

The Volunteer

FOUNDED IN 1937 BY THE VOLUNTEERS OF THE LINCOLN BRIGADE.
PUBLISHED BY THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE ARCHIVES (ALBA)

German American Bund parade in New York City on East 86th St. Oct. 30, 1937. LoC. Public domain.

Alt-right members preparing to enter Emancipation Park, Charlottesville, Aug. 12, 2017. Photo Anthony Crider. CC BY 2.0.

American Fascism Then and Now



Spotlight on Labor p 4

Sarah Watling on Women in Spain p 6

States vs. History Teachers p 17

The Volunteer

Founded by the Veterans of the
Abraham Lincoln Brigade

239 W. 14th Street, Suite 2
New York, NY 10011 (212) 674-5398
www.alba-valb.org

Editor Print Edition
Peter N. Carroll

Editor Online Edition
www.albavolunteer.org
Sebastiaan Faber

Associate Editor
Aaron B. Retish

Book Review Editor
Joshua Goode

Graphic Design
www.eyestormx.com

Editorial Assistance
Phil Kavanaugh

Manuscripts, inquiries, and letters to the
editor may be sent by email to
info@alba-valb.org
The editors reserve the right to modify texts
for length and style.

Books for review may be sent to
Joshua Goode
Claremont Graduate University
Blaisdell House, #5, 143 East 10th Street
Claremont, CA 91711

www.albavolunteer.org

The Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives (ALBA) is an educational non-profit dedicated to promoting social activism and the defense of human rights. ALBA's work is inspired by the American volunteers of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade who fought fascism in the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). Drawing on the ALBA collections in New York University's Tamiment Library, and working to expand such collections, ALBA works to preserve the legacy of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade as an inspiration for present and future generations.

IN THIS ISSUE

- p 3 ALBA News*
- p 4 Spotlight on Labor*
- p 6 Sarah Watling*
- p 8 Former Watt Awardee*
- p 10 Bob Ford*
- p 12 When Will WWII End?*
- p 14 American Fascism*
- p 17 Threats to History Teachers*
- p 20 Reviews*
- p 23 Contributions*

Dear Friends,

The three threads running through this issue are directly linked to ALBA's mission and history. The first thread underscores how important it is to identify fascism wherever it shows up—and to face it head-on. We don't have to explain to you why that is particularly important today. "We can no longer teach fascism as something safely tucked away in the past," the historian Janet Ward tells us on page 14. "It's a present danger."

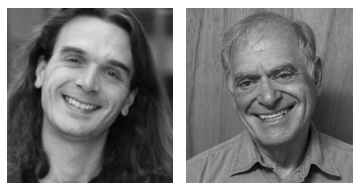
The second thread is education: to act in the present with an eye to a better future, we cannot afford to ignore the past. Everything ALBA does aims not only to educate audiences young and old, but to inspire those audiences to action. And nothing makes us happier than to see the results of our work, from Iago Macknik-Conde, a National History Day finalist this year (p. 3), to Catherine Wigginton Greene, the writer and documentary filmmaker who in 1999 won a George Watt Award (p. 8). To read about the worrisome challenges that history education faces in this country today, don't miss our interview with Brendan Gillis of the American Historical Association (p. 17).

The third thread is that the backbone of progressive activism is a strong, healthy labor movement. It's no coincidence that many Lincoln volunteers were leaders in their unions. As it happens, labor is also a focus of our programming this year. ALBA was proud to feature a panel at the Bay Area Labor Fest this year, as Richard Bermack tells us on page 4. Peter Miller's poignant documentary about Sacco and Vanzetti inspired a lively discussion at our online event in August, where we were joined by two comrades of the Democratic Socialists of America Fund. And in November, we're proud to feature Karen Nussbaum, feminist and labor activist, cofounder of 9to5 and Working America. (Karen's father, the actor Mike Nussbaum, is a longtime reader of this magazine.)

As you browse this issue, be sure to check out our other stories as well. Aaron Retish speaks with Sarah Watling about her new book on international women in the Spanish Civil War (p. 6); Mark Derby introduces us to Bob Ford, a Lincoln vet who fled McCarthyism (p. 10). And James Fernández reflects on beginnings and endings in the first of two touching think pieces (p. 12).

As you well know, none of this would be possible without your generous, steadfast support. Mil gracias. A special thanks to the Puffin Foundation and to Jay and Judy Greenfield, the sponsors of this issue. As always, you may use the envelope included in this issue to make a donation or simply go online to alba-valb.org/donate.

¡Salud!



Sebastiaan Faber and Peter N. Carroll, Editors

P.S. ALBA's Teaching Institutes continue to prosper. Please continue to support them with a donation.

To the Editors:

I was so pleased to see Bruce Barthol on the cover of *The Volunteer*. I would see him at events in Rohnert Park at the home of Corine Thornton, who died just before her 100th birthday. The memorial lunch was the last time I saw Bruce.

Then, at the opening of the Mime Troupe play at Dolores Park in San Francisco—where I've been celebrating my birthday, which is July 4, for the past 40 years; the mime troupe is the best place to be on that patriotic holiday and Bruce always made it better with his rendition of the Star-Spangled Banner—I ran into Michael Sullivan and was able to tell him how much I appreciated his remembrance of Bruce. Thanks for publishing it!

— Molly Martin

ALBA NEWS

Labor Activist Karen Nussbaum to Be Featured in Susman Lecture November 14

This year's Susman Lecture will feature longtime labor activist Karen Nussbaum, co-founder in 1972 of 9 to 5: National Association of Working Women and founding director of Working America. Born in Chicago Illinois into an activist family, Nussbaum joined the anti-war movement as a teenager. 9to5, which addressed issues faced by female office workers, and its sister organization, the union District 925, SEIU, were a leading force in the emerging working women's movement and the growth of women's organizing in unions. They inspired the movie 9 to 5 (1980), with Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin, and Dolly Parton. The Susman Lecture series was established by ALBA to honor one of its founding members, Lincoln vet Bill Susman. Join us live for this online event on November 14 at 3pm Eastern time.

Fall Tribute to Lincoln Volunteers

Stay tuned for an online tribute to the volunteers of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade this fall, which will feature, among other things, testimonies of grandchildren. (See page 19.)

Sacco and Vanzetti: Film Screening and Discussion

Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti—two Italian immigrant anarchists who were accused of a murder in 1920 and executed in Boston in 1927 after a notoriously prejudiced trial—are the subject of *Sacco and Vanzetti*, a documentary by ALBA board member Peter Miller that was screened and discussed at an online event on August 23. Moderated by Brandon West of the Democratic Socialists of America Fund, with special guests Ashik Siddique and Diana Moreno, a research analyst for the National Priorities Project, it's one of several ALBA events this year focusing on labor activism (see also page 4). For a recording of the discussion, visit ALBA's YouTube channel.

Lorca Event Celebrates Pride Month

On June 21, ALBA hosted an online event to celebrate Pride Month. Noël Valis, Professor of Spanish at Yale, spoke with Jeffrey Zamostny (University of West Georgia), about the Spanish poet Federico García Lorca, who was killed by the Nationalists in August 1936. Valis's latest book, *Lorca After Life*, reflects on Lorca's posthumous fame. A recording of the event, which was co-sponsored by the University of West Georgia School of the Arts, and Yale's Women's Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Department of Spanish and Portuguese, can be viewed on ALBA's YouTube channel.

Nancy Wallach Speaks for ALBA

ALBA Board member Nancy Wallach, daughter of Lincoln vet

Hy Wallach, recently represented ALBA on two occasions. She spoke at the annual commemoration of the International Brigades in London, on July 1, 2023, and at the celebration of the 125th anniversary of Paul Robeson's death at the Eblana Club in Dun Laoghaire, Ireland. Read the full text of both addresses in our online edition at albavolunteer.org.

ALBA Features National History Day Finalist

In June, Iago Macknik-Conde, the New York high school senior featured in our last issue, performed his play about the Lincoln Brigade at the National History Day competition for Senior Individual Performance in Maryland, winning an Outstanding Entry medal. Together with his mother, Dr. Susana Martínez-Conde, Iago wrote ALBA's summer fundraising appeal. ALBA "plays a vital role in preserving the historical truth and promoting an accurate understanding of the Spanish Civil War," Martínez-Conde wrote. "I was incredibly fortunate to find ALBA at an early stage in my project's development," Iago added. "Their online database guided my search for primary and secondary sources, helped me identify the most important books to read and documentaries to watch, and even pointed me to original documents from the war."

Watt Competition Draws Interest

This year's competition for ALBA's George Watt Award drew a higher than usual number of submissions, with 54 essays across all categories. "The rise in submissions is due largely to the hard work of Dennis Meaney, ALBA's Executive Assistant," said Aaron Retish, the chair of the jury.

Catalan Government Identifies IB Remains

As part of the Alvah Bessie Program, launched last year, the government of Catalonia has confirmed the identities and place of death of 212 International Brigade volunteers from Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands who died in Catalonia during the Spanish Civil War. Next, the government will attempt to document the place of death for volunteers from Great Britain, Ireland, and the United States. A total of 2,000 IB volunteers are estimated to have been buried in the region.

Alba/Puffin Human Rights Award 2024: Call for Nominations

The ALBA/Puffin Human Rights Award is an annual prize of \$100,000 presented by the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives and the Puffin Foundation for individuals or organizations whose work has had an exceptionally positive impact on the advancement and/or defense of human rights. The award honors the activist tradition of the U.S. volunteers who joined the International Brigades to fight in the Spanish Civil War to stem the rise of fascism. **Submission Deadline: September 30. More information at** alba-valb.org/alba-programs/alba-puffin-human-rights-project/

An Injury to One is an Injury to All: ALBA Spotlights Labor

By Richard Bermack

The Congress of Industrial Organization (CIO) was founded in 1938, but its beginnings go back to 1935—less than a year before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. As the labor movement occupied the front pages, in other words, so did news about fascism spreading across Europe. It was no coincidence that many union members saw their struggle as part of a united front against fascism and volunteered to fight in Spain. This was especially true of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), which was established in 1937.

On July 26, as a part of the Bay Area Labor Fest, ALBA's West Coast event honored the longshoremen who fought in Spain. It included a tribute to ILWU leader and Lincoln vet Archie Brown (1911-1990) and his wife Hon (1917-2010), who served for years as the treasurer of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Bay Area Post.

The origins of the ILWU go back to the 1934 west coast maritime workers strike that became the San Francisco General Strike. In previous strikes, the employers had recruited African Americans from the south as strike breakers. But this time, under Harry Bridges's leadership, the union aggressively reached out to welcome African American workers into the union. The union's paper, *The Waterfront Worker*, called for non-discrimination on the basis of creed, color, or political belief. The union's solidarity made them a cause célèbre.

