

The Volunteer

FOUNDED BY THE VETERANS OF THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE

The remains of a shelter used by the Lincoln-Washington battalion during the retreats.
Photo: Anna Martí.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE LINCOLNS

Page 9



MICHAEL RATNER: WAR CRIMES AND TRUTH- TELLERS

Page 7



GARZÓN JOINS ASSANGE DEFENSE TEAM

Page 6

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT OHIO P3 • WHY NOT TEACH THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR? P4
ELEGY TO THE SPANISH REPUBLIC P12 • BOOK REVIEW SP16 • SOCCER & WAR P18
IN MEMORIA MP20 • HEMINGWAY & GELLHORN P23

The Volunteer

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Dear Friends,

September—the leaves begin to change colors. Even though I dread summer drawing to a close, we can still relish the daylight at the same time that we begin new projects and harvest our ideas.

With your encouragement and support, we’ve been working hard the past months to expand ALBA’s work in human rights and education. These programs are a vital part of honoring the legacy of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and its longstanding support for progressive causes.

This issue of *The Volunteer* brings a new look and design. From this issue onwards, we’ll be featuring a new guest column on human rights for which we are inviting leading figures in the human rights world to discuss topics that we know are important for you. Our first guest writer is Michael Ratner, who was recently honored by the Center for Constitutional Rights as a “relentless radical, a people’s lawyer and a leader” (see page 7). I trust you’ll find this new feature inspiring.

I am also pleased to announce that ALBA is now accepting nominations for the 2013 ALBA/Puffin Award for Human Rights Activism. As you know, the Award is granted on an annual basis to individuals or organizations whose work has had an exceptionally positive impact on the advancement and/or defense of human rights. Honoring the work of our last laureates, Kate Doyle and Freddy Peccerelli, our Human Rights Documentary Film Series will continue its second annual edition with more fascinating stories coming this fall. We’re also hoping to bring more of these programs to the West Coast.

ALBA continues developing creative ways to include the history of the Brigade, the Spanish Civil War, and related human rights issues in our programs for high school teachers. After a very successful summer teachers’ institute at Oberlin College in Ohio (see page 3), I’m delighted that we are expanding our Development Day Program into Alameda County in northern California this fall. With these unique programs, ALBA remains deeply committed to helping high school students develop values of civic responsibility and an appreciation of human rights.

At the end of the fall, we hope you’ll join us at our annual end of year get-together along with our second online auction benefit. Among the items and services offered, we invite you to browse through a number of diverse Spanish Civil War related artifacts. Stay tuned for our news. If you have not done so already, please subscribe to our e-newsletter or check our website under “events.”

As a nonprofit organization, ALBA relies on the generosity of those who share our mission—valued individuals like you. Thank you very much for all your support!

¡Salud!

Marina Garde
Executive Director

PS. Feedback, ideas and donations ensure that ALBA continues its good work—and that *The Volunteer* gets in your mailboxes. Visit our website www.alba-valb.org. Please let us hear from you! Drop us a line at info@alba-valb.org. And look out for falling leaves!

Letter to the editor

With tears in my eyes I read the list of American brigaders who fought in Spain with the Spanish Republic. The only thing I can say as the grandson of anarchist combatant is thanks, thanks and thanks always for their heroic sacrifices beyond duty, beyond life itself. When I read those names I cannot forget ever. Their example will endure beyond many generations through the value of their ideals, their love to others, in their infinite solidarity. Thank you for the blood of the fallen in the name of freedom. I also remember the hundreds of thousands of American soldiers fallen in the fields of Europe during World War II. Without the help of America and its citizens and soldiers, fascism would not have been defeated.

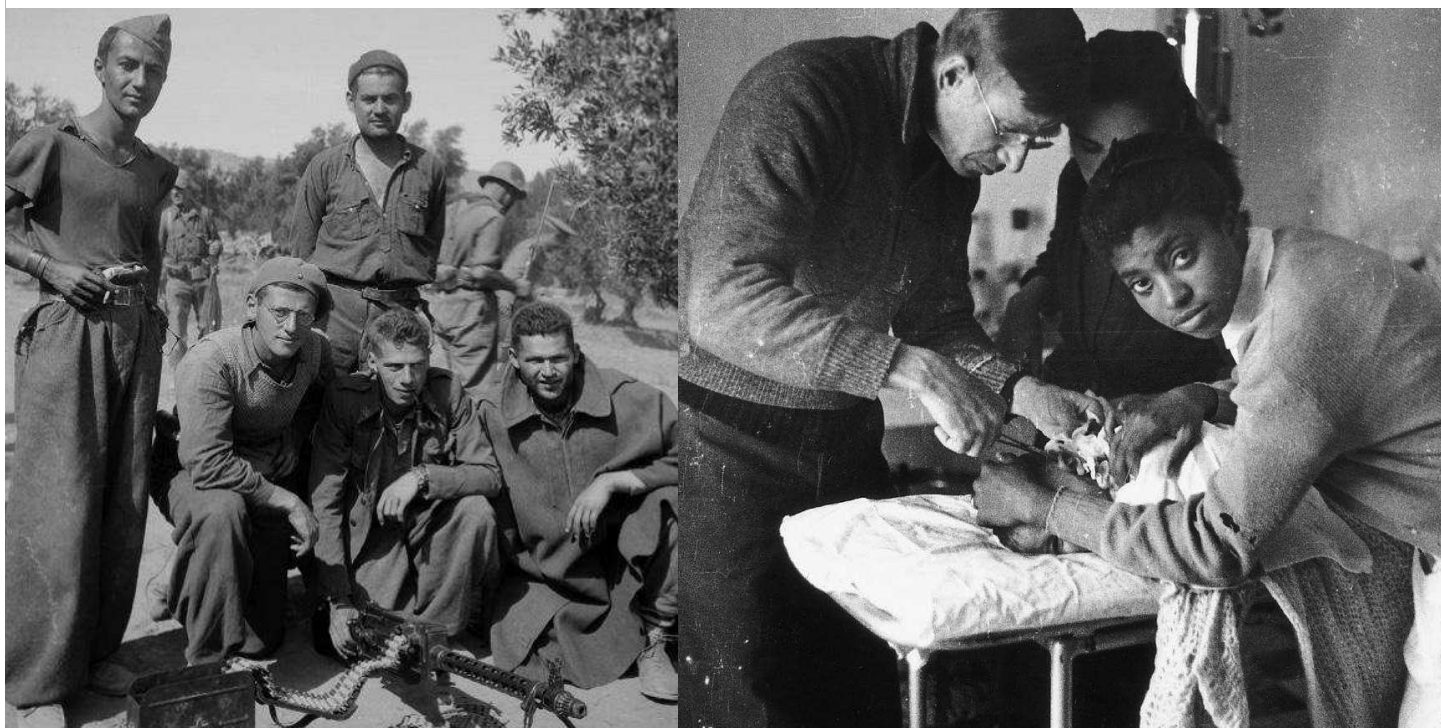
Again, again, a million thanks.

The grandson of an anarchist.

Angel Badal

There's Something About Ohio

Teaching the Spanish Civil War in the Midwest



ALBA's institutes show that the local and the global are closely intertwined: examples from close to home provide a compelling window into world history

Ohio, the quintessential swing state, has long been among the places where the country's political battle lines are most clearly drawn. This was as true in the 1930s as it is now. As a center of industry, Ohio was hard hit by the Great Depression. Social and racial tensions were palpable. The large urban centers had attracted high numbers of immigrants, as well as migrants from the South, and became strongholds of organized labor; in early 1936, the huge Akron rubber strike made national news. But Ohio also had deep conservative pockets and a significant Catholic population.

It is no surprise, then, that when the Spanish Civil War broke out in July 1936, the conflict immediately caught

Ohio's attention, and held it until its final days in April 1939. Between 1936 and 1938, almost a hundred Ohioans enlisted as volunteers to help defend the Spanish Republic against fascism. They include some of the best-known names on the Lincoln Brigade's roll. Salaria Kea, the African American nurse, came from Akron. David McKelvy White, who after his return from Spain became executive secretary of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade (FALB), was the son of Ohio's former governor. Paul MacEachron, a sophomore from Oberlin College, sat on the National Executive Committee of the American Student Union. MacEachron died in Spain, as did Sam Levinger, the journalist son of a Columbus rabbi. Carl Geiser

came from a German immigrant family in Orrville; he survived a year in one of Franco's POW camps, about which he later wrote *Prisoners of the Good Fight*. In early 1937, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, which closely followed events in Spain, reported that the pro-Republican documentary, *Spain in Flames*, had been banned by the Ohio State Board of Censorship. But in December of the same year, *The Spanish Earth*, made by Joris Ivens and Ernest Hemingway, avoided similar censorship.

Leonard B. Levenson, Paul Sigel, Emanuel Mandel, and Elkan Wendkos at Azaila. Oberlin's Paul MacEachron is the second from the left. (Tamiment Library, NYU, 15th IB Photo Collection, Photo #11-0729) (left)

Salaria Kea in Spain. (right)

This past June, thirteen Ohio high school teachers of history, Spanish, and English Language Arts gathered on the Oberlin College campus to spend six days discussing the Spanish Civil War, particularly its impact in Ohio. Their objective was to develop curricula based on the Spanish Civil War. Sponsored by the Ohio Humanities Council, the Puffin Foundation, and Oberlin College, it was the second ALBA Institute to be held in the Buckeye State.

