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**Huidobro's Transatlantic Politics of Solidarity and
the Poetics of the Spanish Civil War**

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The Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) inspired a politics and mobilized a poetics of transnational solidarity.¹ From both sides of the Atlantic, Latin American poets like Vicente Huidobro, Nicolás Guillén, Pablo Neruda, Octavio Paz, and César Vallejo joined Spanish poets like Antonio Machado, Luis Cernuda, Concha Méndez, Rafael Alberti, and Miguel Hernández, in writing in support of the Republican cause. Huidobro's presence in the Second International Congress of Writers in Defense of Culture, and the Spanish Republic, was overshadowed by Neruda's protagonist role in the congress, and deepened their obvious rivalry and tensions.² Rather than revisit these rivalries, I am interested in rereading Huidobro's poems, political manifestos, interviews, and letters in support of the Spanish Republic.³ Very few critics have written on Huidobro's texts on the Spanish Civil War, even though his articles and poems show how the Spanish Civil War shaped his political commitment and his participation in support of the Allies during World War II.⁴ Huidobro's active voice and political poetics need to be reconsidered since his vision of poetry in a world where Fascism threatens and redefines the notions of a historical "progress" emerges from his contribution to the Transatlantic poetics of solidarity.

The war poetry is often underestimated as propagandistic, damned by its prosaic tones, and its "transparent" language. Nonetheless, this was an era when political manifestos and poem/pamphlets were not condemned for being propagandistic. Noël Valis analyzes Robert Capa's comments on how his pictures in Spain did not require too many tricks: "The truth is the best picture, the best propaganda" (Valis 9). Valis suggests that Capa's explanation "reveals how blurry the distinctions were between truth and propaganda. For Capa and for many others, propaganda served the truth. The power and intensity of the photograph can also communicate an historical reality and an ethical-moral vision that transcend (but do not obviate) questions of aesthetic and ideological import" (9). Huidobro's representations of the Spanish Civil War also tried to project his own versions of truth, and tended to be propagandistic, but does that discredit them aesthetically? For example, in "Fuera de aquí" (Get Out of Here)

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Huidobro consciously stresses the text's propagandistic rhetoric, by naming it a "poema-panfleto" (a poem-pamphlet).⁵ Still, I am more interested in discussing how can we read his rhetoric and his use of metaphorical language in comparison to other contemporary poets who also write about the war. How are social, cultural, and racial tensions addressed or not addressed in these poems? How do Latin American poets approach their colonial past and their solidarity with the Spanish people?

In this essay I begin by placing Huidobro and the Transatlantic poetics of political solidarity in the context of the Avant-gardes. I suggest that the Spanish Civil War provoked a new form of solidarity that redefined Hispanism, and changed how Latin America "read" Spain. To develop my analysis of this politics of solidarity, I compare Huidobro's rhetorical discourse on "race" as a social class during the Spanish Civil War to Nicolás Guillén's own "España" (Spain) and how the Chilean poet defined race and approached the Spanish legacy in the Americas from a different perspective. Manuel Machado's and Antonio Machado's diverse takes on "race" and "tradition" also exemplify how these terms are highly contentious, sometimes ambiguous, and how their meanings depend on the ideological backbone of the speaker. In particular, Huidobro's articles, "Por los leales y contra los desleales" (For the Loyals and Against the Traitors) and "España de la esperanza" (Hope for Spain) reveal his vision of a Hispanic solidarity and "race" that seems to idealize the Spanish footprint in the Americas. Finally, I examine how through the metaphors of blood and the phantasmagoric imagery of poems, in among others, "Fuera de aquí" (Out of here) and "España," (Spain) Huidobro intends to support the Republican side and strengthen the bonds that connect Latin America and Spain.

Latin American Avant-garde movements transgressed national and cultural frontiers to redefine originality and innovation in modern aesthetics, reshaping the European artistic scene. Huidobro situated himself in the forefront of a literary movement that stems from a radical rupture with restrictive notions of poetic forms. As Saúl Yurkievich suggests, Huidobro: "necesitó abolir todas las restricciones empíricas, retóricas e imaginativas que coartaban la autonomía del poema" (135) (needed to abolish all empirical, rhetorical and imaginative restrictions that coerced the autonomy of the poem).⁶ Much has been written on his *creacionismo*, his rebellious positioning and on his Avant-garde footprint in Europe, particularly on his influence on Spanish writers like Gerardo Diego and Juan Larrea.⁷ Avant-garde poetics, and the friendships that emerged, were fundamental to the Transatlantic re-conceptualization of the literary and political relations between Latin America and Spain, but in this essay I will focus on the Spanish Civil War, and Huidobro's forgotten, and often underestimated, efforts to support the Republican cause.

In the context of the Avant-garde scene, the poetics that emerges from the Spanish Civil War was not a sudden and a surprising political and aesthetic stand. As Luis García Montero explains:

Fue la crisis del propio callejón sin salida de la sublimación intimista, radicalizado en sus contradicciones por la vanguardia, la que provocó una búsqueda de alternativas en la intención social. El yo en crisis que forma parte de una multitud hueca intenta recuperarse a sí mismo a través de un nosotros rehumanizado. Por eso no creo que deba entenderse el acercamiento de los vanguardistas a la política como una infección exterior a sus procesos creativos, motivada por las circunstancias extremas de la época. La búsqueda del amparo social surge también dentro del proceso lógico de una lírica que ya se había encontrado en sus paseos interiores con los vertederos. (120)

(The dead end street, the crisis of the intimist sublimation, radicalized in its contradictions by the Avant-garde, provoked the search for social alternatives. The self in crisis that is part of a hollow multitude tries to recuperate through a rehumanized “us.” That is why I do not believe that the Avant-gardes’ political inclinations should be read as an external infection, separated from its own creative processes, and motivated by the extreme circumstances of the times. The search for social refuge also emerges from the logical process of a lyric language that had already found itself with the sewers in its internal walks.)

García Montero focuses here on Neruda and Federico García Lorca. Is Huidobro’s notion of the self also in crisis? García Montero’s analysis of the “yo en crisis” *vanguardista* and the need for a “nosotros rehumanizado” could be connected to most of the Avant-garde poets. Huidobro’s poems on the war also reveal this desire to conjugate his lyrical voice in the plural. For example, in “Gloria y sangre” (Glory and Blood) and “Fuera de aquí,” Huidobro privileges the *nosotros* (we) as a Hispanic American collective voice enraged and pained at the horrors of the Spanish War.

