

LTWL 180 Film Studies and Literature: Re-imagining the Spanish Civil War  
Summer 2025  
Session I

For three or four generations of progressive, activist youth, the Spanish Civil War stood out as one of the last “pure” struggles of democracy against fascist totalitarianism. When a group of Spanish generals mutinied in 1936 and set out to topple a legally elected leftist government, not only Spaniards but volunteers from all over Europe and the Americas set out to beat back this threat to the new Republic. Writers such as Ernest Hemingway, George Orwell and André Malraux reported on and/or participated in this conflict on the side of the Republican government and its allies in the socialist and anarchist camps.

The war was particularly brutal, in many ways preceding and presaging the wider conflicts of the Second World War. Both sides committed atrocities and when the Nationalist/Falangist side, led by Francisco Franco, prevailed, there ensued decades of violent reprisals, executions, incarcerations and continual repression of former or perceived members of the Republican side and their families. Moreover, thirty-six years of repressive dictatorial rule outlawed opposition parties and any but the official version of the history and motives of the Civil War.

When Franco died in 1975 and King Juan Carlos chose to move Spain towards a liberal democratic form of government, citizens as well as artists were at least theoretically free to address the trauma and memories of the war. However, democracy came to Spain with an unwritten agreement that the details and horrors of the Civil War would not be publically aired, a “pact of silence” (*pacto de silencio*) was meant to keep from agitating citizens of differing political views. Consequently, this long overdue discussion was slow to develop over the first decade of newly democratic Spain. We will examine some texts and numerous films that eventually came to treat these various themes and issues. In particular, we will consider works that relate to Andalusia, in general, and Granada, specifically, as sites of Civil War activities and their aftermath. We will pay special attention to the life and execution death of Spanish poet Federico García Lorca, who not only strongly supported the Republican side but also was openly gay; either of which would condemn him in the eyes of the fascist forces. García Lorca, like the war itself, has become a symbol for numerous ideas that vary depending on who is telling his story. Details of the war and its aftermath led to a contemporary re-imagining of history, memory and the power of narrative.

We will read various texts, including selections by Hemingway, Orwell and Malraux, as well as related essays. Poetry (translated) by Garcia Lorca, a contemporary novel in English and one translated Spanish novel will also be assigned. We will screen four films, produced by Spaniards since the late 1980s.

We will visit sites in Granada such as the García Lorca Center and locations tied to the Civil War’s battles and events. A field trip to Almeria will include visits to sites made

famous during the war as well as architecture built in the period of Moorish rule in Spain. We will also travel down the coast to Algeciras and across to Morocco, where ferries go to Tangier and, more relevantly, Ceuta, where Franco and his forces crossed over to the mainland to begin his campaign against the Republican government.

Instructor: Robert Cancel  
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 Course ID:

Site Classroom  
 Meetings: Unless otherwise noted,  
 TWTh 6 – 8PM  
 Office hours: TWTh 12 – 1 PM

### **Course Requirements:**

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED IN ORDER TO PASS THE COURSE.

**50% Class Participation:** Though part of the course will entail lectures on the material, a good deal depends on discussion of the films and texts. Attendance, obviously, is an important component of the class and missing more than one (unexcused) class session will result in a reduction of the grade for this requirement. Field trips, both local and to other cities, will also comprise a significant percentage of this grade.

**Writing Assignments:** Because this is a small class, I will be available to help students with their writing in order to improve their research skills as well as the quality of their class essays. I would need, however, time to help out and this means getting started on assignments early.

**15% Journal entries** based on our various excursions around Granada and on our field trips to Morocco and Madrid. Format and content of these entries will be discussed in our earliest class meetings.

**10% Papers:** Three-page paper on a text or a film. Specifics on these assignments will be provided the first week of class. Due date Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

**25% Term Paper:** Five-page paper on a text or film (whatever genre you did not write about in the first paper. Due the last day of class: Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> July.

### **Class Etiquette**

To belabor the obvious, arriving on time and leaving only when class is ended will be expected of each student. If someone has a valid reason for either arriving late, leaving early or missing a meeting, let me know in advance or, if necessary, after class. Attendance will be taken early in each class session, starting from the first meeting of the course.