Led by ALBA's Sebastiaan Faber, Peter N. Carroll, and James D. Fernández, along with Oberlin's Geoff Pingree, the institute covered all of the war's central aspects, alternating lectures, screenings and discussions with small-group work. Relying on primary sources, the participants produced lesson plans ranging from one or two days to six weeks. Their projects ranged from U.S. history units around the Great Depression, isolationism and McCarthyism to beginning and advanced Spanish units focusing on propaganda posters, and honors-level U.S. literature classes about Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell*

Tolls. The institute also focused on the Spanish Civil War as the cradle not only of modern warfare but also of documentary filmmaking, photojournalism and human rights activism.

The Spanish Civil War lends itself particularly well to interdisciplinary and multicultural work. The war, after all, not only changed world history and international relations decisively, but also left an indelible mark on literature, political thought, and the visual arts of the Western world. One of the guiding principles of the ALBA institutes is the notion that the local and the global are closely intertwined, and that examples from close to home can provide a compelling window into the history of the world at large. With this idea in mind, the Ohio institute zeroed in on the lives of six individuals whose lives were deeply touched by events in Spain, including Geiser, Kea, and McKelvy White.

Last May ALBA sponsored a one-day institute for high school social studies teachers in Hillsborough County, Florida. Co-hosted by the history department of the University of South

Florida, the sessions enabled teachers of world history and U.S. history to explore primary sources available for their classrooms and to develop appropriate lessons. ALBA's Fraser Ottanelli and Peter Carroll also introduced teachers to related topics of human rights, tracing the story from civilian bombings in the Spanish Civil War through subsequent international crises affecting civilians. This was the fourth session held in Tampa, Florida.

The first ALBA institute for high school teachers was held in New York City in 2007. Ohio is the seventh state to host ALBA, after New York, Florida, New Jersey, California, Illinois and Washington. This fall, ALBA will offer its second one-day program to high school teachers in Alameda County, California. ▲

Why Not Teach the Spanish Civil War?

By Sean di Renzo

STUDENTS WON'T LEARN UNLESS THEY ARE ENGAGED — we have known this for a long time. The challenge is to get them engaged. As a high school Spanish teacher, it's a problem I face every day. In my quest to cultivate in my students the passion I have for the language and cultures of the Spanish-speaking world, I have found that few topics work as well as the Spanish Civil War. When taught properly, the topic allows students not only to learn about a major historical event but to think, write, and talk about political, moral, and cultural questions that are as relevant today as they were 75 years ago.

I have now participated twice in ALBA's High School Teachers' Institute on Ohio and the Spanish Civil War,

co-sponsored by the Ohio Humanities Council and the Puffin Foundation. After trying to teach the war on my own, I quickly found I could answer very few of my students' many questions. In the summer of 2010 I traveled to Oberlin College with a desire to learn everything there was to know so I could clear up my students' doubts. Oh, how smart I would be! And, oh, how wrong I was! It didn't take long for me to realize that the Spanish Civil War begs a multitude of questions that rarely lend themselves to easy answers.

The ALBA institute frames the Spanish Civil War, among other things, as a story-telling problem. The war is comprised of a long series of historical events whose narrative can be told in many

different ways. But every one of these versions necessarily involves editorial choice. Looking at photographs, documentaries, newsreels, interviews, letters, opinion pieces, literature, and other archival and historical material, the institute participants practice deciphering the ways that history is imposed on events. They then craft lessons in which their own students will be asked to engage with the same issues. Of course, the institute also addresses ways to provide students with the basic information they needed to begin fitting what they see and read into some kind of sociohistorical framework.

Before my participation in the institute, my students regularly asked me about facts, names, terms and dates. After I re-tooled my instruction, their ques-



tions gave rise to lively, full-class debates about questions of defining and establishing justice and making peace with the past for the benefit of the future. My students had attained a working knowledge of facts, names, terms and dates — and they used Spanish vocabulary to do so — but they also wrestled with complex ethical and moral questions. The Spanish Civil War had grabbed my students' attention because they could understand that it was an event in which a great deal was at stake: life, death, liberty, stability. Now, however, I had their attention and their curiosity to dig deeper. I also had materials that helped to tie a war in Spain 75 years ago to the lives of those who lived in surrounding Ohio cities; and to show the global reach of the conflict and its connections to other 20th century events, most notably World War II.

We know from empirical research and our own experience that a sense of relevance is key to student engagement. I have observed that, when studying the Spanish Civil War, students begin to see Spanish — the entire discipline — as something of profound relevance to their lives. I believe that we must make the effort to bring authenticity to our lessons at all academic levels. We can do this by introducing our students to some of the fundamentals of Spanish history, including the Spanish Civil War, and choosing more authentic communicative contexts that reinforce principal details about that history. This will invite discussion and pre-

pare students for more serious study at an earlier point along their educational journey. Instead of, as an example, a fictional account of a grandparent's childhood as the basis for a lesson on the imperfect tense in Spanish II, why not use historical information from the Lincoln Brigade Archives to discuss the actual experience of a veteran? Why not make a family tree in introductory Spanish of some real Spaniards who fought in the war and who might be the focus of more study in later Spanish courses? Why not have advanced students read modern novel fragments related to the war and present a family tree of its principle players to younger students?

These lessons will take no more class time than other textbook lessons they might replace, but they have the advantage of engaging students and fostering a love of something that we who teach them happen to love as well. We love the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world because of our real experiences with those cultures. It is our job to give our students that experience in the classroom to the best of our ability.

Using the Spanish Civil War gives students an essential added benefit. Because it raises themes of ambiguity, deception, conflict, and discord, the Spanish Civil War challenges the imagination and interest of students in a chaotic teenage world. The topic also steers classroom discussions towards moral, ethical and historical questions that lack easy answers — questions that are students'

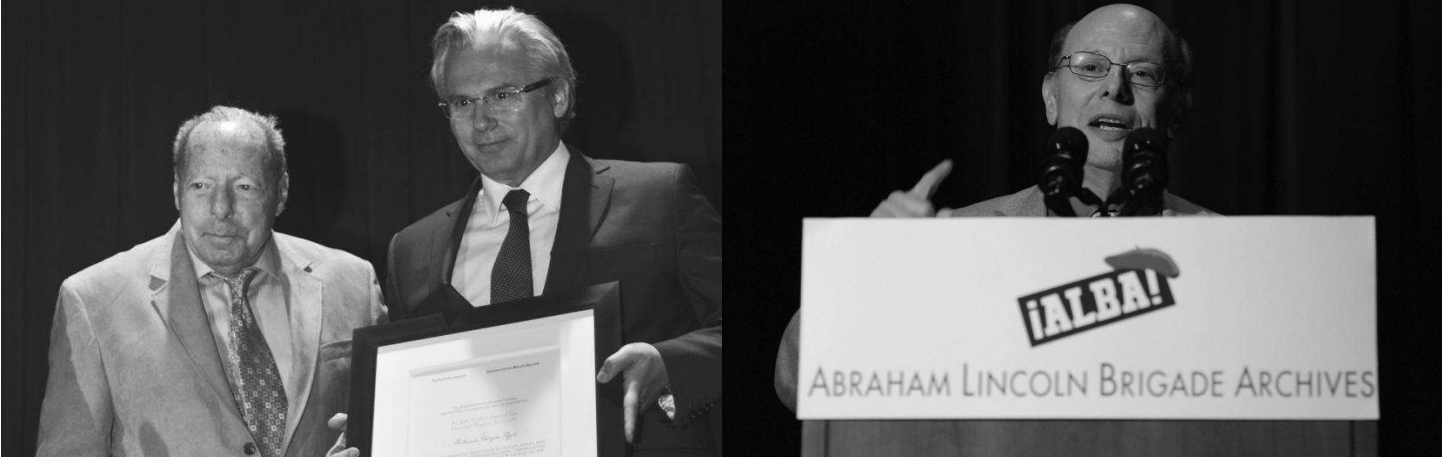
favorites, because they put them on an equal footing with their teacher. We as teachers may know more and be stronger thinkers, but it is our job to empower our students to raise issues we ourselves may not have seen, perspectives we may have missed and judgments that make us re-evaluate our own positions. Along the way, the students are inspired to learn the same vocabulary, writing and reading skills they need to learn, with less coaxing and greater rewards. And all this can be accomplished with ALBA as a powerful ally. ▲

Sean di Renzo teaches Spanish and chairs the Foreign Language Department at North Olmsted High School, near Cleveland, Ohio.

The participants in the Oberlin institute.
Photo Jack Shortlidge.

Garzón Joins Ratner on Assange Defense Team

By Sebastiaan Faber



Judge Baltasar Garzón, winner of the 2011 ALBA/Puffin Award for Human Rights Activism, has assumed leadership of the defense team of Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks. Faced with extradition to Sweden over a case of alleged sexual misconduct, Assange has sought refuge in the London embassy of Ecuador where he has resided since June 19, 2012. Garzón will work alongside Michael Ratner of the Center for Constitutional Rights (www.ccrjustice.org), and author of *Hell No: Your Right to Dissent Twenty-First Century America*. Ratner represents Assange in the United States.

Garzón met with Assange at the Ecuadorian embassy on July 19, 2012. In statements to the press, the Spanish judge expressed concern with the fairness of the judicial process that has produced Assange's indictment and impending extradition, criticizing in particular the secrecy of the proceedings. "In the present circumstances the conditions for a fair trial [in Sweden] do not exist," he said. Garzón is concerned that the United States and Sweden may already have agreed to an extradition of Assange to the United States, where he will likely face charges under the Espionage Act of 1917.