The Transatlantic politics of solidarity during the war does not mean that Latin American poets were prepared to forget Spanish imperialist history in the Americas, still present in its postcolonial relations with Latin America. However, it is interesting how the “anti-Spanish” sentiment that inflamed nationalist rhetoric in Latin America in the nineteenth century was questioned and theorized during the Spanish Civil War. Octavio Paz, in an essay he wrote in 1938, titled “Americanidad de España,” (The Americas in Spain) addresses this new solidarity:

La guerra de España, aparte de su esencial y dramática significación para el presente de todo el mundo y para su inmediato porvenir, ha señalado, en Hispanoamérica, el despertar de una nueva solidaridad, nutrida no sólo en la hermandad democrática y de clase, sino en la unidad histórica de lo hispano. El hispanismo, en América y España, parecía una tesis desprestigiada,

reaccionaria. Era natural. Con el hispanismo se hacía defensa de todo aquello, antiespañol y antiamericano [. . .] la defensa del régimen de encomenderos, clero y Corona. (69–70)

(The war in Spain, besides its essential and dramatic importance to the present of the whole world and to its immediate future, has signaled in Spanish America the awakening of a new solidarity. This solidarity is nurtured not only by a democratic brotherhood and an alliance with the class struggle, but also in the historical unity of the Hispanic. Hispanism in America and Spain seemed like a discredited, reactionary thesis. It was a natural reaction. Prior Hispanism used to defend of everything anti-Spanish and anti-American [. . .] the defense of the Colonists, the Clergymen and the Crown.)

Huidobro adhered to Paz's vision of a Hispanism that awakened a new solidarity among Latin Americans with the social struggle and political ideals of the Spanish Republic. Nonetheless, as I will explain further on, unlike many of the other Latin American contemporary poets, Huidobro polemically idealized the Spanish Conquest as the epic poem of the Americas. In "Americanidad de España," Paz went on to argue that the fight against Fascism was precisely against that imperialist heritage that the Right upholds and reveres. Paz avowed that this was not only the war of the Spanish, it was a war that defended democracy in itself, and thus, "La defensa de España es la defensa de América" (74) (The defense of Spain is the defense of America). As we know, Fascism's political and aesthetic discourse is marked by a nostalgic vision of a glorious imperial past as an anti-modern utopia; it dressed its insurrection as "La cruzada" (The Crusade), and its recuperation of history clearly privileged the "Reconquista" (Reconquest) and the "Conquista" (Conquest) as the ideological backbone of their war. Therefore, Paz's claim that this was a war against an imperialist Fascism that threatened all the democratic nations is well grounded. The Fascist rhetoric, and later on, Franco's dictatorial regime, supported the racist discourse of the Conquest, in favor of the homogenization of the nation: "una, grande y libre" (one, great, and free). In their "nationalist" propaganda, the Republicans were "anti-españoles," (Anti-Spaniards) financed by the Soviet Union. This was a paradoxical stand, since the Fascists' nationalist crusade survived and succeeded precisely because of Moroccan colonial soldiers who served as mercenaries, and because of the financial and military support of foreign forces, like Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy.

Huidobro wrote an overwhelming number of articles and manifestos in favor of the Spanish Republic, many of them published in Santiago's *La Opinión* and *Frente Popular*. In these articles, he tried to emotionally move and politically activate Spanish Americans in support of the Republic. Like Paz, he argued that the Spanish war was also "our" war: "Nosotros, los

escritores de nuestra lengua, nos sentimos unidos al pueblo español; sabemos que nuestro destino es su destino [. . .]. El pueblo español triunfará. Podéis estar seguros de ello, compañeros de América [. . .]. Ayudad vosotros como podáis a la victoria de este pueblo, que es vuestra Victoria” (193) (We, the writers of our language, feel united to the Spanish people; we know our fate is their fate [. . .]. The Spanish people will triumph. You can be sure of that, comrades of America [. . .]. Help in any way you can with the victory of this people, it is your Victory). This is a speech that Huidobro gave through a mouthpiece called “La voz de España” (The Voice of Spain) in Madrid in July, 1937. Just as in Nicolás Guillén’s, Neruda’s and Vallejo’s poems, solidarity with the Spaniards is also exposed through language, and the use of “vosotros.” They chose a Spain they could connect to through this vision of a Hispanic union. These cultural bonds and a common language shared by Americans and Spaniards strengthened the Transatlantic poetics of solidarity.⁸

Many Spanish and Latin American poets portrayed the war as the class struggle that would lead to the ultimate revolution, and within their texts, they also defied Fascist imperialist and racist discourse. In his poem “España,” Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén chooses to emphasize his racial and cultural identity; he represents the voice of Latin Americans, and its Spanish and African heritage. The poem clarifies from the first stanzas that the speaker does not defend the Spain of Cortés or Pizarro, and the Spanish Conquest, but the Spain of the Republican “milicianos,” “los cercanos hermanos” (militiamen, our closest brothers). He alluded to the Spanish Conquest to legitimize the current struggle against the imperialistic ambitions of Fascism: “Con vosotros, brazos conquistadores / ayer, y hoy ímpetu para desbaratar fronteras” (Osuna 122) (With you, arms of conquistadors yesterday, and today the impetus to destroy all the frontiers). Both Guillén and Huidobro subscribed to an anti-nationalist political discourse, in their need to recognize the filial bonds between Spain and its former colonies.

Huidobro’s obsession with defending “our race” in his articles is both fascinating and problematic. Guillén legitimizes his voice as the biracial, bicultural son of both Spain and Africa: “Yo, hijo de América, / hijo de ti y de África, / esclavo ayer de mayorales blancos [. . .] / hoy esclavo de rojos yanquis [. . .] / yo, corro hacia ti, muero por ti” (121) (I, son of America, son of yours and Africa, / yesterday the slave of white foremen [. . .] / today the slave of red Yankees [. . .] / I, run towards you, I die for you). But unlike Guillén, Huidobro does not describe himself as a product of a Latin American history of *mestizaje*, nor does he respond to the violent heritage of the Spanish Conquest. Both poets want to stress their unequivocal alliance to the Spanish Republic, but they approach the Spanish colonial past in very different ways. While the Cuban poet embraces his multiracial identity and

establishes a critique of the Colonial and Neocolonial history of slavery; the Chilean poet's vision of race could be considered more polemical because it treats "race" as abstract cultural value, almost as a "Hispanic" commodity. In his poems, he also insists on "blood" as a metaphor of both the bloody fight, and what connects the two hemispheres, the Transatlantic "blood" stream.

