Seeing Memories: Blindness, Truth, and Accountability in the Theater of Juan Mayorga

By

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Para Mami
Para Papi
Para todos los abriles

Abstract

This dissertation considers how theatrical representations of seeing and the imagination function as components of memory in the works of contemporary Spanish playwright Juan Mayorga (Madrid, b. 1965). Mayorga is currently one of Spain's most widely represented and translated playwrights and winner of Spain's 2007 *Premio Nacional de Teatro* and the 2013 *Premio Nacional de Literatura Dramática*, among several *Premios Max*, and is also a published essayist and scholar. This dissertation explores how, in his theater, Mayorga constructs memory as a non-neutral and conflictive process informed by characters' capacities to see and imagine beyond the visible. The cultural and historical context that grounds the introduction to the chapters is the current debate in Spain having to do with historical memory. The thesis is structured in four chapters, the first two of which serve thematically to inform the third and fourth, which are both grounded more specifically in a historical context characterized by political violence. Chapter 1 establishes a relationship between memory and the imagination's capacity to visualize and experience other worlds as equally or more valid than any visible or objective reality or experience. For this chapter, I examine Mayorga's *La lengua en pedazos* and three of his works of *teatro breve*: *"Amarillo," "La mano izquierda,"* and *"Una carta de Sarajevo."* Chapter 2 examines how the testimonial narrative retelling of memory is both framed and altered by an investigation that seeks to record and archive it, and takes as its examples Mayorga's *El arte de la entrevista* and *La Tortuga de Darwin.* Chapter 3 looks at Mayorga's Holocaust-themed plays and specifically at how in plays such as *Himmelweg (Camino del cielo)* and *El cartógrafo. Varsovia 1:400.000,* Mayorga constructs the acts of *seeing* and *telling* during and after the Holocaust as a critical, ethical imperative. Chapter 4 looks at how Mayorga's Spanish Civil War-themed plays perform the limits and silences of memory. In these works,

language is insufficient to capture and communicate the rupture and silences of a traumatic witnessing and remembering that has for decades been silenced and forced to exist hermetically and, thereby, invisibly.

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Introduction

Conflicts of Memory:
Juan Mayorga and the Work of Historical/Memory Theater in Contemporary Spain

Language has unmistakably made plain that memory is not an instrument for exploring the past but its theater. (611)
-Walter Benjamin, "A Berlin Chronicle" (1932)

In the March-April 2013 onstage adaptation of Basque writer Bernardo Atxaga's novel *El hijo del acordeonista* (2003) at the Centro Dramático Nacional's Teatro Valle-Inclán in Madrid, director Fernando Bernués and set designer José Ibarrola elected to use giant accordion-like blinds, similar in function and form to the kind used for windows, that they lowered and raised throughout the performance to alternately conceal and reveal parts of the stage.[1] These structural blinds blocked spectators' direct view of transitions in time, generations, and settings, but had a secondary, much more striking effect. The raised and lowered blinds had an alternate function—in addition to marking transitions, they also produced in the audience an experience of partial and intermittent "blindness." This scenic effect manifested itself as an example of theater's ability to perform and embody the strategic, selective disclosure of "truth" in memory. It was spectators' own "blindness," framed and conditioned by the lowered and raised blinds that,

[1] Atxaga's *El hijo del acordeonista* is about a man, David, son and friend of men who had to choose sides during the Spanish Civil War, who had lived in Spain throughout most of the Franco period before going into a sort of self-imposed exile in California through which he'd attempted to evade responsibility for his actions during the Franco period. He arrives to his final years in California, the scene with which the play opens, while still carrying a great debt of memory. His past actions—and the imperative of holding him accountable—come back to haunt him in the form of old friends and witnesses who take him to task with critical questions whose answers he cannot escape. Atxaga wrote and originally published *El hijo del acordeonista* in Euskera under the title *Soinujolearen semea* (2003). Patxo Telleria later adapted it into the screenplay used for this CDN performance. Please see the Centro Dramático Nacional's trailer for the dramatic adaptation of Axtaga's novel: http://cdn.mcu.es/espectaculo/el-hijo-del-acordeonista/. (8 April 2014). At the time of the novel's publication, a controversy known as the "Caso Echevarría" arose over critic Ignacio Echevarría's being apparently pulled from the team of writers for *El País*'s culture and art blog, Babelia, for his criticism of the novel. For more on this controversy, see Escolar.net's 19 December 2004 editorial on this controversy: http://www.escolar.net/MT/archives/001975.html (8 April 2014).

together with the haunting and nostalgic music of the accordion, enabled the performance of the play's underlying message—that to engage a traumatic past through evasion is no way to effectively "work through" it. From my perspective as both spectator and someone who would eventual write analytically about the experience, the production underscored the interplay of "seeing"—or not—and remembering—or not—, in turn challenging the idea that a painful, traumatic memory that is concealed, "erased," or deliberately made to be "out of sight," can ever be entirely "out of mind."

This dissertation project borrows from this performance the visible image of lowered and raised blinds and the binary pairs this image signifies in theater and for the spectator—seeing/blindness and visibility/invisibility—as a visual metaphor for exploring the theatrical representation of memory in the works of contemporary Spanish playwright Juan Mayorga (b. Madrid, 1965). The way Mayorga would construct this same staging of memory and (in)visibility is not, however, through the use of large onstage devices that block characters' and spectators' view, as in the performance described above. Rather, he would construct it through the three interrelated elements fundamental to his theater: dialogical, dialectical conflict, the foregrounding of the imagination, and the construction of *seeing* as an ethical act. The four chapters that follow this introduction are centered on those of Mayorga's plays in which the act of seeing, together with its counterparts, actual and metaphorical blindness, are performed onstage as a deliberate and ethical choice capable of producing, transmitting, and altering memory. For Mayorga, theater is first and foremost *"el arte de la imaginación,"* one that, like all art, is capable of performing "truth" as a construction of the imagination, so that reality is constituted as much by what is visible as by what is invisible. As Mayorga explained to David Barba in a 2006 interview: "'Como la filosofía, el arte desvela la realidad, la hace visible.

Porque. . .la verdad no es natural; la verdad es una construcción. Es necesario un artificio que muestre lo que el ojo no ve'" (Barba; qtd. in Argüello Pitt 71). For Mayorga, theater, and any "truth" it might purport to contain, is not neutral (Perales 2011). Rather, it is an art that derives from conflict and, as such, should produce it: "Debe generar controversia. Es el arte del conflicto. Las mejores obras son capaces de dividir al público y de abrir una contradicción en cada espectador. El mejor teatro es polémico, desata una guerra" ("Urgencia" 2010). Conceiving of his theater the way a cartographer might conceive of the maps he/she creates—that is, as deliberate answers to deliberate questions posed by the cartographer/playwright (Mayorga "*El cartógrafo"*)—, Mayorga has pointed out that theater is a non-neutral, political act *because* its vitality and survival depend on the gathering of and engagement with the *polis*. However, far from echoing back to spectators their own voices or reflecting back to the audience an image of itself, argues Mayorga, theater should challenge the public and, in the best of scenarios, compel critical consciousness:

> Igual que un mapa, un teatro que no provoque controversia es un teatro irrelevante. El mejor teatro divide la ciudad. Divide la conciencia, la memoria, la imaginación de la ciudad. Porque en vez de a lo general, a lo normal, a lo acordado, atiende a lo singular, a lo anómalo, a lo incierto. A aquello que la ciudad quiere expulsar del territorio y del mapa. Un teatro valioso, como un valioso mapa, rehace la escena original de la ciudad: aquella en que se establecieron sus límites. ("Teatro y cartografía" 87)

From Mayorga's perspective, theater's capacity to provoke transformation resides certainly in a well-wrought stage production onstage and in each actor's capacity to perform other worlds, but above all, it unfolds in the minds and imaginations of its spectators. In this sense, for Mayorga,

any effective theater must take into account the spectator's "cultural memory reinforced by his or her imaginary" (Finter 230).

In contemporary Spain, theater that pretends to be "a la escucha de la ciudad" cannot but respond to any of the several crises that Spanish society is currently living—whether the economic crisis characterized by a dearth of resources and employment; the ongoing polemic regarding bullfighting and animal rights; the controversy over immigration policy and immigrants' legal and social status; Spain's recent involvement in international war efforts; the continued efforts of autonomous communities to increase their independence, further decentralizing the State; and what, by many counts has been nearly four if not eight decades of struggles over Spain's collective historical memory in the wake of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), the dictatorship of Francisco Franco (1939-1975), and the *Transición Española,* which began shortly after Franco's death in 1975 and lasted, some historians say, until the democratic general election of 1982 (Jerez-Farrán and Amago 2).[2] As mentioned above, Mayorga argues that theater's transformative potential resides in its capacity to challenge spectators and to unseat any comfortable notions of self and society. This suggests that the most effective theater today will be that which anchors itself in the conflicts produced by these crises and, moreover, that which regards conflict as a vehicle—and not an obstacle—for individual and collective consciousness and change. In many respects, the state of general crisis which has been literally taken to the streets in the protests of recent years in Spain has underscored the need for open, public dialogue and transparency as critical to a process that seeks resolution. It is here that

[2] For an examination of theater's response to other social crises such as gender inequality in Spain, see Ingenshcay (2004). For an excellent panoramic study of "la estética de la catástrofe" in vanguardist and experimental theater in post-1978 in Spain—a response to global crises such as the Cold War and the censorship and silencing that continued during Spain's democratic transition and into the XXI century—see Sánchez (2006). For an article that looks at Mayorga's response to the War on Terror, see Beilin (2012). Also from Beilin, a study on how Mayorga's theater responds to the debate on animal rights (2014, forthcoming).

contemporary theater has a unique opportunity. As a convocation of the city, and by extension, the nation, theater can not only actively hear and see, it can challenge, question, and disrupt the city's comfortable assumptions, creating a sort of revolution of consciousness and, perhaps, memory. The spirit of Mayorga's theater in this sense echoes that of Antonin Artaud, who professed that "In a true theater a play disturbs the senses' repose, frees the repressed unconscious, incites a kind of virtual revolt (which moreover can have its full effect only if it remains virtual), and imposes on the assembled collectivity an attitude that is both difficult and heroic" (28).

This thesis will focus on how theater addresses memory as a product of dialogical conflict in which individuals struggle to create transparency and visibility while accessing memories that at every turn seem threatened by the "forgetful" passing of time, the undercurrent of fear that lingers over speaking out about the past, and the social, political, and institutional conditions that directly or indirectly push for memory's silencing or erasure. In 2000, when Spanish journalist Emilio Silva Barrera discovered the mass grave located in Priaranza del Bierzo, León, in which lay the remains of his grandfather and twelve other civilians who had been executed by Franco's *falangistas* in 1936, the wound of Spain's historical, political memory was re-opened. Silva Barrera's discovery prompted his founding of the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (ARMH), an organization that has since worked with volunteers to organize the exhumation of over 88,000 victims (Torrús) scattered throughout the country—other estimates, place the number at more than 120,000 (Elkin)—, all executed extra-judicially.[3] Between Franco's institutionalized censorship and the fact that, for the 37 years of his

[3] According to many of the stories told by victims' families, the would-be executioners would ask the victims to go for a "paseo," take them into a forest or rural area, and executing them point blank, before "disappearing" them by dumping their bodies in a mass grave (Elkin), a pattern that the ARMH website describes as "secuestro-asesinato-

regime, many of these *verdugos* lived amongst their victims' families as local politicians, those who had lost family members would not speak about the victims, or the "secret" graves in which they were buried, without facing serious social or legal repercussions (Elkin). After Franco's death, the fear of destabilizing a fragile new democracy, together with the residual fear of speaking out, were concretized again in the 1977 Amnesty Law, passed with votes from both the left and the right.[4] Article 2.f of the law declares amnesty for "'los delitos cometidos por funcionarios y agentes del orden público contra el ejercicio de los derechos de las personas,'" making it illegal to prosecute any crime or violation of human rights committed by public and political functionaries prior to 15 December 1976.[5] The Law devolved into a sort of national *pacto de silencio* that constructed accountability and the act of remembering as a contaminant to the nation's new democracy. In short, justice and memory were seen as a disease, while *el silencio* and *el olvido* were seen as a nurturing curative for the new democracy (Aguilar Fernández).

The irony of the Transition's efforts to move beyond the past by only looking forward is that the decades since 1975 have been saturated with filmic, literary, and dramatic attempts to capture, reenact, and make sense of the Spanish Civil War and the Franco regime. The continued presence of this traumatic past in cultural productions, alongside its relative absence or silencing in political discourse, suggests that historical, political memory in Spain continues to be, as Vicente J. Benet suggests, a wound that never heals (351). This cultural production has not had a painless existence, however, and many artists and writers have had to face the unspoken

desaparición." For more information, please consult the official website for the ARMH at the following link: http://www.memoriahistorica.org.es/joomla/index.php/quienes-somos (25 April 2014).

[4] During the transition to democracy, leaders feared that talk of the past in any way, except to look and move beyond it, would do nothing short of prompting another Civil War. The failed *coup d'état* of 1981 served to reinforce this paranoia.

[5] This information can be located in the ARMH website, previously cited.

silencing and unofficial censorship that still operate at many levels in Spanish society. As an incursion into the fractured, blocked, and silenced memories that continue to occupy Spain's public discourse, Mayorga's theater offers audiences an opportunity to question where and how the silencing and the ruptures in memory emerge, not only at the collective, national level, but within the self and between individuals.