"There are several unambiguous signs that the United States is on track to prosecute Assange for his work as a journalist," Ratner wrote in an op-ed for *The Guardian* on August 2, 2012. "A grand jury in Alexandria, Virginia, empanelled to investigate violations of the 1917 Espionage Act – a statute that by its very nature targets speech, in the form of interfering with military recruitment, specifically and extended in 1918 by the Sedition Act which covered a larger range of offenses – has subpoenaed Twitter feeds regarding Assange and WikiLeaks. An FBI agent, testifying at whistleblower Bradley

Manning's trial said that 'founders, owners and managers' of WikiLeaks are being investigated. And then there is Assange's 42,135-page FBI file – a compilation of too enormous scope to prompt a government response of 'not interested' with regard to further investigation. In this context, Assange's fears of extradition to and persecution in the United States, and therefore his plea for asylum, are eminently reasonable."

As Ratner points out, U.S. persecution of Assange would be doubly ironic. The United States, which "has demonstrated its commitment to be a safe haven for those being persecuted for their political beliefs by recognizing that journalists punished for expressing political opinions in places like China meet the criteria for asylum under the U.S.'s own laws" seems poised to go after Assange for work that is, in essence, journalistic: "The journalistic function and legacy of WikiLeaks cannot be disputed. The site has published 251,287 leaked U.S. diplomatic cables and military documents that revealed the inner workings – warts and all – of U.S. foreign policy. These publications illuminated state-sponsored human rights abuses in Iraq and Afghanistan, exposed a secret war in Yemen and revealed the Obama administration's interference with independent efforts to prosecute Bush officials for torture and other war crimes."

"The U.S. government," Ratner concludes, "is more concerned with investigating a journalist and publisher than the high-level government officials whose alleged war crimes and misdeeds Assange and his cohorts brought to light." ▲

Baltasar Garzón accepting the ALBA Puffin Human Rights Activist Award with Puffin president Perry Rosenstein, 2011.

Michael Ratner speaking at ALBA's 2011 annual event in New York. Photo Len Tsou.

WAR CRIMES AND TRUTH-TELLERS:


BALTASAR GARZÓN AND
JULIAN ASSANGE

By Michael Ratner

In dramatic news last month, Baltasar Garzón – the acclaimed Spanish lawyer and former judge who built his career on doggedly pursuing accountability for human rights crimes—agreed to head the legal defense team for Julian Assange in the Wikileaks publisher's efforts to avoid extradition to the United States via Sweden.

If there is such a thing as a perfect match in this high-stakes legal predicament, this is it: both men, are smart, courageous, and command worldwide respect for their willingness to speak truth to power. And in a trend that only serves to underscore the need for such truth-tellers, both have suffered severe consequences for their unwavering commitment to truth and accountability.

Garzón's rise to global recognition can be most attributed to the international arrest warrant he issued against Augusto Pinochet, the former dictator of Chile, on the grounds that Spanish citizens were among the many whom his regime had tortured. The warrant, the first use of what is known as universal jurisdiction against a former head of state, resulted in Pinochet's house arrest in London for 18 months. Fearing what



If there is one takeaway from these shared experiences in truth-telling and courage, it is a note of extreme caution: never doubt the mendacity and cruelty of the state.

Julian Assange in Norway, 2010.
Photo Espen Moe. Permission CC BY-SA. 2.5

Wikileaks' digging into the dirt of U.S. war crimes have made Assange a target of the U.S government.

Pinochet's arrest might mean for their own high officials accused of committing human rights crimes, the world's most powerful nations did not support Garzón, or the arrest and, ultimately, the United Kingdom allowed Pinochet to return to Chile.

Contrast the treatment of Pinochet, a man responsible for unspeakable horrors, with that of Julian Assange, a journalist who helped to expose them. Recently, the Government of Ecuador granted Assange asylum at their embassy in London after determining that he faces persecution in the United States. Rather than the respect afforded to such internationally protected persons, Assange finds himself confined to the embassy, police officers at the ready to detain him at his first misstep. Extraordinarily, the British government has not stopped there, further violating fundamental protections of international law by threatening to storm the embassy. Had Assange been named Pinochet, he'd be on a first-class flight to Ecuador.

Yet despite attempts to silence both Garzón and Assange, neither shows signs of yielding to the pressure.

Operations at Wikileaks, the organization through which Assange works, have been diminished by the U.S.'s successful pressures to cut off the means of funding, and by the abhorrent treatment of whistleblowers like Bradley Manning, the U.S. soldier who allegedly gave Wikileaks millions of documents regarding U.S. criminality. Still, Assange continues to speak out in the media, hoping to regain the right to practice journalism without the ever-looming threat of persecution.

Criticism that Garzón received from powerful states for his willingness to take on the dictator Pinochet did little to deter him as well. In addition to many international investigations Garzón opened since, his actions at home in Spain actually cost him the most. In 2008, Garzón initiated an investigation into the crimes of the Spanish Civil War, particularly those of the Francoist regime. Garzón sought the truth about



Michael Ratner in front of the Supreme Court, 2006. Photo Jonathan McIntosh. Permission CC BY-SA. 2.5

war crimes and wanted to determine what had happened to over 100,000 people who disappeared. He declared these crimes to be crimes against humanity, correctly stating that such crimes could not be amnestied as Spain had attempted, and that disappearances were a continuing crime not barred by a statute of limitations.

These actions enraged the right in Spain and not soon after, Garzón was suspended from working as a judge for 11 years.

On what grounds? The official line is that Garzón was found to have exceeded his authority in a bogus case concerning a wiretap order that is currently on appeal. The reality, as most acknowledge, is that he was being punished for attempting to expose the ugly truths of Spain's civil war.

Similarly, Wikileaks' digging into the dirt of U.S. war crimes in Afghanistan and Iraq, and exposing a secret war in Yemen, along with the corruption, hypocrisy, and double-dealings of the State department have made Assange a target of the U.S government. The world's self-styled shining example of democracy is bent on stopping Wikileaks and making an example of Assange that will send a message to others: exposing U.S. criminality is itself a crime and the consequences for doing so include life in prison, and possibly the death penalty. The United States finds it convenient to forget that it has granted asylum to journalists and publishers that expose criminality around the world.

Yet U.S. officials obfuscate their intentions by claiming that Assange took refuge in the embassy to avoid answering questions about alleged sexual misconduct in Sweden. On the contrary, Assange has said repeatedly that he would answer questions from the Swedish prosecutor in London but Ecuador's request to Sweden to do so has been rejected. Assange has even made clear that if he received a guarantee that he would not be extradited from Sweden to the U.S., he would go in person. So far, no such guarantee has been forthcoming and likely will not be, as the United States has either already indicted Assange or will.

Notable in the saga of Garzón's and Assange's shared struggle for accountability is Wikileaks' role in exposing U.S. efforts to impede Garzón's work to establish U.S. accountability for torture, long before he and Assange had met. Garzón attempted to investigate U.S. government officials responsible for carrying out torture at Guantanamo—torture that included Spaniards as victims. Contrary to its claimed belief in an independent judiciary, Washington made every effort to stymie those investigations and insure that Garzón would not be the judge in the case. State department cables released by Wikileaks detail numerous meetings between U.S. and Spanish officials in which the U.S. government tried to influence or end the criminal proceedings. The U.S. did manage to get rid of Garzón, but to its dismay, the Guantanamo torture investigation continues with the Center for Constitutional Rights among the counsel.

If there is one takeaway from these shared experiences in truth-telling and courage, it is a note of extreme caution: never doubt the mendacity and cruelty of the state. It will make pariahs and outcasts out of those who will someday be recognized as heroes. Unmistakably, history will place upon that list the names Bradley Manning, Julian Assange, and Baltasar Garzón. ▲

Michael Ratner is President Emeritus of the Center for Constitutional Rights. He and CCR are US counsel for Julian Assange and Wikileaks.

In the Footsteps of the Lincolns

By Anna Martí



At the end of 2004 a friend of mine found, by chance, a small piece of writing in English on a wall in the chapel of San Gregorio in the Spanish town of Aguaviva (Teruel). The graffito had been written on Christmas Day, 1937 by Edward Muscala, an American member of the International Brigades. Although Aguaviva is my father's hometown, my family was unaware of the presence of American brigaders there. My curiosity led me to investigate who he was. After much research and help from ALBA, I discovered that Edward was 26 years old when he arrived in Spain in August 1937 from Minneapolis. A member of the Young Communist League, he left behind a wife and son of a few months. But what struck me most was to learn that he died three months later in March 1938 during the Great Retreats from the Aragon front, after leaving his name written on the chapel wall.

In early 2009 a group of interested individuals began to investigate the presence of the Fifteenth Brigade in the

area of Batea and Corbera d'Ebre during the *Retreats*. This group consisted of two local Catalan historians, Vicenç Julià and Miquel Sunyer; Alan Warren, an English historian of the International Brigades based in Catalonia; my husband, Enric Comas; and myself. As a basis for our study we used the brigaders' accounts, photos from the ALBA Collection at the Tamiment Library, interviews with people of the area and field work in each location. We know that our research is finished as we continue to receive information from locals. This is just the beginning! Here's what we did:

The Camp in Batea (March 18-26)

Thanks to photos taken by Lincoln volunteer Harry Randall and his photographic unit, we found the farm building that housed the headquarters of the General Staff of the Fifteenth Brigade near the town of Batea. Once we had located this site we were able to identify another nine photos taken in the

vicinity and the location of the Brigade's camp. The Brigade was at Batea from March 18, after participating in the defense of Caspe, until March 26, a period they spent in reorganization. On March 18, one hundred and twenty-five new American brigaders arrived from the training camp of Tarazona de la Mancha. Among them was Alvah Bessie, whose diaries and book, *Men in Battle*, have helped us identify locations and chronological dating.