In "Por los leales y contra los desleales," Huidobro argues that Chilean intellectuals are bound to defend the Spanish Republicans, because they are the defenders of "la cultura" (culture) and "la raza" (race) (de la Fuente 216–217). Huidobro's notion of race is more "cultural" and "historical" than actually racial. He wants Chilean "intellectuals" to see their sense of self in the "people:"

Los intelectuales chilenos saben que el pueblo español defiende la cultura, defiende la verdadera tradición de la raza, defiende el destino y la dignidad del hombre [. . .] ¿de dónde salieron Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Góngora, Quevedo [. . .] Murillo, Goya [. . .] Picasso, Falla? Salieron del pueblo [. . .] el gran magma de la raza, es el que produce lentamente los seres de excepción. (216)

(Chilean intellectuals know that the Spanish people defend culture, defend the true tradition of the race, defend our fate and the dignity of men [. . .] Where did Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Góngora, Quevedo [. . .] Murillo, Goya [. . .] Picasso, Falla come from? They came from the people [. . .] the great essence of race, which slowly produces exceptional beings.)

For Huidobro, "race" means here the proletariat, the working class, which *slowly* produces these artistic geniuses, who determine the Spanish cultural treasure. Even if we place this text in the context of the 1930s and their conflicting definitions of race, its elitist rhetoric may bother us. But we must ask ourselves, what was he trying to do here? Just like many Spanish writers who tried to recuperate their "Spanishness," their national pride from the Fascist ultra-nationalist rhetoric, here, Huidobro tries to recover the words "tradition" and "race" from the Nationalist discourse.

Manuel Machado's poem "Tradición" precisely evokes this National-Catholic appropriation of the Spanish "glorious" historical past and its tradition:

¡Ay del pueblo que olvida su pasado
y a ignorar su prosapia se condena!
¡Ay del que rompe la fatal cadena
que al ayer el mañana tiene atado! [. . .]
[. . .] ¡Goza de su herencia / gloriosa! [. . .]
¡Vuelve a tu tradición, España mía! (163)

(Oh, the people who forget their past
and condemn themselves to forget their lineage!
Oh, he who breaks the fatal chain
that ties yesterday to tomorrow! [. . .]
[. . .] Enjoy your glorious / legacy! [. . .]
Return to your traditions, Spain of mine!)

Manuel Machado accuses the Republicans of forgetting their past in their aim to change the present. Spain must return to its imperial “glory,” to its “tradition,” and must not pretend to be godlike: “¡Sólo Dios hace Mundos de la nada!” (Only God makes Worlds out of nothingness!) Manuel Machado criticizes the Republic as a revolutionary and utopian project that intended to create a new world. The Spanish glorious past and the evocation of the Spanish Conquest as the ultimate poem is more explicit in another text by Manuel Machado, “Los conquistadores” (The Conquistadors), where Pizarro and Cortés are elevated as the epitome of greatness.

In “Tradición,” Manuel Machado alludes to a visionary poem, “El mañana efímero” (The Ephemeral Tomorrow), written by his brother, Antonio Machado, nearly twenty-five years earlier, in 1913. In “El mañana efímero,” Antonio Machado parodies the “vano ayer” (vain yesterday) that engenders the “mañana efímero,” and proposes that the only way to stop the cycle is through the birth of the “España de la rabia y de la idea” (233) (Spain of rage and ideas). In contrast to his satirical portrayal of the “mañana efímero,” a product of “amantes de sagradas tradiciones,” (lovers of sacred traditions), Antonio Machado envisions another version of the new Spain:

Mas otra España nace,
la España del cincel y de la maza
con esa eterna juventud que se hace
del pasado macizo de la raza. (233)

(Still, another Spain is born,
The Spain of chisel and mace
with that eternal youth made
from the strong, solid past of the race.)

Antonio Machado conveniently rhymes “maza” and “raza” to identify the Spanish “race” with the working class. The evocation of the “maza,” a “drop hammer” or “mace” is a metonymy of the workers, but it is also a way of confronting its solidity, its strength, with the fragility, the ephemeral nature of the “vano ayer.” Just as Huidobro does in his article, “Por los leales y contra los desleales,” Antonio Machado uses race as a referent of social class. These poems point to a contested terminology, a battlefield of words. The use of the same words indicates the need to recuperate their meanings, to activate them in their own respective discourse.

In contrast to Antonio Machado's use of "race," Fascist rhetorical discourse presents their followers as the "true defenders" of the Hispanic race and its traditional, conservative values. Franco anonymously authored the script of the famous film called *Raza* (with the alias Jaime de Andrade), in which the Hispanic race is conveniently delimited to his followers, since Republicans, and everyone who supported them, were "anti-Spanish." At the end of the film, the victorious march glorifies this vision of a new militarized Spain, a "purged" nation that suppressed or erased from the map any cultural, ideological or racial diversity. *Raza's* portrayal of the march is even more complex if we consider the role of the Moorish mercenaries, who were "persuaded" that they were fighting an atheist Other. The Nationalist Army manipulated the tradition of the "Reconquista" when it seemed convenient. But when it came to convincing their Moorish "helpers," they demonized the Republicans as the atheist "infidels" and their war was therefore the fight of Catholicism and Islam against the "godless" Communist machine.⁹

When Huidobro insists on depicting the Republicans as the "true defenders" of "la auténtica tradición española" (the authentic Spanish tradition) and its race, he is responding to a fight for words (de la Fuente 216). The war was also fought beyond the battlefield, with words and ideas, and terms such as "Spain," "nation," "tradition" and "race" had different meanings and connotations according to the ideological discourse that framed them. This is not to reduce the complexities of the war to a pair of opposing discourses, or into black and white positions; the Republicans had many diverse representative groups (among others, Communists, Anarchists, and Socialists) just as the Nationalists were not a homogeneous group (Fascists, Nationalist-Catholics, and Falangists). For example, while Nicolás Guillén alludes to his own racial identity in connection to his cultural background, Huidobro in "Por los leales y contra los desleales," addresses race as a notion that responds more to class than to racial identity, and could even represent the "human" race.

In "Por los leales y contra los desleales," Huidobro identifies the Republicans as the people who value their cultural past and the Fascists who hate it. The Spanish people feel pride in "ir custodiando el futuro cultural de la raza y también su pasado viviente, heredado por aquellos hombres superiores" (216) (protecting the cultural future of race and also its living past, inherited by those superior men). Huidobro intends to reconcile his elitist perspective, in which the superior men are the artists, who represent a venerable canon, with his political commitment to the "people" who really know how to appreciate their cultural past—in contrast to what Manuel Machado argues in his poem, "Tradición." Huidobro goes on to explain that "El fascista odia la cultura, porque ella significa el despertar del hombre y el adquirir conciencia" (216) (The Fascist hates culture, because it means the

awakening of men and his conscience). Therefore, Latin Americans, and in particular, Chilean intellectuals, must support the Republicans because they defend “culture” itself, and the social and political awakening that it provokes.