Historian Paloma Aguilar Fernández is the author of *Memory and Amnesia: The Role of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy* (2002), published originally in Spanish in 1996 and considered one of the first scholarly texts to publicly address Spain's historical memory. In it, Aguilar Fernández argues that "conflictual historical memory" at the collective level—with its multiple, competing interpretations of historical events—can prevent a nation from being able to create harmony and stability and "build a common future" (8). Meanwhile, Fernández de Mata, in his article "The Rupture of the World and the Conflicts of Memory" (2010), locates "conflicts of memory" at the level of the individual remembering subject.[6] In the interviews that Fernández de Mata has conducted with the family members of the Spanish Civil War's "disappeared," what has resounded, more than any coherent, linear testimony, is the fractured remembering characteristic of trauma victims. He attributes these silences and broken stories to the decades of fear, guilt and resulting self-censorship experienced by survivors, witnesses, and the families of victims. Fernández de Mata argues that the moments of fracture and silence signify the "rupture of the world" that these family members experienced upon losing their loved ones to (2010: 292). He argues that this is because traumatic memories have been "made socially *invisible* for more than six decades and have therefore remained unarticulated and

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[6] An earlier version in Spanish of Fernández de Mata's essay was published in 2006 under the title "La memoria a la escucha, la ruptura del mundo y el conflicto de memorias" / "Remembering and Listening, the Rupture of the World and the Conflict of Memories" in *Hispana nova. Revista de Historia contemporánea.* Núm. 6 (2006). http://hispanianova.rediris.es--notably, one year before the 2007 passing of the Law of Historical Memory in Spain.

often suppressed" (2010: 281; my italics). Fernández de Mata signals the fragmentation of support networks and an environment of hostility as factors that made the bringing of these memories—and in many cases, the buried bones that can attest to them—into full view nearly impossible without repercussions. In this same fragmentary and silencing rupture is where Michael Bernard-Donals (2009) locates the "void" of memory that emerges in the spoken testimonies of Holocaust survivors. Drawing from Maurice Blanchot's *The Writing of the Disaster* (1995) as well as those of Emmanuel Lévinas, among others, Bernard-Donals argues that between *mneme,* the linear, narrative form of memory, and *anamnesis,* the fragmentary, ruptured memory, is what he calls a void of memory. It is here that, much like Blanchot's "disaster" and the "rupture of the world" that Fernández de Mata writes of, Holocaust survivors reveal the "concavity of experience" that signals the tremendous losses that prompt the memory itself (9-10). However, Bernard-Donals also suggests that the interplay of forgetting (associated with *anamnesis*) and remembering (associated with *mneme*) is a similarly productive conflict. That is, it is the fragmentation, inaccessibility, and forgetting, that make memory possible (10).

In his critical collection of essays, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (2004), Paul Ricoeur describes as "lost objects" that same "forgetting" or "blocked memory" that Bernard-Donals writes of—that is, these silenced recollections have not been erased but, rather, misplaced (446). For Ricoeur as for Bernard-Donals, "forgetting" is not the same thing as *amnesia*, arguing in favor of the "paradoxical idea that forgetting can be so closely tied to memory that it can be considered one of the conditions for it" (427). In her *Working Through Memory: Writing and Remembrance in Contemporary Spanish Narrative* (2007), Ofelia Ferrán recasts the Freudian concept of "working through" by applying it to the analysis of novels and Spain's collective historical memory. In this context, she suggests, remembering and forgetting are "inevitably

intertwined in the difficult balance between honoring the past, mourning the victims of such traumatic events, and moving on with life" (xv). As mentioned above, Transition-era policies and approaches to Spain's past had the effect of making accountability and justice for past crimes and repression illegal, preventing memory from entering public discourse.[7] Ferrán points to Ricoeur's notion of *dissensus,* which includes remembering and forgetting, as well as competing, multiple interpretations of historical events, to argue that it is the disagreements over memory—and not the consensus that the Transition sought to forge—that will be critical to Spain's healing and resolution with regard to its past (Ferrán xliv; Ricoeur 501). Ferrán argues that is only through the cultivation of "conflicts" over memory—and not in their avoidance—that the nation will eventually heal and be able to move on (2007: xliv). The shift towards openness that began with Silva Barrera's discovery of his grandfather's grave in 2000 faces an uphill battle, however, with historical memory still being portrayed by the more conservative or traditional factions of Spanish society as a social ill to be kept at bay.

In this context, the amnesic erasure implied in *olvido* is far more devastating to collective historical memory than the fragmentary "forgetting" and "rupture" described above. While there is hope for the healing of these—the forgetting and the rupture—, there is little hope for *el olvido.* Reyes Mate, senior scholar and philosopher at Madrid's Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), winner of Spain's 2009 Premio Nacional de Ensayo, and Mayorga's doctoral thesis director, has suggested that in Spain, memory is currently seeing a surge in popularity and prestige (qtd. in Rodríguez Marcos) and cites two reasons: first, that the

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[7] In an attempt to reverse this effect, the 2007 Law of Historical Memory passed by Prime Minister Zapatero and the PSOE momentarily brought Spain's historical collective memory to the forefront of public discourse, an effort whose backbone has since been weakened by the election of the conservative Partido Popular. For an example of attempts to discursively weaken this effort, see the *Libertad Digital España* 2007editorial article titled "El PP dice que la Ley de Memoria Histórica 'peca de los vicios de la dictadura' al 'dividir' entre 'buenos y malos'" (19 April 2007). <http://www.libertaddigital.com/nacional/el-pp-dice-que-la-ley-de-memoria-historica-peca-de-los-vicios-de-la-dictadura-al-dividir-entre-buenos-y-malos-1276303783/.> 12 April 2014.

generations that have inherited the legacy of the Spain's past are now the voices calling for justice and accountability; and, second, that memory itself has become indispensable: "'Los historiadores la despreciaban: preferían los archivos. Pero hay aspectos del pasado que sólo podemos conocer por la memoria: la significación de las víctimas. Víctimas ha habido siempre y la historia hablaba de ellas, pero como el precio que había que pagar por el progreso" (qtd. in Rodríguez Marcos). Now, suggests Mate, the debate should no longer be about "historical memory" but about "political memory," since it is the public, shared, "political" memory (of the *polis*) that is the obligation of *all* of society in the present (Rodríguez Marcos). Reyes Mate has further suggested that a nation facing a catastrophic past has one of two options—either it remembers by deliberately making the past *present,* with the intention of ensuring that the past's critical lessons stave off future catastrophes, or it remembers by explicitly leaving the past behind (which is what the leaders of the *Transición* attempted to do), effectively erasing the lessons of the past from present consciousness and, ironically, making itself more vulnerable to history's repetition (2003). Reyes Mate also suggests that one reason it may be possible to "work through" these memories is that the notion of justice in Spain has since changed (2003). Reyes Mate writes that during the Transition, it did not occur to anyone that the victims of the *Guerra Civil* would ever have a "voice" in the public arena—"eran invisibles o mejor in-significantes" (2009). But, in the last decade, it is the buried victims that are at the forefront or the "epicenter," to use Mate's term, of the discourse on justice (2009).[8] What remains to be seen is how this dialogue will unfold and whether the "conflicts of memory," so fraught with disagreements and

[8] Mate attributes this change to what the world now knows of the Holocaust and the extent to which Germany could not, in the decades following the Holocaust, continue to ignore the tremendous degree of violence and losses it had witnessed. Writes Mate: "Nace así el deber de memoria que no es cosa de alemanes, sino propio de las generaciones que han tomado conciencia del precio de la historia, de la lógica violenta con la que se ha construido la realidad que ha llegado hasta nosotros" (2009).

disparities, fragmentation and forgetting, will continue to engage each other as in a dialectic with one ultimate goal—that justice for its victims be served. Even in the current atmosphere in Spain, in which, as Mate suggests, memory has gained in prestige, there is much to indicate that the road to reconciliation and any kind of "moving on" from the past will be far from smooth. This atmosphere of hesitation or outright fear of reprisals for literary or artistic works that land clearly on one side or the other of the political spectrum in Spain underscores a paradoxical situation. That is, that while *memory* is entering the public (though not necessarily political) sphere now more than ever, it is still a discourse and a practice that is framed by fear. This means that cultural productions about historical memory almost always carry with them these fear-induced silences—a residual carry-over from the institutionalized censorship of Franco's dictatorship.

In his 2010 article, "The Weight of Memory and the Lightness of Oblivion: The Dead of the Spanish Civil War," Joan Ramón Resina wrote the following: "Never before has there been so much fascination with historical memory and so much resistance to its implications. Our relation to the past has become *spectatorial*, as if mediated witnessing of the atrocities and injustices of previous generations happened in a different moral planet and could not claim our moral response to the lived present" (226; italics added). Resina draws a powerful but problematic parallel between the spectator in theater and the spectator as a remembering subject, assuming, as he does, that spectators are passively separated from the object of their gaze by a distance that upholds their moral and ethical disengagement. Implicit is the idea that the spectator is only capable of passively seeing and cannot engage with it, let alone be "afflicted" by the performance as if "with the force of an epidemic" (Artaud 26; Rancière 4-5). The following study suggests that what Mayorga assumes through his theater is a fundamentally different kind of engagement with memory and a fundamentally different sort of spectator—as

Rancière would argue, one whose *seeing* upends the notion that the spectator is merely a passive receptor and that seeing and saying do not actually *do* anything.

This assumed passivity is among the assumptions that Rancière seeks to dismantle in his *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009). The first is the idea that in order to combat the spectators' assumed passivity, and the *spectatorial* distance to which Resina alludes, theater must either increase this distance by instructing the public, creating in the spectator an analytical, investigative posture, as Brecht (1964) suggests with his epic theater; or it must abolish this distance, recasting the spectator as an actor, calling the spectator to physically enact and embody what Antonin Artaud referred to in his Theater of Cruelty as the "concrete language" of action and gesture.[9] Both approaches assume that the spectator's *seeing* is by itself irredeemably passive, detached, and inactive. Rancière also unpacks the assumption that theater is a collective, community experience simply *because* it is a gathering of individuals who will share in *seeing* the same performance within the same space (16). The "emancipation" of the spectator, for Rancière, emphasizes that community is created through the spectators' individual capacity to actively *see* and *say,* to uniquely interpret and "develop their own translation in order to appropriate the 'story' and make it their own story. An emancipated community of narrators and translators" (22). This notion of the "emancipated," active spectator appropriating what he/she sees and making it into his or her own story echoes Mikhail Bakhtin's idea that meanings and

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[9] In Brecht's epic theater, this distance is necessary because it allows for the spectator's "refined gaze," an investigative posture that supports theater as a kind of pedagogical "narrating podium" (Broamt-Bertail 20; Rancière 5; Brecht 1964:71). For Brecht, the spectator of epic theater reacts with words such as, "'I'd never have thought it – That's not the way – That's extraordinary, hardly believable – It's got to stop – The sufferings of man appall me – I laugh when they weep, I weep when they laugh'" (1964: 71). Meanwhile, for Artaud with his Theater of Cruelty, the distance between the spectator and the performance should be abolished in favor of "total performance," the full, embodied participation of spectators, whereby in which theater effectively "infects" them with the force of an epidemic (Rancière 5; Artaud 38).

words in language are not neutral—they "exist in other people's mouths" and each individual must grab it and make it her/his own:

> The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral or impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own. (293-294)

For both theorists, *seeing* (Rancière) and *speaking* (Bakhtin) are acts that have the potential to transform the self and the outside world; acts that derive their force directly from the individual's intellect, imagination and memory; acts that enable the individual to forge meaningful links and exchanges in and through community; and, finally, acts that are deeply common to our existence as individuals in the world. As Rancière writes, "Being a spectator is not some passive condition that we should transform into activity. It is our normal situation" (17).

Mayorga has written that "El teatro vive del conflicto, y el conflicto más rico es el que se abre entre el escenario y el patio de butacas. La mejor forma de respetar al espectador es desafiar sus convicciones, su sensibilidad, su punto de vista. Enfrentarlo a aquello que no quiere ver" (qtd. in Arraubarrena). In this study, I analyze those of Mayorga's works in which dialogical struggles over meaning, "truth," and memory are rooted in the characters' individual capacities and willingness to actively *see* and *speak* in the ways that Rancière and Bakhtin propose. Returning to Resina's characterization of Spain's historical memory as something by which individuals are fascinated but also from which they are morally and ethically detached, I propose

two considerations, both of which enter into the chapters' analysis of Mayorga's theater. The first is that whether and how an individual accesses memory is—like the performance's story and like meaning in language—something that he/she must struggle to appropriate. It is a process that is circumscribed by power inequalities and deceptive, "official" stories of the past. In Spain's case in particular—and, as we'll see in the following section, this applies to theater both as it takes place on the stage and at the writer's pen—, each individual's capacity for "emancipation" and remembering must face the challenge of having that word, that meaning, that story, and that memory yanked from before him or her by the fear-inducing forces of censorship, dogmatic ways of seeing, and institutional repression. The second point has to do with memory itself and how Mayorga constructs its production, distortion, and/or its potential erasure—that is, as non-neutral products of conflictive, dialectical dialogue: what I refer to alongside Fernández de Mata as "conflicts of memory". Mayorga's foregrounding imagination and dialogical conflict in theater as his means for producing meaning and memory echoes Rancière and Bakhtin's calls for shifting the focus in language use and seeing from the passive to the active. In this way, I will insist, as Anne Ubsersfeld does, that dialogue in theater actually *does* something (2002).[10] As she writes:

> The difference between a conversational exchange in real life and theatrical dialogue lies in the unremarked but fundamentally important fact that a theatrical utterance has not only meaning, but also an effect or, more exactly, an action. Every speech acts. No speech fails to modify something within its theatrical universe, a universe that includes

[10] In Janelle G. Reinelt's analysis of performativity versus theatricality, she cites Jacques Derrida's (1988) critique of J.L. Austen's *How to do things with Words* (1955), in which Austen downplays theatrical utterance as empty and meaningless in his theory of performative utterances. Derrida, meanwhile, emphasizes the "'iterability'" of theatrical language and tries, in his critique, to rescue it as an utterance like any other. In Reinalt's assessment of Derrida's critique, she writes: "The force of utterance is its structural break with prior established contexts. Iteration means that in the space between the context and the utterance, there is no guarantee of a realization of prior conditions, but rather of a deviance from them, which constitutes its performative force" (204).