Even after so many years we were able to locate over 400 *chabolas* (shacks) used as shelters for the brigaders in an area close to the headquarters and the Batea-Maella road. These shelters were dug at the foot of mountain overhangs. To their front a simple stone wall was built for protection and then camouflaged with pine branches. Sometimes it was a simple semicircle of stones. Generally, the soldiers had to crawl inside on all fours; each shelter could accommodate several people if necessary. The camp was located strategically to the rear of the fortified line along the

1938



Algars river. This line of makeshift bunkers was originally built in 1936 at the start of the Spanish Civil War with the aim of defending the entire border of Catalonia, but it was never completed or provided with necessary artillery for that weighty purpose.

Alvah Bessie wrote that when the new volunteers arrived at Batea they found the veterans very demoralized and lacking sufficient weapons. One should remember that since March 9, when Franco began the great offensive, the Lincoln-Washington Battalion had suffered heavy casualties. For a week it had been forced to flee because of the great Fascist movement blanketing the country. The Brigade did all that it could to improve morale. We have photos depicting activities such as a class in topography, soldiers digging trenches and two *fiestas*. The evening of March 23, 10 volunteers received a wristwatch as a reward for personal courage, and on March 25, four women from the JSU (United Socialist Youth) and a young Spanish soldier came from Barcelona to give inspirational speeches. That day they also had a *fiesta* with cheap champagne, food, bonfires and songs. The veterans suspected that something was about to happen. The next day it did. On the afternoon of March 26, the brigaders marched to a new camp, away from the front, just north of Corbera d'Ebre. Their march coincided with the resumption of Franco's offensive in Caspe to cross the Guadalupe (or Guadalupejo) river.

2012



The Camp at Corbera d'Ebre (March 27-30)

Thanks to Vicenç Julià, who was able to link photos from the Randall collection to particular locations, we now know that the brigaders were camped in the valley of Canelles, a valley with vineyards and olive trees near the village. A woman from the town, although she was only 8 years old at the time, vividly remembers the tall brigaders walking down the streets of Corbera d'Ebre, speaking a language she did not understand; she did not recall that they ran into any trouble. What struck her most was to see an African American for the first time.

On March 29, Fascist troops succeeded in crossing the Guadalupe river. In front of them lay two more rivers: the Matarraña and the Algars. The next day they managed to cross the first. The Fifteenth Brigade was sent to defend the Algars. That day, March 30, early in the morning, the volunteers of the Fifteenth Brigade were given new rifles, still covered with grease, and in the afternoon they left the camp at Corbera d'Ebre to take their positions at the frontline.

The Algars Front (March 31-April 1)

The four battalions of the Fifteenth Brigade were moved toward the front line, with the British battalion in a more advanced position marching westwards beyond the village of Calaceite.

They made first contact with the enemy — unexpectedly — when, during the morning of March 31, as they were leaving the town, they met some Italian tanks from the *Corpo Truppe Volontarie* (Troop Corps Volunteers; CTV). The skirmish caused 150 deaths and another 140 men were captured.

The Lincoln-Washington Battalion was sent to cover a gap between two battalions of the Eleventh Brigade (the Thaelmann and the Edgar André) northwest of Batea in the area of the hills of Cuadret and Vallbona. We think we've able to locate the positions of the Lincolns: Alvah Bessie's *Men in Battle* describes the Brigade first-aid post as "a great lime-washed stone house" and a neighbor from Batea remembers seeing first-aid men in the house of Venta de Sant Joan during the fighting. The positions in these hills were defending access to the old road linking the towns of Fabara and Vilalba dels Arcs. In this rocky terrain, we found stone parapets and wartime materials such as bullets, clips, pieces of hand grenades and tin cans. In the position held by the German Edgar André Battalion we found a great deal of cans and some unexploded grenades.

The Lincolns did not hold these positions long. They saw little action, with the exception of the period between March 31 and April 1, when units of the Nationalist 55th Division attempted to penetrate the area. During the first hours of the first of April, the

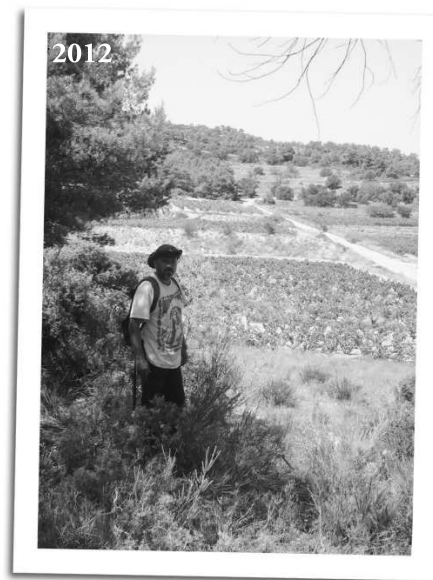
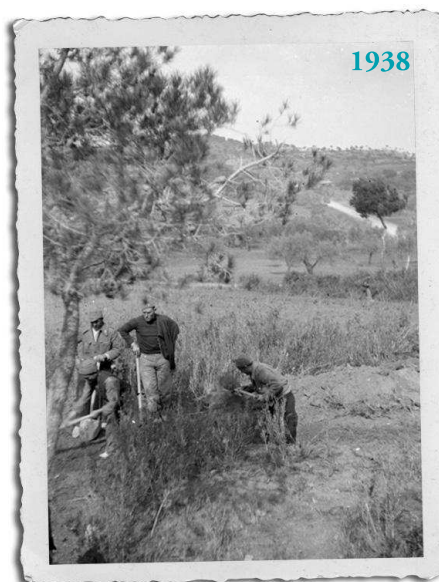
battalion remained calm and took no part in any action, ignoring the powerful forward attack by the Rebels that had severely punished the Canadian and Spanish battalions located on the Gandesa-Alcañiz road. Eventually they were forced to leave their positions and retreat towards Gandesa. Once the Chief of Staff Robert Merriman had ordered withdrawal, he went to find his countrymen. In front of the house of Venta de Sant Joan units were mustered. When the route had been decided, in the direction of Vilalba dels Arcs and Gandesa, they marched, as Alvah Bessie recounts, at 7:30 in the evening. However, the brigaders were unaware that on that day, the Navarrese 1st Division had rapidly advanced toward Gandesa, occupying the villages of Pobla de Massalua and Vilalba dels Arcs. The Nationalist 55th Division had effectively surrounded the Lincoln-Washington Battalion, cutting off their retreat.

Withdrawal (April 1-2)

Because we know the exact location where they began their withdrawal and the direction they headed, we have been able to plot a route the Battalion which likely served them. We know they marched from the first aid post down to the Nonaspe-Batea road, where the brigaders rejected the ammunition offered in the interest of light travel. They continued to march until they reached the point where the previous day they “had entered the lines” as Bessie writes. Since this is the location of the old road to Vilalba dels Arcs, this may have been their route. The fact that Bessie’s group, which became separated from the battalion, ended up in the middle of a Nationalist Requeté camp in Vilalba dels Arcs helps confirm this assumption. At dawn on April 2 the rest of the battalion reached the hills overlooking Gandesa. They had covered 20 kilometers on foot along unknown paths on a dark moonless night, carrying their equipment, tired, hungry and hoping to get safely to the town, which was believed to still be in Republican hands. Konrad Schmidt, a Swiss brigader, who during the retreat ended up mixed with the Lincolns, described the point from which they over-

P10:
(1938) Washing up. March 1938. A villager recalls that a group of villagers were paid to go to the house of the well to shave the brigaders who, he said, had beards of several days. In the photograph they are washing and it probably was taken that day. (Tamiment Library, NYU, 15th IB Photo Collection, Photo #11_0320.)

(2012) The washing spot today.
Photo Anna Martí.



looked the village as a high plateau; we believe that this area could be Els Tossals, where there two hills meet.

There are many as varying versions of what happened on April 2. Knowing the area, we are inclined to regard as plausible the versions that describe an attack on Gandesa, with the Lincolns in turn being attacked by Nationalist artillery and cavalry. On one thing the brigaders’ memoirs agree: it was a sweltering day, a fact confirmed by the meteorological record.

According to the brigaders’ accounts, when night fell and the scouts returned with the news of having found a possible escape route, the men left their positions and marched in single file into enemy territory. (Corbera d’Ebre had been occupied at noon on the April 2.) From Els Tossals there begins a trail, hidden from view from Gandesa, which descends to the Vilalba dels Arcs road and then winds up, also protected, into the hills between Gandesa and Corbera d’Ebre. There, on the ridge of those hills, there is a cattle route marked on the maps they carried.

There are several reasons why we think they may have followed this route. For one, it’s an easy path to follow because it’s wide, much used and protected by a pine forest; further, the trail crosses the Gandesa-Corbera d’Ebre road at a point between the two municipalities; it runs parallel to the Vall de Canelles — familiar territory where the brigaders were camped some days before. Once the path crosses the road, it leads to the village of Miravet, where there was a ferry to cross the Ebro river. It seemed a good plan of escape. However, the Lincolns were unaware that when reaching the main road the good path turned into a narrow corridor with high banks preventing any escape in the event that they were intercepted by an enemy patrol. This may be precisely what happened: the battalion was reportedly broken in two; the first group — which included the Chief of Staff Merriman and Political Commissar Dave Doran — was intercepted, and the two men were likely captured.