From a Transatlantic approach, Huidobro’s rhetoric is more intricate than we would expect from articles or pamphlets that have no clear artistic ambitions, other than merely being persuasive and eloquent in their defense of Spain. In another short article, “España de la esperanza,” Huidobro reveals his solidarity with the people, the oppressed, as he did in “Por los leales y contra los desleales.” Much like Neruda, Guillén, and Langston Hughes, among many other poets, Huidobro emphasizes that the civil war is a class struggle:

La horda de traidores quería detener brutalmente a ese pueblo, aplastado durante siglos y siglos por una oligarquía de privilegiados que manejaba a su antojo al Ejército y a la Iglesia para el servicio de sus mezquinos intereses de casta [. . .]. En España ha cristalizado de repente la lucha de las clases sociales, de oprimidos y opresores [. . .]. Por eso el pueblo español no puede perder. La oculta corriente de la Historia no puede detenerse. (1976: 895–96)

(The horde of traitors wanted to brutally stop that people, crushed by centuries of an oligarchy, a privileged group that capriciously controlled the Army and the Church in favor of the mean interests of their caste [. . .]. In Spain we suddenly see clearly the social class struggle, the oppressed and the oppressors [. . .]. That’s why the Spanish people cannot lose. The hidden undercurrent of History cannot be stopped.)

Huidobro clearly condemns the Nationalists as a bunch of Fascist traitors, supported by the Army and the Church. The use of the word “horda” is a double indictment for the oligarchy because it is usually connected negatively to the working class. Still, the key point here is the comment on the progress of History. The democratic Spain cannot lose; otherwise, History and its vision of lineal progress would be interrupted. Walter Benjamin considers progress as a menacing force because in “the name of progress” many atrocities are committed and permitted. The fetish of progress disillusioned the materialist historian. Just before he explains his notion of the angel of history, Benjamin addresses the contemporary crisis in Europe threatened by Fascism:

The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the “state of emergency” in which we live is not the exception but the rule. We must attain to a conception of history that is in keeping with this insight. Then we shall clearly realize that it is our task to bring about a real state of emergency, and this will improve our position in the struggle against Fascism. One reason why Fascism has a chance is that in the name of progress its opponents treat it as a historical norm. (257)

Benjamin suggests that history should not be read a progressive line, a constant undercurrent that would lead us to a better future, because among other reasons, Fascism should not be underestimated as a historical norm. In “España de la esperanza,” Huidobro holds on to hope, to the certainty of victory against Fascism, which is part of the common rhetoric of the times. He underlines that the victory of Fascism in Spain would be the apocalyptic end of History. As he concludes his short essay, his reading of History reappears when he refers to how the Spanish *wrote* the history of the Americas.

At the end of “España de la esperanza,” Huidobro celebrates the Spanish “Discovery” of America, a statement that is now if not almost inconceivable, at least clearly problematic. We may try to contextualize his essay, as it aims to create a Transatlantic solidarity, and remember that in 1936, the word “discovery” had not been challenged yet, as it happened in 1992; however, Huidobro’s rhetoric gets closer to the glorification of the Spanish Conquest:

Hoy, en este aniversario del descubrimiento de América, de ese magno poema escrito por el pueblo español sobre los océanos y los continentes, el enorme pueblo de ayer ha vuelto a la epopeya y los ojos del universo están fijos en él y llenos de esperanza.

Como hijo de tu raza, y de estas tierras que arrancaste al misterio, mi emoción te saluda, España dolorosa y sublime, de pie y nunca de rodillas. (896)

(Today, on this anniversary of the Discovery of America, of that great poem written by the Spanish people over oceans and continents, the great people of yesterday have returned to the epic and the eyes of the universe are fixed on them, full of hope. As a son of your race, and these lands that you lifted from mystery, my emotion salutes you, pained and sublime Spain, always standing, never on your knees.)

“La España de la esperanza” seems to commemorate October 12, 1492, as the day that establishes the beginning of history in this continent. The metaphor of the Spanish Conquest as an epic poem, in which the heroes were the Spanish conquistadors, who “saved” these lands from the mystery of oblivion, is a very contentious statement, to say the least. It becomes particularly puzzling, when we know that Huidobro speaks as a Latin American poet in favor of a Republican popular army, who had not the imperialist ambitions of “el enorme pueblo de ayer” (896) (the great people of yesterday). Furthermore, the depiction of the Spanish Civil War as an epic poem, comparable to the “Reconquest” and the “Conquest,” clearly abounds in the work of Fascist poets like Manuel Machado and José María Pemán. Still, Huidobro, just like Guillén, identifies himself as a “son of Spain,” a representative of a collective, “Como hijo de tu raza, y de estas tierras que arrancaste al misterio” (As a son of your race, and these lands that you lifted from mystery). But he particularly privileges the Spanish race as his

valuable racial and cultural heritage, and he treats America almost as an uninhabited, mysterious land. We may commend his efforts to strengthen Transatlantic solidarity with the Spanish struggle, but his argument weakens as it becomes so Eurocentric.

Huidobro also wrote some poem-pamphlets in support of the Republic, for example “Fuera de aquí,” in response to the South American tour of four Italian Fascist aviators.¹⁰ This text is more a pamphlet than a poem, but the hyperboles and animalization in his portrayal of the Italian aviators intensify the political cry of condemnation: “Fuera de aquí pájaros de mal agüero, aves de rapiña que hasta el cielo / ponéis hediondo” (1216) (Get out of here, black birds of bad omen, birds of prey / that even make the sky stink). The aviators and their killing machines, the airplanes, are effectively compared to birds associated with bad omens and death. Rhetorical questions and denunciations frame the text, in which the speaker is appalled at the fact that the Italians dare to come to South America after their participation in the Spanish Civil War in favor of the Fascists. But, once more, Huidobro alludes to Spain’s “true” heroic past: “¿Quién os mandaba allí con qué derecho metáis vuestra infamia en esas tierras pletóricas de verdaderos heroísmos, de verdaderas epopeyas?” (1217) (Who sent you there, how dared you bring your infamy to those plethoric lands of true heroism, of true feats?). He supports his reproach to the Italian aviators with another idealization of the “true” epic tales that fill the Spanish soil.