At this year's event, Claude Potts, Librarian for the Romance Languages Collections at UC Berkeley, spoke about a new monument at the university campus for Robert Merriman, a graduate student at Cal who served as the first commander of the Lincoln Battalion. Potts described how Merriman and his wife Marion organized demonstrations against the use of the football team as strike breakers in the 1934 strike. The monument will be installed on the UCB campus later this year.

When WWII ended and the Cold War began, President Truman threatened to use the military to break the longshoreman strike of 1946. The ILWU responded with telegrams from unions all over the Pacific Rim pledging that workers at the other Pacific ports would refuse to unload any the cargo, forcing Truman to back down.

In the 1950s, while other unions agreed to limit their scope of activities to wages and working conditions, the ILWU joined other social movements. It was also the first union to oppose US military intervention in Vietnam. In the 1980s, the union refused to handle South African cargo for 11 days and engaged in work stoppages protesting the military dictatorships in Chile and El Salvador.



At the event, Peter Carroll, ALBA's former Board Chair, spoke about Lincoln vet Archie Brown's leadership role in many struggles opposing McCarthyism.

When the Taft-Hartley Act banned communists from union leadership, Brown was forced to go underground for four years. He was later arrested and convicted under the Landrum Griffin Act, which prohibited unions to elect Communists as officers. He fought the conviction all the way to the Supreme Court, which declared the anti-communist laws unconstitutional.

Bettina Linares, the daughter of Ana Pérez, the former president of the Friends of the International Brigades in Spain, recited a poem by Bertolt Brecht:

There are men who struggle for a day and they are good.

There are men who struggle for a year and they are better.

There are men who struggle many years, and they are better still.

But there are those who struggle all their lives: These are the indispensable ones.

"Archie Brown was one of those indispensable men," she said.

Other speakers included Robyn Walker and Brian McWilliams of the ILWU; Stephanie Brown and Sean Farrell, the daughter and grandson of Archie Brown; ILWU labor historian Harvey Schwartz; ALBA's Executive Assistant Dennis Meaney; and activist and documentary photographer David Bacon. ALBA's new board member, Steve Birnbaum, a worker's compensation lawyer for longshoremen, helped arrange the event. Moderated by Richard Bermack, it can be viewed online through ALBA's YouTube channel.



ALBA is offering several other programs about the labor movement. On August 23, we featured a screening and discussion of *Sacco and Vanzetti*, a feature documentary by ALBA board member Peter Miller.

And this year's Susman Lecture, on November 14, will feature Karen Nussbaum, a pioneering labor leader and feminist (see page 3). Organized across race and class lines, 9to5 and inspired the movie *9 to 5* with Jane Fonda, Dolly Parton and Lily Tomlin, and also *9 to 5: The Story of a Movement*, by documentary filmmakers Julia Reichert and Steven Bogner. Also in the works is a tribute to labor reporter Art Shields, who covered the Spanish Civil War for the *People's World*, as well as the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti and the Battle of Blair Mountain. ▲

Richard Bermack, a documentary photographer based in the Bay Area, serves on ALBA's Program Committee. He is the author of The Front Lines of Social Change: Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade (2005).

Archie Brown Farewell Parade 10/31/38

Men gather in the plaza. After a time the bugle sounded, we fell into ranks nine abroad and proceeded to march. Overhead zoomed the air fleet. The little Moscas... came down almost to the tree tops. The chatos and bombers performed higher up....The people cheered. The crowds kept getting thicker and thicker.

Signs proclaimed *International brothers—*
we will never forget you.

We will fight to the last man—
so that all of us could be free from fascism
Our adopted sons—Spain loves you.

The people's salutation knew no bounds.

They showered us with flowers....

Girls broke through the lines and showered us with kisses. One would run out with tears on her cheeks—she would grab the first man and pull him down. Then several others broke through.

I never felt so good....After each attack we would bravely reform our ranks and plunge onward only to find that the enemy had pulled a...surprise attack on us. This kept on for several kilometers....

It was glorious—an ovation none of us shall forget.

—Peter N. Carroll



Bay Area Plaque for Nate and Corine Thornton

Lincoln vet Nate Thornton and his life partner, Bay Area activist Corine Thornton, have been memorialized on a bench below the Golden Gate in San Francisco. There are now 12 plaques on four benches to honor the union activists of the "Fort Point Gang," including Bill Bailey, another Lincoln vet.



Richard Bermack. Photo Jeannette Ferrary.

Faces of ALBA: Sarah Watling

By Aaron B. Retish

“Orwell and Hemingway Are Not the Whole Story.”



Sarah Watling is an award-winning author who recently published *Tomorrow Perhaps the Future*, in which she weaves together the stories of women whose lives were affected by the Spanish Civil War, including Martha Gellhorn, Josephine Herbst, Sylvia Townsend Warner, Valentine Ackland, Jessica Mitford, Nancy Cunard, Virginia Woolf, Salaria Kea, and Gerda Taro.

Your first book, The Olivier Sisters, is a group biography of the late Victorian era. What drew you to the Spanish Civil War?

I'd been interested in the 1930s and the Spanish Civil War for a long time, but I didn't start to think I had a subject for a book until I came across *Authors Take Sides on the Spanish War*, a pamphlet organized by Nancy Cunard in 1937. It was Cunard's way of framing the issue that really struck me: "Now, as certainly never before, we are determined or compelled to take sides." I wondered how you would justify a statement like that and what "taking sides" meant in practice for people facing up to the most pressing issues of their day. The pamphlet also raises the question of why authors in particular should have a responsibility—or right—to assume a position on a war in a foreign country. It's a product of a moment I was interested to explore: a period during the rise of fascism, and a period when many British writers were attracted by Communism, in which writers and journalists began to rethink the purpose of their work and reconsider their responsibilities as artists.

The fact that my subjects are all foreigners to Spain is significant: I wanted to explore the position of the "outsider" in particular. Partly because my subjects' foreignness to Spain complicated their attempts to show solidarity with the Republic and partly because I thought their "outsiderdom" made visible a position they would have recognized, or claimed, as writers. Writing can be a solitary and deeply absorbing business. How did their involvement in the Spanish war challenge that ability to retreat? Did it stimulate them in other ways? Could they maintain their independence, creative and otherwise once they had allied themselves to a particular side?

With the Olivier sisters, I had subjects whose lives spanned from the end of the Victorian era until the 1970s and who were extraordinary in some ways and fairly representative of their

class and gender in other ways. That gave me the opportunity to use their lives to trace the ups and downs of the women's movement over almost a century—to ask what that period promised women and what it actually delivered. With *Tomorrow Perhaps the Future* I wanted again to use some fascinating individual biographies to pursue broader questions—about polarization, solidarity, literature in dark times, for example—and to consider how a certain generation, or certain generations, lived them.

What do you think are the historical lessons of the Spanish Civil War? I'm asking because in the book you unabashedly link the politics of the figures in your book to current anti-feminist policies and an anti-democratic slide across Western Europe and the United States.

In the book I'm open about the fact that I was drawn to this history and these individuals because so much of their predicament felt contemporary to me. The women I follow in this book, and some men, are different from each other in many ways. But they had one thing, which I very much admire, in common: They were paying attention to developments in the world and were alert to what these developments could portend. An anti-democratic slide challenges those of us who want to live in democracies, and in safety and in peace, to do the same, and—as they did—to work out where we stand, what principles we're willing to defend, and specifically what we need to defend them from. They saw ideologies they fundamentally opposed gaining ground and observed fearful catastrophes on the horizon. But their sense of foreboding galvanized rather than paralyzed them.

Can you describe your research process?

At first, because my main characters were going to be writers, I thought I could focus only on published accounts. But I soon found myself in the archives searching for material that had fallen out of print or was private or unfinished or unpublished, in order to understand what being in Spain at that time *felt* like for my subjects and what meanings the Republican cause had for them. This book was partly written and researched during the lockdowns, so one particular thrill for me was when I finally got to see the physical booklet of poems Sylvia Townsend Warner wrote for her partner, Valentine Ackland, about their first visit to Spain in 1936. I'd read the poems already, but the booklet itself brought home both their exuberance and their intimacy. The booklet is handwritten and bound in decorative red paper: It was intended as a gift between lovers, not for publication. Warner wrote plenty of journalism about Spain, in which she acknowledged the destruction of the war and the ideals she believed the Republic represented; but the poems are a demonstration of how, for these particular foreigners, the revolution occurring in Barcelona was also experienced as a personal emancipation. There Warner and Ackland felt accepted—even embraced—as a queer couple in a way that was new for them.

It was a pleasure to get to know the work of the photographer Gerda Taro better, too; she has long been overshadowed by the reputation of her partner, Robert Capa, but her photos from Spain show her emerging as a talented and dedicated photo-journalist in her own right. It's haunting to think of what else she might have achieved, had her story not ended so tragically in Spain.

Both of your books spotlight women who represent larger historical and cultural movements. Josephine Herbst, Martha Gellhorn, Sylvia Townsend Warner, and others really come alive in Tomorrow Perhaps the Future. Your list of the top neglected books on the Spanish Civil War recently published in The Guardian urges us to go beyond reading the usual suspects (I'm looking at you, George Orwell and Ernest Hemingway). How does a focus on women and those who have been overlooked change the story?

Reading many histories, you would think that the past is only shaped by, and only acts upon, men. *Tomorrow Perhaps the Future* follows women who were politically engaged, courageous historical actors who had strong opinions about the future they wanted to see and were prepared to take action to bring it into being. It also follows women writers who understood how oppression operates, how certain voices are silenced, and who set out to draw attention to the struggles of those most likely to be omitted from the record. As you note, the legend of the war that we've inherited is very influenced by Orwell and Hemingway. But the more I read in my initial research into the war, the more I was surprised by the names that came up. Langston Hughes was someone I hadn't associated with the conflict but who spent a long period in Spain reporting on the war—and who pointedly noted that he met more white American writers in Madrid than he ever did at home: another example of the kinds of freedom and potential Spain offered various writers. I

had been reading Virginia Woolf for years but hadn't appreciated how brutally the war intervened in her life. It was fascinating to explore how it influenced her political thought, despite the fact that she didn't go to Spain. Adding these names to the picture makes it clearer how much this war became an inescapable issue in certain circles, how much it mobilized a generation, how it came to be the "last great cause." Orwell and Hemingway are not the whole story—far from it. Broadening the view gives us a richer understanding of history. It also shows us that those drawn to the Spanish Republic were bringing their own experiences of prejudice and of activism with them, as women, as Jews, as queer people or people of color or political radicals. That complicates the picture we have in fascinating ways. I should say that none of the writers in my book are Spanish, but that is because of my focus on outsiders and the attempts at solidarity made by foreigners—not because I think that the history of the Spanish Civil War could be properly told without Spanish voices.

Has writing about reporters and writers made you think differently about language, perspective, and the reproduction of experience for popular consumption?