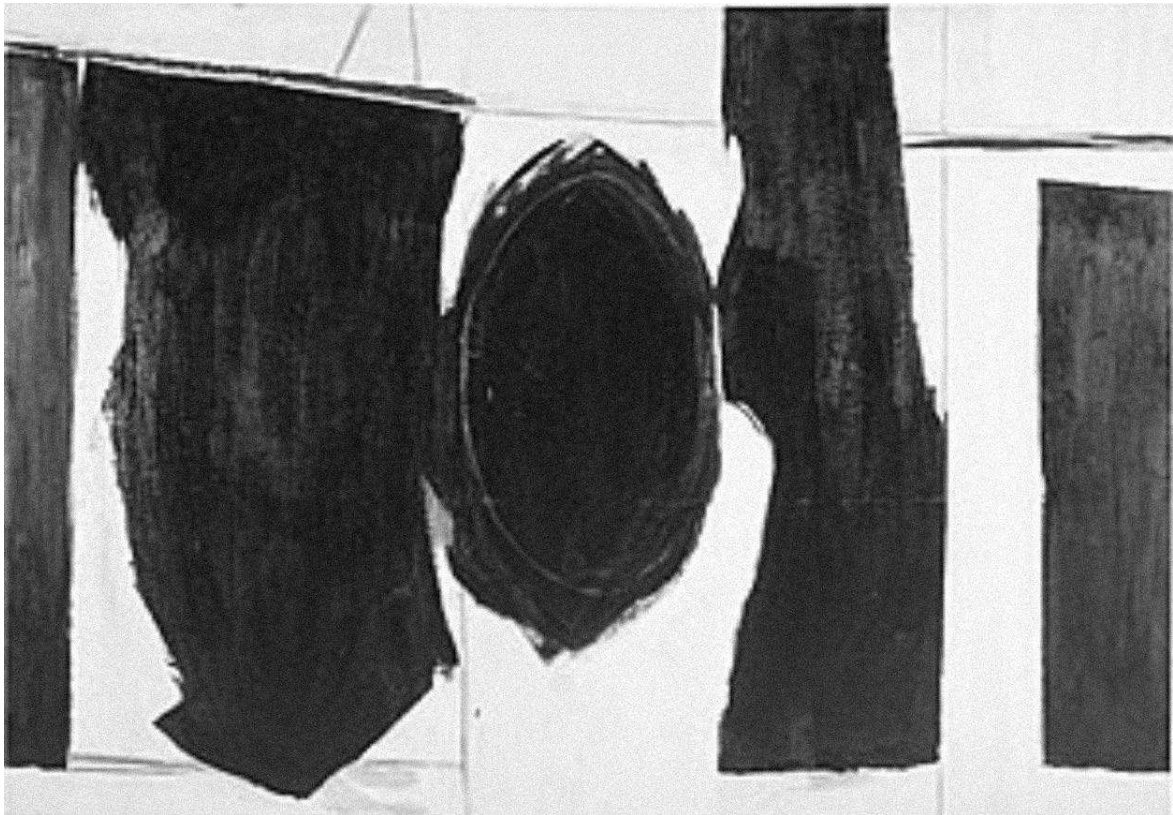
This scenario does not match the version of events presented by the Valencian

(cont. page 14)

(1938) Machine gunners building nests; Batea, March 1938. (Tamiment Library, NYU, 15th IB Photo Collection, Photo #11_0292.)
(2012) The site of the machine gunners nest at Batea today; part of the trench is still visible. Photo Anna Martí.

Elegy to the Spanish Republic: Our American Guernica

By Nancy Wallach



Elegy to the Spanish Republic, 1958 — By Robert Motherwell
(Approximately 6' x 8')

The Enigma of the Elegies

WHAT PROMPTED THE ARTIST **ROBERT MOTHERWELL** to devote over 40 years, from 1948 until his death in 1991, to a body of work entitled "Elegies to the Spanish Republic"? Why did Motherwell, whom the noted critic Clement Greenberg considered "one of the very best of the Abstract Expressionist painters," return to this theme in nearly 200 monumental canvases? How did a body of work that helped invent the formal language of abstraction come to engage with such strong political, philosophical and literary content?

The 76th anniversary of the International Brigades seems a fitting time to examine this series by Motherwell, who spent most of his 76 years in "private insistence that a terrible death happened that should not be forgot" — the destruction of Spanish democracy by General Francisco Franco. Fortunately for Spanish history enthusiasts, Motherwell wrote many essays and commentaries on his artistic process and the ideas that engaged him throughout the course of his life's work.

Although he began the series almost 10 years after the fascist attack on the Republic, the artist recalled, "I was 21 in 1936 [when the Civil War broke out], and that was the most moving political event of the time." In 1937, Motherwell attended a rally in San Francisco, where he heard French author and advocate for the Spanish Republic, Andre Malraux, speak on the Spanish Civil War. In those early years after the "terrible death," the artist found the decisive moral issue that would be reflected in all his life's remaining work.

The series had its beginnings in the painting *At Five in the Afternoon*. The title is a line from the poem *The Goring and the Death* by Federico García Lorca, lamenting the death of the legendary matador, Ignacio Sánchez Mejías, who was mortally wounded by a black bull in 1934. In the poem, Lorca repeats the phrase "at five in the afternoon" 28 times, just as Motherwell would repeat his abstract arrangements of flat black and white ovoids and columns in the *Elegy* series. Here Motherwell paints the poem, using Lorca's metaphor for the death of the Republic as his own visual lamentation for the poet and the Republic's death at the hands of the fascists.

Lorca used the term *pena negra*, or "black grief," which Motherwell said characterizes his alternating black abstract shapes. *Guernica*, the other great 20th-century masterwork response to fascist brutality in Spain, employs a stylized bull motif to provoke images in the mind of the horrors of war. However, while Picasso went on to work in many other formats and media, Motherwell would revisit the motif and style of *At Five in the Afternoon* with the intensity of a series of Bach cantatas until they became the style most associated with Motherwell.

Black columns vary slightly moving through the *Elegy* series. At times they form borders, suggesting columns of architectural structures such as temples, mausoleums or coffins. They sometimes compress the oval shapes, which Motherwell said initially represented a bull's testicles — a direct response to Lorca's poem. At other times the ovals seem to break free of the oppressive columns. Black grief is set in contrast to a white background, through which the artist strove to evoke the light and liveliness of Matisse.

As the *Elegies* evolved over many years and contrasts developed into ever shifting evocations of the archetypal images of life and death, oppression and freedom and the universal rituals of mourning. Would these associations be as salient for the viewer without the title? Would the massive monolithic shapes have the power through purely formal means to evoke the philosophical and political considerations of the human condition? Perhaps these lines of Motherwell's best explain the artistry he brought to bear to inform our reactions to the work:

"Without ethical consciousness the audience is only sensual, one of aesthetes.... 'The Elegies' reflect the internationalist in me, interested in the historical forces of the 20th century, with strong feelings about the conflicting forces in it.... Without ethical consciousness, the painter is only a decorator."

Though *The Persistence of Memory* is the title of one of Catalan surrealist Salvador Dalí's best known works, it could easily serve as subtitle for Motherwell's omnipresent *Elegies*. Motherwell raised his voice in lamentation with his mural-size works in major museums throughout the United States, even during the cold war period when Franco was an ally.

Variations on the *Elegies* are in the collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yale University, the Albright-Knox Gallery, Washington D.C.'s Phillips Collection and the National Gallery of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Denver Art Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and many more. These visual testimonials travel internationally and are now in the Tate Modern of London, the National Gallery of Australia and the Reina Sofía in Madrid. Motherwell's testament to the historical memory of the Spanish Republic was prescient of the Spanish grass-roots movement that has spent the last decade reclaiming their history and fighting modern forces of fascism. ▲

Nancy Wallach, an art teacher in New York, serves on the ALBA Board of Governors.

In the Footsteps of the Lincolns

(cont. from page 11)

1938



2012



soldier Fausto Villar in his unpublished memoirs, written many years after the fact. This temporal distance from events on the ground may explain the many inconsistencies in his account. He recalls that he witnessed Merriman's falling, for instance, but that may have occurred during the attack on Gandesa earlier that day. Villar describes the incident as happening in the morning, after which he fled from the scene. It is, however, highly reasonable to contend that Merriman could not have escaped from that situation and returned safely to the battalion. At the moment we have no other evidence apart from our knowledge of the area and an anonymous witness who stated that Merriman was captured and later shot in Corbera d'Ebre.

What we do know is that on the night of April 2, the Lincoln-Washington Battalion ceased to exist, breaking up into small groups that fled desperately to the river Ebro.

The Route to the Ebro

The retreat became a chaotic and disorderly

retreat. To reconstruct events, the recollections of people living in the area at the time are an invaluable resource. Vicenç Julià, a historian from Corbera d'Ebre, has spent several years collecting oral histories from his neighbors regarding the presence of brigaders in the area. He always asked the same question: "Have you ever seen brigaders, alive or dead, during the rout of the Aragon Front in April?" Thirty-seven people agreed to be interviewed. It is through their stories that we've obtained the accounts of the interaction between locals and brigaders. We were even able to make a map with the locations where they were seen alive, shot, killed or buried. The reason for this contact between the brigaders and the locals is that upon receiving the news that Franco's troops were heading towards the village, people, as customary, fled to their *massos* (farm houses), which were located in village outskirts, where they encountered the fleeing volunteers. The recollections of brigaders and locals agree in many respects. The locals recall that the

brigaders moved in small groups, approaching them with caution and asking for food, drink, and directions. All asked for the same thing: THE EBRO. One villager received a watch from a brigader, another a compass. The locals told us of a group carrying a Republican banner. One brigader who stayed behind to provide cover for his comrades was eventually killed by grenades hurled by Moroccan soldiers.