> the spectator. This *carrying out of an action* characteristic of theatrical utterances must be central to any analysis of theatrical dialogue, a dialogue which is not conversation, even when it gives the illusion of conversation." (14)

This dialogical-dialectical confluence of actions, intentions, and meaning recalls the epigraph with which this Introduction begins. In "A Berlin Chronicle" (1932), Walter Benjamin suggested that it is memory, and the language and dialogical exchanges that give it form, through which the past exists and sees its "performance" in the present: "Language has unmistakably made plain that memory is not an instrument for exploring the past but its theater" (611). Mayorga's theater adds a critical component to our understanding of the relationship between language and the conflicts over memory. I argue that it is through the ethical act of *seeing* what is both visible and invisible that Mayorga's characters make the past a living part of their present, actively facing its lessons and at times recklessly diving into its wounds.

Juan Mayorga's Theater: *"Entre las pasiones humanas y las pulsiones intelectuales"*[11]

Juan Mayorga, born in Madrid in 1965, is relatively anomalous among his contemporaries for various biographical reasons, such as his educational background in mathematics, his five years as a high school math teacher and, later, his 1997 Doctorate in Philosophy for which he wrote a dissertation, as mentioned above, under the direction of philosopher Reyes Mate. Mayorga's dissertation, centered on the works of Walter Benjamin and now published under the title, *Revolución conservadora y conservación revolucionaria. Política y memoria en Walter Benjamin* (2003), cements Mayorga's intellectual debt to Benjamin, traces

[11] This is a phrase used by the blogger Miguel Ayanz (2013) to describe Mayorga's work.

of whose thought can be detected in all of Mayorga's works.[12] In the fifteen years since Mayorga completed and earned his degree, he has taught philosophy and theater at the Real Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático (RESAD) in Madrid, participated as an investigator with the Instituto de Filosofía of the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), Spain's National Research Council, published dozens of essays and plays, and become Spain's most widely awarded, translated, and performed living playwright. Mayorga's intellectual and academic work is remarkable, not only for how it distinguishes him from his contemporaries, but for the ways in which it informs his dramaturgy. For example, while at CSIC, Mayorga was a member of two research circles directed by Reyes Mate, one dedicated to "El Judaísmo. Una tradición olvidada de Europa," and the other to "La Filosofía después del Holocausto." Mayorga later directed his own research circle between 2010 and 2013 for the Instituto de Filosofía at CSIC, a monthly seminar guided by the title "Memoria y pensamiento en el teatro contemporáneo." Mayorga organized the seminars as a kind of conference panel for which he would invite scholars as well as playwrights, directors, and actors, to present and/or perform alongside each other. Each seminar featured its own topic and Mayorga generally structured them so that his introductory remarks would be followed by a scholarly/philosophical presentation and, after a short break, a presentation by someone from the theater community, who would in turn introduce the featured theatrical work for that day's seminar, a fragment of which was either informally staged or performed through a dramatic reading. Mayorga organized the seminar's topics around plays that would be performed in Madrid within days of the seminar being held, and often featured the play's author, director, or actors, thereby making his seminars

[12] Zoe Martín Lago, a student of philosophy at the University of Salamanca, is currently working on a dissertation in which she analyzes the influence of Walter Benjamin in Mayorga's works.

both relevant *and* timely.[13] Mayorga's most recent academic post is with a different institution, the Universidad Carlos III in Madrid, where he has designed and initiated the university's new Master's Degree in Creación Teatral, which has just completed its inaugural semester.[14]

Concurrent with Mayorga's academic and scholarly accomplishments over the last twenty-five years has been his tremendous rise to literary fame in the world of theater, with plays translated into over twenty languages and performances of his works in cities as distant and disparate as Buenos Aires, Havana, New York City, Oslo, Athens, Tartu, Seoul, and Sydney, among many others. Since he wrote his first play, *Siete hombres buenos,* in 1988—for which he was runner-up for the Premio Marqués de Bradomín for young playwrights—, Mayorga has been receiving awards for his work, the most notable and prestigious of which he has received in the last decade. For example, he received the Premio Nacional de Literatura Dramática for *La lengua en pedazos* (2012) in 2013—a play I analyze in Chapter 1—, the Premio Valle-Inclán for *La paz perpetua* (2007) in 2009, and the 2007 Premio Nacional de Teatro, among many others. He has also received several Premios Max al Mejor Autor—the equivalent of the Tony Awards in the United States—for *Hamelin* (2005) in 2006; for *El chico de la última fila* (2006) in 2008, a play

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[13] Throughout the thesis, I will refer to certain of these meetings of Mayorga's seminar, many of whose proceedings and papers were published in the theater journal *Primer acto.* Of particular interest to this thesis and special interest to the analysis in Chapter 4 is the November 2010 seminar, which Mayorga dedicated to the topic, "Muertos sin tumba" and which incorporated the work of forensic anthropologist Fernando Ferrándiz and playwright and director, Laila Ripoll and her theater group, Micomicón. For more information, please consult the following link, http://www.cchs.csic.es/en/node/282919, as well as the seminar's proceedings, published in volume 337 of *Primer acto* (I/2011). For the December 2012 seminar, organized around the December 2012 performance of Mayorga's adaptation of Calderón's *La vida es sueño* at the Teatro Pavón in Madrid, a seminar meeting in which both philosopher Reyes Mate and theater director Helena Pimenta participated, Mayorga wrote of Calderón's classic play in terms of its relevance to contemporary society, saying: "Pocos textos teatrales han dado que pensar en los cuatro últimos siglos como este y su reciente puesta en escena ha probado la vigencia de la extraordinaria obra calderoniana y su capacidad para interrogar el hombre contemporáneo." <http://www.fronterad.com/?q=memoria-y-pensamiento-en-teatro-contemporaneo>. 17 April 2014.

[14] For more information on this new Master's Degree created and directed by Mayorga, whose inaugural semester began in January 2014, please consult the Universidad Carlos III's website for this program of study—http://portal.uc3m.es/portal/page/portal/postgrado_mast_doct/masters/Master_Creacion_Teatral (17 April 2014)—as well as a YouTube video of the official inauguration of the Master's Degree: http://youtu.be/58Zwn87xitA (22 April 2014).

that was later converted into the award-winning feature film *Dans la Maison* (2012, France), directed by François Ozon; and for *La Tortuga de Darwin* (2008) in 2009, one of the two plays that I analyze in Chapter 2. Mayorga received his most recent Premio Max in 2013 for Mejor Adaptación de Obra Teatral for his work on the adaptation of Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *La vida es sueño,* performed at Madrid's Teatro Pavón in late 2012 and directed by one of Spain's premier directors, Helena Pimenta.[15]

In addition to his original theater work, Mayorga has also completed several adaptations—*versiones*, he calls them—of classic narrative or dramatic texts. His role in these works is to adapt the text from the period in which it was written into the present, making its language and transitions more accessible to a contemporary audience. Differentiating the task of the adaptor from that of the playwright, Mayorga has said that he is more like a translator between the past and the present,

> buscando siempre la transparencia, la invisibilidad, teniendo en cuenta que es malo que a quien adapta una obra se le note demasiado en el texto… y que también es malo cuando se le echa de menos; es decir, que he tenido que trabajar a medio camino entre la inhibición y la invasión, pero siendo plenamente consciente de que no debía ser más que un modesto traductor de un texto de su época original al presente. (Casillas)

Among the other texts that Mayorga has adapted, or "translated," from their original by reworking the language and transitions so they are clear, streamlined, and intelligible to a contemporary audience, are Greek classics such as Euripides' *Hecuba* in 2013 and classic

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[15] See Helena Pimenta's "La dirección de escena. Un oficio necesario" (2006) for a discussion of what is, in her experience, the art of the director in theater. At the start of her essay, she refers to the relative unfamiliarity with the director's task as a product of society's being "en su mayoría, ajena al teatro" (2006: 67). In an early 2014 interview, Pimenta wrote of her criteria upon choosing a text to direct for the stage: "'Siempre que tengo que elegir una obra, por un lado me baso en lo formal y lo académico, y por otra parte en lo que me mueve a mí por dentro. Esa inquietud por querer poner en debate determinados valores, por ejemplo, y que a todos nos conciernen'" (Bejarano).

Spanish works such as Calderón's *El monstruo de los jardines* in 2000, Lope de Vega's *La dama boba* in 2002, and the more recent *Divinas palabras* by Valle-Inclán in 2006; Shakespearean plays such as *Rey Lear* in 2008, which for its February 2008 performance at the Teatro Valle-Inclán in Madrid, directed by Gerardo Vera, the role of King Lear was performed by the recently deceased Argentine actor, Alfredo Alcón. Mayorga has also adapted a variety of literary and biographical works that point to ethical questions and Europe's political and cultural history, among them Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's late 18th century *Natán el Sabio* in 2003; Dostoevsky's *El Gran Inquisidor* from *The Brothers Karamazov* in 2005; Henrick Ibsen's *Un enemigo del pueblo* in 2007; *Wstawac* in 2008, based on Primo Levi's Holocaust survival narratives and poetry; *Ante la Ley* in 2008, from Franz Kafka's *The Process*; Anton Chekov's *Platonov* in 2009, and, most recently, Georg Büchner's *Woyzeck* in 2011.

Mayorga has also co-authored two works, one of which garnered him and his co-writer, Juan Cavestany—as well as the theater group they formed along with others at the time, Animalario—unexpected notoriety and national recognition. In 2003, Mayorga and Cavestany co-wrote an explosive parody in response to an absurdly ostentatious social event—the wedding of the daughter of then Prime Minister José María Aznar. The play, written in several short, interrelated but still autonomous scenes, was titled *Alejandro y Ana. Lo que España no pudo ver del banquete de la boda de la hija del presidente* (2005), and saw its debut performance, directed by Andrés Lima, in February 2003 in the large banquet hall Salones Lady Ana in Madrid. Spectators lined the edges of the banquet hall and even sat at a large banquet table in the center of the room, a table at which actors would periodically sit and perform parts of the play. Not only was the play wildly sarcastic, theatrical, and critical, it was tremendously well received, enjoyed over 250 performances throughout the nation, and even earned Animalario the 2004 Premio Max

for Mejor Espectáculo de Teatro.[16] The scenes that were written by Mayorga—"Candidatos," "Justicia," "Inocencia," "Sentido de calle," "El espíritu de Cernuda," and "Manifiesto comunista"—are published as autonomous texts (though each remains prefaced by the context of the wedding of the daughter of the President) in Mayorga's collection of 28 short plays, *Teatro para minutos* (2009).

Mayorga has also taken classic texts and used them as an impetus for his own original creation, constructing a parallel and tangential original fiction that uses as its motive a classic text. Among these are *Palabra de perro* (2004)*,* which takes as its origin Cervantes' *El coloquio de los perros; Primera noticia de la catástrofe (a partir de "Historia de las Indias" de Bartolomé de las Casas)* (2007) based on the writings of Bartolomé de Las Casas*; Job* (2006)*,* a four part play based on the Biblical Book of Job as well as the Holocaust survivor/victim writings of Elie Wiesel, Zvi Kolitz y Etti Hillesum; and *La lengua en pedazos* (2012), a fictionalized dialogue between Santa Teresa de Jesús and an Inquisitor, which Mayorga created after reading Santa Teresa's *Libro de la vida*. *La lengua en pedazos* in its current form has also compelled Mayorga's directorial debut, with 2013 and 2014 performances throughout Spain with the theater company he founded, called "La Loca de la Casa"—what Santa Teresa called the imagination.[17] Regarding his new endeavor as director, Mayorga has said that he considers it an extension of his task as a writer, or, a form of the same thing: "La dirección es otra forma de escritura, en el espacio y en el tiempo. Hay un lenguaje distinto, un juego de signos, que me

[16] Assuring the play's accessibility to the public, Animalario produced a documentary film (2003) which is accessible and free on YouTube in eight parts, the introductory portions of which can be seen using the following links: Part 1/8 (Introduction) http://youtu.be/1TT2Y7wRYJo, Part 2/8 http://youtu.be/5nEPFfT4g0w, and Part 3/8 (http://youtu.be/oRP0MeeUcz0), Part 4/8 http://youtu.be/XIAuX5XLhMg, etc.
[17] *La lengua en pedazos* is a work I analyze in depth in Chapter 1 on blindness, while Mayorga's *Job* and *Wstawac* are works that I analyze in Chapter 3, dedicated to Mayorga's Holocaust-themed works.

permite explorar la escritura dramática; una palabra, en el teatro, cobra sentidos muy distintos si se dice al oído de un personaje o se dice de espaldas a él" (qtd. in Bravo).