Nevertheless, Huidobro successfully emphasizes that one of the stronger links between Spain and Latin America is a shared common language. He speaks from Spanish America, whose personified rivers sing to Spain: “No humillaréis nuestros ríos que cantan a España en su misma lengua / con un acento un poco más montañoso” (1217) (You will not humiliate our rivers who sing to Spain in its own language / with a mountainous accent). This resurgence of his Spanishness is understandable; Latin American writers want to promote a solidarity with Spain that would diminish the resentment left by a history of violence and exploitation. Huidobro breaks down the nationalist discourse, and identifies himself as a Spaniard, a Chilean and a Spanish-American:

Fuera de aquí aviadores fascistas somos hijos de España [. . .]
Llevamos como una flor enorme el orgullo de sentirnos españoles.
Fuera de Chile en nombre de los chilenos, fuera de América en nombre de /
todos los americanos que [. . .]
comprenden la voz de su profundo origen [. . .]
Esto también es España. (1218)

(Get out of here, Fascists aviators, we are the children of Spain [. . .]
We carry with us, as a grand flower, the pride of feeling Spaniards.
In the name of all Chileans, get out of Chile, get out of America

in the name of / all American who [. . .]
 understand the voice of its deep origins [. . .]
 As it is also Spain.)

Although the idea that Spanish America finds its “origin” mainly in the Spanish tradition should be questioned, I read this text as a rebellious stand against the Fascist “tour” and the indifference of Spanish Americans who did not see the Spanish war as their “business.” Huidobro also intensifies the connection of Spain and the Americas in this poem through the metaphor of “blood ties.”¹¹

The repetition of the image of blood as the violent effect of the war intensifies the indignant tone of the speaker. Huidobro denounces that the Italian aviators have Spanish blood on their hands, and their presence will taint South America. In “Fuera de aquí,” he depicts the blood of the victims as “our blood,” which is also underlined linguistically through the use of “vosotros:”

No vengáis a manchar nuestros paisajes con el olor a sangre que
 despiden vuestras manos
 Sangre de niños españoles, sangre de España, sangre nuestra [. . .]
 Sangre que se prolonga en nuestras venas, sangre que viene de nuestras / madres
 y va a nuestros hijos
 Sangre sublime que crea continentes. (1216)

(Don't come to stain our landscapes with the smell of blood
 in your hands
 Blood of Spanish children, blood of Spain, our blood [. . .]
 Blood that extends in our veins, blood that comes from our
 mothers and goes to our children
 Sublime blood that creates continents).

The verses suggest a synesthesia when the odor of blood itself both taints and stinks, presenting a metaphor with multiple meanings. The aviators are repudiated because their guilty hands project the blood of Spain, and its children, but Huidobro goes further on to explain why it is “our blood” as well. Therefore, blood is both a symbol of death and the life-giving force that genetically connects Spain, the “madre patria,” and its former colonies in the Americas—a rhetorical discourse that is frequent and conventional among the *criollos*. Here, the “blood” ties mean the creation of a new Hispanic “race,” the contentious statement of “creating” the continent by “populating” it. His other poems “Está sangrando España” (Spain is bleeding) y “Gloria y sangre” portray in a more sophisticated way the imagery of blood as it penetrates the Spanish landscape.

In “Está sangrando España,” Spain is personified through the initial apostrophe and a series of rhetorical questions.¹² The speaker evokes a

natural landscape in pain, “Oh montaña ¿por qué te reclinás contra la noche? [. . .] / Oh abuela de los ríos [. . .] / Hay un olor de sangre entre las piedras” (1204–1205) (Oh mountain, why do you lean against the night? / Oh grandmother of the rivers [. . .] / There is a smell of blood among the stones). Spain cries as it feels its blood in its stones, its roots, and its grass. Still, this text reclaims the war as a class struggle, in which the people are fighting for social justice: “Yerguen los puños como rocas desesperadas en el fondo / Y hay un olor a sangre entre las hierbas / Y hay una gran promesa tras el llanto que se ilumina por sí solo” (1205) (They raise their fists as desperate rocks in depths / And there is a smell of blood among the grass / And there is a promise hidden behind the cry, that illuminates itself). The defiant fists are strong and yet desperate, but here the blood and the cry, a possible metaphor for the poem itself, hold on to hope, to the promise of light. At the end of this text, Huidobro transforms blood into salve: “Hay un olor a sangre en toda España / Y esa sangre será la savia del mañana” (1208) (There is a smell of blood in all of Spain / and that blood will be tomorrow’s sap). From the sacrifice of the Republican soldiers will emerge a tomorrow that will heal all the wounds of the present.

“Gloria y sangre” begins with a series of similes that describes the hopeful future, the dream of Spain. The future is like a tear, an interior light, a desire, and a violent hurricane, an iron arm, a fist, “como sangre España como sangre [. . .] / sangre raíz herida de semilla / He ahí el futuro” (1209) (As blood, Spain, as blood [. . .] / blood, root wounded by seed / There lies the future). The blood that nurtures our bodies will also nurture the land, the root, the seed, fertilizing the future. In marked contrast to the regular accusations of vanity and narcissism, in these poems Huidobro tends to be self-effacing. The speaker usually uses the first person plural, and occasionally, like in “Gloria y sangre,” the speaker merges the “nosotros” with the “yo.” In contrast to “Está sangrando España,” in which Spain was crying, the speaker here repeatedly pleads to be able to cry out of pride: “Permítenos llorar [. . .] Lloramos de orgullo repentino [. . .] / Déjanos llorar los muertos que tú cantas y te cantan” (1209–1210) (Let us cry [. . .] We cry of sudden pride [. . .] / Let us cry the dead that you sing to and who sing to you). The poem becomes a song, a cry in itself, in homage to the dead. Most of these poems do not have punctuation marks, with few exceptions, and in this sense, the lack of a final period in “Gloria y sangre” accentuates the hopeful final message. The verses, “He ahí España entre abrazos y cánticos y sonido de sangre / Ese dulce sonido del mito que se torna en espiga” (1211) (There, Spain, among hugs and songs and sounds of blood / That sweet sound of the myth that turns to the ear of corn), paradoxically portray the sound of blood as a sweet, melodious myth. Through the last synesthesia, Huidobro returns to the metaphor of blood, whose sound is a

fertilizer for the ear, the stalk of wheat. Blood ties once again nurture the bone marrow of Huidobro's Transatlantic poetics of allegiance to Spain.

In "España," Huidobro's most moving poem about the Spanish war, the imagery of blood is associated to the music, the symphony and the dance of the dead who defend the Republic, "músicas con sangre" (1212) (music with blood).¹³ In "Memory and Modernity in Democratic Spain: the Difficulty of Coming to Terms with the Spanish Civil War," Jo Labanyi argues that through the motif of "haunting," films like Víctor Erice's *El espíritu de la colmena* and Guillermo del Toro's *El espinazo del diablo* more successfully engage the traumatic past, "precisely because they acknowledge the horror—that is, the 'unspeakable'" (Labanyi 107). Although Labanyi focuses on how we read the Spanish Civil War decades after it ended, Huidobro's "España" also tries to face the trauma of the effects of the war through the phantasmagoric, the ghosts who will haunt the political and historical imaginary, and who will not let us forget them. The poem's protagonists are the constant marching dead, the soldiers we will never see again, but who will always be heard, submerged in the earth.