There is a moment in Martha Gellhorn's novel *A Stricken Field*, which is set in Czechoslovakia but is really about Spain, in which a refugee rages at the protagonist, a journalist, for staring at their group "as if we were animals." After the Republic's defeat, Gellhorn was tormented by the fear that her work in Spain—which had given her such fulfillment—had not actually had any meaningful effect. That presented the deeply uncomfortable possibility that she had somehow benefited from the suffering in Spain when she had instead hoped to draw attention to it, and thus ameliorate it. The writers in *Tomorrow Perhaps the Future* hoped to serve the Republic and the "people of Spain" in their writing, but by writing they also ran the risk of drowning out the voices of those they hoped to support or of making themselves the story. It's a problem of allyship that hasn't gone away: How to amplify others rather than speaking for/over them?

Another of the things I discuss in the book is Gellhorn's rejection of objectivity as a guiding principle for her journalism, a position deeply influenced by the suffering she witnessed while reporting. I was also interested in how these writers responded to the disillusionment of 1939, when the Republic ceased to exist and they had to face the fact that, as Albert Camus put it, "one can be right and yet be beaten, that force can vanquish spirit ..." Josephine Herbst wrote that the 1930s was a period when "People cared. It was a decade when people believed in the possibility of their own powers." The defeat of the Republic, which led to the world war that all of them had feared, shook that faith terribly. Both Gellhorn and Herbst came to feel that the best they could do was ensure that a record of the suffering and the resistance survived. Herbst felt that the record was essential for keeping the possibility of protest alive. ▲

Aaron Retish, ALBA's Treasurer, teaches at Wayne State University.

"I've Never Stopped Thinking about Salaria Kea."

Catching up with Watt Awardee Catherine Wigginton Greene

By Gina Herrmann



In 1999, Catherine Wigginton Greene won ALBA's Watt Award with an essay on Salaria Kea, the only African American nurse to serve in the Spanish Civil War. Twenty-four years later, Wigginton is a successful novelist, filmmaker, and educational consultant whose work still focuses on the themes that drew her to Kea as an undergraduate at Coe College: racial justice, gender equity, and anti-fascism.

Catherine Wigginton Greenes' filmography includes the feature documentary *I'm Not Racist... Am I?* (2014) and *Look Deeper: Race*, a digital, interactive course on race and racism. She also works with Point Made Learning, a consulting firm focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion education, and leads interactive workshops on identity. Her first novel, *Rebecca*,

Not Becky, co-written with Christine Platt, is due out this December. Wigginton, who grew up in Denver, Colorado, holds a BA in History and Spanish and an MS in Journalism, and is working on her doctorate in Education. She lives in Washington, D.C. with her husband and three daughters. I spoke with her in May.

"I always felt committed to social justice and race, but the Lincoln volunteers—that was just next level."

What drew you to the Spanish Civil War? I always had an affinity for languages. I had lived in Italy with my family when I was a kid. I think that early exposure to a romance language made Spanish easy for me. But I don't remember all that much about Italy—I wanted my own travel story. I loved history in college, took a course on Spanish film, and had the opportunity to do a study abroad program in Sevilla. I was fascinated by the Spanish Civil War and the idea that Americans who were not in the military would travel to Europe to fight. It sounded so drastic. Would I ever be that brave? I always felt committed to social justice and race, but the volunteers... that was just next level. Next, I read Peter Carroll's book, and learned about Salaria Kea. I saw what Langston Hughes wrote about her. And I just wanted to tell her story. So I wrote my BA thesis in history about Salaria. I did research at Brandeis, where I found information about Salaria in Fredericka Martin's files. It felt very meaningful. And even though it was a long time ago, I have never forgotten about her. I've never really let this go. There are so many components to the story, the love story of Salaria and John O'Reilly. In fact, I have talked about it with my literary agent, but she thinks I should not write about Salaria because I'm white. Still, I've been thinking about what I might do with all this.

How did you become a filmmaker? After I got my BA, I wanted to be a journalist, but I did not know how to begin. My partner and I (he worked on political campaigns) were pretty dejected after the Kerry election. I decided I should follow through on my goal to get a graduate degree in journalism and got into Columbia University. After I graduated, I was hustling; walking dogs, copyediting, anything to pay the rent. Then I saw a posting for a job to write a blog for a brand-new filmmaking company that was doing a film on transracial adoption. I had good connections to the theme, because of work my mother had done and because my husband is Black, and I was serving as stepmother to his daughter. They wanted me to write blog posts about transracial adoption that would go viral—the idea of blogs going viral was still new at that time. Eventually I moved into a production role and the woman who owns the company became my mentor. I've been with them ever since.

Your filmmaking and educational work seem closely connected. All our films have an educational element. A teacher at a school in NYC had received a prestigious Kellogg grant to do a film about race but had no idea how to go about that. We connected with him and that's how we made *I'm Not Racist... Am I?*, which we continue to screen in educational settings around the US. The film shows how over the course of one school year, a diverse group of remarkable teens and their families plunge into a yearlong journey to get at the heart of racism. Through some tense and painful moments, we see how these difficult conversations begin to affect their relationships, and ultimately challenge them to look deep within themselves. By the end of their time together, we see these courageous young people develop stronger bonds, a greater resolve, and a bigger, more significant definition of racism than any of us ever imagined.

What new projects are on your work bench? I'm back in grad school, at a Doctor of Education program at George Washington University, where I'm doing research that draws on my years of observing how audiences respond to *I'm Not Racist... Am I?* My project involves "reimagining curriculum for the humanities," specifically looking at affect and emotion and pedagogy of discomfort, critical race theory, and the field of "difficult knowledge." This field holds that learning about some topics—for instance, civil war, communism, genocide, racism—can be a deeply emotional experience. We cannot say what outcomes are because the content is destabilizing. I've seen this first-hand with our film on racism. I was excited to see that there is actual terminology and theory that helps to explain and study what is going on with people experientially when they learn things that make them feel implicated or makes them feel shame or anger. ▲

Gina Herrmann teaches at the University of Oregon and serves on ALBA's Board.

To the Editors:

Thank you for posting the information about Paul Robeson. My mother's first husband, Gilbert Taylor, was a member of the International Brigades and was at Tarazona / Albacete in January 1938. In a letter dated 27 January 1938 to my mother, he wrote:

"We had a grand surprise yesterday: Paul Robeson suddenly turned up, with Mrs. Paul Robeson and Charlotte Haldane! They arrived just before lunch, and at half past two the whole camp paraded in their honour, and then for just over an hour Paul Robeson gave us a concert in the Church. Goodness, it was lovely. You never heard such applause and enthusiasm. He just sang the songs as comrades called out the names: some Russian, some English, some American, and one in Spanish—also one or two in a Negro dialect. He made a short speech too, telling us why he was here and promising to use his voice for Spain when he got back to England. Charlotte Haldane spoke too and presented the English Bazaar by people who had contributed to the IB Fund. Unfortunately, the whole thing was such a surprise, and they left so soon that it was impossible to write anything for them to take back to you."

Paul Robeson's visit to Spain was certainly a great morale booster for those who were fortunate enough to hear him sing.

— John Mehta

REFUGEES FROM McCARTHYISM

By Mark Derby

Bob Ford, who worked in Hollywood and fought in Spain and World War II, suffered relentless surveillance because of his radical past, as did his wife, Augusta Ain. In 1950 they moved to New Zealand—and never looked back.

4 February 1938

We just returned from Madrid. We had rather a good time except the last day when the fascists dropped 18 shells into town. There wasn't much damage or anyone seriously injured, but they dropped one right across the street from us... Madrid is a swell town and I like it very much. The only thing is the Spaniards will never get used to my size. They turn around in the street and stare at me.

Standing around six feet tall, Bob Ford was a distinctive figure even among his fellow members of the Lincoln Brigade. He arrived in Spain in May 1937 and enlisted in the Mooney Battalion as a Communist Party member and “antifasciste Americaine.” Details of his combat service are few but he is known to have taken part in the battles of Brunete from mid-1937 and the Ebro in late 1938. He was evidently ill or injured for much of that time, spending a week in hospital in September 1937, and the next five months in another at Valdeganga de Cuenca.

Nevertheless, he remained in Spain until ordered to depart, along with all other International Brigade members, in October 1938, and returned to the US bearing the Carnet de Honor awarded to combatants in the Republican Army's 35th Division.

Every week or so throughout his service in Spain Ford dashed off a postcard to “Nana and Bill,” his relatives in California. The rigours of wartime censorship ensured that the pictorial side of these cards is usually more eloquent than the few words he wrote on the back. Ford recognised this himself, admitting that there was very little he was allowed to say about his own activities, although the cards, illustrated with images from Republican propaganda posters, were worth sending in their own right. “All over Spain you see posters like these,” he wrote

in October 1937, “issued by the Propaganda Ministry and the various political parties. The finest artists in Spain draw them – they are all very interesting and forceful. And some of them are of great beauty.”

“I unfortunately did not see or hear Paul Robeson while he was here,” he revealed in March 1938, “but I am glad that he came to Spain. I believe that he is a communist and if that is true, it is a good thing. We need men like him in the revolutionary movement as he is both popular and intelligent.”

“You ask me in all of your letters when I am coming home,” he wrote soon after his arrival in Spain. “I really can't say even if it wasn't for the war...” (and the next line is blue-pencilled, presumably by the military censor) “there are personal reasons that will keep me in Spain for a long time.” What those reasons were we can only surmise but a later card, sent in March 1938, makes clear his admiration for the country he had chosen to fight for. “This is a marvellous country and the Spanish are swell people, and when we have finished with the damn fascists it will be one of the best countries in the world.”

Urgent requests for cigarettes are a repeated theme in Ford's postcards from the civil war, along with anxious queries about his father. “I would like to get some late news,” he wrote in October 1937, “so I would know what my old man thinks of me being here.” Six months later he had still not heard from his father. “I don't know why his letters have not reached me, that is if he has written to me and put the correct address on the letters.”

Francis Ford, the father whose approval Bob evidently yearned for, was a well-known Hollywood actor and director who began making Westerns in the silent-movie era. His younger brother

Bob ensured that his postcards from Spain were deposited in the Auckland Museum

John developed a more illustrious career movie, making classics like *The Searcher* with John Wayne. Before his tall and rangy nephew left for Spain, his uncle cast him in a number of small parts in his films, and on his enlistment papers Bob gave his occupation as “cinema worker.”

Upon his return to the US, Bob Ford evidently made no attempt to call on family connections in the movie business to evade further military service. Like many another Lincoln Brigader he enlisted for WWII at an early opportunity and spent the next several years as a military policeman stationed in Europe. This was a posting for which he was ideally suited physically, since he looked huge and authoritative in an army greatcoat, although his disposition was fundamentally gentle and non-violent.

During the war Ford also married. Augusta Bebel Ain appeared quite unlike him in most respects – diminutive, myopic, with a shock of frizzy hair and a radical pedigree. Her parents were Russian Jewish immigrants who named her in honour of a German socialist orator who died the year she was born, and her family spent some years at Llano del Rio, a utopian socialist colony on the edge of the Mojave Desert. Despite their sharply differing backgrounds, Augusta and Bob remained soulmates for life, enduring many difficulties and disappointments.