Among the more influential directors that have worked with Mayorga's plays are Gerardo Vera, Ernesto Caballero, Helena Pimenta, and Guillermo Heras. Vera, who served as director of the Centro Dramático Nacional (CDN) between 2004 and 2011, has directed many of Mayorga's adaptations and versions, including *Woyzeck* (2011), *Platonov* (2009), *Rey Lear* (2008), Ibsen's *Un enemigo del pueblo* (2007), *Divinas palabras* (2006), and *El gran inquisidor* (2005), while Caballero, current director of the CDN, has also directed Mayorga's adaptation of *El monstruo de los jardines* in 2000 and, in 2008, *La tortuga de Darwin,* whose protagonist was played by Carmen Machi.[18] Helena Pimenta, mentioned above in the context of Mayorga's 2013 adaptation of *La vida es sueño,* also directed Mayorga's adaptation of Lope de Vega's *La dama boba* in 2002 as well as the only dramatic reading of Mayorga's short play, "*Encuentro en Salamanca"* from Mayorga's *Teatro para minutos* (2009). Finally, Guillermo Heras, founder of the theater company Teatro del Astillero in 1995, along with Mayorga, José Ramón Fernández, Hernández Garrido, and González Cruz, and current director of the Muestra de Teatro Español de Autores Contemporáneos, has, over the course of almost twenty years, directed several of Mayorga's plays in several countries.[19] For example, he directed Mayorga's *Cartas de amor a Stalin* three times, in three different countries and three different decades: in 1999 at the Teatro María

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[18] *La Tortuga de Darwin* is a play that I analyze in depth in Chapter 2.

[19] Please see Teatro del Astillero's ten-year anniversary manifesto, titled *"10 años contra el teatro"* (http://www.teatrodelastillero.es/documentos/dossier_10anim.pdf). Heras has directed many of Mayorga's adaptations whose theme has to do with conflicts and catastrophes justified or caused by religion, such as *Natán el Sabio* in 2003; *Job* in 2004; *JK,* as part of a performance project titled *Exilios* in 2005; *Primera noticia de la catástrofe* at the Iglesia del Real Monasterio de Santo Tomás in Ávila in 2006; *Wstawac* in 2007; and *Ante la ley* in 2008. Heras also directed Mayorga's first onstage production, *Sueño de Ginebra* at the Sala Cuarta Pared in 1996, and, in 2000, *El traductor de Blumemberg*, in what Heras describes as "un inovlidable estreno en el Teatro Cervantes de Buenos Aires, con unas excelentes interpretaciones en los dos dificilísimos roles de la obra" (Heras 28).

Guerrero in Madrid; in 2004 at the Centro de Arte Lía Bermúdez in Maracaíbo, Venzuela; and in Mexico City in 2012 with the Compañía Nacional de Teatro at the Teatro Casa de la Paz. According to Heras, Mayorga is one of the few playwrights in Spain—along with Catalan playwright Sergi Belbel, one of Mayorga's closest contemporaries—whose works are produced on stages of all types, everything from the official, government-funded theaters such as the Centro Dramático Nacional and Teatre Nacional de Cataluyna, to private theaters, such as the Teatro de la Abadía, and alternative theaters such as the Sala Cuarta Pared, Guindalera and Sala Beckett (Heras 31). For Heras, Mayorga "siempre ha estrenado en cada una de estas opciones sin renunciar a sus principios éticos, ni a su compromiso con la búsqueda de un lenguaje complejo, alejado de tanta experiencia banal como se ha desarrollado en ciertas tendencias de la postmodernidad escénica española" (31). This unyielding commitment to the complexity of each of his works, together with his openness to a variety of venues, has allowed Mayorga's theater to reach audiences of all types—from different economic backgrounds, generations, and even ethnic heritage and nationality—each of which will claim, as Susan Suleiman writes, its own "horizon of expectation" (Suleiman; qtd. in S. Bennet 94).[20]

In her essay "Creación autorial y gestión teatral: una interrelación en la escena española contemporánea," María Francisca Vilches de Frutos suggests that, in Spain, playwrights' institutional affiliation—which, in Mayorga's case is linked to his doctoral studies, his teaching at RESAD, his investigative work with CSIC and, now, his directing and teaching a Master's Degree at the Universidad Carlos III—seems to correlate with a writer's success. That is, for

[20] Director Jorge Lavelli, who has directed several of Mayorga's most important plays—*Himmelweg, El chico de la última fila*, and *Cartas de amor a Stalin*—for the Théâtre de la Tempête in Paris, has said of Mayorga's theater: "'Ver el mundo como un trastornante juego de manipulación apasiona a Juan Mayorga. Todas sus obras lo atestiguan y, cual un 'deus ex machina', la manipulación y sus avatares—el juego del poder y de la humillación—provocan las decisiones más inesperadas'" (qtd. in *elEconomista.es*). According to Mayorga (personal communication; March 2014), Lavelli is currently looking for production possibilities for Mayorga's Holocaust play, *El cartógrafo. Varsovia, 1:400,000* (2010), a play that I analyze in Chapter 3.

Vilches de Frutos, this network of academic institutions linked to theater facilitate the playwright's works making it to public, national stages, versus remaining in small, alternative theaters, or not being staged at all (21).[21] Mayorga's institutional and academic affiliations and activities, his being highly prolific as a writer of plays and essays for public readership, as well as his being from and based in Madrid, are among the factors that have contributed to his being so widely represented and translated.

In the last few years, Mayorga has been able to count on at least 2 or 3 of his plays making it to major national stages each year. For example, in the space of one month last year—in April 2013[22]—Mayorga had at least four plays see different stages in Spain, each in a different kind of theater. Among them was Mayorga's directorial debut with *La lengua en pedazos,* in which actors Clara Sanchis and Pedro Miguel Martínez performed as Teresa de Jesús and a fictionalized Inquisidor; and *El crítico. Si supiera cantar, me salvaría,* with Pere Ponce and Juanjo Puigcorbé—both Catalan actors known for television and movie acting in Spain—, directed by Juan José "Cuco" Afonso. Both plays were in the midst of a *gira nacional* during the spring 2013, performing in smaller, municipal, regional theaters throughout the country in preparation for the arrival of both plays on the stages of Madrid during the following summer

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[21] Vilches de Frutos writes of contemporary playwrights who, due to their origin in not being from one of Spain's two cultural centers and centers for theater—Madrid and Barcelona—, and thanks to budgetary crises or political, electoral changes, are kept out of mainstream theaters (23). Efforts in the 1990s to curb what she refers to as the "marginación de los autores españoles vivos" led to efforts to establish quotas at public theaters throughout the country that would ensure at least 50% of the onstage productions would be by playwrights in Spain who are alive (20, 21).

[22] I was able to personally attend all of the performances I include in this paragraph, while on a research trip in Spain during the month of April 2013. I attended two performances of *La lengua en pedazos*—the first in a small, public theater in a community center in A Coruña, Galicia, and the second at the municipal theater of Fuenlabrada, a small city on the southern outskirts of Madrid, and, between those two performances, I went to see *El Crítico* at the municipal theater in Soria, Spain. I was also able to attend the amateur theater performance of *Animales nocturnos* as well as both April performances of Jorge Sánchez's Ocupa Madrid—the first held at Espíritu23 and the second at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. In addition, during this trip, I attended the April 8 meeting of Mayorga's *Memoria y pensamiento en el teatro contemporáneo* seminar at CSIC, the topic of which that day was disability in theater. Please consult the following link for a description of the 8 April 2013 seminar: http://www.artezblai.com/artezblai/seminario-memoria-y-pensamiento-en-el-teatro-contemporaneo.html.

months.[23] During this same time, on April 13 and 14, a Madrid-based amateur theater group, ParafernaliAs, put on a production of Mayorga's *Animales nocturnos* on the north side of Madrid at the Teatro de la E.M.T., a bus depot and community center with an auditorium. Theatergoers for this production, about half of whom were elderly patrons who had walked to the theater from within the surrounding neighborhood, paid just a few euros each to see the play. Finally, twice during April 2013, Argentine actor and director Jorge Sánchez put on "Ocupa Madrid," a production of *microteatro* that Sánchez organizes along with two theater groups, La Cantera and Faro Luciole, in random spaces throughout the city specifically *not* designated for theater.[24] The method of Sánchez's *microteatro* works like this: on the day of the performances, Sánchez and his theater groups arrive at a randomly selected place in the city to begin to "occupy" the space.[25] Later that afternoon or evening, spectators arrive and, just before the show begins, are randomly divided into groups of about 10 and then led and circulated through small interconnected spaces—spaces normally used for daily activities such as a kitchen, classroom, or hallway—inside of which they see the actors perform short plays within the small spaces. Among the six plays that spectators saw in April 2013's two iterations of "Ocupa Madrid" was Jorge Sanchez's

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[23] This is a play I discuss further in Chapter 4.

[24] For information and posters announcing all of the groups *microteatro* performances, including these in April 2013, please consult La Cantera's website: http://lawebcantera.blogspot.com.es/. Jorge Sánchez has also initiated a play-writing experiment with Mayorga during 2013-2014. Beginning in late 2013, Mayorga was to submit scenes of a play on Tuesday of each week. Sánchez would receive them, give the scripts to the actors in his company, who rehearsed and performed the play on that same day. The play that Mayorga is writing using this method–which Sánchez refers to as *"creación a ciegas"*—is titled *Famélica legión.* On 30 March 2014, Sánchez organized an event for the final week of the February-March 2014 Festival Mucha Vida at the Ateneo in Madrid, which featured Mayorga's *Famélica legión*. The actors that had been working with Mayorga's weekly submissions during the previous few months performed Mayorga's unfinished text in front of an audience, in what they called an "ensayo abierto." Mayorga himself was in attendance, and, after the performance, participated in a lively talk-back with Sánchez, the actors—Juanma Diez, Xoel Fernández and Santiago Ferrería (the same three actors that had performed Mayorga's "Candidatos" in the April 2013 performances of Ocupa Madrid)—, and the audience (personal communication). Please consult the following link for more information: <http://www.publico.es/culturas/510217/el-festival-mucha-vida-del-ateneo-se-despide-con-tres-obras-dramaticas-y-una-exposicion-fotografica>.

[25] For the April 2013 performances, the two "occupied" spaces were Espíritu23, a shared studio space for arts and social change in the Malasaña neighborhood of Madrid, and, for the second performance, the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

liberal adaptation of three of Mayorga's works of *teatro breve,* "Candidatos," "Justicia," and "Inocencia," each of which Mayorga wrote originally for the 2003 production of *Alejandro y Ana.* These April 2013 plays are also a good example of the thematic and contextual variety in Mayorga's works and reflect his commitment to dialogical, dialectical conflict as a medium for the imagination's battle over truth. For example, *La lengua en pedazos,* which I analyze in Chapter 1, consists of a single, continuous scene in which Santa Teresa is in dialogical confrontation with an Inquisitor. Similarly, *El crítico. Si supiera cantar, me salvaría,* features the dialogical confrontation—also in a single, continuous scene—between a playwright and his most feared but respected critic.[26] *Animales nocturnos* is about the controversy over immigration, and features a twisted relationship of emotional blackmail between a man *con papeles* and a man *sin papeles*. And the three works that Jorge Sánchez adapted for his microteatro performances of Ocupa Madrid blend together the power struggles of three men vying for favor in hopes of succeeding their leader. The thematic range in Mayorga's plays, the types of performances he allows for, and his works making to the stage in public, private, and alternative theaters, performed by professional, semi-professional, and volunteer actors, all give a sense of the reach as well as the variety and accessibility of his theater.

The Complicated Business of Historical/Memory Theater in Spain

I include this extensive panorama of Mayorga's theater-related and scholarly activities and involvement to provide background on him as a writer, of course, but also to situate him in

[26] While *El crítico* was still on its *gira nacional* in Spain in the spring 2013, actors Horacio Pena and Pompeyo Audivert, directed by Guillermo Heras were preparing for the play's 9 May 2013 premier at the Teatro San Martín in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Mayorga traveled to Buenos Aires for this performance and, while there, conducted a theater workshop at the *Teatro San Martín* titled "El soliloquio y el aparte" using examples from works by Calderón de la Barca. The workshop took place in three-hour sessions on May 15, 16, and 17, 2013.

the context of contemporary theater in Spain. His relative success and the extent of his accessibility and movement throughout theaters both in Spain and globally may suggest that Mayorga does not face the same obstacles to the production of his plays as have many of his contemporaries (Vilches de Frutos). Early in his career, however, as I will explain further in Chapter 4, Mayorga's *El jardín quemado,* a play centered on Spanish Civil War era crimes, their witnesses, victims, and perpetrators, and the survival of memories in this context, became one of the first casualties of the mid-1990s change in political parties. With the 1996 election of José María Aznar as Prime Minister, Spain went from fifteen years of the center-left social-democratic *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE), led by Felipe González, to the conservative *Partido Popular* (PP). Mayorga's *El jardín quemado* had been slated for the 1997-1998 season of the government-funded Centro Dramático Nacional, but with the 1996 election of Aznar, the directorial staff of the CDN underwent an overhaul and, with that, *El jardín quemado* and a few other plays not consistent with the PP's interests and values were deleted from the projected schedule. In the 2007 introductory essay to his adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's *Un enemigo del pueblo,* Mayorga wrote:

> "*Un enemigo del pueblo* es una obra sobre el riesgo de que la democracia genere en demagogia y sobre el precio que paga quien dice lo que la mayoría no quiere oír. Una obra sobre el coste de decir la verdad cuando ésta es impopular: ser señalado como traidor por la sociedad a la que se desea ser útil. . . . Por todo ello, Ibsen nos ofrece en *Un enemigo del pueblo* una miniatura del mundo politico contemporáneo" ("Stockman" 7).

This could not be more true in the context of contemporary Spain and an atmosphere in which in/direct modes of censorship continue to influence how and whether artists and writers address issues of historical memory.