In the first stanzas, the speaker addresses Spain, and the betrayal of the democratic Republic that meant the Nationalist's coup, through contrasting metaphors of water:

Traidores nocturnos con alma pantanosa
 Hermanos de la víbora y las ropas de luto
 Apuñalaron tu hermosa estrella esperanzada
 Entre algas y tinieblas entre ríos difuntos

Sopla el mar fabricando pirámides de lágrimas
 Fatales escaleras y músicas con sangre
 Bajo nubes que pasan como carros de heridos
 Por un cielo color turbio de cañones distantes

La epopeya del pueblo que exige su destino
 Levanta al cielo frentes y rompe grandes pechos. (1212)

(Nocturnal traitors with a slimy soul
 Brothers of vipers and of mourning robes
 Stabbed your beautiful, hopeful star
 Among seaweed and shadows in the deceased rivers

The sea is blowing, making pyramids out of tears
 Fatal staircases and music with blood
 Among clouds that pass by as wagons full of wounded people
 Across a sky dark with distant canons

The epic of the people demands their destiny
 It raises the forehead of the sky and breaks its great breasts.)

The Fascists, associated with stagnant waters, swamps and dead rivers, broke the Republic's star, the utopic symbol of hope. In contrast to the gloomy imagery, the vibrant wind of the personified sea quickly moves and constructs pyramids and staircases from pain and fatality. The natural landscape reflects the battleground and "la epopeya del pueblo" (the epic poem of the people). The sky is tinged by the colors of canons and bombs, and the clouds are shaped as the cars of the wounded, introducing the phantasmagoric element he will develop throughout the poem.

The motif of "La danza de la muerte" appears as a constant image in which the natural scene merges with the procession of dead bodies. The ghosts circle not around the cars of the wounded, but among the ships that will carry them from one coast to the other:

Y danzan los fantasmas entre barcos enfermos
En la noche del hombre que nutre cementerios

Pasan soldados pasan olas y pasan vientos

Como notas de un canto que asusta a las edades
La inmensa sinfonía con su lluvia y sus hombres
Se pierde en una tumba debajo de la tarde. (1212)

(And the ghosts dance among sick ships
In the night of men that nurtures cemeteries

Soldiers pass by waves pass by winds pass by

Like song notes that scare the eras
The immense symphony with its rain and its men
Gets lost in a tomb under the hours of the afternoon.)

Death, commonly represented as the night of men, paradoxically nurtures the city of the dead, the cemetery. The movement of the soldiers passing by, as a marching band towards death, is beautifully portrayed through the simile of "Como notas de un canto;" each soldier is a note that defines the collective symphony. The enraged tone of the beginning leaves way for a more melancholic, hopeless tone, when the music of war seems to get lost with those tombs. Phantasmagoric metaphors abound, since the main agents of history are the ghosts of these soldiers. At the end of the poem, crossing the threshold means a silence that paradoxically will soon turn itself into eternal music: "Procesión de ataúdes en puentes al silencio [. . .] / Y pasan los fantasmas atados por la sombra [. . .] / Sus esqueletos vivos debajo de la tierra / Serán los clavecines de una música eterna" (1213) (A procession of coffins crossing the bridges of silence [. . .] / The ghosts pass by, tied together by the shadow [. . .] / Their living skeletons under the earth / Will

be the spinets of an eternal music). The metonymy of the coffins as the soldiers who march in a procession towards the world of shadows and silence is contrasted with the last two verses, when death is transformed to another form of life and music. The final paradox of the skeletons that are “alive,” the ruins of those bodies, emphasizes a double paradox with their comparison to spinets of an eternal music. In previous verses, the soldiers were compared to ephemeral, abstract notes, and at the end, when they are placed under the earth, they will be musical instruments, in a way that is Huidobro’s search for a hopeful note.

“España’s” evocative imagery can be compared to the broken metaphors of Pablo Picasso’s *Guernica*. The self-effacing speaker in Huidobro’s text seems to be a painter, a voyeur, and a witness of history. The army of soldiers is not only represented as musical notes, but also as lights: “Ejércitos de luces al borde de la muerte [. . .] / Es el gran viaje ciego de las velas y el viento / Ya no veréis más esos soldados” (1212) (Armies of light, close to death [. . .] / It is the great blind journey of the candles and the wind / Those soldiers you will never see again). The imagery of these verses responds to the same metaphorical spaces and the aesthetics of fragmentation present in Picasso’s painting: the face of a woman who seems to enter as the wind, through the window and with a lantern in her hand, illuminating the scene and warning everyone. I doubt, however, that Huidobro had already seen Picasso’s *Guernica* by the time he wrote this poem, since they are both from 1937. The broken bodies in Huidobro’s and Picasso’s works also project a Spain in ruins. The metaphor of the assassinated star in the first stanza of “España” also reappears towards the end: “Los vientos se estrellaron en la más alta torre / Caerán mil estrellas con la quilla partida / Y cada una en la tierra tendrá más de cien nombres” (1213) (The winds crashed against the tallest tower / A thousand stars will fall with a broken keel / And on earth, each one of them will have more than a hundred names). Huidobro effectively transforms the individual lonely star into a collective, a multiplicity of broken bodies, broken names, broken stars, who once again give light to the phantasmagoric nature of the poem.

“España” is Huidobro’s finest poem on the Spanish Civil War. Even though I find that the representation of the phantoms can be effective in portraying the haunting effects of the war, it tends to group them as an indistinct mass: “Y salen de sus cuerpos como salían de las fábricas” (1213) (They leave their bodies as they would leave their factories). The soldiers are clearly identified as the working class whose tool in battle is its own body, its own life. However, this verse suggests an automatism in their sacrifice, as if there were no internal conflicts; they lack individuality, as they seem to work and die as heroes: “Tanta sonrisa tanta sangre tantos heroes que caen” (1213) (So many smiles so much blood so many fallen heroes). Here, the verse signals the mythification of the soldiers, whom we know are

Republicans, not only because Huidobro published this text in *El Mono Azul*, but also because the speaker in the beginning calls the instigators of the coup traitors. This mythification becomes problematic when Huidobro alludes to the historical past of the Spanish Conquest as an example of the grandeur of the people, with the reference to the American continent:

El pueblo será grande como su propia estatua
 Como ese continente que sacó de la noche
 Como el galope histórico de épicas mesnadas
 Que dan escalofríos a las alas del bosque. (1213)

(The people will be great as their own statue
 As that continent that they saved from the night
 As the historical gallop of the epic, armed retinue
 Giving chills to the wings of the forest.)