Initially, all captured volunteers were shot, but after a few days they were instead taken prisoner. The 87 captured Lincolns were taken to Alcañiz and then to Zaragoza where they ended up in prison at San Pedro de Cardena in Burgos and suffered great hardship. They were released at the end of the war, the vast majority in April 1939 and the rest in August of that same year. In Gandesa we also gathered recollections of people who saw the captured brigaders, who were imprisoned in a building where women and children came to see them. They remember that the volunteers looked very tired and dirty,

and only asked for water and cigarettes. In Corbera d'Ebre, locals showed us a house where some brigaders were held in the cellar before they were taken outside through a back door in groups of two and shot.

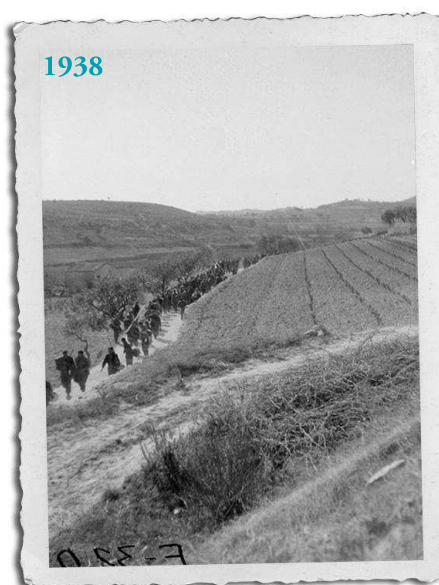
Once a village had been occupied, Franco's army was under orders to capture locals in order to keep them under control. Because the villagers returned to their homes again we have information about what happened in the towns. The people of Corbera d'Ebre showed us the place, known as Les Eres — just outside the village, where executions took place. We were told that sometimes the Nationalists made the brigaders run before being shot. They wore only underwear because they were stripped of all their belongings. After being shot they were buried immediately on the very spot. The locals explained that while those who died far from the village were buried where they fell, those who died closer were loaded on mules and then buried in mass graves in Les Eres.

Who buried them? Villagers, particularly those labeled as "Red." We have valuable testimony from a local man who in 1938 was 16 years old and is still alive, memory intact. When his father was called to be part of a group of diggers, he volunteered to replace him. He took us to the exact spot where he dug a grave for a brigader. He remembered that the man was very tall, with brown hair, wearing only his underwear. It impressed him to see the corpse lying there. He dug a trench about one meter deep. The undertaker of the town was the person who threw the body into the grave and another group covered it with dirt. While we took photos and marked the site with GPS technology, the villager told us that as far as he knows the brigader is still buried there. A chill ran down our spines. How many brigaders must still be buried in the area without even a single mark to commemorate their lives and sacrifice?

We must not forget those who drowned in the Ebro River. Although

P 14:
(1938) Going to the Botaja Front, March 1938. The moment of the march from the camp to the front. These pictures were mistakenly labeled as "Going to the Botaja front" There is a misspelling and it should read "Going to the Botja front" because Botja is a ridge where the Fifteenth Brigade Estado Mayor as well as the Canadian and Spanish battalions were eventually situated. The 2 pictures were taken from the same point but focused in opposite directions. (Tamiment Library, NYU, 15th IB Photo Collection, Photo #11_0327.)

(2012) Going to the Botja Front, today. Photo Anna Martí.



some volunteers managed to escape the numerous Fascist patrols they encountered between Corbera d'Ebre and the river, those who reached its shores found no bridges or boats to cross it, as the Republican Army had blown up the bridge of Mora d'Ebre on the evening of April 2. Many Lincolns from the cities, who had never learned to swim, drowned.

We are compiling a list of those killed and so far we can say that they number about 183 volunteers in early April. There is nothing to remember these men. In Gandesa there is a single plaque at the cemetery in memory of a brigader, Kenneth Frederick Nelson, a 22 years old, who was born in Colorado and volunteered from Seattle.

Our goal in doing this work has been to remember an important and frightening historical episode, not only to educate Spaniards about the tragedy of our Civil War but to also honor the international volunteers and give them back their dignity. ▲

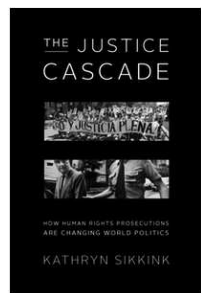
Anna Martí Centellas was born in Terrassa (Catalonia, Spain) in 1970. She works in a national park and has long been fascinated with English-speaking members of the International Brigades.

Book reviews

Perpetrators on Trial

The Justice Cascade: How Human Rights Prosecutions Are Changing World Politics. (New York: Norton, 2011), by Kathryn Sikkink

A review by Sebastiaan Faber



One of the most shocking scenes in *Mad Men*, the popular TV series about the hard-drinking advertising scene of the 1960s, occurs in the pristine upstate New York countryside. After an idyllic family picnic, Betsy Draper shakes out the family's litter-filled blanket onto the grass and returns to the car. *Just like that.* Our level of disbelief at her carelessness illustrates the rise of general environmental awareness over the last 50 years. Sometime between the early

1960s and today, leaving your trash behind in nature became unacceptable to most of America.

How, when, and why we see these kinds of changes in what one could call ethical common sense — norms not only of acceptable behavior, but also of the consequences attached to unacceptable behavior — is the focus of Kathryn Sikkink's groundbreaking book *The Justice Cascade*. Rather than environmental awareness, Sikkink zeroes in on the rapid rise of the idea that political and military leaders can be held individually and criminally accountable for violating human rights.

Since the mid-1970s, Sikkink writes, "there has been a shift in the *legitimacy of the norm* of individual criminal accountability for human rights violations and an increase in criminal persecutions on behalf of that norm." The consequences of this shift can hardly be overstated. Former heads of state who long thought themselves protected by the age-old principles of national sovereignty and sovereign immunity — the idea that a country's leader can do whatever

Sikkink produces social-scientific evidence to demonstrate that trials help deter human rights violations.

he wishes to his own citizens and cannot be prosecuted for his actions — are now likely to find themselves in court if they are not already languishing in prison. The list has been steadily growing: Argentina's Videla and Massera; Uruguay's Bordaberry; Serbia's Mladić; Liberia's Taylor. To be sure, the Obama administration has not ratified the International Criminal Court and has not been willing to investigate violations of human rights by U.S. government officials. But Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney are now forced to think twice before boarding a plane to Europe, where there are several universal-jurisdiction cases running against them and the other architects of Bush-era torture policies.

Sikkink's book traces this trend from its origins in the post-World War II Nuremberg Trials, via its more recent but still largely happenstance manifestations in post-dictatorial Greece and Portugal, to its consolidation in Argentina in the 1980s. In her riveting and crystal-clear account, Sikkink changes our understanding of transitional justice in four important ways. First, she shows that the change in norms did not happen by itself, but was the result of work by small groups of activists — "norm entrepreneurs" — whose creativity and persistence helped change the perception and legal practice of entire societies. Second, she shows that the trend toward individual criminal accountability is contagious in several ways. Activists in one country inspire and collaborate with others. National judiciaries look at each other as examples and changes in norms are eventually integrated into treaties and international law. Third, she points out that, despite the visibility of international tribunals, most human-rights prosecutions occur in domestic courts.

Finally, Sikkink produces social-scientific evidence to demonstrate that trials help deter human rights violations. Based on the first global database connecting the two phenomena over more than three decades, Sikkink's research shows that "countries with human rights prosecutions have



better human rights practices than countries without prosecutions”; that “transitional countries that have experienced more prosecutions over time (and thus a greater likelihood of punishment for past violations) have better practices than countries that have had no or fewer prosecutions”; that “countries are more likely to use prosecutions if they are already being used by other countries in the region”; and that “the presence of human rights prosecutions in geographically proximate countries surrounding a particular country significantly decreases the level of repression for that country.”

A political science professor at the University of Minnesota, Sikkink has studied transitional justice for many years, first as an exchange student in Uruguay in 1976 during that nation’s dictatorship and then as an intern with the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), at a time when Jimmy Carter made human rights a cornerstone of US foreign policy. She was in Argentina during the first trials of the military Junta leaders in 1985. This personal involvement allows Sikkink to intersperse her book with poignant personal anecdotes. It also means that she is compelled to look back on her own changing awareness of what was necessary and possible in the face of human rights violations. “For almost two years,” she writes about her time at WOLA, “I was part of a network that later became a main advocate for individual criminal prosecution, and yet I cannot identify the instant when the idea first appeared and started to flourish.”

Sikkink’s work fundamentally reframes the debate over the merits of domestic and international human rights prosecutions, particularly in the context of democratic transitions. Until now, that debate was largely cast as one between naive, quixotic idealists and skeptical pragmatists. “In an ideal world, the guilty would be held accountable,” the latter would argue, “but in the real world, prosecutions are unwise and risky.” According to this view, a country emerging from a period of civil violence can have either peace or justice, but not both. Sikkink’s research allows us to move past this seemingly insurmountable division; she shows that, in many cases, prosecutions are in fact the most pragmatic solution.

At the same time, she points out that justice, as an ideal, is treacherous. Given what is at stake, human rights trials almost always disappoint every party involved, including the victims, who “are ultimately disillusioned with institutions that can neither heal their broken bodies and minds nor return their loved ones.” Nevertheless, Sikkink’s painstaking, evidence-based approach shows that, however slow and uneven, the progress has been real.