Censorship in the visual—especially cinematic and dramatic arts—is not new in Spain, nor was it new in the mid-1990s when Mayorga's *El jardín quemado* was cut from the CDN's scheduled programming because of its ostensible breach of Spain's *pacto de silencio.* Nationally-known journalist Vicente Romero's 1994 documentary, *Imágenes prohibidas,* retransmitted in Spain in 2011, addresses censorship in film in Spain between 1912 and 1977, a period that spans from well before the beginning of the Spanish Civil War to just after Franco's death. In response to the 2011 retransmission of *Imágenes prohibidas* on TVE*,* Romero expressed the topic's timeliness even 17 years after its original making, due to its relationship to the controversy surrounding Spain's historical memory. In his words, "'Tiene un gran valor histórico y documental y además se puede ver como un ejercicio de memoria histórica'" (Gallo). In Isabel Gallo's report on the documentary, she writes that *Imágenes prohibidas* is especially relevant "Porque también muestra el cerrazón mental de un tiempo en que España vivía sometida a la disciplina de un cuartel y bajo la moral de un convento. Hacer una serie sobre la censura 'es casi un acto de justicia," remata el periodista [Romero]" (Gallo).[27] In theater, playwrights have faced similar challenges when addressing the topic of repression during the Spanish Civil War and the Franco regime, in particular when the plays directly touch on the issues of justice and accountability.

Many of the plays that have attempted to capture the repression of the war and the Franco period, and especially the theme of *"muertos sin tumba,"* the subject of this study's final chapter, have, like Mayorga's *El jardín quemado,* met with resistance on multiple fronts. In the late 1940s, José Martín Recuerda's *La llanura* (1947) faced both direct and indirect challenges to its publication and onstage production. In the late 1940s, during the Franco regime's most violently

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[27] See also Claudia Jünke (2006) for another study of the topic of memory and the Spanish Civil War in cultural production in Spain.

repressive decade, Martín Recuerda boldly wrote and attempted to organize the performance of *La llanura*, but local theaters resisted. Public critics of the play also deliberately misrepresented its plot, saying that play's dead, buried in a mass grave on a farm, were not deaths related to the *guerra civil* at all but rather the result of localized interpersonal disagreements and conflicts (Reyes). The play faced a similar challenge to its publication, which happened in a modified version in 1977, despite its publishers claiming it was the uncut original. According to José Manuel Reyes, *La llanura* is a clear, bold call for justice, an element exemplified in the character of the mother, whose husband had been executed during the war, his body was tossed in a mass grave. In a climactic moment of the play, the mother insists that the land under which her dead husband's body was thrown after his execution not be planted for cultivation (Reyes). As Reyes writes:

> Ella reclama insistente y públicamente que se haga justicia. Quiere que la comunidad reconozca la llanura como la fosa común donde están enterradas las víctimas de la represión y que se impida que ese pedazo de tierra se siembre y, de ese modo, se perpetúe la invisibilidad de la injusticia cometida con los desaparecidos. Su actitud desafiante, en el contexto del ambiente de terror de la inmediata posguerra, supone una acusación a la comunidad que, por miedo, silencia esta realidad. (Reyes)

Reyes' analysis on this point applies as much to Martín Recuerda's works as it does to that of many playwrights during and after the end of Franco's regime, even to this day. Justice for the dead, as Reyes suggests, must first combat the fear that pervades a community unwilling to come forth and recognize its crimes or publicly mourn its losses.

The legal declaration of freedom of expression that marked the *Transición,* provoked a definitive but also controversial shift in theatrical production in Spain, even though, as Mariano

de Paco de Moya has noted, playwrights whose careers spanned the changes before and after Franco's death have received relatively little attention from scholars and critics (2004: 76).[28] Derek Gagen argues that this period in Spain's theatrical production is marked by an ironic turn: instead of being encouraged to speak more clearly, as the anti-Franco vanguardist *"nuevo teatro"* movement had been in the 1960 and early 1970s, playwrights during the *Transición* were criticized for their boldness, a criticism provoked by the fear that they might "rock the boat" and disrupt the course of the democratic transition (103). These negative reactions to creative freedom reflect what Alberto Miralles describes as "'la progresiva domesticación de la vanguardia teatral durante la transición política española'" (Miralles 56; qtd. in Gagen 103). As an example, Antonio Buero Vallejo (1916-2000), whose work as playwright spanned from the late 1940s until his death in 2000, is a writer who learned to adjust his work to periods of intense social change, such as those that marked the end of the Franco regime and Spain's transition to democracy (Paco de Moya 75). Though Buero Vallejo has been criticized for carrying over values and ideas from the Franco period into the post-Franco period, despite his public and resolute commitment to the Left, critics such as Mariano de Paco de Moya insist on the playwright's dedication to ethical representation and justice and his resilience in the face of politically-charged receptions to his works. In 1995, a controversy that arose over the printed program for one of Buero Vallejo's last plays, *Misión al pueblo desierto* (1999), further reflects the uncomfortable relationship between theater and politics in Spain. Unbeknownst to the playwright, the play's producer, Enrique Cornejo, had asked two political figures to contribute short texts to the program. Then, without running the changes by the playwright first, Cornejo sent the programs to print. Buero Vallejo didn't learn of the additions until the programs had

[28] For more on theater during the period of the *Transición, s*ee also García Lorenzo and Vilches de Frutos (1984) and Ana Luengo (2002).

already been printed, a situation he reacted to with outrage. The reason for his outrage was that the two blurbs had been written by politicians—José María Álvarez de Manzano and José María Aznar, the latter of whose views Buero Vallejo did not agree with. Álvarez de Manzano was the mayor of Madrid at the time and Aznar, as mentioned above, was at the time was in the midst of preparing what would be a successful electoral run for Prime Minister. In Buero Vallejo's adamant and public disapproval of the program changes, he pointed out that, while he accepted the inclusion of Álvarez de Manzano since the play was to be performed and sponsored by his municipality, he insisted that Aznar's contribution was inappropriate, arguing that artistic production should be divorced from political interests (Torres). In his public statement, Buero Vallejo wrote: "'En caso de que me hubiera consultado [Cornejo] nunca hubieran contado con mi autorización ya que no me hace ninguna gracia que se pueda entender que hay un fichaje que no existe, y un estreno tiene que estar al margen de cualquier opción política'" (Buero Vallejo; qtd. in Torres).

One of the elements that distinguishes works in Spain that treat the topic of historical memory is the extent to which they straddle both historical events and issues of memory. Plays that follow a relatively more historicist line feature fictionalized renditions of events in their original contexts, in many cases pretending to offer spectators an idea of how things might have been or might have been experienced at the time. Theatrical examples of these in post-Franco Spain, though in this case allegorically, might be well-known works such as José Sanchis Sinisterra's *¡Ay Carmela! Elegía de una guerra civil en dos actos y un epílogo* (1989), later produced as a film in 1990 by Carlos Saura. *!Ay Carmela!* takes place in 1938 during the *guerra civil* and has recently seen a resurgence on contemporary stages, including as a musical that ran for two months in late spring 2013 at the Teatro Reina Victoria in Madrid, a performance I had

the fortune of attending. Also by Sanchis Sinisterra is a collection of nine short plays gathered under the title *Terror y miseria en el primer franquismo* (1979). With the phrase *"el primer franquismo,"* Sanchis Sinisterra is referring to the period between 1939, the first year of Franco's regime, and 1953, when the U.S. signed a treaty with Franco that would the U.S. to build military bases in Spain—a period that also happens to be the most repressive under Franco. In the liner notes for Cátedra's 2003 publication of *Terror y miseria en el primer franquismo,* a deliberate reference to Bertolt Brecht's *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich,* first performed in 1938*,* the play's publisher describes Sanchis Sinisterra's collection thus: "Nueve piezas que a través del dolor, el miedo, la amargura y la tristeza, no extentos de humor en ocasiones, constituyen nuestra reciente memoria histórica y forman parte de nuestra biografía emocional" (2003). This is a characterization of Sanchis Sinisterra's work that would not have been possible just over two decades earlier in 1979, when he originally wrote and published his collection, and when Spain was just drawing up and forging its unspoken *pacto de silencio.* Theater during Spain's transition to democracy in the late 1970s and 80s paint a somewhat predictable picture in which works that represent the repression and extrajudicial crimes committed during the *guerra civil* and Franco's regime would either be recast and misrepresented or altogether censored. Fernando Fernán Gómez's *Las bicicletas son para el verano*, written in 1977 and first performed in 1982, also takes place during the *Guerra Civil* and was similarly made into a movie in 1983 directed by Jaime Chávarri. Fernán Gómez's work focuses on the family conflicts during the before and during the Spanish Civil War, but the fact that the play is not whollyexplicit about the political context indicates that it, too, was responding to the atmosphere of the late 1970s in which, in order to move beyond the past, what was called for was, arguably, never to remember.

In recent years, Spain's national stages have seen productions that have begun to treat this history more directly, though again, works have seemed to focus on historical figures and most have only indirectly addressed issues of memory or accountability. Among these is *Transición* (2013), a musical/play written collaboratively by Alfonso Plou and Julio Salvatierra, that was part of the Centro Dramático Nacional's 2012-2013 season at the Teatro María Guerrero in Madrid, and was produced in collaboration with three theater groups—the Teatro del Temple, the Teatro Meridional, founded by Salvatierra, and L'Om-Imprebís. The central character in *Transición* is an aging man suffering from Alzheimer's disease, who is convinced he is Adolfo Suárez, the politician known for controversially spearheading Spain's transition to democracy (Plou and Salvatierra 17). This fictionalization was not far from the truth, since the recently deceased Suárez is known to have suffered from Alzheimer's in the latter years of his life. One of the co-authors, Alfonso Plou, writes in the introduction to the play's CDN 2013 publication, that the fact that his generation had lived Spain's transition to democracy as teenagers had helped him and Salvatierra create a work that would function as a sort of bridge between generations, especially significant, as Salvatierra writes, to the writing of such a controversial period in Spain's history (Plou 10; Salvatierra 17). Plou and Salvatierra's work, though parodic and with multiple layers of humor and idealization, in addition to its being a musical, incorporated archival recordings and historical footage in video screens above the stage. These served to juxtapose "real" or at least official archival history with the protagonist's imaginary, fantastic one, a dramatic strategy that may have made the play's political history component more palatable—though also more compelling—for audiences in contemporary Madrid (Ortega Dolz).

The spectacular performances of *Transición* in March-April 2013 at the CDN's Teatro María Guerrero—one of Madrid's oldest, public stages, seem to indicate a wider openness in

contemporary Spain to politics and history-themed works. Also a political history-themed work, the recent March 2014 production of Ignacio Amestoy's *Dionisio Ridruejo: una pasión española* (1980) at the CDN similarly addresses historical actors during Spain's transition to democracy. However, the history of the writing and publication of Amestoy's work does not escape controversy. Amestoy wrote *Dionisio Ridruejo* in the early 1980s but did not try to take it to the stage because of recent acts of government censorship at the time. Two events altered Amestoy's plans regarding his play: a few years earlier in 1977, playwright Albert Boadella had been incarcerated after *Els Joglars'* performance *La torna* and, in 1979, Pilar Miró's movie *El crimen de Cuenca* had resulted in her being court marshalled (Perales 2014). The repercussions that his contemporaries had suffered for writing works with certain political themes deterred Amestoy from moving forward with the play's publication and performance. In a March 2014 interview, Amestoy retells the story. After writing the play in the early 1980s, Amestoy had shared it with Catalan writer and director Lluís Pasqual. In response, Pasqual warned Amestoy of the possibility that his work would be censored and that he could suffer other consequences if he were to attempt to bring it to the stage. As Amestoy remembers it, Pasqual had said, "'Ignacio, después de lo de *La torna* de Boadella, pienso que esta obra no se estrenará por lo menos hasta dentro de veinte años'" (qtd. in Perales 2014). As it turns out, Pasqual was not only right, he was conservative in his estimate: it took over thirty years for *Dionisio Ridruejo* reach the stage in Spain (Perales 2014).[29]

The fact that works such as *Transición* and *Dionisio Ridruejo: una pasión española* have both been taken to the stage in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 seasons by the Centro Dramático Nacional, thanks to its director, Ernesto Caballero, bodes well for what may be a further opening

[29] For an article that compares Amestoy's *Dionisio Ridruejo* to Mayorga's *El jardín quemado* as works of historical theater, please see Chainais (2012).

in Spain's climate of public and popular accountability for its past. It may be an especially positive step considering that Caballero has been able to bring plays such as these to the CDN's stages even though Spain's government has been under the leadership of the Partido Popular since 2011. But on smaller municipal stages, it is possible that the story would remain the same. As playwright and director Laila Ripoll has said, exasperated, with regard to her musical *Cancionero Republicano* (2006)*,* about the Constitution of 1931 and the radio music of the time. When she and her theater group, Micomicón, tried to have it performed on smaller, regional stages, they had to contend with electoral changes first (2011: 32). The play had premiered at the 2008 XI Festival Madrid Sur in 2008, but they could not get it to the stage after the election of the conservative party: "Pierden los socialistas, gana el PP y al día siguiente nos quitan la función de la programación. Y eso nos pasó en muchos municipios" (Ripoll 2011: 32).