While acknowledging the importance of electronic information flow, laptops are to be used during class time to take notes and, if necessary, look up information pertinent to lecture topics, if I ask you to. Multi-tasking is nice, but most studies suggest that focusing on one

task at a time, in this case lecture, note taking and discussion (actually three tasks), is a more effective way to understand and remember information. Students who cannot abide by this rule will be asked to close their laptops. Cell phones are not to be consulted during class.

Literature and film constitutes the main data of this class. You maximize your understanding and appreciation of this material if you complete assignments before they are lectured on or discussed in class. If you do not do this, and then have a hard time trying to understand or write about the material, you might want to consider one of the sources of your problem (see first two sentences of this paragraph).

Finally, this is an upper division literature course and writing is important. All UCSD students have signed a pledge of academic integrity. Any suspected cases of plagiarism will be submitted for formal investigation by the university. The whole idea of writing a paper is for students to express their own analytical findings, ideas and impressions; otherwise no real learning is taking place. If writing is a problem for you, please ask me, or someone, for help in a timely manner in order to maximize your chances for success.

Because we are a Global Seminar meeting in Granada, and it is important to follow the pledge you signed before departure, egregious and obvious deviations from the UCSD Code of Conduct, Academic Integrity Rules, and otherwise dangerous or threatening behavior could result in dismissal from the Program. On the other hand, I and the local Program staff stand ready to assist you in any way if you experience any form of personal problems.

### **Syllabus:**

Tuesday 7/1; 6 – 8PM: Introductory Remarks: Spanish history and the Civil War  
 READ: *The Assassination of Federico García Lorca*, Ian Gibson, pp. 13 – 50

Wednesday 7/2; 6 – 8PM: Granada and Andalusia during the Civil War  
 READ: *The Return*, Victoria Hislop  
 INTRODUCTION: Team 2

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Tuesday 7/8; 6 – 8PM: Federico García Lorca’s life, death and legacy  
 READ: “How a City Sings from November to November,” Federico García Lorca; *The Assassination of Federico García Lorca*, 105 – 111; 134 – 154, Ian Gibson  
 INTRODUCTION: Team: 3

Thursday 7/10; 6 – 8PM: International Images of the Civil War: Fiction and Reportage  
 READ: *Man’s Hope*, André Malraux, pp. 70 – 100; *Homage to Catalonia*, George Orwell, pp. 172 – 203; “The Denunciation,” Ernest Hemingway, pp. 89 – 100; “Under the Bridge,” Ernest Hemingway, pp. 140 – 151  
 INTRODUCTION: Team 2 (Malraux); Team 3 (Orwell); Team 4 (Hemingway)

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Tuesday 7/15; 6 – 8PM: Translation of Horrors through Memory and Ghosts  
 SCREEN FILM: *El espinazo del diablo (The Devil's Backbone)*, Guillermo del Toro (2001)

Wednesday 7/16; 6 - 8PM: Spain after the Civil War

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Monday 7/21; 6 – 8PM: Contemporary Re-Emergence of Civil War Memories  
 SCREEN FILM: *Juegos de guerra [Libertarias]*, Vicente Aranda (2007)

Tuesday 7/22; 6 – 8PM: Towards Democracy after Franco  
 READ: “The Politics of History and Memory in Democratic Spain,” Carolyn P. Boyd  
 INTRODUCTION: Team 5  
 FIRST PAPER DUE TODAY

Wednesday 7/23; 9 – 10AM: LTWL 180GS – Guest Lecture “Spanish Civil War in Granada,” Professor José María Pérez Fernandez (University of Granada).

6 – 8PM: The Civil War Re-framed for Contemporary Spaniards  
 READ: *Soldiers of Salamis*, Javier Cercas  
 INTRODUCTION: Teams 4 - 5

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Monday 7/28; 6 – 8PM: From text to screen.  
 SCREEN FILM: *Soldados de Salamina*, David Trueba (2003)

Tuesday 7/329, 9 – 10AM: Guest Lecture: “Morocco and Spain from the Civil War to the Present,” Professor Jose María Pérez Fernandez (University of Granada)

6 – 8PM: Central Themes and Ongoing Issues Related to the Civil War

Wednesday 7/30: Closing remarks and conclusions

Thursday 7/31: FINAL PAPERS DUE TODAY by 8PM