The Justice Cascade contains painful lessons for countries that have resisted human rights prosecutions, including Spain and the United States. If Spain’s democratic transition in the late 1970s did not result in any prosecutions while those of Greece and Portugal did, it was not only due to the fact the Franco regime could negotiate terms but also because the notion of accountability was only just emerging. At this date, many trials are off the table because most perpetrators are now dead. Still, as Sikkink told Scott Horton last year, “although criminal accountability for human rights violations from that period is no longer possible, other forms of accountability are needed. In particular, many family members still hope to locate the remains of their relatives, to rebury

those remains, and to know more about the circumstances that led to the deaths. Such truth-telling is still necessary and possible, even if individual criminal accountability is not.”

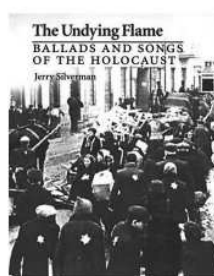
For the United States, to which Sikkink dedicates a whole chapter, the chickens are bound to come home to roost. “The people whose positions carried the day within the Bush administration,” she writes, “believed they were operating in a realist world where international law and institutions are quite malleable to exercise of hegemonic power.” They were wrong. Unless the United States adapts to the justice cascade, it will have a difficult time maintaining its “claims to leadership in the area of democracy and human rights” both in the United States and abroad.

Sebastiaan Faber is Chair of ALBA’s Board of Governors.

Songs of Struggle

***The Undying Flame: Ballads and Songs of the Holocaust.* (Syracuse University Press, 2002), by Jerry Silverman.**

A review by Bruce Barthol



Jerry Silverman has written much more than a songbook with his 2002 *The Undying Flame: Ballads and Songs of the Holocaust*. The author brings to life the rise of fascism and the horror of the Holocaust in songs and text.

The book contains 110 songs, in sixteen languages, with easily accessible English translations, musical notation and guitar chords chart along with photos and illustrations. The book comes with a 14-song CD which includes biographies of the writers and composers. Silverman, an accomplished musician, provides the historical background for each song and thereby introduces the overall context of the *Undying Flame* — the unfolding history of the “Theory and Practice of Hell.” His account of how he collected 110 songs provides the thread that ties the book together.

The collection is organized into three sections, beginning with “The Gathering Storm, 1933-1939” Included here are 10 Spanish Civil War songs (familiar to most readers of *The Volunteer*) as well as the first songs to come out of pre-war German concentration camps, beginning with *Die Moorsoldaten*, the *Peat Bog Soldiers*.

The second part focuses on the *Shoah* of 1940- 1945. It contains songs from within various concentration camps, the anti-fascist resistance and songs of the émigré cabarets. Some of this material had never been published.

The final section deals is “Kaddish, A Post-War Retrospective,” with songs by, among others, Mikis Theodorakis, Pete Seeger, Si Kahn and Tom Paxton.

The scope of research involved in this collection is staggering. That Silverman took nine years to write it is not surprising. To create lyrics that are eminently accessible from texts in Greek, Ladino, Russian and thirteen other languages is a monumental accomplishment. Some of the recovered texts were found without the original music. Silverman wrote what was needed with an educated eye to what was stylistically appropriate.

When first asked to write this review, I was reluctant to subject myself to what I thought would be 300 pages of depressing material. It was not at all what I expected. There is the historical horror to be sure, but it is lifted with humanity, courage and even humor. The book is not new and, sadly, its publisher seems to have done almost nothing to promote this important collection.

Jerry Silverberg has published over 200 books: collections of songs, instruction books for guitar, mandolin and fiddle and books on music theory. A short list of his accomplishments would be longer than this review. *The Undying Flame* would be at the top of that list.

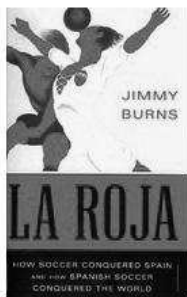
Bruce Barthol has been an associate of the VALB: Bay Area Post since 1986. He performs regularly at annual events in the Bay Area and New York City. He was the original bass player with Country Joe and the Fish and a longtime member of the San Francisco Mime Troupe. His latest CD can be found at www.brucebarthol.com.

Soccer and War

***La Roja: How Soccer Conquered Spain and How Spanish Soccer Conquered the Worlds* (New York: Nation Books, 2012), by Jimmy Burns.**

***Ajax, the Dutch, the War: Soccer in Europe During the Second World War* (New York: Nation Books, 2012), by Simon Kuper.**

A review by Sebastiaan Faber



Sports have always been serious business. They are sophisticated, stylized affairs that serve to entertain as much as to channel collective desires, fears and tensions. For the past one hundred years, no sport has fulfilled this role as prominently as soccer — to use the name Americans stubbornly insist on calling a game the rest of the world knows as football. Some say soccer is politics and others consider it poetry.

Both are right. While the history and economics of sports reflect and shape domestic and international political struggles,

While Franco shamelessly manipulated the sport to further his political agenda, it also became a stronghold of resistance against the dictatorship.

a pass or a goal can be as beautiful as a sonnet. Jimmy Burns and Simon Kuper, the authors of these two important books on the history of European soccer are clearly driven by a love of the game. But their books also lay bare the connections between what happens on the field and the world around it.

Burns' *La Roja* is an informative and entertaining history of Spanish soccer from its origins — English expatriates teaching the Basques in the 1880s — until its glorious present, embodied in world-renowned teams FC Barcelona and Real Madrid, eternal rivals and political polar opposites whose players manage to bury the hatchet when appearing in the red jersey of Spain's national team. The book dedicates extensive chapters to the Spanish Civil War, the Franco dictatorship, the transition to democracy and the persistent legacies of recent conflict and violence in Spanish soccer. While Franco shamelessly manipulated the sport to further his political agenda, it also became a stronghold of resistance against the dictatorship and, later, a channel for overcoming the country's deep-seated divisions.

Burns shows how Spain's unprecedented success as a soccer nation grew out of a serendipitous, hybrid blend of domestic and foreign influences. The arrival of two Dutchmen, Rinus Michels and Johan Cruyff, forever changed the way Spanish soccer was played. Michels, who coached *Barça* from 1971 to 1974, introduced the notion of "total football," in which "every player is supposed to have the technical and physical ability to interchange roles and positions at will." It was Cruyff, joining Barcelona from Ajax in 1973, who embodied and perfected total soccer, first as a player and then as a coach. And it was *Barça's* Dutch-inspired game that ironically allowed Spain to beat the Netherlands in the 2010 World Cup final. Burns himself is of both British and Spanish origin; his grandfather was the famous Dr. Gregorio Marañón, one of the most prominent intellectuals during the years of the Second Republic; his father was a British diplomat. Burns knows the Spanish soccer scene like the back of his hand.

Kuper's *Ajax, The Dutch, The War* is less exhaustive than Burns' book but in a sense it goes deeper. Kuper's narrative of soccer's influence during World War II and long aftermath is, in effect, a nuanced cultural history of 20th century Dutch culture, inter-European relations, and the role of sports in the forging of identity and community. Like Burns, Kuper is bi-cultural: born in 1969 of itinerant South-African parents, he lived in the Netherlands between the ages of 7 and 16. Much

like Ian Buruma, Kuper writes about the country and its history from the perspective of an outsider with inside knowledge. A first version of the book was published in Dutch in 2000; an English version was published in the UK in 2003. For this edition, the first to appear in the United States, Kuper has added an afterword.

Kuper's account of the pre-war years, life in the Netherlands under the German occupation, and the way the Dutch came to terms with the horror of the Holocaust after the war is fascinatingly revisionist and provocative. Through interviews and archival research, he destabilizes the simple narrative of a brave Dutch nation massively resisting Nazism. The truth, he shows, was much less glorious: for most Dutch citizenry, life went on as normal. Very few did much to prevent the massive deportation of Dutch Jews. Soccer, meanwhile, became more popular than ever. Focusing on the case of AFC Ajax, the legendary Amsterdam soccer club long associated with the capital's Jewish community, Kuper tells a story of the war years that contains equal amounts of heroism and opportunism. Acts of profound solidarity alternate with acts of base collaboration and cowardice. In fact, the legacy of the war was so complex in emotional and political terms that the post-war Ajax community, which included Jews who had survived the war in hiding along with Nazi collaborators, preferred not to remember the war years at all. Kuper, however, is a tenacious digger and not afraid to pass judgment. The stories he uncovers are uncomfortable, to put it mildly, but his work is indispensable today, as Dutch liberalism and tolerance are being sidelined by new waves of violent anti-immigrant sentiment.



Sebastiaan Faber, Chair of ALBA's Board of Governors, is a lifelong Ajax fan.



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The Volunteer

Michael H. Nash

(1946 - 2012)



MIKE NASH, the director of New York University's Tamiment Library, Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives and ALBA board member, died unexpectedly on July 24. He was 66. A well known and accomplished archivist and historian, he came to NYU in 2002 from the Hagley Museum and Library, after working at Cornell University and the New York Public Library.

Behind Mike's disheveled appearance and self-effacing demeanor loomed a wealth of knowledge, energy, and vision. In his 10 years on the 10th floor of the Bobst Library, Mike was instrumental in the acquisition and cataloguing of several major collections. He led processing of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade collection, which was transferred from Brandeis University in 2000, and oversaw the acquisition of the Moscow microfilm of the personnel records of the International Brigades. Under Mike's directorship, the ALBA collection saw a significant expansion and became the most frequently consulted at the Tamiment Library.