Probably the most promising and recent work in terms of historical memory and theater in Spain is also the most recent—the upcoming play by Laila Ripoll and Mariano Llorente, *El triángulo azul,* directed by Ripoll, which will begin its month-long run at the CDN's Teatro Valle-Inclán on 25 April of this year, 2014. *El triángulo azul* is about the 7,000 Spaniards who, after having tried to escape Franco's Spain, were sent to Mauthausen, the Nazis' WWII-era prison camp, where they were forced to wear a blue triangle to designate their condition as *"apátridas"* since Franco had refused to recognize them as citizens—the blue triangle containing the letter "S" later came to designate the state-less Spaniards. Only 2,000 survived. This play addresses the issue of the abandoned dead, framed by the distant influence of an intensely repressive and newborn Franco regime, all within the umbrella of the Nazis' atrocities. In this context, the play's international setting, despite the atrocity it signals, may lessen the impact of

its content—it is difficult to predict whether Spain is ready to take a direct hit at the heart of its historical memory.[30]

Among Juan Mayorga's few works directly related to the Spanish Civil War, besides the aforementioned *El Jardín quemado,* are the short play *"El hombre de oro"* (1997) included in Mayorga's *Teatro para minutos,* and the full-length *Siete hombres buenos* (1988)*,* Mayorga's first play. *Siete hombres buenos* is about seven men, five of whom went into exile because of the Spanish Civil War, and two of whom are descendents of those men. The play feature characters physically separated and either literally or metaphorically exiled from the events of the Spanish Civil War, who spend their time in exile meeting on a weekly basis priming themselves as a proxy government ready for a toppling of the dictator's government. Mayorga wrote *Siete hombres buenos* in the late 1980s, but has recently revised it in a way that reflects a possible shift or expansion in his own treatment of political topics, both with regard to Spain's history as well as to how his plays might be relevant in a global context. In his original 1988 version of *Siete hombres buenos,* Mayorga specifies that the home country from which the men are exiled is Spain, the tyrant is Franco, and the country of exile is Mexico, but in his newest version over twenty years later, these could be, respectively, any country whose political situation provokes the exile of its citizens, any leader that has ruled as a tyrant, and any country that has received political exiles. Mayorga has described this revision process as the play's *"desespañolización,"* indicating that his writing stems from a desire to achieve a more universal appeal for the play

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[30] The authors' introduction on the CDN's website addresses the lack of monument to these victims: "Hace ya sesenta años y todavía, a dia de hoy, ni un triste monolito en nuestro país recuerda a los miles de españoles que dieron su vida por la libertad, asesinados por los Nazis en el campo de concentración en Mauthausen." Please consult the CDN's link for more information and a trailer for the play: http://cdn.mcu.es/espectaculo/el-triangulo-azul/.

(March "Nadando"). The rewriting of the play so that it is more deeply focused on the condition and experience of exile increases the work's universality, as Mayorga explains:

> Cuando releo la pieza a lo largo de estos años me voy dando cuenta de que la atención que dediqué en ella a rasgos específicos de la Guerra Civil Española reducía su universalidad. Me refiero a, por ejemplo, los conflictos entre los distintos grupos republicanos –anarquistas, comunistas, republicanos moderados…-. Poco a poco me convencí de que alejarme de las referencias a España y a México podía hacer que, sin que el espectador español dejase de sentir la pieza como una obra sobre el exilio republicano, un iraní o un cubano también se la apropiasen. Ésta ha sido la búsqueda que me ha llevado a importantes decisiones de reescritura.[31] (March "Nadando")

Siete hombres buenos addresses issues of memory and, especially, its conscious manipulation, but does not examine the problem of an irremediably inaccessible memory made so by institutional forces or the trauma of the event itself. Some of the works I analyze throughout the thesis examine this dynamic, especially in Chapters 3 and 4.

In Jorge García's January 2010 article titled *"El teatro español se olvida de la memoria histórica,"* written for the online news source *Público.es,* he argues that Spain's October 2007 Ley de Memoria Histórica had done little of what it had promised—that is, to promote the recognition and commemoration of the victims of the *guerra civil* and to combat "el anonimato y el olvido al que la impunidad del franquismo les había relegado durante 40 años de dictadura"

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[31] Interestingly, while *El hombre de oro* has seen two *puestas en escena*—one in 1996 at the alternative theater Sala Cuarta Pared in Madrid as part of a larger performance series of works by the group *El Astillero* and directed by Carlos Rodríguez, and the other in January 2013 at the hACERIA arteak in Bilbao, directed by Richard Sahagún—, *Siete hombres buenos* has *never* seen a stage production. This begs the question of whether *Siete hombres…* and its lack of production have to do with its subject matter and setting, though not necessarily for its being related to the *guerra civil*. As Sebastiaan Faber has noted, the Spanish Civil War exile and cultural productions have historically been, relative to other exiles, ignored (personal communication, 5 April 2014). One notable work that combats this dearth of critical attention is the posthumous publication of Ricardo Doménech's *El teatro del exilio* (2014), edited by Fernando Doménech Rico.

(Garcia).[32] On top of that, however, theater had followed suit: "El teatro," writes García, "se ha olvidado de la memoria histórica." García cites the work of playwright Victor Boira, author and main actor of the one-man play, *La habitación 42* (2010), performed on 26 February 2010 at the III Muestra de Teatro de la Fundación Progreso y Cultura in Madrid. *La habitación 42* is about a man, Enric, who in 1939 finds himself buried in a mass grave somewhere in Aragón along with his *compañeros,* waiting and waiting for their remains to be exhumed to that he can spend time with his family, but no one arrives (Muévome).[33] The play is narrated from the perspective of a dead man in a *fosa común.* According to Boira, the reason there are so few works depicting the Second Republic, the *guerra civil,* and the Franco period is that "'el humor es lo que vende y es la forma en que los teatros intentan hacer caja, no buscan implicarse en temas sociales'" (qtd. in García). Javier Yagüe, founder and director of the alternative exhibition space and theater Sala Cuarta Pared in Madrid, expressed a need for greater cultural leadership to combat this problem. He also suggested that plays about this difficult period of time in Spain's history should not be "piezas fáciles"—instead, for Yagüe, what is necessary is theater that knows how to "'contar la historia mediante técnicas y formas más contemporáneas, no como un documento arqueológico'" (qtd. in García). Ana Trinidad, an actress in the theater company Tricliniu Teatro, affirms a slightly different point in her interview with García: that contemporary theater in Spain is not political enough, always tentatively treading this difficult line between left and right, careful not

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[32] "La Ley de Memoria Histórica" is the name used both officially—for example, by the website of Spain's Ministry of Justice—and unofficially, as in newspaper articles and other popular media, to refer to the Ley 52/2007 that was passed on 26 December 2007 under Prime Minister Zapatero. The law does not mention the phrase "memoria histórica" except in its announcing the formation of the Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica, based in Salamanca. It does, however, mention "memoria democrática" and "memoria personal y familiar." The law uses the term "memoria colectiva" only to state that it is not within the government's purview to determine or be responsible for it. I thank Juan F. Egea for his alerting me to these distinctions in both the title and content of the law (personal communication, 12 May 2014.) Please see <http://www.memoriahistorica.gob.es/LaLey/index.htm> for government documents and statements regarding this law.

[33] Consult the following link for more information and a trailer of *La habitación 42:* *http://www.muevome.com/2010/02/la-habitacion-42-de-victor-boira-en-la.html*.

to appear too right wing or too left wing (García). Municipalities that would otherwise sponsor performances of a political nature are reticent, says Trinidad. Even after almost four decades since Franco's death, they are still afraid that if they sponsor or promote the performance of a play that is too political, they'll upset the *verdugos* (García).

The question as it applies to this study, then, is where Mayorga's theater fits in, in light of his work becoming more oriented toward universal issues of justice and ethics and unfolding in contexts and settings outside Spain.[34] My sense is that the impulse that led Mayorga to *"desespañolizar" Siete hombres buenos* in recent years is the same one that has driven him to explore the Holocaust as the supreme example at the core of his deepening treatment of the personal, political, and physical violence present at nearly all levels of society; nearly all kinds of relationships; and amongst people of all kinds of ages and interests. Mayorga's historical/memory theater is infused through and through with an ethical preoccupation and an unwavering sense of justice, so that anything he writes that addresses Spain's case of historical memory and political violence will indeed be relevant in some measure in any other similar context anywhere, and the same will apply in reverse. Regarding the representation of historical trauma in his works, Mayorga has written against a historicist approach, arguing alongside Benjamin that it is impossible to reproduce history "as it really was." Instead, his theater attempts to forge an unlikely encounter between the present and the past as if in a sort of ellipsis, again citing Benjamin, in which the tension between the two poles is held at all times by the time

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[34] Among the global or international contexts in Mayorga's more recent works, for example, are the Holocaust, as it appear in works such as *Himmelweg (Camino del cielo)* (2003), *El cartógrafo. Varsovia 1:400*.000 (2010), *Job, JK,* and *Wstawac,* the first two of which are discussed at length in Chapter 3; global terrorism in works such as *La paz perpetua* and, though minimally, in the short work *La biblioteca del diablo,* the latter of which I analyze in Chapter 4*;* the last two-hundred years of European history in *La Tortuga de Darwin,* subject of Chapter 2; the Bosnian War Cold War, though indirectly, in works such as the full-length *Los yugoslavos* and the short play, *Una carta de Sarajevo,* analyzed in Chapter 1; and the Cold War in Mayorga's most recent work, *Reikiavik,* about the 1972 World Championship of Chess between Bobby Fischer and Boris Spassky, a play that is also Mayorga's second venture into directing.

that has lapsed between them—that is, as if "el tiempo transcurrido entre el pasado y el presente no quedase anulado" (qtd. in Cortina). As we'll see in particular in Mayorga's Holocaust and Spanish Civil War plays, discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 respectively, the present and the past function in distinct time periods, overlapping intermittently while each maintains its integrity, challenging traditional notions of linearity and unitary space (March "Nadando" 134). As Mayorga suggests repeatedly in his interviews, "A mi juicio, lo importante no es tanto lo que nuestro tiempo pueda decir sobre un pasado como lo que ese pasado pueda decir sobre nuestro tiempo. Siempre será mucho menos interesante lo que nosotros podamos decir sobre Teresa de Jesús que lo que ella pueda decir sobre nosotros. Lo importante no es lo que entendemos inmediatamente del pasado, sino aquello que no entendemos y que nos desafía, porque no podemos reducirlo a nuestras categorías y a nuestras experiencias" (qtd. in Cortina).

In Mayorga's 1999 essay, "El dramaturgo como historiador," he argues that the best historical theater does not reflect spectators' expectations like a mirror, nor does it pretend to reproduce the past, framing the spectator as history's "witness." Instead, writes Mayorga, "Hay un teatro histórico crítico que hace visible las heridas del pasado que la actualidad no ha sabido cerrar. Hace resonar el silencio de los vencidos, que han quedado al margen de toda tradición. En lugar de traer a escena un pasado que conforte el presente, que lo confirme en sus tópicos, invoca un pasado que le haga incómodas preguntas" ("Historiador" 9). It is from this perspective that Mayorga writes his historical/memory plays. I have separated with a slash the terms I use to describe Mayorga's theater on memory—that is, "historical/memory" theater. My idea here is to underscore the tension between them; the dynamic slippage that can lead a person or society to privilege one while silencing the other; and the inescapable reality of their being inextricably

linked, much like the now-familiar pairs of remembering/forgetting, past/present, individual/collective, and, as we'll see in the following chapter descriptions, seeing/blindness.

Mayorga's Conflicts of Memory: Seeing and Remembering Beyond the Visible

In her "Teatralidad y representación de la historia: Ética, memoria y acción suspendida en las obras de Juan Mayorga," Ana Gorría Ferrín, referencing Lucía de la Maza Cabrera, writes that Mayorga's memory theater may be the most effective representative in contemporary Spanish theater of works that are capable of taking the spectator out of his/her passivity and *"actitud acrítica"* with regard to society, the present, and the past (Gorria Ferrín; de la Maza). For Gorría Ferrín, a major factor in the effectiveness of Mayorga's treatment of individual and collective memory is his use of language as the tool for "rescuing" memory. Similarly, Carmen de las Peñas Gil writes that one of the fundamental characteristics of Mayorga's theater is "la reflexión sobre el lenguaje, sobre sus límites y perversiones" (de las Peñas Gil 15). I argue through this study that, in addition to language, Mayorga uses the physical enclosure of the theatrical space and the manipulated act of "seeing"—or blindness—to signify the potential destruction of memories as much as its only chance of being "rescued." In this study, I look at those of Juan Mayorga's works that perform the problem of "conflicts of memory" through the dialogical act of seeing and attempts to access historical memory, with the ultimate goal of shedding light on Spain's most recent repressive historical events—the Spanish Civil War and the Franco period and its repercussions—an episode in Spain's history about which, as Reyes Mate has reflected, "hay muchas historias y, hasta ahora, poca memoria" (2003). In Mayorga's works on historical memory, for example, the specter and memory of death and the violence of the Spanish Civil War are performed as a profoundly inaccessible and often (mis)remembered

imaginary. Having witnessed or experienced the atrocities associated with these events is not a guarantee of authentic truth in remembering, however. Rather, painful recollections become marred in delusion, denial or silences that work to block any effort that searches for and attempts to "rescue" historical memory.