In the late 1940s Augusta studied at UCLA Berkeley, writing a thesis on US folk music. She and Bob formed a student cell of the US Communist Party but soon realised that its other members were FBI informants. Both the Fords were subject to relentless state surveillance because of their radical pasts, and they soon chose to leave the US permanently. In 1950 they departed on a passenger liner, never to return. Why they chose to resettle in far-distant New Zealand, where they had no friends or relatives, is not known but they may have been influenced by reports of that country's progressive Labour government, first elected in 1936. If so, it must have been deeply disillusioning to find that the year before their arrival in New Zealand, Labour had been replaced by a very conservative, stridently anti-union government with close ties to the US administration.

Nevertheless, this odd and anomalous couple re-established themselves on Auckland's North Shore, and eventually made close friends there. Bob, who had received training after the last war as a lathe operator, took a job in a factory that made parts for the plumbing industry. He spent the rest of his working life travelling daily to this small firm, working at a machine intended for operation by a much smaller man. Augusta found a more fulfilling job teaching English, first at a local high school and then at Auckland Teachers Training College, where she exerted a profound and lasting influence on many of her students and colleagues. She further extended her cultural influence through a series of radio broadcasts on modern American literature and music, paying special attention to Black and feminist artists.



After some years of renting and saving they were able to buy a small house, sparsely furnished but lined with books. Its large windows drew attention to their lack of interest in cleaning them. Augusta was “an intellectual who utterly refused the job of housewife,” according to one of her former students. Yet she and Bob, while childless themselves, proved devoted babysitters to their neighbours’ children, willingly reading to them by the hour. They were also generous and

unconventional hosts, introducing a succession of New Zealanders to such exotic dishes as giant T-bone steaks, Mexican tamale pie and baked cheesecake, served with endless glasses of red wine and, one guest remembers, “ferociously strong coffee.”

Both the Fords smoked incessantly, and their spartan house was invariably acrid and unkempt but always filled with music, mostly from Bob's extensive collection of jazz 78 records. He enjoyed discussing art and politics with friends and neighbours in his slow-spoken, deep drawl, and he and Augusta played a small part in anti-apartheid protest activity. They were unusually generous despite their few resources, lending at least one young couple the finance they needed to buy their first home.

The couple showed no indication of wishing to return to the US and became naturalised New Zealand citizens in 1970. They appear to have never owned a car, and very rarely travelled at all, although they received occasional visits from US relatives such as Augusta's brother Gregory Ain, a well-known and controversial California architect who, like the Fords, had been subject to McCarthyite witch-hunting.

As they aged both the Fords' eyesight and hearing deteriorated, leaving them even more than usually isolated in their adopted country. By the early 1990s they could no longer remain in their house and were moved to a rest home where they occupied separate rooms. Bob Ford died within a few months of this move, and his wife lingered on until the following decade.

Whether the Fords ever regretted their decision to live in New Zealand is not known. Their life there appears limited and uneventful, although they inspired the admiration and affection of a circle of close friends. Although Bob apparently had no interest in maintaining contact with fellow veterans of the International Brigades, he ensured that his postcards from Spain were deposited in the Auckland Museum. Another memento of his service there held less value for him. While moving from the house he had shared with Augusta for almost 40 years, he retrieved his Republican Army revolver from a closet and flung it into overgrown waste ground behind his property, where it was never subsequently found. ▲

Mark Derby's biography of Doug Jolly, a New Zealand surgeon who served with distinction in the Spanish Civil War, will be published in June 2024.

When Did World War II Start? And When Will It End?

By James D. Fernández

Reflections inspired by Picasso's *Guernica*

Before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, James D. Fernández had agreed to visit Picasso's *Guernica* in Madrid with a group of students from the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts. The trip was canceled, and instead, he delivered a zoom lecture to the students about *Guernica* without *Guernica*, which we reproduce here, in two parts (conclusion in the December issue).

When does something, anything, begin?

When does something, anything, end?
These are the kinds of questions that would often get me in trouble as a kid. My school teachers weren't very interested in such fuzzy inquiries. And at home, my no-nonsense and always-occupied mom had a standard response to these sorts of Saturday-morning musings: "Jimmy: you're talking crazy again. Things start when they start, and they finish when they finish. Like this conversation; now go and play, I have things to do..."

These questions bother a lot of people because beginnings and ends are among the few things we usually feel most certain about. The details of whatever it was that happened between the start and the finish of something, *that* we might disagree about; *that* might be open to interpretation. But beginnings and endings? We tend *and we need* to carve those in stone. Literally. And we spend a good part of our lives marking and commemorating those rock-solid landmark certainties in our own trajectories, and in the trajectories of our families, communities, nations.

But let's stop for a moment, and put aside the Monday-to-Friday-nine-to-three certainties that have been chiseled into us like the Roman alphabet; let's channel our curious inner kids, on one of those lazy Saturday mornings, when we're not busy memorizing the Pledge of Allegiance or studying for a History quiz...

When does something, anything—a war, a love, a movement—actually begin?
When does something, anything, actually end?

On a picturesque campus in the Berkshires of western Massachusetts, there is a college chapel. And in that chapel, there is a bronze plaque dedicated to the Williams College faculty and students who died during World War II. And on that plaque, among the dozens of engraved names, places and dates of death, there is one entry that jumps out: "Barton Carter, Calaceite, Spain, 1937."

An American dying in World War II in 1937! And in Spain! Surely, this must be some kind of mistake...

Any schoolgirl will tell you that World War II began in Europe on September 1, 1939. Any schoolboy will cite December 7, 1941 as the day that World War II began for the United States. The men and women who, after that date, volunteered or were drafted to take part in World War II, would come to be celebrated as the "Greatest Generation," extraordinary people who made tremendous sacrifices and demonstrated great heroism in the effort to put down Fascism once and for all.

But Barton Carter? He died in Spain, four full years before Pearl Harbor, two long years before Hitler's invasion of Poland. Carter was a volunteer in what would come to be known—somewhat

inaccurately—as the Spanish Civil War. Though this so-called Civil War did pit Spaniard vs. Spaniard, the conflict quickly became international, as within days of the onset of the coup that unleashed the war, Hitler and Mussolini intervened on the side of the insurgent generals, and before long, the Soviet Union would come to the aid of the loyalist forces. To the chagrin of Spain's democratically elected government—and of antifascists all over the world—the UK, France and the US, in full appeasement mode, decided to remain neutral, and even imposed—and enforced—an embargo on the sale of arms to the Republic.

The war in Spain was felt with great force and immediacy in the US. In an unprecedented display of international solidarity, some 2,800 American men and women risked life and limb by traveling to Spain, to take up the fight against international fascism. These volunteers, eventually known as the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, were just the tip of the iceberg. Hemingway's now iconic portrait of an American participant in the Spanish Civil War in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* features a rugged and solitary WASP idealist from Montana. But most of the non-fiction volunteers emerged from vast, intensely mobilized communities, which were decidedly urban, working-class, and ethnic. For each man or woman who took the extraordinary step of volunteering in Spain, there were thousands who stayed behind, raising funds to send medical supplies to the besieged government, urging the FDR government to "Lift the Embargo Against



Loyalist Spain,” and doing their bit to “make Madrid the tomb of fascism.”

Between 1936 and 1939, Spain came to occupy a space in the US imaginary similar to the place held by Vietnam in the 1970s, or Syria in the 2010s, or Ukraine in the 2020s; a relatively small piece of far-away real estate that seemed like the point of collision and upheaval of all of the world’s major ideological tectonic plates. And for those three long years, all eyes were on Spain. And yet...

Exactly six months after Franco’s troops marched triumphantly into Madrid, Hitler invaded Poland and, according to most standard accounts, World War II was officially underway. The horrors of that war undoubtedly help explain why the memory of Spain was subsequently

eclipsed and almost forgotten in the US. But there were other forces in play in the immediate post-war period that would help transform how—and even if—Spain would be remembered.

At the time, many perceived the Spanish Civil War as being entirely of a piece with what subsequently came to be known as World War II. For starters, the Lincoln volunteers frequently and presciently depicted themselves as soldiers who in Spain were attempting to stave off another world war. In November of 1937, for example, volunteer Hy Katz would write home to his mother:

If we sit by and let them grow stronger by taking Spain, they will move on to France and will not stop there; and it won’t be long before they get to America.

Realizing this, can I sit by and wait until the beasts get to my very door—until it is too late, and there is no one I can call on for help? And would I even deserve help from others when the trouble comes upon me, if I were to refuse help to those who need it today?

In March of 1945, no less an authority than President Franklin Delano Roosevelt himself, in a private missive to a diplomat, would characterize the clear continuities he saw between the war in Spain and the rest of WWII:

Most certainly we do not forget Spain’s official position with and assistance to our Axis enemies at a time when the fortunes of war were less favorable to us, nor can we disregard the activities, aims, organizations, and public utterances of the Falange, both past and present. These memories cannot be wiped out by actions more favorable to us now that we are about to achieve our goal of complete victory over those enemies of ours with whom the present Spanish regime identified itself in the past spiritually and by its public expressions and acts.

Even a publication like *Stars and Stripes*, a semi-official organ of the US Armed Forces, would, in its European edition of July 1945, unhesitatingly affirm: “Nine years ago last week, the first blow was struck in World War II. On July 17, 1936, in the picturesque garrison town of Melilla, in Spanish Morocco, a Spanish general and his Moroccan regiments proclaimed civil war against the infant, five-year-old Republic and its government...”

From the vantage point of 1945 the general contours of how the Spanish Civil War was likely to be remembered into the future were clear: as part and parcel of the long struggle against international fascism. But a funny thing happened on the way to the Fifties...

Between 1945 and 1955, Francisco Franco managed to refashion himself completely. No longer an ally of the defeated Axis—in fact, he would claim that he had never really been such a thing—and invigorated by the chill of

Between 1936 and 1939, Spain came to occupy a space in the US imaginary similar to the place held by Vietnam in the 1970s, or Syria in the 2010s, or Ukraine in the 2020s.

the Cold War, Franco repackaged himself as a stalwart anti-communist, ruling over a strategic land mass at the corner of Africa and Europe. And it worked. If, for FDR, Franco had been a pariah ruler, for Truman and Eisenhower, the Generalissimo would become a crucial partner in the war between “freedom” and “communism.” Truman and Eisenhower effectively helped end the Franco regime’s ostracization from the post-war international community of nations. In exchange, the US got to build an archipelago of military bases on Spanish territory.

