing (Ibid). This second group of exiles started returning in 1980 and perhaps were not as politically driven as those of the previous five years.

The woman profiled as a representative of the group from the RD-SN database is Vicenta Llorente de Moral. Her information was entered by her longtime friend who had also written about Llorente de Moral previously (López 2005). Born in 1930, Llorente de Moral was only six years old

when her widowed mother sent her brother and her in the *La Habana* transport ship to France in 1937. There they were transferred to the *Sontai* ship in route to St. Petersburg. She would spend 19 years in the Soviet Union, earning her university degree in biology with a specialization in entomology. She was among the first to return when the opportunity to repatriate presented itself in 1956, wanting to reunite with her mother and sister. At 26 years old, she was unmarried and did not present a “threat” to the Spanish government (González 2003, 85). Notably, her undergraduate degree was recognized, and she was allowed to enroll in a doctoral program in Madrid. Thus she did not resettle back in her native Algorta, and proceeded to work as an entomologist till her retirement.

## **Mexico**

The Mexican profile group of women is the second largest representing 25% of data our database profiles. Mexico also received the second highest number of Spanish refugees, estimated at 20,000 exiles (Fagen 2014, 37). The majority of the refugees in our profile, representing 84%, moved directly from France to Mexico. Mexico was the country of choice due to the welcoming social-political conditions of the time: it imposed no professional or ideological prerequisites on exiles, and allowed them the freedom to work and even, eventually, to become Mexican citizens (Hilmardel Pliego-Moreno 2006, 213, 225, 233, 263). Additionally, the Spanish Republican Government in exile resided in Mexico pro tempore. With all these conditions, the Spanish intelligentsia in exile flourished and integrated, we can say easily, into the Mexican nation and culture.

Our database group profile is representative of the roughly 20,000 Spanish exile population in Mexico, and Mexico-bound Spanish exiles tended to be the most well off vis-à-vis the other profiles. The average woman in this group was exiled in 1939 at the age of 26. She then spent the second-longest exile period in the receiving country, roughly 31 years, and returned in 1969 at the age of 60. This is significant because 64%

returned during Franco's rule and 28% after his death. Returning during Franco government was significantly more difficult and dangerous due to the 1939 Law of Responsibility (Soo 2014, 39). This is particularly noteworthy when considering that Mexico had no official diplomacy with Spain, and so all forms, visas and passports had to have been processed via a third party organization (Rickett 2015, 135). Citing their reason for returning, 24% of the individual women cited family motives and 16% returned for political reasonings. According to our data, this group was also comparatively well-educated, with 28% having completed post-secondary education and 12% having completed their elementary school education. Once in Spain, 36% returned to their city of origin while 12% chose larger cities; and 40%, opted not to work, while 32% would go on to find employment.

The Mexican profile group is represented by the exile Adela Zubiaurre González. Born in 1909, she was 30 years old when, in 1940, she traveled to the Dominican Republic from France. It is unknown how long she remained in Santo Domingo, then known as Trujillo City, (named after the country's then-dictator) before settling in Mexico. While we can only speculate on her individual reasons for leaving—though, the agrarian and working conditions for Spanish refugees at the time on the island forced many to leave for third countries of exile (González Tejera 2012, 57). She would spend 20 years living in Mexico, temporarily returning to Spain in 1970 at the age of 61 to visit her birthplace and family. According to her Mexican-Spanish granddaughter, Adela had a “basic” level of education and did not work beyond the realm of the house.

**Table 2. Women's averages for France and Argentina profiles**

France 25%	timeframe	Argentina 4%
1916	Year of birth	1902
24	Age at exile	41
1940	Year of exile	1939
14	Years in exile	24
41	Age at return	65
1955	Year of return	1963

## **France**

Because of how the Spanish Civil War terrestrially evolved, with the war starting in the south of the country before moving to the north, internally displaced Spanish tended to move north, and France became the default country of exile and the single largest receiver of the exodus. However, within a year after the end of the conflict, this number was halved due to forced repatriations and voluntary returns alike (Soo 2014, 35). For the more than 200,000 people that remained in exile, France would become their second home country. Their exile experiences would be governed by whichever governmental policy they found themselves living in at the time. Many in the north and south joined the French resistance, others in the south were forced into labor camps by the Vichy government, and many others in the north of France sought ways to survive Nazi concentration camps (Berdah 2008, 314).