In several of the plays analyzed in these chapters, forgetting functions as a form of resistance as much as a mode of controlling individuals and groups. In either case it is a tool and, in the most critical of cases, a weapon. Mayorga's characters appropriate or disavow memory from within the place where it resides—an intersubjective space in which others can and do attempt to give those memories/objects their own intentions and meanings, to echo Mikhail Bakhtin again (294).[35] Bernard-Donals offers a view of remembering and forgetting that is useful for my reading of Mayorga's memory theater. Echoing the works of philosophers such as Friedrich Nietzche and Maurice Blanchot, Bernard-Donals suggests in his *Forgetful Memory* that remembering and forgetting do not function as opposites. Instead, they are complementary elements of the same phenomena of memory, asserting a productive, even creative role for forgetting: "Forgetting is the source of memory," he writes (13). Bernard-Donals distinguishes oblivion and forgetting in productive, creative terms. Oblivion, he writes, is "pure negativity," whereas forgetting points to the "fullness that is marked by absence," a productive tension that in the end constitutes remembering (14). As with most of Mayorga's works, this dynamic of control and resistance does not lead spectators to any easy conclusions about what memory, power or resistance mean or how they function. Instead, what Mayorga's works highlight is the dialectical

[35] Considering the dynamic of forgetting and remembering, Jeannette R. Malkin (1999) writes that "restoration of memory" requires more than Marcel Proust's "sensual recall" (7). Citing Benjamin, she writes further that "the irrationally experienced past only becomes significant once it is recollectivized through time, in all its detail, and organized into a cognitively convincing shape" (7). It is this "subsequent unfolding and retelling that allows the past to take its place in the present—as narrative" (7).

process of remembering and how remembering subjects respond creatively to the effects of outside pressure and the ruptures these produce in them. Spectators of Mayorga's historical/memory theater must engage similarly with his characters' unsettling processes of memory-making and/or forgetting, as if they, too, were entering into a tangled web of truth and illusion.

To date, the only published critical volume entirely dedicated to Mayorga's works is *Un espejo que despliega: El teatro de Juan Mayorga* (2011), edited by Mabel Brizuela and published by the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba in Argentina. The articles in this volume range from the theoretical to those that focus on the structure of Mayorga's plays, taking as examples specifically one or two works. Among the main works that appear analyzed in *Un espejo que despliega* are *Himmelweg* and *Cartas de amor a Stalin,* with a portion of articles dedicated to his adaptations and *teatro breve* as well. In Brizuela's introduction to the volume, she describes Mayorga's theater as a *teatro de ideas* (Brizuela 15), as clear as it is complex, in which words and images alternate and complement each other "en una estructura fragmentaria que, sin embargo, tiene sus conexiones, sus pasadizos secretos, su ilación, que el espectador debe descubrir y ordenar" (Brizuela 21). Others examine Mayorga's works by focusing on the obstacles to communication and Mayorga's ability to construct a fractured world, as in Cecilia Asurmendi's analysis of Mayorga's *Cartas de amor a Stalin*. Still others, such as Guillermo Heras, also a contributor to Brizuela's volume and the aforementioned director of several of Mayorga's plays, gathers a list of structural elements and themes that run through Mayorga's plays: "la recuperación de la memoria histórica, construcción de personajes con caracterología muy definida, estructuras dramáticas que aunque hunden sus raíces en el clasicismo no dejan de apuntar importantes zonas de renovación y búsqueda, por ejemplo a partir de la investigación en

la mezcla de tiempos y espacios escénicos, o la construcción de tramas que ya están desveladas desde la primera escena" (31). While Heras is firmly rooted in theater, journalist Liz Perales sees Mayorga's production from the perspective of an analyst of popular culture. Perales identifies two other themes in Mayorga's work, which she—as Mayorga would likely as well—attributes to Mayorga's academic study of the works of Walter Benjamin. Among these "temas obsesivos," according to Perales, are "la manipulación de la verdad en la Historia, y la coexistencia de la cultura y la barbarie" (2003).

The conflict between civilization and barbarity is the topic of one of Mayorga's essays, "Cultura global y barbarie global" (1999), as well as the subject of one of the several doctoral dissertations either being written or recently completed, that are either partly or entirely dedicated to Mayorga's work. Within the theme of *cultura/babarie* is Robert March-Tortajada's thesis titled *Memoria y desmemoria en la dramaturgia de Juan Mayorga"* (Dir. Evangelina Rodríguez Cuadros, Universitat de València), which March will defend in the summer 2014. Among the other dissertations dedicated entirely to Mayorga's theater, either completed or in progress, are Claire Spooner's *Le théâtre de Juan Mayorga: de la scène au monde à travers le prisme du langage"* (defended July 2013, Dir. Monique Martínez Thomas, Université de Toulouse II – Le Mirail), while two dissertations in progress by doctoral students based in Spain are Mónica Molanés Riál's dissertation examining Mayorga's *teatro breve* and, as mentioned earlier, Zoe Martín Lago's doctoral dissertation in philosophy, titled *Recepción de la estética filosófica de Walter Benjamin en el teatro español contemporáneo: Juan Mayorga y el papel político del arte,* both theses in the process of being researched and written. One of the earliest doctoral dissertations on the work of Juan Mayorga is Gwynneth Dowling's *Performances of Power in the Theatre of Juan Mayorga* (2009), which I draw from toward the end of the thesis in

Chapter 4. Among the dissertations in the final stages of development that treat contemporary Spanish theater more broadly but which dedicate a portion or chapter to Mayorga's theater are Iulia Sprinceana's *Staging History in Modern and Contemporary Spanish Drama* (to be defended in May 2014; Dir. Dru Doughterty), one chapter of which is dedicated to Mayorga's theater, as well as Jeffrey Coleman's dissertation, "Bracing for Impact: Portrayals of Immigration in Contemporary Spanish Theatre" (University of Chicago, Dir. Mario Santanana), a chapter of which he dedicates to Mayorga's play *Animales nocturnos,* and which he will defend in July 2014.

With this dissertation I hope to draw from those works that examine the dynamic of conflict and productive tension in Mayorga's dialogues (Argüello Pitt). My focus on the act of seeing/blindness allows me to discuss invisibility as it relates to characters' debatable notions of "truth," which they invariably construct through a combination of memory and imagination. The other aspect of my emphasis on seeing—and especially my considering it a conscious, ethical choice—is that Mayorga aligns this act with a kind of critical consciousness. At the same time, those characters whose seeing is framed by the onstage enclosure in which they must exist—as we'll see in the latter two Chapters 3 and 4—have the movements of their bodies limited to a space and/or an institution that attempts to silence their minds. In this sense, Mayorga's theater has an interesting relationship to Guy Debord's concept of the spectacle. Like Debord, Mayorga's work emphasizes the power of the gaze, but it is not a seeing that remains on the surface; it is a seeing that must penetrate to look beyond the visible in its search for truth, meaning, and justice. In his *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967)*,* Debord emphasizes the predominance of the appearance of things, of the image and visibility as the location of both vitality and its negation. My task is to try to understand vision—seeing—as an ethical act

through which the remembering subject creates consciousness and can respond responsibly to present or past acts of injustice. As we'll see in the works that occupy the following chapters, the process of seeing, consciousness, and memory is neither fluid nor unproblematic, and nor is seeing a neutral act.

In the first chapter, I look at the relationship between memory and blindness/seeing in Mayorga's *La lengua en pedazos (A partir del "Libro de la Vida" de Teresa de Jesús)* (2010) as well as at three of Mayorga's short works from his collection *Teatro para minutos* (2009): *"Amarillo," "La mano izquierda,"* and *"Una carta de Sarajevo."* I consider Jacques Derrida's notion of the blind man as a "visionary," "seer," and an "archivist of visibility" to explore how Mayorga constructs the possibilities of seeing beyond the visible and tangible. I argue, throughout the chapter, that he does so by having characters conjure their imaginations and their memories in order to "survive" a dialogical confrontation. I explore in these different works how the invisibility of an object of remembrance shores up notions of "truth" for the dialogical pair in each play, placing it on a sort of discursive chopping block. In *La lengua en pedazos,* an Inquisitor, speaking as if in an informal one-on-one tribunal, questions Teresa de Jesús about her claim of having "seen" Christ, not with the eyes of her body, but with the eyes of her soul. Teresa, meanwhile, defends her "abocular" seeing of Christ by responding to the Inquisitor's requests for evidence or comparable experiences such as blindness, which Teresa insists are all inadequate. Indeed, she does not find the words to precisely describe how she *sees* Christ. All that she is certain of is that she does and that she knows of his presence, as she insists, more clearly and strongly than if she were to see him with her eyes. This exchange constructs the ocular seeing of the Inquisitor as inferior and in many ways superficial. That is, his way of seeing is not capable of penetrating into the inward universe of the soul to which Teresa unique

and privileged access. In the analysis of *La lengua en pedazos,* I also establish a correspondence that runs through all of Mayorga's plays in which memory comes into play—that is, the dynamic interdependence of memory, *seeing,* and the imagination. As these analyses and chapters will show, memory cannot exist without the imagination, which in turn cannot exist without the seeing/blindness through which the subject constructs his or her *truth*. We will see this same dynamic emerge in the debates that ensue between the blind man, generally older, and a younger seeing helper, in appearance a sort of wink to el *Lazarillo de Tormes*. In all three plays—*"Amarillo," "La mano izquierda,"* and *"Una carta de Sarajevo"*—the exchange between the two characters over what is visible, present, and "objectively" true escalates into more of an argument at the same time that their discussions become increasingly detached from whatever might be deemed objectively "real" or "true." Characters' ways of "seeing" turn from the normative, superficial or visible appearance of things, and instead towards intuition, imagination, and what the individual remembering subject wishes were real. Seeing and blindness, then, have a kind of kinship—they are each part of a greater realm of perception and imagination and each draws upon memory for confirmation of its truth. In his works incorporating blindness, Mayorga places visibility and invisibility on an equal plane, both of critical importance to characters—and spectators—in the construction of memory as a dialectical struggle over how to see and tell the truth of the past.

In the second chapter, I examine Mayorga's *El arte de la entrevista* and *La tortuga de Darwin,* both centered on the investigative interview as a means of delving into the past. In *El arte de la entrevista,* three generations of women sharing the same house enter into a sort of memory vortex prompted by the teenage granddaughter's high school assignment, which asks her to interview someone *"interesante."* The interesting person she interviews happens to be her

grandmother, who is currently suffering from the onset of dementia and whose memory is presumably unreliable. The camera recorder, however, plays more than just a functional role in the women's interviews—it is as if the camera were a catalyst for the telling, or inventing, of supposed "truths." The art of the interview, however, resides not in what is said, but the moment in which the memory or testimony seems to break the interviewee, as if she were suddenly fractured by the weight of the *truth* she tells. Memory, in this work, becomes entirely destabilizing to these women, their relationships with each other, and their home. The recording "device" in *La tortuga de Darwin,* meanwhile, is the protagonist herself—the nearly two-hundred year old anthropomorphized Harriet the turtle whose extraordinary capacity to witness and remember becomes the object of value for "scientific" and archival research. Harriet, who has traveled the world and witnessed the greatest human catastrophes of the last two centuries, understands that, as a turtle for most of her life, she has been able to experience life "desde abajo." As such, what she remembers can potentially correct historical record and possibly rewrite much of the previous two hundred years of known European history. Armed with that knowledge, and having evolved to speak and walk as a result of the most intense suffering she witnessed throughout her life, Harriet approaches a historian-professor in the opening scene of the play and offers him her knowledge as a walking archive. In the course of their exchanges, however, the professor and, later, a research "doctor" begin to regard Harriet as an object for their investigative "excavations." They treat her as if she were a scientific specimen and come to value their own professional interests over Harriet's well-being. The protagonists of these two plays share similarities in their gender and relative age, but it is the ways in which they remember that differentiates them. While Harriet the turtle is a hyper-mnemonic, living archive who can *choose* to exaggerate or distort her memories, Rosa, the grandmother in *El arte de la*

entrevista possesses a memory that may be unreliable. The possible unreliability of her memories makes Rosa not only more interesting as an interviewee but also more threatening—that is, it is the possibility of *truth* in Rosa's interviews that is most upsetting to her daughter and most compelling to her granddaughter.

In the third chapter I examine how Mayorga addresses the question of how to stage and perform the invisibility of the Holocaust's horror, looking in particular at his plays *Himmelweg (Camino del cielo)* and *El Cartógrafo. Varsovia, 1:400.000. Himmelweg* is based on the 1944 visit of the International Red Cross to the Terezin/Theresienstadt concentration camp during the Holocaust, and is structured around five scenes, the first of which features the lone Red Cross worker who had been guided through the camp by the Nazi Kommandant, and had not "seen" behind the façade of normalcy—the theater within theater that the Nazi Kommandant was orchestrating so the Red Cross and International community would not learn of their genocide. *El cartógrafo,* which takes place in the space of what was the Warsaw Ghetto, both during the Holocaust and in the present day, is a play that features the circulation of maps as much as the circulation of the map-maker in ways that I will argue require not only an ethical way of being but an ethical way of seeing. Mayorga constructs the act of map-making as a mode of urgent, ethical seeing necessitated by the very invisibility and concealment that made the Holocaust possible. I argue that Gilles Deleuze and Feliz Guattari's (1987) notion of the rhizome, with its tuber-like growth, multiple points of entry and malleability, and as an object that is detachable, capable of growth and subject to modification, is reflected in Mayorga's construction of maps and space in his Holocaust theater. In Mayorga's *El Cartógrafo,* maps are useful precisely *because* they are unconventional, have multiple entry points, change over time, and represent something other than what is visible to the eye, but also because they *do* things—they can start

and end wars, and they can urgently warn an entire generation of an unfathomable danger and they can save lives. In this play, just as in many of Mayorga's works, the space of the theater itself calls for the spectator to actively *see*, as though through a microscope, to understand human connections, language, and power dynamics on the smallest scale possible—in this case, 1:400,000. In his Holocaust theater, Mayorga presents spectators with the enormity of the *truth* of a concealed genocide—the *truth* as a catastrophic tearing apart of the ethical fabric of an entire society, disrupting common understandings of good and evil, of culture and violence. In these works, Mayorga constructs the Holocaust—the victims and survivors' attempts to remember, express or communicate its horrors as a "cartography of erasure," one that features Mayorga's dramaturgy of invisibility, absence, and *truth*. By destabilizing the causal correlation between *seeing* and *knowing* for his characters, Mayorga compels spectators to make a similar sort of cognitive and epistemological leap. While the spectators' task is primarily to hear with their ears and see with their eyes, they too will find that neither their senses of sight and hearing nor their imaginations will help them completely *know*—though hopefully never understand—what is essential in the "nothingness" of the Holocaust before them on the stage.