For Franco to go from being “Adolph’s Man in Madrid” to being “Ike’s Man in Madrid,” a lot of history would have to get rewritten, on both sides of the Atlantic. And so it was. Peter Carroll reminds us of how it was not until 1952 that the first US edition of George Orwell’s “Homage to Catalonia” was issued. Orwell’s book was a powerful indictment of how the

Communist Party had attempted brutally to squelch the social revolution that was unleashed in Spain in 1936, and Orwell’s anti-communist book quickly became a fixture of the Cold War canon. It didn’t seem to matter much to right-wing cold warriors that Orwell’s positions were, on the whole, far to the left of the official popular front communist stance during the Spanish Civil War.

And before long, in both Spain and the US, the Spanish Civil War could be talked about not as an opening bracket, a provisional beginning, for the antifascist World War II, but instead, as one of two things; 1) a self-contained exotic object, a kind of ethnic, fratricidal bloodletting, neatly bracketed and framed by its own deeply carved starting and ending dates [1936–39]; or 2) an early chapter of an entirely different story, the Cold War annals of communist mischief and perfidy.

But let us go back to the plaque in the chapel on the campus in the woods. From the vantage point of 1946, a community mourning loved ones lost in WWII could reasonably see fit to include Spanish Civil War dead in their tributes. Barton Carter’s name on that plaque in the chapel of Williams College in the woods of the Berkshires was right where it belonged. It just so happens that the answer to “When did WWII begin?” depends on where, when and to whom you ask the question. ▲

James D. Fernández is Professor of Spanish at NYU, director of NYU Madrid, and a longtime contributor to The Volunteer.

“We Can No Longer Teach Fascism as Something Safely Tucked Away in the Past. It’s a Present Danger.”

A New Book on American Fascism Then and Now

By Sebastiaan Faber

Has fascism arrived in the United States? Will it soon? Or has it been living among us for many years? These are the questions that drive the twelve essays gathered in *Fascism in America: Past and Present*, a new collection edited by Gavriel Rosenfeld and Janet Ward, two prominent historians of the Holocaust.

Gavriel Rosenfeld, who teaches at Fairfield University, currently heads up the Center for Jewish History in New York. Janet Ward, a professor at the University of Oklahoma, recently served as president of the German Studies Association and as an American Council on Education fellow at Yale University.

Your book combines essays that address urgent questions about the political present—specifically, how fascist Trumpism really is—with pieces on fascist movements in the United States, from the KKK and Oregon vigilantes to the “America First” movement. Who is your intended audience?

Janet Ward (JW): As academic historians, our default audience is normally academic. Yet here that’s not necessarily the case. We’ve always been aware that we operate in a concrete social and political context, of course. But since 2016 many of us have been compelled to consider more directly how our work can help sustain and protect democracy. That has also meant breaking down the barrier between academic and other audiences, as Timothy Snyder and others have done in recent years. Ultimately, speaking as a mother of teenagers, I would say that our intended audience is, through high school teachers, the generation of our children. The radicalization of American youth, especially during the Covid pandemic, is a worrisome

If we don't want the Holocaust commemorative project to fail, we have to teach it differently.

development, as our contributor Cynthia Miller-Idriss, who runs the Polarization and Extremism Research Lab (PERIL) at American University, recently pointed out on NPR. This is why we very much hope that teachers—like those who ALBA works with—will use the material from the book.

Gavriel Rosenfeld (GR): Beyond targeting a multi-generational scholarly and lay audience, we also wanted to pitch the book to people interested in both European and U. S. history. We're proud that scholars of German, Italian, and American history are represented in the volume. They bring a diverse set of perspectives to our topic.

You are both veterans of the field, but this feels like a new direction for you both.

JW: It's true that both Gavriel and I have been teaching Nazi Germany and the history of the Holocaust since the groundswell of interest in those topics in the US in the early 1990s, with the opening of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC and the appearance of Spielberg's *Schindler's List*. But now it's thirty years later, and the ground has shifted. If we don't want the Holocaust commemorative project to fail, we have to teach it differently.

What has changed?

JW: First of all, we've seen a right-wing radicalization of society. But we also have to account for the loss of first-person testimony, as the generation that lived through the Holocaust has been disappearing. The digitization of Holocaust memory has been crucial for upholding the historical record—but it can also reduce authenticity and be used to fabricate false evidence in the service of that same right-wing radicalization. The real shift, I think, is that we are no longer teaching the rise of mid-20th-century fascism as something safely tucked away in the past. Today, we're teaching it as a present danger. In old-style Holocaust education, we used to assume that people would become more tolerant because they learned its history or visited a historical site of an atrocity. When a globalized extreme right is working with great success to build an alternative way of viewing those sites of evidence, this can no longer be taken for granted.

GR: And while it's easy for us to think that Holocaust consciousness has been with us forever, it really is a recent phenomenon. Since the 1990s, the focus has been less on the way Hitler rose to power than on the expanding spectrum of victims of the Holocaust. That's an important moral and humanitarian agenda, to be sure. Today, though, we need to communicate a better understanding of how Holocaust education links to how liberal

democracies break down and how reinforcing their strength is linked to larger social movements, such as Black Lives Matter.



Many of your contributors identify the threats to democracy quite clearly in US history.

JW: Indeed. It's no coincidence that Linda Gordon's chapter on the Ku Klux Klan is called "The American Fascists." Bradley Hart's essay shows how elected US officials were directly recruited by fascism in the 1930s. Richard Steigmann-Gall writes about the Silver Shirts, an American-born fascism movement. Matthew Specter and Varsha Venkatasubramanian trace the history of "America First," a term whose prehistory most people are not familiar with. When the alt-right rally in Charlottesville in 2017 shouted "The Jews will not replace us," most people don't understand that this wasn't simply a phrase imported from Nazi Germany but one that drew on longstanding American traditions of antisemitism and anti-immigration.

GR: In addition to the historically focused chapters that Janet mentioned, other chapters address how the present-day discourse on fascism—the recent "fascism debate"—has shaped contemporary perceptions of our present political moment. Thomas Weber's and Ruth Ben-Ghiat's contributions directly discuss Trump's relationship to fascism. Marla Stone's essay addresses the debate about whether ex-President Trump's migrant detention centers on the U. S.-Mexico border were akin to "concentration camps." And my own essay on the counterfactual depiction of Nazis taking over America in recent big budget streaming series (*The Plot Against America*, *The Man in the High Castle*, etc.) shows how fears of fascism are pervading today's cultural discourse.



In the introduction you explain that the book was born out of several scholarly meetings, including a three-day seminar in Portland.

GR: This was at the German Studies Association meeting in 2019. Our goal was to compare historical Nazism with what was going in the United States at the time, in a first attempt to bridge the gap between scholars working on Germany and those working on the US.

It can't have been a coincidence that this happened three years into the Trump presidency. Geoff Eley, in the opening chapter, builds a nuanced case for the use of the term "fascism" to understand political phenomena in the

When we talk about American fascism and its origins, we are not discovering entirely unknown territory. It's just that now we have a more urgent political context

US and the world today. Still, as good historians, in your introduction you warn against “presentism,” the temptation to overemphasize the parallels between the past and the present at the expense of historical rigor.

GR: That's why it's so important that all twelve essays, each in different ways, focus on the actual historical origins of American fascism. Of course, we all grapple with the inevitable political aspects, not to mention the emotions, that come with the topic. But these are real debates in which our contributors take different positions. As editors, we've purposely avoided doing that. Instead, we have done our best to explain what those different positions look like, what the agendas are, and what's ultimately at stake.

Still, some of the central points of the debate may seem less than relevant to a non-academic audience. I'm thinking of the nitpicking about the precise definition of “fascism,” for example. Or the question of whether fascism should be considered a foreign import or a home-grown American ideology.

JW: I'd say that second question in particular is quite relevant beyond the academy. The notion that what gave rise to Nazi Germany is something extraneous to American identity is a stumbling block to understanding both German and American history. We now know, for example, that native-born American eugenics and immigration laws exerted influence on the genesis of Nazi war crimes in Germany. The same is true for the Nuremberg Race Laws that created the platform for those crimes, and which, as James Whitman and others have shown, were modeled on American race law. What happened in Nazi Germany and in the Second World War was not an outside danger that Americans overcame by becoming actively involved as Allies.

GR: At the same time, you can't overstate that argument either, because that might risk letting the Germans off the hook by ignoring what was specific to German history. It's a question of emphasis and balance. When we talk about American fascism and its origins, we are not discovering entirely unknown territory. It's just that now we have a more urgent political context for the public at large. The stakes are higher, and these debates have gained a new relevance.

Speaking of relevance: How do you imagine high school teachers addressing these topics in any of the states that have now adopted laws that ban the teaching of “divisive topics”? “The origins of American fascism” strikes me as pretty divisive.

JW: I, for one, think there are ways in which teachers can teach this material without running afoul of those new laws. For example, by focusing on first-person and historical newspaper sources and providing students with structured questions about those sources. Another approach that has long been successful in Holocaust museums is to understand history through the

first-person experience of a child. That's one way for teachers to steer clear of direct connections with partisan or politically divisive questions in the present—for example, who was on the right or wrong side in the storming of the Capitol on January 6, 2021.

You are both Germanists. What did you learn from your Americanist colleagues?

GR: I really appreciated how Bradley Hart challenged the deterministic underpinnings of the “good war” narrative—according to which American democracy was more or less destined to triumph over German fascism—by showing how an alarmingly large number of U. S. officials were sympathetic to Nazi ideas and betrayed American democracy by working with the Third Reich.

JW: I've learned a lot about the history of Black antifascist activism in the US, which Anna Duensing and Ousmane Power-Greene discuss in their contributions. I also learned from Alexander Reid Ross' analysis of the long history of vigilantism in Oregon.

The accounts from Black volunteers in the Lincoln Brigade we use in ALBA's professional development workshops show that African Americans' experience with segregation and racial terror in the US allowed them a much clearer understanding than most other Americans of the dangers of German, Italian, and Spanish fascism—and how to respond to it. As historians, what would you say is the best protection against the fascist threat? Is a principled defense of liberal democracy enough? Or is liberalism too easily tempted into complacency or complicity with fascism if it's not held to account by more militant forms of antifascism to its left?

GR: The connection between fascism and liberalism is a fascinating historical question. Is fascism an outgrowth of liberalism, or is it more rooted in the efforts of conservatives to torpedo the liberal system against the wishes of liberals? But it's not a question that our book really gets into.

JW: Well, if the final years of the Weimar Republic show us one thing, it's that arguments among the Left didn't help it respond to the rise of fascism in an efficient or effective way. That's a lesson we should probably heed.

GR: I'm very sympathetic to the idea that militancy has to be a part of the response, and yet I want to maintain an open mind about the complications. Looking at all these chapters about the 1930s, I'm heartened by the fact that, at least in the Popular Front era, liberals and leftists did work profitably together to stop fascism in its tracks. ▲

Sebastian Faber, the chair of ALBA's Board, teaches at Oberlin College.

BRENDAN GILLIS: “THE EFFORT TO USE STATE POWER TO RESTRICT WHAT TEACHERS CAN SAY AND DO IN THE CLASSROOM IS UNPRECEDENTED.”