Our database profile group is a good representation of the greater whole of the exiled female population. These Spanish refugee women have been described primarily as housewives with a basic level of education (Alted 2008, 68). However, when averaging their data, this description becomes more complicated. This group of women was on average much younger upon their returns to Spain than all the other profiled women. The average woman for this group was exiled in 1940 at the age of 24. This year is after the Civil War time and is due to the fact that 16% of these women were driven out in 1947 and 1948 respectively. As a whole, these women would average 14 years in exile, the shortest time period for all of our profiles. 88% of them returned when Spain was under Franco's period of rule, at an average of 41 years old in 1955. A further point of distinction is that 36% of them returned by 1945, when World War II had not yet finished, and were forced to deal with the full brunt of sociopolitical backlash that existed in Spain at that time. On average, 27% of these women were married, while 25% were not. It is unknown how many of them had children, or whether or not they returned with them or with their

spouses. When deducing their reasons for returning, 64% did so for familial reasons, while 16% returned for political ones. This correlated to their resettlement location, where 72% elected to resettle in their city of origin and only 12% opted to go to a larger city. Furthermore, 46% had a “basic” level of education while 29% had post-secondary levels. Because of the age at return, 46% of these women worked upon resettling in Spain—the largest of any group. It is difficult to ascertain in which sector or industry most of these women worked, but 32% of them did menial service jobs from seamstress to washer. Of note, a higher level of education did not equate to a higher probability of finding and retaining employment.

The individual who best represents this profile group is Rosario Ortells Badenes. Born in 1904 in Castellon, she was 35 years old when she and her husband were exiled to Elne, France. She would spend 16 years there and in 1955, at the age of 52, permanently returned with her husband and son to the same city (a neighboring town) that she was originally from. However, according to her grandson, she was not happy with how Spain was at the time of her return, and was never “accepted” by the community that still saw her as a “red.” Because of her age and basic level of education, coupled with the limited employment options at the time, she continued to work “odd jobs” but mostly took care of her family home.

## **Argentina**

Last in the profiles is Argentina. Representing just four percent of the total returns, it is the smallest in our profile groups. It is estimated that Argentina received approximately 10,000 Spanish refugees by 1945 (Pla 2002, 105). This would make it third in total of refugees received by any one country, ahead of the USSR.

For our profile group, and due to its small number of individuals from the RD-LS database, it is not at all representative of the larger exiled population in Argentina; with four women, it could never be. We decided to include them as a profile group because it is the fourth largest group in

our database and also to highlight our limitation in diffusing our questionnaire in Argentinian online social groups.

As a profile group, it is a collection of women composed of three accomplished writers and one artist. The majority of them left France for Argentina directly, making it their country of choice. The average age of departure from Spain was the of all the profiles, at 36 years-old when departing in 1939. On average, they spent 24 years in exile, the second-smallest period of time next to France. They then returned in 1963 at the average age of 65, the oldest average for all profile groups. All of the women had post-secondary education and were established in their profession prior to their exile. They also exercised a similar profession before and during their *émigré*. Three of them returned during Franco's rule and one returned immediately after his death. When classifying their reasons for returning, two returned for political reason while one returned for work and the last one for education. Upon their return three of them were married and one was widowed. Once in Spain, two chose to resettle in a larger city from their birthplace, while a one returned to her birthplace.

Unfortunately, there were no RD-SN women in this profile group and thus we chose the closest matching RD-LS female. This turned out to be the writer Rosa Clotilde Chacel Arimón. At 41 years old, she was the second oldest in the group to emigrate to Argentina. She was also in the minority for the Argentina group since it was not her chosen country of exile and had arrived via a circuitous route of France, Greece and Brazil. She spent 22 years in Argentina, temporarily returning in 1961 at the age of 63 and staying till 1963. She would then permanently move to her native Valladolid, Spain in 1973. She was the only woman in the group to return for educational purposes, receiving a Fundación Juan March scholarship to finish her "Neighborhood of wonders" [*Barrio de Maravillas*] (Fundación March 2019). Chacel would receive various literary awards and continued to work as a writer until her passing in 1994.

## CONCLUSION



Our objective was to create a general overview of the individual women and their differences as they returned and adapted back into Spanish society from their respective countries, while also creating a starting point of reference for subsequent research. We believe that by classifying their collective experiences in exile, we can gain insight into their varied ensuing experiences upon returning to Spain.

