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Ealham, Chris & Michael Richards (eds) (2010) *España fragmentada. Historia cultural y Guerra Civil española, 1936-1939*, Granada: Comares Historia, xxviii + 289 pp., isbn 978-84-9836-686-0

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This handsomely produced book on "fragmented Spain" successfully convinces its audiences – from historians of contemporary Spain, to cultural studies practitioners and to Peace and Violence Studies scholars – to continue to revise over-simplistic versions of the Spanish Civil War. The very notion of a "splintered Spain", from the book's original title in English, published in 1995, not only conveys the fracture lines along which the civil, political, military, religious and class conflict of 1936-39 was driven, but also invites us to think beyond the easy binarisms of good/evil, religious/non-religious and even left/right in a conflict that involved many more versions than the oft-invoked "two Spains".

The book begins with an excellent overview of current historiography and debates on the civil war, questioning immediately the reliance on dualisms between Spain and the "anti-Spain" and the "democracy versus fascism" paradigm. The epistemological thrust of the book, therefore, is strongly centred on multiple visions of the conflict, its causes and its effects: "Por tanto, vista desde varias posiciones ventajosas, la guerra puede interpretarse como un proceso de fractura o "fragmentación", como consecuencia de las muchas grietas de la sociedad de los años treinta" (p. 3). A wide-sweeping overview of current trends in the history of the civil war follows and an engagement with the political and social valency of some of these tendencies within the present Spanish society, especially with respect to the question of memory, make up the remainder of the introductory chapter. The particular inflections taken by history writing, whether due to the restrictions of the dictatorship, the limitations of work on working-class movements or the silences coming about as a result of the so-called "pacto del olvido", are also considered carefully in this introduction.

The other nine chapters are as varied as they are excellent sorties into diverse themes related to an over-arching project that seeks to make a contribution to the workings of culture, articulated along the lines of language, locality and identity. The understanding of culture is a broad one, following Peter Burke's and others' work on identities, mentalities and every-day experience, as a system of shared signifiers, attitudes and values and the symbolic forms that express them (pp. 17-18). Each chapter in its different way seeks to trace how collective interpretations arise from discourses, social mediation and the symbolism of words and acts. In the chapter by Eduardo González Calleja, the roots of violent discourse in the 1930s are examined as instances whereby collective behaviour was to undergo modification, justifying and bringing about violent political strategies. In the gaps between a lack of tradition of a "civil society" in Spain, the fall of dictatorship and the problematic road taken by the Republic, thrived discourses that had recourse to violence as a solution for society's ills. This violent discourse incited action and created particular forms of social mobilization toward concrete ends. The differences evoked between different political actors and the underlying material and

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economic conditions present, or at least their interpretations, served to justify the very recourse to violence in the first place.

The intricate landscape of these discourses on the left is examined by Chris Ealham in the sixth chapter. But not only in the violent or destructive sense since the chapter plots how the revolutionary left – the POUM and the CNT – created a network of common interpretation and experience that flowed through the streets of Barcelona in order to articulate a revolutionary reality that was distanced from the stereotypical imagery of chaos and blood-thirstiness. Despite the fragility of the waves of popular protest, Ealham identifies a conscious, if at times somewhat incoherent desire to inaugurate a society very different from the capitalism of the mid-1930s. Pamela Radcliffe transports a similar undertaking to the Asturian city of Gijón, where a common notion of what the Republic stood for galvanized support for the Republic against the military uprising. The particular profiles of the political left, in particular that of a more "moderate" CNT, or one which had participated in the Workers' Alliance and in pacts with other leftist forces in the 1930s, however, provided for a different kind of political unity, fragile though it was, less revolutionary and more rallied around the defence of the Popular Front. This rallying point, nevertheless, produced an example of a society in motion towards collective defence and the maintenance of the social and political gains brought about by the Republic.

Increasing focus has been brought to bear on the groups making up the rebellion against the Republic in July 1936. While the Franco regime itself has been subjected to an analysis that is distanced from any monolithic account (see the work of Jordi Gracia, for example), Rafael Cruz analyses the "collective identity" of the rebel zone in 1936. The symbols around which this amalgam of interests was formed – the flag, religious symbols, "Spanishness" – became the watchwords of the Spanish Nationalists. The role and value of religious symbolism as a justification and motor for violent acts is further examined in Mary Vincent's chapter. In both these chapters, and perhaps more generally throughout the book, the gendered elements of the advocacy or the perpetration of violence could have been more prominently discussed as part of the collective interpretations of the social reality of conflict and war.

The thread of violence running through various expressions of nationalism, particularly in the construction of Carlist identity in Navarre (Francisco Javier Caspistegui) and the various uses of the concept of "nation" in different hands since the sixteenth century (Xosé Manoel Núñez Seixas) provides a comparative point of reflection for a chapter on the articulation of Catalan nationalism and the different understandings of what was at stake in that nationalism in a chapter by Enric Ucelay-Da Cal. The ten chapters in this book make for a coherent collection of new research on the dimensions of the conflict of the civil war. For students of peace and violence, they bring together an interdisciplinary account of the culture of conflict and construction of alternative realities in the 1930s.