By Sebastiaan Faber

The Right’s culture war on schools, universities, and history teachers—thinly disguised as a crusade against straw men like “divisive concepts” and “critical race theory”—is showing no sign of letting up. According to a tracking project at the UCLA Law School, between September 2020 and July 2023, “a total of 214 local, state, and federal government entities across the United States have introduced 699 anti-Critical Race Theory bills, resolutions, executive orders, opinion letters, statements, and other measures.” The chilling effect on teachers has been palpable.



Brendan Gillis, a historian of the colonial United States and the British Empire, currently oversees teaching and learning initiatives at the American Historical Association (AHA), the largest membership association of professional historians in the world. In his role at the AHA, Gillis keeps close tabs on the challenges that history teachers across the United States face today. He’s part of the AHA’s “Freedom to Learn” initiative, through which the organization responds to the new legislation and provides resources to affected teachers. This summer, Gillis headed up the AHA’s first-ever standalone professional development workshop for 40 high-school educators. I spoke with him in late July.

Why are you offering this workshop now?

Given how fraught things have become in the education space and seeing that these issues have attracted the interest of some nefarious actors, we think it’s important to create opportunities that are free or affordable for teachers.

Nefarious?

That’s too strong a word. I’ll say that some groups working to reshape state education policy are driven by agendas that are beyond just professional. Look, history has always been controversial, and the way we teach it has always had a politics. But since 2020, after Trump’s 1776 Commission and the emerging awareness that “critical race theory” as a buzzword could mobilize political energy on one side of the spectrum, history and civics have become points of leverage in national politics. This means that there’s a lot of money funneling into the space of history education. Of course, there are plenty of good organizations that are focused on equipping teachers with the skills, knowledge, and support they need to do this work. But there are also other groups who claim to be offering professional development when in reality they seek to weigh in on the culture wars. There’s a sense on the right, overlapping with some intellectually conservative figures in pedagogy circles, that this is a moment of crisis—that the left-wing “woke” control of education schools has gone too far, and that we need some kind of dramatic intervention to rebuild education from the ground up.

Are they getting any traction?

In some places they certainly are. The flagship example is South Dakota, which completely overhauled its state standards for social studies. Normally, these standards are developed by professionals: committees of teachers, historians, and community leaders. Last year, the State Board of Education opted to throw out a revised draft that had been developed and vetted over many months. They brought in a consultant, a retired Hillsdale professor, to totally rewrite the state social studies standards from the ground up. It was a structural overhaul with huge implications for local school districts, who will now have to reassign or retrain teachers. Among other things, the new standards downplay South Dakota history. Yet despite a huge outcry in public hearings, where everyone from teachers’ unions to tribal nations came out against the new standards, they were approved anyway. To train teachers in these new standards, the South Dakota Department of Education has sought out more conservative organizations.

I knew about “divisive concept” laws, but I hadn’t realized standards have also become a target.

The divisive concept laws were in many cases the first front in the campaign to overhaul public education. State standards are next. These documents establish benchmarks against which to evaluate student learning at each grade level. In Virginia, the State Board of Education attempted a radical overhaul of the entire framework for history and social studies. In August 2022, the board



rejected a revised draft developed through the usual democratic and inclusive process. The state superintendent of instruction hired a consultant to produce a hastily compiled replacement version, which ended up borrowing extensively from the conservative American Birthright model standards from Civics Alliance. In Colorado, a motion to replace the state's social studies standards with American Birthright failed by one vote. Something similar happened in Ohio, too, where a proposed House bill would have created a separate, politically appointed committee whose sole responsibility was to pester the state Board of Education to adopt an Ohio variant of American Birthright. The bill would have given final say over how the state's public schools teach history to the legislature itself.

Has this new landscape, in which the history field has become such a central focus of political debate, created dilemmas for an organization like the AHA? What have the internal debates been like?

This isn't entirely new ground. Our members have often been on the committees who are involved in writing state standards, which really came into being in the early '90s. The AHA has criteria and guidelines for state standards development that have gone through revision

several times over the last few years. Still, the new context is forcing us to rethink our role. There have, of course, been lots of conversations about how we should get involved and in what ways. As an organization, we are deeply committed to academic and intellectual freedom. We don't want to tell states what history they have to teach. We don't want to force teachers to teach history a certain way.

It's always been the mission of the AHA as a professional organization to support historical understanding wherever it's taking place. This means that the AHA, and professional historians generally, have always had a commitment to shaping how history education happens at the local, state, and national level. But because of the shifting politics in the last few years, many of us on staff and in the leadership have felt that we need to get involved in new kinds of ways to make it clear that we, as professional historians, are supportive of the work that K-12 teachers do because they are historians as well.

What we're seeing with divisive concept legislation, as well as efforts to use state standards to reorient public education, is unprecedented. This is really an effort to use state power to restrict what teachers can say and do in the classroom. As the AHA, we want to make sure that teachers have the training, the knowledge, and the

support they need to teach professionally, to share historical knowledge and habits of mind with their students—without interference from people who are trying to restrict their freedoms.

What are the limits to what the AHA thinks it should do or can do, and where does it defer to other organizations who have challenged the new legislation, such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) or the American Association of University Professors (AAUP)?

Ultimately, the first question we always ask before we even think about intervening or issuing a statement is: Is this about history? The AHA has been known to sign on to statements that other organizations have put out more generally about academic freedom. We are often called on to comment about other efforts to intervene in university governance. But if it's not something that clearly relates to the discipline of history and the work of historians, we try to stay out of it. We're not an academic freedom organization. We're not a civil liberties organization, even though many of our members may feel a certain way on those issues.

Jim Grossman, AHA's executive director, was an early and vocal critic of divisive concepts legislation. He pointed out that

these laws, as written, would make some of the very basic work that we as historians and educators do illegal. For example, the Florida Board of Education, in a document explaining how the “Don’t Say Gay” law applies to K-12 education, said that teachers from kindergarten through sixth grade could not say anything about sexual orientation. But when they revised and expanded this rule after a legal challenge, the way in which they stipulated how high school teachers are supposed to avoid questions of gender and sexuality was incredibly broad. The revised policy said that teachers can only address gender and sexuality in contexts where the state standards mandate that you do so. Florida’s state standards in history rarely state how gender and sexuality intersect with major events and developments. So, we issued a statement that raised a series of questions: Does this mean that when you’re talking about the American Revolution, you can’t mention the marriage between John and Abigail Adams? Is it forbidden to bring up rugged masculinity when you talk about Teddy Roosevelt? The state Board of Education members responded rather dramatically: “Why are historians trying to sexualize children?”, a state Board of Ed member tweeted. Our point, of course, wasn’t that you’re necessarily going out of your way to try to ban people from teaching foundational elements of history, but that the way that the policy is written, if interpreted literally, would forbid teachers from doing this work.

Critics say that even if these anti-divisive concept laws will ultimately be defeated in the courts, they are designed to have a chilling effect on teachers. Are they?

Absolutely. It depends a lot on the context in which someone is teaching. Teachers in Florida are really concerned, especially younger teachers, because they often just don’t know what they can or can’t teach. The controversy surrounding the state’s new African American history standards over the past couple of weeks is a case in point. Many people are left more confused than they were before these standards were put out there. In public statements, some Florida education officials make it clear they are ready to root out teachers who are not toeing the line. This hostile environment has had clear consequences. The Rand Corporation, for example, issued a study that found statistically significant evidence of a chilling effect, especially around

histories of gender and race. There was a similar study from a research group at UC Riverside that documented alarm and concern among many teachers about how politics are increasingly intersecting with the work that they do. One of the clear takeaways is that many school districts are dropping difficult topics rather than court controversy. The easiest option is just not to teach anything with any connection at all to current events.

What’s most stunning to me is the general distrust of teachers and professional historians, with politicians and parents across the country dismissing experts out of hand.

Part of the issue is that we’re not having enough conversations that bring people together. Sometimes it seems we’re living in different realities. For example, there’s been a spate of state bills trying to mandate that public universities teach introductory history courses that include a range of founding documents. These are presented as a sort of punitive measure based on an assumption that historians and teachers don’t want to teach American history. But if you’ve ever met a historian or history teacher, you’ll know that we’re generally willing to talk your ear off about these things: We want *more* time in the classroom to deal with the Revolution, we *want* to nerd out over the Constitution and the founding documents. So, it seems really absurd to have state bills coming forward insisting that we need to be forced into doing that.

In North Carolina, the state not only mandated what documents be taught but also stipulated they have to be part of a final exam to be graded in a way that we, as educators, know to be ineffective. When university faculty objected to the bill for this reason, Fox News picked up the story and said: “North Carolina faculty no longer want to teach the Constitution.” Conversely, if you ask Democrats, you’ll find many are convinced that Republicans don’t want to teach the history of slavery. But many Republicans believe slavery should be part of any history course. When you look at the polling data, there is actually much more of a consensus when it comes to history than many pundits would like to admit. What we are concerned about, as the AHA, is groups operating outside of that consensus trying to seize this moment as an opportunity to enact radical change.

Are you making progress?

The heartening thing is that there are actually a lot of elected officials who are open to what professional historians have to say. When it comes to K-12 education policy, there’s a lot of distrust of teachers and the way in which they go about their work. But many officials are less dismissive of academics. So, if a professional historian comes in and says: “What you’re trying to force these teachers to do is unteachable,” they’ll listen in a way that they might not if it’s just the teachers themselves. If there’s a lesson that I’m preaching right now, it’s one of solidarity. Teachers in many contexts are feeling a lot of pressure. But many potential allies are keeping too silent. There’s a lot we can do to support each other in just preserving the basic professional integrity of our work in the face of autocratic efforts to interfere with what we do in the classroom. ▲

Sebastiaan Faber, who serves as chair of ALBA’s Board, teaches at Oberlin College.

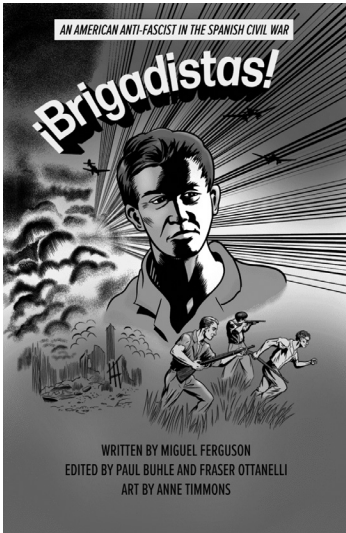
Are you the Grandchild of an ALB Veteran? We Need You!

We want to hear from the second generation of ALB descendants! Send us a short (1-2 minute) video clip talking about your memories of an ALB grandparent or what it means to carry on their legacy. For submission details, write to info@alba-valb.org.

Book Reviews

¡Brigadistas! An American Anti-Fascist in the Spanish Civil War, by Miguel Ferguson. Edited by Paul Buhle and Fraser Ottanelli. Art by Anne Timmons. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2022. 116 pp.