Our findings thus revealed more shared traits and subsequent questions than differences. According to our database, a short exile period favored successful re-adaptation into Spanish society, while a longer period deterred it. The French profile group, with its relative short exile period follows the former pattern, while the USSR, with its much longer displacement, correlates with the latter. Based on our data, if the individual returned in the first ten years of exile, there was an 81% chance that she resettled in her birthplace community and 19% elsewhere. Inversely, if she spent more than 40 years in exile, there was a 62% chance that she resettled elsewhere and 38% in the original hometown. Although resettling in the same community does not automatically equate re-adaptation, it does encourage it.

There was also a correlation when examining the primary reason for returning—the familial link, or lack thereof, and politics. Among all the four profile groups, the top two reasons for returning to Spain were family and politics. We found that for those women choosing to return for familial reasons, there was a 77% chance they resettled in their original communities and 23% elsewhere. However, if they returned for political reasons, there was a 53% probability for resettling elsewhere and 47% for the birth city. Both associations exemplify the uprooting and distancing effect of the exile period across time on the individual and her ties to culture.

This, however, generates many questions for exiles, and are particularly poignant when addressing the experience of the children of war. For example, if one is a nine year old child when becoming a refugee into a new culture, how “Spanish” are you really after forty years in exile? Vicenta Llorente de Moral speaks of the Spanish culture in the USSR in active and positive terms, and she identified as Spanish. However, as child

with limited agency who is entirely dependent upon her adult Spanish guardians, how much Spanish culture is she able to assimilate when living in Russia? She herself stated that without telling her nor knowing of him, the USSR separated her brother from her for four years (López 2005, 211). Their degree of assimilation to Soviet culture, and their parallelly constructed Spanish one, is perhaps an extreme case. However, it illustrates how refugees change and adapt to a new dominant culture. In this case, it highlights the erosion of one culture for the other. The Soviet refugee children of war may have identified as Spanish but lived as Russians.

The four aggregated profiles of returnee women exemplify the individual-adjustments required to tremendous circumstances over a long period of time, and reflect certain shared common traits vis-à-vis other country's exiled populations. The USSR profile group was disproportionately made up of children of war. Nearly half of the Spanish exiles in Russia were made up of children of war, and so our profile group serves as a case study for 50% of the exile population in the USSR. It also highlights the long duration of exile, and the acculturation these children had to Soviet culture and its educational system; and also the culture shock that many of these women experienced upon repatriating to Spain in the late 1950s. However, as it is now, it is not an accurate sampling of the whole Soviet exiled population. Like with all profiled groups, more individual returnees are needed to better describe the overall exiled populations as it re-accultured to Spanish society.

The Mexican group of women was the most varied and indicative of its first-generation exiled population. It had the most diverse professions with a high number of exiles achieving post-secondary education. In general, these returnees were financially, socially and politically more solvent than the other groups. This in turn allowed them to return to Spain on better footing. Eventually, 20% of these individuals returned back to Mexico. However, this phenomena could be due to an imbalance in the RD-LS database, where more prominent figures were exiled in Mexico and thus were more successful in Mexico than in Spain.

Although France is where the majority of Spanish refugees resided, they only accounted for 25% in our database research. There could be any number of reasons why this is so, and we identified two: First, we did not aggregate enough candidates and must continue to enlarge the individuals in both databases. Second, fewer French returnees have been identified than the other profiles groups, and have been bureaucratically invisible among decades of paperwork since Spaniards traveling to Spain have crossed from France to Spain for decades, and for any number of reasons—for example, as tourist—making it difficult to sort exiles from other Spanish migrant groups. With the shortest exile period, which places them in the first period of the Franco's rule, and the highest resettlement rates to their original communities, they are more difficult to register. One thing is for certain, not enough female individuals have been documented as returnees and their lives written down for posterity.

In comparison, Argentina profile group is the complete opposite of the French profile. It is composed of the oldest women at the time of exile and also of those returning, while being second to France in terms of the exiled time period. All of them were established and recognized professionals in their fields, by their inclusion in the RD-LS database of notable returnees. They had a financial mobility or agency unlike the other profile women. Evidently, these four women as a group stand out from the three other profiles. In subsequent research, we will endeavor to identify unknown individual returnees from Argentina to Spain to balance the profile. Possible future work may possibly focus on the other various countries in Latin America. Thus creating a holistic overview of the commonalities and differences returnees experienced in Spain.

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