Along with ALBA's Peter N. Carroll, James D. Fernández, Mel Small, and Sebastiaan Faber, he edited and curated several books and exhibits, including *The Good Fight Continues: World War II Letters from the Abraham Lincoln Brigade* (NYU Press, 2006), and photography shows on Walter Rosenblum and Agustí Centelles. He was author of *Conflict and Accommodation: Coal Miners, Steel Workers and Socialism* and co-editor of *Red Activists and Black Freedom: James and Esther Jackson and the Long Civil Rights Revolution*.

Among the many other major collections that Mike brought to Tamiment were the archives of the US Communist Party and the

Daily Worker, the National Lawyers' Guild, and the papers of Philip Agee and Howard Zinn. Mike was also founding co-director of the Center for the United States and the Cold War and founding co-director of the Frederic Ewen Center for Academic Freedom.

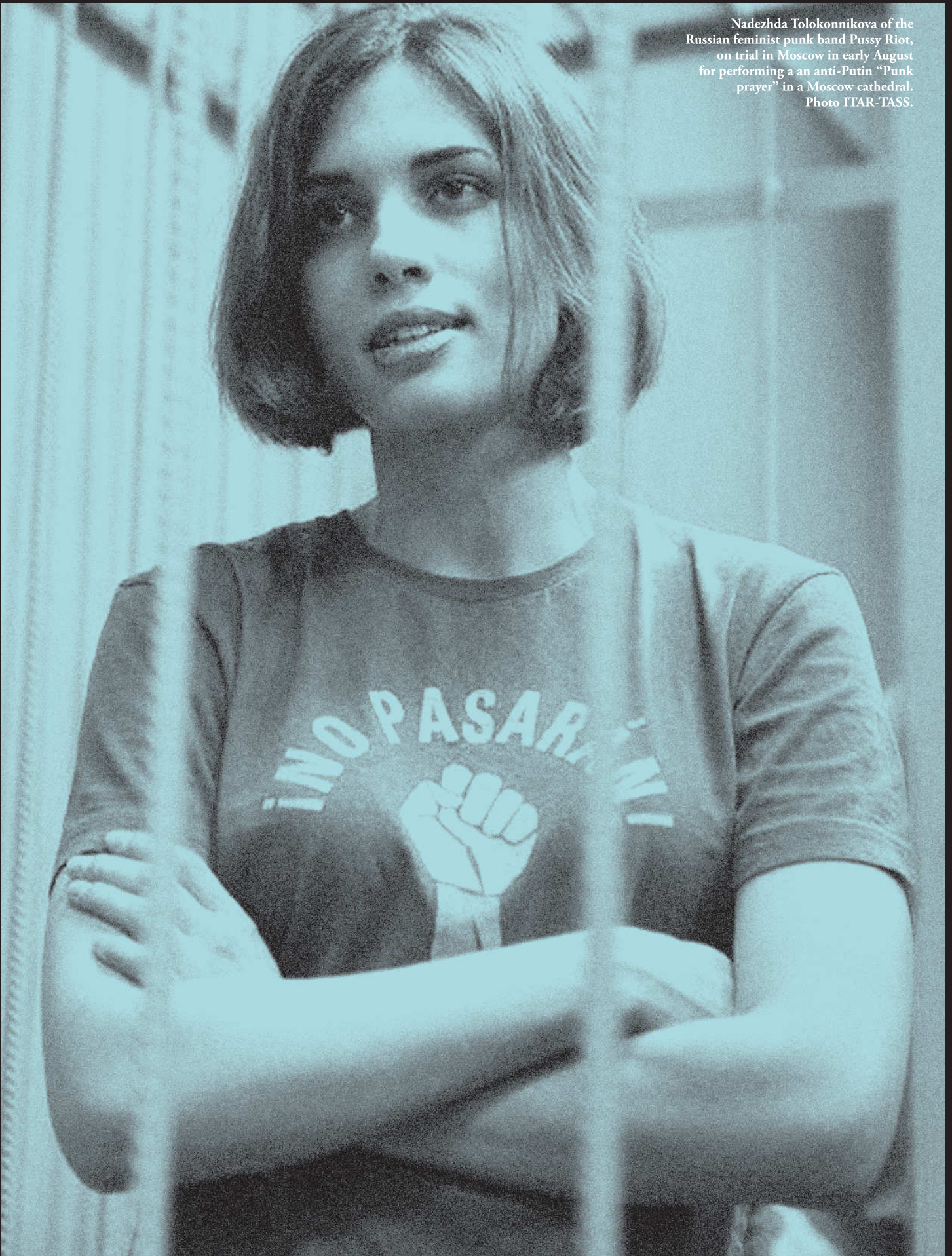
With ALBA's Jim Fernández, Mike regularly co-taught an undergraduate seminar on the Spanish Civil War. "He was a remarkably learned teacher and scholar who wore his erudition lightly," Jim writes, "a generous and gentle archivist always eager to help others; a principled and committed man whose teaching and scholarship and stewardship of Tamiment were of a piece with his lifelong dedication to the promotion, via historical understanding, of human rights and social justice."

Mike always enjoyed telling the story of how, when appearing before the Vietnam War draft board, he was asked if he had ever been a member of a long list of subversive organizations, including the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. Like virtually all of the young men whose eligibility for the draft was being judged in the late 1960s, Mike had been born long after the end of the Spanish Civil War. "Are you kidding?" asked Mike. The no-nonsense drafter responded: "No, we don't kid about anything here." To which Mike replied, "OK, yeah, put me down for that one. I was a member of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade." He wasn't drafted.

Mike did his undergraduate and doctoral work at the State University of New York (SUNY), Binghamton and also earned Master of Arts degrees from Columbia University. The academic community concerned with the history of progressive movements has lost a great friend and colleague. He will be sorely missed. ▲



Nadezhda Tolokonnikova of the Russian feminist punk band Pussy Riot, on trial in Moscow in early August for performing a an anti-Putin "Punk prayer" in a Moscow cathedral.
Photo ITAR-TASS.



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of Angel Viñas

Papa & Marty at the Movies

Hemingway & Gellhorn. A film directed by Philip Kaufman. (HBO 2012).

By Judith Rascoe



At worst, *Hemingway & Gellhorn* is the best bad movie you'll see all year. It has two stars—Nicole Kidman and Clive Owens—at the top of their game and the chemistry between them incandesces. There's a great supporting cast too: David Strathairn as the crushable John Dos Passos; Tony Shalhoub as Mikhail Koltsov, the Stalinist journalist in Spain who provided the model for Karkov in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. There's even Robert Duvall in a small but juicy cameo as a lustful Russian general. The sex is hot. The scope is global. The cinematography and editing are masterly and include some of the most sophisticated digital compositing you've ever seen, letting the actors run around within archival footage, mingling reenactments with historic footage, and recreating iconic photos from Robert Capa's portfolio, amidst other magic. And the sound track is great too, proving the old saw that the Republicans had the best songs.

Why did I say then that it is a bad movie? Because that's what I thought it was the first time I saw it, and a lot of critics felt the same way. In my case it was the former English major that was outraged—outraged!—at this glossy, strident, insanely romantic yet stereotyped portrayal of Hemingway and Martha Gellhorn, their life and love affair. There's definitely a paint-by-numbers quality to the use of Hemingway's dialogue. You soon start playing “spot the quotation” and wondering if certain scenes weren't just set up so Hemingway can pontificate about “grace under pressure.” The flaming romance between Papa and Marty breathes harder than a *telenovela*, and the symbolic elements are as subtle as a marlin thudding onto a deck.

But the second time I watched this movie, I relaxed. I realized that this is a Roy Lichtenstein, not an Andrew Wyeth; a Classic Comic version done with high craft, a seductive and even moving parodic depiction of two melodramatic lives lived by two highly dramatic characters who reveled in their own fame and public presentation. Hemingway was among other things a genius of self-promotion who played the media of his day, and Gellhorn was no slouch either as her own PR person—except for one thing. After her divorce from EH she

refused to become a “footnote” to his story and steadfastly refused to retail the tale of their marriage. On the other hand she was one of the world's great letter writers as well as a terrific journalist, so her personality was open for inspection.

Everybody has waited years for Hollywood to do a great movie about the Spanish Civil War, and while this one may not satisfy that yearning, it's still a respectable shot at the project. Joris Iven's classic documentary *The Spanish Earth* could almost be called the second subject of this movie: big chunks of it are used as found, and in other times it serves as background for composited shots of Hemingway and Gellhorn, Capa and Dos Passos running around Spain and the battle of Madrid. The integration of new and old footage is seamless and eerie. And the film doesn't flinch from beloved clichés, like the Brooklyn boy with the guitar (“this guitar kills fascists”) who sings “there's a valley in Spain called Jarama.”

The last third of the movie—the death of the love affair and the decline and death of Hemingway—is darker and less bombastic. As Hemingway is unpeeled in his treachery and vulnerability, Clive Owen keeps Hemingway's magnetism and charm alight for a long time despite revelation after revelation of the writer's mean-spirited jealousy. In point of fact Hemingway did not fall apart as soon as his marriage to Gellhorn dissolved. He managed to get a Nobel Prize and wrote some damn good books too. But this is a movie and in the end it's Gellhorn's movie, not Papa's. She is the triumphant survivor. ▲

Judith Rascoe is a screenwriter based in San Francisco. Her credits include The Bang-Bang Club and Who'll Stop the Rain.

Ernest Hemingway (fifth from right) and Martha Gellhorn (second from right) make eye contact in a line-up with officers of the 15th International Brigade (left)

From HBO's *Hemingway & Gellhorn* (right)

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- Wednesday, October 3, 6:30 p.m. Inauguration of the exhibition, with remarks by organizers. Special performance by soprano Amaya Arberas. Reception to follow. All events will take place at the King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center, New York.

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