Reviewed by Robert S. Coale



Graphic novels are increasingly popular conduits for approaching historical subjects on both sides of the Atlantic. Readers may recall “Paul Robeson in Spain,” which appeared in June 2009 of *The Volunteer*, as a harbinger of this new mode of dramatizing the past. In Spain, several artists have published extremely well received works, such as Carlos Giménez’s *Paracuellos*, Antonio Altarriba’s *El*

arte de volar (*The Art of Flying*), Antonio Zapico’s *La balada del Norte* (*The Ballad of the North*), or Pablo Durá’s *La Brigada Lincoln*, which narrates the experience of American volunteers in Spain.

It was only a question of time before more U.S. authors joined this trend. Miguel Ferguson has taken up the challenge in his graphic novel loosely based on the life of Lincoln volunteer Abe Osheroff. The crisp black and white drawings are the work of Anne Timmons. Former ALBA board chair Fraser Ottanelli has penned a succinct introduction, while Paul Buhle contributes an afterword.

The effort to educate a wider American audience about these men and women who crossed the Atlantic between 1936 and 1938 to fight a first battle against fascism in Spain is laudable. Although the three thousand or so American men and women were a varied and colorful group, one difficult to portray, this graphic novel accomplishes its objective. The author has managed to include several of the emblematic episodes of Lincoln history, such as the *S.S. Bremen* incident in New York, the sinking of the *Ciudad de Barcelona*, Oliver Law as commander of the Lincoln battalion, and even Ernest Hemingway at the Hotel Florida (although it is mistakenly located in Barcelona).

Still, the author’s decision to merge the experiences of several veterans into Abe’s story, while good for narrative efficiency, hurts the novel’s historical accuracy. The main character

seems invincible—a superhero of sorts who vanquishes the villain Nazi German officer Streicher in a personal duel, with hardly a Spanish fascist mentioned in the script. The superhero also has a noble romantic interest: his girlfriend, who resented being left behind in New York, ultimately volunteers to join Abe in Spain, serving as a nurse. Along the way, the author makes numerous erroneous geographical references and mistakes in Spanish. Worse, he falls into the old mythic script that portrays all those in the IB ranks as “idealists and writers,” more amorphous dreamers than the political activists that many of them were. Frankly, this does more to tarnish the image of the brigaders than the factual mistakes in the text. Abe’s comrades in the novel are whiners.

While it is true that American volunteers were known to gripe, the Lincolns were nevertheless disciplined activists. They understood the value of following orders. They withstood the shortages in weapons and supplies of the beleaguered Spanish Republic. They became stalwart elements of the Spanish Popular Army in its 33-month long struggle against a coup led by a rebellious fascist officer corps with the generous assistance of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, Spanish landowners, monarchists and the Catholic Church. In this sense, the whining volunteers in this novel who constantly complain of lack of food, weapons, and sleep—and who oddly never quite seem to don uniforms—are quite the opposite of the determined antifascists of 1937.

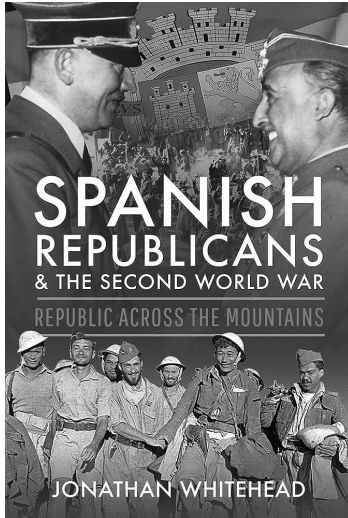
Of course, this work is fiction, so it may be unfair to hold such a text to the rigors of historical study. Quoting Osheroff, Ferguson says he seeks to “bend but not break the rubber band of truth.” In the end, the story of the Lincolns in Spain may just be too vast (or complicated?) for a 100-page graphic novel. Yet because his good intentions lead the author to attempt to squeeze too much into the book, the storyline strays from important issues. Perhaps a more effective option would have been to limit the story to the authentic Abe Osheroff, a great activist and humanitarian who did not need to be reflected as a comic book superhero. Still, if this graphic novel serves to kindle interest in the Spanish Civil War and the International Brigades among a wider, younger audience, its publication must be saluted. ▲

Robert S. Coale is Professor of Hispanic Studies at the Université de Rouen-Normandie in France and a member of the Board of ALBA.

◆
The production of this issue has been sponsored by Jay and Judy Greenfield with a generous donation in memory of Sergeant Herman “Hy” Greenfield (1915-38), who was killed in action at Seguro de los Baños in February 1938.
◆

Spanish Republicans and the Second World War: Republic Across the Mountains, by Jonathan Whitehead., Philadelphia and South Yorkshire: Pen and Sword Books, 2021. 304 pp.

Reviewed by Robert S. Coale



Back in 1996 at a ceremony around the International Brigade monument in Barcelona, Lincoln vet Len Levenson openly wondered if anyone had studied what had happened to the Spanish comrades who had sought refuge in France in 1939. Of course, the subject is studied in France and the first Spanish authors to write about it were Antonio Vilanova, *Los olvidados* (The

Forgotten Ones) in 1969 and Eduardo Pons Prades, *Republicanos españoles en la Segunda Guerra Mundial* (Spanish Loyalists in the Second World War) in 1975, but neither book has ever been translated. In this sense, Jonathan Whitehead's text fills a void as the first book in English that addresses the trials and tribulations of the Spanish Republicans and their continued fight against fascism after their loss in 1939.

This sweeping 300-page text is divided into twenty-five chapters that chronologically touch on the experiences of the exiled Spanish from 1939 up until the failed attack across the Pyrenees into the Val d'Aran that the Spanish Communist resistance hoped would trigger a popular uprising against the Franco regime and precipitate an Allied invasion of Spain late in 1944. It mentions, for example, the participation of thousands of Spaniards as soldiers in Allied units like the French Foreign Legion or the Leclerc Division or as members of the French Underground. It also includes those who were imprisoned and murdered in Nazi death camps, amongst other destinies.

In the end, despite being a very appealing subject, the book unfortunately does not deliver. Historical errors stemming from the occasional use of untrustworthy sources and an excessive reliance on newspaper references make for a frustrating read, peppered with typographical errors and a few truly outlandish assertions, such as the claim that General Philippe Leclerc would have released his famed Second French Armored Division to participate in the Val d'Aran attack. Furthermore, the author includes an odd chapter dedicated to Franco's Blue Division, a volunteer Falangist corps that embodied the antithesis of the Loyalist struggle, sent to bolster the Germany Army's Eastern front against the

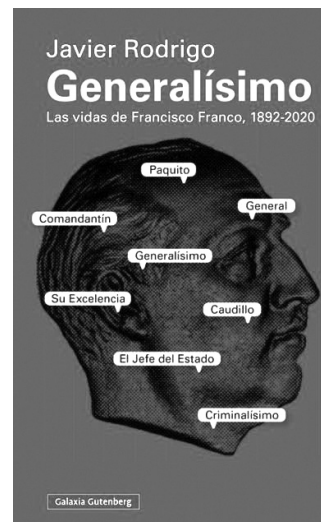
Red Army. It's a subject that is out of place in this volume.

While this book may prove useful for readers who are unable to access the rich Spanish and French bibliography on the matter, it should be read with caution—perhaps strictly as a possible introduction rather than the definitive work on the subject. ▲

Robert S. Coale is Professor of Hispanic Studies at the Université de Rouen-Normandie in France and a member of the Board of ALBA.

Generalísimo. Las vidas de Francisco Franco, 1892-2020, by Javier Rodrigo. Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg, 2022. 494 pp.

Reviewed by Jorge Zirulnik



The purpose of Javier Rodrigo's "metabiography," he states in the introduction, "is not to reconstruct the trajectory of the Caudillo's life, but to show how it has been explained." The assumption, in other words, is that Franco's biographical project has come full circle.

Rodrigo's decision to organize his book around eight of the nicknames Franco received over the course

of this life—from "Paquito" to "Caudillo," "Generalísimo," and "Criminalísimo"—comes across as a bit superficial. Still, his overview of more than fifty biographies is certainly useful. He includes hagiographies like those of Arrarás (Franco's first biographer), Galinsoga, De la Cierva, or Crozier; critical biographies like those by Fusi or Bachoud—one of the only two women biographers, although, strangely, Rodrigo omits the other one, Ashford-Hodges—and some of the best-known biographies such as Paul Preston's magnum opus and the more recent, revisionist take by Stanley Payne and Jesús Palacios. Rodrigo also discusses books that, without being full-blown biographies, make important contributions to our knowledge of Franco's life, such as those by Tusell, Cazorla, or Moradiellos.

Rodrigo's close to 500-page tome includes its own detailed account of Franco's life and afterlife, from his birth in El Ferrol in 1892 and his death in Madrid in 1975, to his exhumation from the Valley of the Fallen in 2019. Still, rather than a definitive biography in its own right, the book reads like a summary of the kind that ChatGPT might come up with. This prompts three observations:

First, Rodrigo's book does not supersede the biographies he discusses. We cannot dismiss the pleasure that reading a well-constructed narrative of a life can provide, whether it's apologetic (like De la Cierva's or Crozier's) or critical, like Preston's. Biographies, after all, are a literary genre.

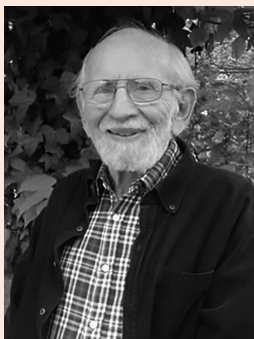
Second, Rodrigo glosses over an essential aspect of every biography: the relationship between the biographer and his or her subject, which often shapes the entire text. Each biographer approaches the figure of Franco from a different cultural, ideological, or historical perspective. Much like in a novel, there is a constant dialectic between narrator and character. A metabiography that captures this aspect of the genre much better is John Lukacs' *The Hitler of History* (1997).

Third, the reader of a metabiography like this one expects the author to help distinguish between fact and myth. In Rodrigo's book, however, the reader comes away with the impression that every single one of the previous biographers helped construct Franco's myth, so that Rodrigo is left the task of writing the definitive, intensely documented account of Franco's life. Here, too, it would have been more useful to follow Lukacs' example and, instead of Rodrigo's exhaustive approach, present a more conceptual analysis based on a smaller number of examples.

The good news is that the field is by no means sewn up yet—it's far from *atado y bien atado*, as Franco assured the Spaniards his legacy was. Rather, the window remains open for more imaginative metabiographical projects to rival Rodrigo's comprehensive, but ultimately cold, approach. ▲

Jorge Zirulnik is a psychiatrist and amateur Hispanist. His main field of research is intellectual creativity, with a focus on thinkers and writers under totalitarian regimes. He lives and works in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Translation by Sebastiaan Faber.