Huidobro's Transatlantic poetics of solidarity go deep into the shallow waters of the aggrandizement of the past, turning the metaphors of mobility, of passing, of construction into metaphors of petrified, static objects: "El pueblo será grande como su propia estatua [. . .] / cien leones antiguos / Petrificados por el rayo y los relámpagos" (1213) (The people will be great as their own statue [. . .] / a hundred antique lions / Petrified by lightning and thunder). Unlike Iván Carrasco Muñoz, I do not find an ironic tone in this poem.¹⁴ As in his short article "La España de la esperanza," where Huidobro suggests that the Spaniards rescued the Americas from mystery, from the unknown, here the poet once again associates the Spanish greatness to the "Discovery" of the continent "que sacó de la noche" (saved from the night), Huidobro's vision of the Conquest of the Americas is openly prejudiced and Eurocentric; it is hard to think of the Americas as a world of darkness, stuck in the night of history when we marvel—and some may also shiver—at the grandeur of the Inca, the Mayan and the Aztec empires. This rhetoric in both his poems and his political pamphlets contributes to the idealization, to the mythification of Spain in search of the support of the Republicans. Carrasco Muñoz reads this as the final brushes of his *creacionismo*:

Los hechos y tiempos históricos referidos en los poemas también han sido transfigurados por la fuerza mágica del creacionismo, pasando a tener rasgos ilusorios, irreales, fabulosos: España es un heroico mar con sus estrellas despertadas, la situación bélica es un himno de luz que estremece al planeta, la sangre es la savia del mañana [. . .] la clave creativa es la libre expresión de la imaginación creacionista que se desarrolla en la transfiguración de sus objetos, que son deshistorizados de acuerdo a los códigos huidobrianos. (1554)

(The events and historical times present in these poems have also been transformed by the magic force of creationism, ending up with illusory, unreal,

fabulous traits: Spain is a heroic sea with its awoken stars, their war is a hymn of light that shakes the planet, blood is tomorrow's salve [. . .] the creative key is the free expression of the creationist imagination that is developed in the transfiguration of objects, dehistoricized according to Huidobro's codes.)

History is obviously recreated through poetic language, whether *creacionista* or not, yet I do not think that his poems "dehistoricize" the war or the events it evokes solely by infusing the ideal, the surreal or the phantasmagoric into his poetic landscape. In "España," Huidobro reminds the reader that those soldiers are fighting for freedom as an unalienable right: "La libertad bien vale un astro emocionado" (1213) (freedom is well worth a moved star). The metaphor of the broken stars is once again illuminated, so that it leaves its own unforgettable traces.

Huidobro's poems on the Spanish Civil War may have a contentious approach to how to deal with Spain's imperial past in the Americas, but ultimately what he intends to do in these texts is to hold on to hope, and to contribute in his own way to the support of the Spanish Republicans, who were vehemently "anti-imperialist." His poems also aim to construct the historical memory of the war. Huidobro testifies to the horrors of the war, and to the visceral need to not forget: "Ya no podréis jamás olvidar esos soldados" (1213) (you will never be able to forget those soldiers). This verse, which he repeats throughout "España" in different forms, stresses the impossibility of forgetting, and the ethical imperative to remember. In order to salvage a certain definition of Spain against the Nationalist and the Fascist appropriation, a Chilean poet was ready to salvage Hispanism with all its enduring "black legend" weight, and make usage of the same vocabulary his enemy was using, "raza," and "tradición," to redefine them in his own terms, and evoke a magma, a hot continuum of spilled blood. Huidobro's poems and articles on the Spanish Civil War genuinely expressed his support for the Republic, and reflect the complexities of the Transatlantic politics and poetics of solidarity.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Pedro García-Caro for his critical reading of an early version of this essay.
2. For a thorough study on these rivalries, consult Faride Zerán's *La guerrilla literaria*. Many contemporary poets in their memoirs allude to those rivalries between Neruda and Huidobro, either with a distant, more sympathetic eye like Elena Garro, or in alliance to one or the other, like Rafael Alberti. Elena Garro mentions that: "Vicente Huidobro estaba preocupado porque Pablo Neruda había prohibido dirigirle la palabra, y sólo de escuchar su nombre, Pablo vomitaba fuego. Huidobro era amable, de maneras fáciles y conversación brillante, pero era chileno y las rivalidades son terribles. Lo encontré varias veces paseando solo por Madrid. Conversaba mucho

con Carlos Pellicer, que lo llamaba ‘el Gran Huidobro’” (23) (Vicente Huidobro was worried because Pablo Neruda had forbidden everyone to talk to him, and only by hearing his name, Pablo would vomit fire. Huidobro was loving, easy going, and always carried out a brilliant conversation, but he was a Chilean, and their rivalries are terrible. I found him a few times walking alone in Madrid. He talked a lot with Carlos Pellicer, who would call him “the Great Huidobro”) [All translations from Spanish into English are mine]. On the other hand, Rafael Alberti mocks Huidobro along with his friend Neruda. He recalls in his memoirs: “Elvira (de Alvear) fue quien me presentó a Vicente Huidobro, gran poeta, sí, pero de una inmensa vanidad, rayana casi en lo grotesco. Cuando en el año 1937 vino a España para el congreso de escritores por la paz, quiso en Madrid visitar algún frente, y Pablo Neruda y yo inventamos esta copla, que se le hizo llegar, diciéndole que los soldados la cantaban con alborozo en las trincheras:

Ya llegó nuestro Vicente,
ganaremos la batalla,
que es el hombre más valiente
por dondequiera que vaya. (Alberti 20)

(Elvira (de Alvear) introduced me to Vicente Huidobro, a great poet, yes, but with such an immense vanity, that was close to being grotesque. When in 1937 he came to Spain for the Congress of Writers for peace, he wanted to visit a battleground in Madrid, and Pablo Neruda and I invented a folk song, that was sent to him, saying that the soldiers sang it rejoicing in the trenches: Arrived our Vicente has / Now the battle we'll win / He's the bravest man of all / Where ever he may be). I have decided to quote these two comments on Huidobro in Madrid because they reveal the perspective of two contemporary writers, from Mexico and Spain, and are less well-known than the parodic portrait we see in Pablo Neruda's *Confieso que he vivido*.