Dan Bessie (1932-2023)



Dan Bessie, who passed away on July 1 in Brantôme, France, was born in rural Vermont, where his parents, Lincoln vet Alvah Bessie and Mary Burnett, eked out a hardscrabble existence during the Great Depression. The family lived in New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and finally, Southern California. Fol-

lowing high school, Dan became a shipboard steward in the merchant marine, a longshoreman, and an automobile assembler. Dan worked at various factory jobs to support his wife and children until 1956 when he realized his childhood dream—to become a cartoonist.

Following an apprenticeship at MGM Studios working on Tom & Jerry, Dan enjoyed a more than forty-year career in the industry, animating TV commercials and Saturday morning children's programs, like *The Marvel Superheroes*, *Spiderman*, and *Linus the Lionhearted*. When Dan transitioned to live action, he directed a series of patient advice films for doctors' offices. Between 1970 and 1975, he ran his own studio, producing films for schools and libraries, and co-produced the feature *Executive Action* (starring Burt Lancaster) that dramatized the assassination of JFK.

Dan relocated to Santa Cruz, California, in 1978, and until 1995, he continued to write and direct educational and TV films, including the highly successful *Peter and the Wolf*, featuring Ray Bolger. Dan wrote and directed *Hard Traveling* (1986), a feature film that recalled an incident in his mother's life. Dan wrote two memoirs: *Rare Birds: An American Family* (2000) and *Reeling Through Hollywood* (2006). In 2002, he published his father's *Spanish Civil War Notebooks*, which have just appeared in Spanish translation.

Norah Chase (1942-2023)



Norah Chase, who died on May 28, 2023, was the daughter of Homer Chase, a Lincoln veteran from New Hampshire. Norah worked as a professor of English at Kingsborough Community College for many years. In the 1980s, she wrote her Ph.D. thesis

about her grandmother, Elba Chase Nelson, who ran for governor of N.H. on the CP ticket three times in 1934, 1938, and 1940; she successfully sued the FBI for free access to her grandmother's files.

Norah leaves her daughter, Gabrielle, and many friends. The lives of her father and uncle, Homer and Joseph Chase, are told in *Two Communist Brothers from Washington, New Hampshire and their Fight Against Fascism*, by Donald Forbes.

In the photograph above, taken in 1948 by Sam Schiff, a six-year-old Norah appears with her grandmother, Elba Chase Nelson.

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED FROM 05/01/2023 TO 07/31/2023

BENEFACTOR (\$5,000 AND ABOVE)

The Puffin Foundation • Jay & Judy Greenfield in memory of Hy Greenfield

SPONSOR (\$1,000-\$4,999)

Hila & Gerry Feil • Jeffrey Heisler in memory of Vivienne & Irving Heisler • Carla F. Wallace & Lisa Osanka in memory of Fawzy Sabri Al Nabulsi, Malih Al Kharuf, Najati Sidqi, and Youssef Naquib

SUPPORTER (\$250-\$999)

Joshua Barnett • Samuel A. Evans • Robert A. Fitzgerald in memory of Daniel Fitzgerald • Albert Gorn • Paul Kessler in memory of Freda Tanz • Geraldine Nichols & Andres Avellaneda • Jefry Rosmarin in memory of Susan Richter • Todd Trescott in honor of John “Johnnie Tricks” Trcka • Josephine & Henry Yurek in memory of Steve Nelson

CONTRIBUTOR (\$100-\$249)

Mark Asquino in memory of Albert Lahue • Jeff Balch in honor of Peter Glazer, Bruce Barthol and the Halls • Scott Benson • Steve Birnbaum • Paula Braveman in honor of Bruce Barthol • Sydney Clemens in memory of Helen Levitov Sobell, my mother who led the fight to save the Rosenbergs • Rachel Cummins • Yolanda de Vicente • Rob & Julie Edwards in memory of Arthur Lutz • Kathy Everly • Paul V. Fitzgerald in memory of Daniel Fitzgerald • Lola Gellman in memory of Isaiah Gellman • Kristin Glen • Edward & Priscilla Goldson • Anne Gordon • Annette & Ronald Halpern in memory of Joseph Isaac Siegel • Peter D. & Carolyn Hartzman in honor of Jack Hartzman & May Levine Hartzman • William A. Hazen • Stanley Heinricher • Linda Jimenez in memory of Rose Glassman Jimenez • David Kerns • David S. Klein • Erik Kooyer • John Lamperti • Rachael Lorenzo • June & Peter Loskutoff • Henry Lowendorf in memory of George Watt • Karla & Arthur Lutz • Dennis Mar in memory of Coleman Persily • Margaret Matlin • Lisa McGurrin in memory of Vincent Lossowski • Robert Nelson & Marguerite Renner • Mike Nussbaum • Michael J. Organek • Michael Podolin in memory of Si Podolin • Paula Rabinowitz • Maria Cristina Rodriguez • Suzanne & Alan Jay Rom in memory of Norah Chase, Samuel S. Schiff & Isabelle P. Schiff • Constanca Romilly in memory of Esmond Romilly • Susan Sadjadi in honor of Armin Heurich • Daniel Schiller • Arnold Schlanger • Marc Shanker • Luise S. Stone in memory of Ely Joseph Sack • Paul & Valerie Taylor in memory of Robert Taylor • Scott J. Thomas • Jaime Veve in honor of Muhammad Najati Sidgi • Mike Wehrle • Lucy Weinstein in memory of Morris Kornblum (aka Martin K. Balter) • Sydney O. Williams in memory of Al & Freda Tanz

FRIEND (\$1-\$99)

Julia M. Allen • Margarita Asencio-Lopez • Michael Bailey • Marilyn Barton • Judith Berlowitz in memory of Fredericka Imogen Martin • Michael Bichko • Sam Bisno • Scott Boehm • John & Susan Boland • Garrett Brown • Paul & Mari Jo Buhle • Alain Bujard • Marion Burns • Dean Burrier • Harold Bush in memory of Victor Tiship • James Cameron • Barbara Caress • Ted Cloak • Muriel Cohan • Barry & Naomi Cooper in memory of Sol Zalon • Dydia Delyser in memory of Abe Osheroff • Sean Dixon-Gumm in honor of Lorraine Scripture • Ric Doringo • Deborah Edel • Jerald Feldman in memory of Pincus Kaplinsky • Herbert L. Fox in memory of Elizabeth Fox-Wolfe • Joshua Freeman • Lucy Fried • Paul Gamer in memory of Selma Gamer • Karl Garman • Rochelle Gatlin • Marc Goldstein in memory of Maynard Goldstein, VALB • Mary Goldstein in honor of Allan Goldstein • Francisca Gonzalez-Arias • Paul Gottlieb • Wayne Grachow • Carla Hagen • Andrew Haimowitz • Angela Halonen • Mary Jill Hanson in memory of Irving & Freda Weissman • Timothy F. Harding • Maria Hernandez-Ojeda • Ann F. Hoffman • Charles Idelson • Joan Intrator • Ethel & Keith Kirk • Fran Krieger-Lowitz • John Larson • Eric Lessinger • Adam Levin • Beth Lewis in memory of Celia Lewis • Cathy Campo & Kevin Lindemann in memory of Manny Hochberg • Marlene Litwin • Blas Ruiz & Lorena Gonzalez • Brion Lutz in memory of Frederick Lutz • Marilyn Lynds in memory of Arthur Lutz • James Massarello • Philip Mazzone • Molly McLaughlin • Brian Mitchell • Paul B. Mitchell • Matthew Murtagh • Martha Nencioli • John Nichols in memory of Clarence Kailin • Sergi Nicolau Ferrer • Susan Nobel • Karen Nussbaum • Michael O'Connor • David Pauletti in memory of Susan Richter • Ronald D. Perrone • Aris Polyzos • Louise Popkin • Robert Portune • Nieves & Manuel Pousada • David Ravenscroft • Chris Rhomberg • Carlos Rial • Álvaro Rodríguez Guillén • Miki Rosen • Francisco Rubio • Sylvia Scofield • Francis Nash & Sherron R. Biddle • Thomas Silverstein • Elsie Solecki in honor of Stephen Zielinski • Laura Stevens • Weir Strange • Fred Stuart • Ethel Sussman in honor of Al Socolov • Pedro Luis Sánchez • Margaret Tanttila • Arlene Tyner • Ricardo Villreal in memory of Oliver Law • Mark Wallem • David Warren & Susan Crawford • Andrew Weissman in memory of Helene Propp Weissman • Thomas Wineholt • Jason Lustig & Amy Yamashiro in memory of Dave Smith • Kenneth Zak

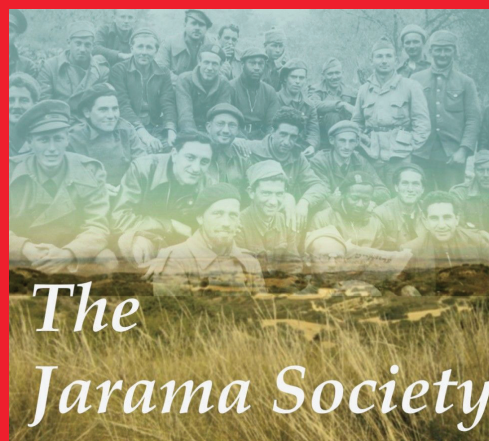
The Volunteer

c/o Abraham Lincoln Brigades Archives
239 W. 14th Street, Suite 2
New York, NY 10011

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
PERMIT NO. 1577

MAKE ANTI-FASCISM PART OF YOUR LEGACY!

What you leave to friends and loved ones—and the causes you champion—are ways of expressing your hopes and dreams for the future. As you make your plans, please consider joining the Jarama Society by including ALBA in your will or living trust or naming us as a beneficiary of your estate. ALBA accepts legacy gifts in any amount. Help us to continue and expand our educational mission of teaching future generations about the sacrifices made by the Lincoln Brigade in their fight against the global threat of fascism. Your gift to ALBA will help ensure that today's young people learn about the experiences of volunteers in Spain, as well as their broader dedication to social justice at home.



If you have questions or would like to discuss your options, please contact ALBA's Executive Director Mark Wallem at 212 674 5398 or mwallem@alba-valb.org.

THE VOLUNTEER NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Every three months, ALBA is pleased and proud to send you this publication. We know that so many of our readers treasure it, and we value your feedback, your encouraging words as well as your constructive criticism. We strive to make the publication a forum for the exchange of information and ideas of interest to the ALBA community.

Each edition of *The Volunteer* costs \$7,500 to publish. Would you consider donating at this amount to cover the cost of one edition? Your name would be prominently displayed (with your approval) in that edition, as the single donor who made that edition possible.

We know this is a big "ask"! If you are able to consider a gift at this level, to sponsor an edition of *The Volunteer*, please contact Mark Wallem directly at mwallem@alba-valb.org.

Please know that we appreciate every gift, large or small, that comes our way. Thank you for your generosity and your support of *The Volunteer*.