3. Huidobro seemed committed to help the Republican side. Volodia Teitelboim explains that Huidobro even wrote to Gen. Enrique Lister to volunteer to fight in the trenches (230). However, Teitelboim also asserts that as part of his rivalries, Huidobro wrote an article against Neruda's *España en el corazón*. Teitelboim suggests, although he cannot prove it, that Huidobro uses a pseudonym and assumes “la identidad apócrifa de un franquista sarcástico” (231) (the apocryphal identity of a sarcastic Francoist). Teitelboim's critique of the poet is very strong; Huidobro felt very disillusioned, and he seems certain that he wrote that text.
4. David Bary in “Vicente Huidobro y la literatura social” (Vicente Huidobro and Social Literature) reviews some of the texts that reveal Huidobro's social and political commitments. Among them, “En *Vientos contrarios*, ya lo vimos, elogia al comunista como tipo humano; pero el libro no es más que un tejido de aforismos a la cual más antiolectivista y antisocial [...] Huidobro no llega a identificarse plenamente ni con el comunismo ni con la literatura proletaria, como lo demuestra su poesía poscreacionista” (322, 325) (In *Vientos contrarios*, as we have seen, he praises the communist as a human being; but the book is nothing but a web of aphorisms, absolutely antiolectivist and antisocial [...]) Huidobro does not manage to really identify himself with communism nor proletarian literature, as his postcreationist poetry demonstrates) He concludes his essay emphasizing that Huidobro's “social” poems are more numerous in his last books, but that they still represent a minority within his oeuvre and that they tend to be too rhetorical to be aesthetically successful. It is striking to note how forgotten and inaccessible were

Huidobro's texts on the Spanish Civil War, which Bary does not mention, since it is in 1993 when José Alberto de la Fuente published *Vicente Huidobro: Textos inéditos y dispersos*.

5. "Fuera de aquí" is in Vicente Huidobro's *Obra Poética* edited by Cedomil Goic (1216–1219).
6. According to Yurkiévich, he intended to revolutionize modern poetry through an aesthetics of freedom: "Huidobro practica una libertad de asociación hasta entonces no alcanzada por la poesía en lengua castellana" (137) (Huidobro practices a freedom of associations, unprecedented in Hispanic poetry).
7. Among many essays, Gerardo Diego wrote in 1948, "Vicente Huidobro (1893–1948)," and Juan Larrea wrote in 1979 "Vicente Huidobro en Vanguardia."
8. I cannot mention all of Huidobro's articles or *crónicas*, but in "Envidiamos a México," (We envy Mexico) he reinstates his plea for Latin Americans, especially Chileans, to follow Mexico's leading role as a supporter of the Republic: "El pueblo chileno, al dar su voto al Frente Popular, pensará no sólo en sus hijos, pensará también en España, en el pueblo que sangra hoy por su libertad y por su pan, en ese magno pueblo que no quiere ser esclavo y sabe dar su vida para no serlo. Y también pensará en el pueblo mexicano que por haber sabido elegir sus hombres puede darse la mano con el pueblo español [. . .] Por Chile, por España, por México con el Frente Popular, con los partidos del pueblo" (de la Fuente 192) (The Chilean people, when they give their vote to the Popular Front, will not only think of their children, they will also think of Spain, the people who bleed today for their freedom and their bread; that great people who do not want to be slaves and are willing to give their life for it. They will also think of the Mexican people, who because they chose their leaders well can now offer their hand to the Spanish people [. . .] For Chile, for Spain, for México, with the Popular Front, with all the political parties of the people). Here, Huidobro is clearly connecting Chile's national politics and the election to the Spanish war, and the need to be consistent and brave in the midst of such a call to arms.
9. For a very thorough study on the connections between the Moroccan War and the Spanish Civil War, and how the Moorish mercenaries were used and abused, see Sebastian Balfour.
10. A footnote clarifies that its original name was "'Fuera de aquí! Imprecación a los aviadores italianos en paseo comercial por Sud América,' publicado en *La Opinión* (Santiago, 14 de octubre de 1937) p.3, poema-panfleto, al margen izquierdo dice: 'Cuatro de los aviadores italianos que están en Chile y van en gira por Sud América han combatido en España'" (1216) ("Get out of here! Curse on the Italian aviators on a tour around South America," published in *La Opinión* (Santiago, 14 de octubre de 1937) p.3, poem-pamphlet, in the left margin of the text it says: "Four Italian aviators, who are in Chile and are on a tour around South America, have fought in Spain").
11. Writing with blood and through blood also becomes Neruda's aesthetic claim, a point already advanced by Federico García Lorca when he introduced Neruda to literature students at a conference in Madrid as "un poeta [. . .] más cerca de la sangre que de la tinta" (147) (A poet [. . .] closer to blood than to ink). In 1934, when García Lorca described Neruda as closer to blood than to ink, to death than to philosophy, he was commenting on *Residencia en la Tierra* and Neruda's aesthetics of an "impure" poetry, in which Neruda privileged the representation of the concrete. In his poetry of the Spanish Civil War, Neruda constantly uses blood as graphic image of the destruction, for example, in his famous poem "Explico algunas cosas," he ends with the repetition of the verse "Venid a ver la sangre por las calles"

- (Come see the blood in the streets). Huidobro's "Fuera de aquí," "Está sangrando España," and "Gloria y sangre," evoke the same bloody imagery and in particular the innocent blood of the children, present in Neruda's "Explico," and in Vicente Aleixandre's "Oda a los niños de Madrid muertos por la metralla" (Ode to the Madrilian children killed by the schrapnel).
12. "Está sangrando España" can be found in Vicente Huidobro's *Obra Poética* (1204–1208). In the footnote, Cedomil Goic explains that it was originally published in *Escritores y Artistas a la España Popular* (Santiago: Imprenta y Encuadernación Marión, 1936, pp.2–5) (Writers and Artists in Popular Spain).
 13. "Se publicó en la revista *Mono Azul* 20 (Madrid 1937) p.3" (*Obra Poética* 1212–1213) (Published in *Mono Azul* 20 (Madrid 1937) p.3).
 14. Carrasco Muñoz writes that: "El léxico, la métrica, la retórica, la semántica, son convencionales, lo cual permite afirmar que éste ["Canto al Primero de Mayo"] no es un poema vanguardista, como tampoco "España," "La dulzura de vivir," y "Policías y soldados," poemas irónicos con un alto grado de prosaísmo" (The vocabulary, the rhetoric, the semantics, are conventional, which permits me to avow that this ["Song to the First of May"] is not an Avant-garde poem, as are not "Spain," "The sweetness of living," and "Policemen and soldiers," ironic poems with a great level of prosaic language). He gives a clear example of ironic tone from "Policías y soldados," but I disagree with this reading when it comes to "España," a poem whose hyperbole is not a result of irony but rather a way of exacerbating the very real political urgency of the situation and the ravages of war. The context of these two poems he refers to, "La dulzura de vivir" (January 1936) y "Policías y soldados" (1935), is very different from that of "España" (1937). (See Iván Carrasco Muñoz's "*Últimos poemas: La voz que no decrece*" (1553).

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