In the final chapter, the only one of the four whose context relates thematically and directly to Spain's twentieth century history, I will also suggest that Mayorga's theater constructs seeing and memory as dialogical conflict in ways that resonate with the public discourses on truth, accountability, and justice in the nation's contemporary collective memory debates. Through Mayorga's *La biblioteca del diablo* and *El jardín quemado,* I examine how traumatic memory, when allowed to exist only within the hermetic four walls of a home or institution, atrophies individuals' capacity to express it. In these works, the remembering subjects, either resigned or forced to remain in a small space cut off from the rest of the world, are subject to

institutional control and surveillance. Their bodies and minds become a product of a tomblike silencing space or institution that renders them unable or unwilling to speak or write freely or coherently beyond the traumatic moment of witnessing. But there is an additional disruptive element to this power-laden dynamic. One assumption underlying this chapter is that the same socio-political or medical institutional framework that works to erode individual and collective capacities for critical consciousness of the past also constructs remembering as a destructive, deteriorating force, one whose effect can only be curbed by judicial, government, or medical order. However, the remembering subject's incapacity to remember or access memory, while ostensibly a product of trauma, can also function as an insulating form of resistance—a way of not having to *see* directly or remember the traumatic event.

Conclusions

Throughout this study, I emphasize that Mayorga's centering his fictions on dialogical exchanges in which his characters debate the "truth" of the past or present through the tension of what is visible and invisible catalyzes the production, preservation and construction of memory. Similarly, I analyze the act of *seeing* as one dependent on physiological capacity as well as the corresponding interplay of imagination and memory. Mayorga's blind characters tend towards imaginative, narrative retellings of what they cannot see, at the same time that his ocular "seeing" characters—those with the gift of sight—may find themselves "willfully" blind to certain of the realities that surround them.[36] Mayorga's treatment of blindness and seeing problematizes the facile assumption that correlates each to ignorance or knowledge, respectively.

[36] There is an important debate over the ethical dimension of using blindness metaphorically in literature and in other contexts in ways that do not recognize that it is a very real disability. This not something I address in depth in this study this study. Please see Naomi Schor's excellent article, "Blindness as Metaphor" (1999), for more information and sources on this topic in terms of literature.

Some of Mayorga's seeing characters truly see—that is, see beyond what is visible—while others of his seeing characters are ethically or willfully blind to what surrounds them. By the same token, Mayorga's physiologically blind characters, the subject of this study's first chapter—are some of them willfully blind as well, having deluded themselves into believing that reality is other than what it is, while others are perceptive of what is not visible to them through imagination and/or memory. In this sense, the acts of seeing or not-seeing, for those of Mayorga's characters in the plays that shape this study, operate as a function of the independent mechanisms through which they remember and imagine.

In Mayorga's historical/memory theater, the past emerges in three registers: archival History, collective historical memory, and individual, subjective or private memory. Each, by nature or circumstance, claims varying degrees of artifact-like fixity and "thingness," so that, much like disease, memory can be constructed and performed as something that invades and sickens the body and mind. In this way, memory and the concomitant tension between remembering and forgetting arise in the works as a locus of discursive negotiation but also objectification. That is, memory can and is seen, treated and in some cases experienced as something that must be extracted, eradicated, or cured. Memory also operates through a combination of words and silences, of presence/recall and the ever-teetering possibility of oblivion. This tension between remembering and forgetting and the power dynamic that circumscribes them in Mayorga's historical/memory theater produces scenarios in which characters, especially those in positions of power, intentionally objectify memory, rendering "remembering" everything from an advantageous commodity to be promoted and exchanged to a historical truth buried as far as possible beneath a burnt garden where nothing—least of all memory and critical consciousness—can grow.

Chapter 1

Blindness and Memory in Juan Mayorga's *La lengua en pedazos* (2010) and *Teatro para minutos* (2009)

Se puderes olhar, vê. Se podes ver, repara.
–José Saramago, *Ensaio sobre a cegeuira*

In the early 1990s, Jacques Derrida was asked by the curators of the Louvre Museum in Paris to organize an exhibition of works around a common theme. Derrida chose blindness and the visual representation of blind men in drawings and literature. The catalogue he prepared for the exhibit, published under the title *Mémoires d'aveugle: L'autoportrait et autres ruines* (1990), turned out to be a comprehensive, thoughtful essay on the aesthetics and ethics of blindness in the visual arts, particularly in the practice of drafting. In it, Derrida argues that the blind person is an "archivist of visibility," making memory of the visible with his fingers or through smells or sounds, which Derrida describes as an equally "invisible" language (20). Establishing a relationship between memory and blindness, Derrida writes of Socrates' *Phaedo* (99d-e), in which Plato speaks of prisoners chained by the "phenomenal prison of the visible world" (13, 15 Derrida) who find their only escape in words and, thereby, memory: "They do not venture out with outstretched hands. . . . They converse, they speak of memory" (15). According to Derrida, the irony of blindness for Socrates is that the ones who are "blind" are not those deprived of ocular sight, but those who attempt to see the truth of things with their eyes. That is, those who see things clearly—through intuition, ideas, memory, and words—do so not with their eyes but by seeing "truth in invisible forms. . . discourses, reasons, calculations," words, and memories (15, Footnote 7). This "blindness" is not a passive sort of seeing, receptive only of what information the blind person is given, however. As Derrida insists, "by a singular vocation, the blind man becomes a witness" (20).

The representation of blindness in a visual medium comes through in a less direct fashion in Art Spiegelman's *Maus I & II* and *In the Shadow of No Towers,* each based on his family's experiences of the Holocaust and 9/11 respectively. In these works, Spiegelman uses comic-book-style images to depict trauma by leaving certain aspects of these well-known but horrific events undrawn and invisible (Orbán). Katalin Orbán argues that this strategy leaves readers to imagine some of the most critical aspects of these catastrophic events and especially those aspects most traumatic. Writes Orbán: "The first notion—at work in *Maus* though also seriously complicated by it—is an ability to see inwardly, without the eyes, canceling the visible image. This notion reverses the idea of blindness as a disability, since it offers a deeper immediate understanding than that offered by the eye. Therefore, in this idea of blindness as true sight, the visual apparatus itself is the more profound disability" (61). Applied to Juan Mayorga's work, Spiegelman's illustrated dialogues reveal how in a highly visual medium such as art, illustrated books, and, as we'll see in this chapter, theater, what characters—and spectators—cannot see with their eyes is often just as or more essential to the experience and understanding of truth and the construction of memory as what they can see.

These two ideas—Derrida's idea of the blind man as a "witness," an "archivist of visibility" who makes memory of what he cannot see, and Orbán's notion of blindness as "true sight" and ocular sight as the true "disability" in Spiegelman's works—are elements that Juan Mayorga problematizes in his representation of seeing and blindness. This chapter examines the relationship between memory and seeing in Mayorga's theater by looking at blindness and (in)visibility as a catalyst for the making of memory. Mayorga accomplishes this in part by constructing characters' ways of "seeing" as product of contentious dialogical exchanges. In each of the plays to be analyzed in this chapter—Mayorga's *La lengua en pedazos* and the short

plays *"Amarillo," "La mano izquierda,"* and *"Una carta de Sarajevo"*—a debate over what is visible unsettles any preconceived notions the characters have of what is or may have been seen as objectively true. In the three short plays featuring blindness, a discussion between a blind and a seeing character over the appearance and significance of an object becomes a vehicle for memory. In the course of these exchanges, characters' ways of *seeing* become increasingly detached from the visual, turning instead towards intuition and imagination, thereby drawing from and informing memory. In *La lengua en pedazos,* the act of seeing takes on the ethical responsibility of "witnessing"—a testamentary, memory-making act. This chapter addresses the strategies Mayorga uses to construct seeing and remembering through blindness, considering how the dialogical dimensions of sight can refashion memory itself. This analysis also suggests that Mayorga's treatment of blindness reconfigures the visual experience of spectators by placing the visual world at the same level as the non-visual world. Mayorga has said repeatedly in interviews that theater is the art of the imagination and it is the spectator's imagination that Mayorga intends to conjure. I argue that those of Mayorga's works that include blind characters—whether metaphorically or physiologically blind—purposefully situate spectators in a similar non-seeing position. Through this strategy, Mayorga compels the audience members to spectate through a process of inward seeing very similar to the one they see on stage. Mayorga challenges spectators to look beyond what is immediately apparent, in turn becoming themselves "archivists of visibility" who must use their imaginations and memories in order to access truth. Mayorga's representation of seeing and blindness, together with his construction of invisibility and space—will be relevant in the chapters that follow, especially in Mayorga's Holocaust and historical/memory theater, in which I argue that he uses characters' isolation and enclosure to

construct memory—both remembering and forgetting—as a strategy for survival and self-preservation.

The following analysis of Mayorga's works on blindness is organized along two ideas—that of the blind person as a witness, and that of the blindness as tied to imagination and memory. The first part of the analysis looks at Mayorga's *La lengua en pedazos (A partir del "Libro de la Vida" de Teresa de Jesús)* (2010), a work that recently garnered him Spain's 2013 *Premio Nacional de Literatura Dramática*. The second part of the chapter is dedicated to *"Amarillo," "La mano izquierda,"* and *"Una carta de Sarajevo"* from Mayorga's collection of short works, *Teatro para minutos* (2009). In each of these latter short plays, a blind man and his seeing helper—a sort of *lazarillo*—are the only two characters.[37] The analysis of these short works examines the dialogical exchange in which the two characters discuss the content, appearance or existence of a given object. The dramatic tension in their exchanges lies in the conflict between seeing and not-seeing as it relates to interpreting tangible, visible objects, such as a household item, a photograph, or a letter, respectively. Each of the dialogues becomes a debate over the "truth" of this object and how the seeing character's description or account contradicts what the blind man remembers or imagines. What come into play are the blind man's imagination and expectations based on those images and sensations that he recalls from when he could see.[38] In these works, Mayorga establishes a relationship between seeing and memory by having tangible

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[37] In addition to these three, there is one more short play in this collection of short works that features blind men, but which I do not include in this chapter. Its title is *"Legión"* (1998) and is the work of *teatro breve* from which Mayorga elaborated his full-length work, *Angelus Novus* (unpublished, written in 1998). *"Legión"* features a battalion made up of blind soldiers and a blind general in the midst of mounting a rebellion. I have chosen not to include the analysis of *"Legión"* and *Angelus Novus* in this chapter in part because *"Legión"* does not feature a blind man and a seeing helper as these other plays do, and also because this short work reappears recast and elaborated in *Angelus Novus* in ways that are more relevant to other aspects of Mayorga's work not examined in this thesis, that of resistance and rebellion.

[38] While in *"Amarillo"* and *"Una carta de Sarajevo"* it is clear that the blind man was rendered blind due to illness or an accident, in *"La mano izquierda,"* the origin of the man's blindness is not mentioned.

objects recall an experience of rupture or trauma. This link compels Mayorga's blind and seeing characters—and, by extension, spectators—to critically question the possible disconnect between what they can or cannot see and what they remember or believe to be true. In his *Memoirs of the Blind,* Derrida defines blindness as "abocular" seeing, basing his definition on the French word for blind, *"aveugle,"* which comes from the Latin *ab oculis,* meaning "not from or by but without the eyes," which signifies for Derrida that "the blind man can be a seer, and he sometimes has the vocation of a visionary" (2). As we'll see in this and the chapters that follow, for Mayorga, seeing is a strategic dialogical act framed and fueled by personal histories of trauma, loss, and the need for survival. In the chapters that examine those of Mayorga's works centered on historical trauma—including historical memory related to the Holocaust (Chapter 3) and the Spanish Civil War (Chapter 4)—Mayorga constructs "abocular" seeing as an essential component of gaining critical consciousness and insight into an invisible or "disappeared past." In the following analysis, visuality takes on a dimension of power used by characters to defend and protect themselves, at times with the imperative of staying true to their convictions and at others with that of making or erasing memory.

Seeing "*con los ojos del alma*" in *La lengua en pedazos* (2010)

In *Aspectos semiológicos del teatro de Buero Vallejo* (1997), Jovita Bobes Naves explains how blindness functions in the works of Spanish playwright Antonio Buero Vallejo (1916-2000). Bobes Naves includes in her analysis of blindness the following Buero Vallejo plays: *El concierto de San Ovidio, La tejedora de sueños, Un soñador para un pueblo,* and *Llegada de los dioses*.[39] In *Llegada de los dioses,* for example, blindness afflicts the character

[39] I thank Juan Mayorga for referring me to Jovita Bobes Naves's study (1/24/14; personal communication).

Julio as a product of circumstances; that is, Julio becomes blind as a result of learning of the fate of his father (59). Bobes Naves interprets Julio's blindness as a self-inflicted means of evading a surrounding reality, but what is most interesting to her about Julio's blindness is the critical inward seeing through which he begins to understand his surroundings and his circumstances: "La ceguera parece proporcionarle una visión crítica e imaginativa no correspondiente a una visión realista, sino más bien onírica, más profunda e intuitiva" (59). Similarly, in *La tejedora de sueños,* writes Bobes Naves, Buero Vallejo gives the character of the blind wet-nurse an insight typical of visionaries who "al perder su visión externa adquieren el don de profecía por una suerte de visión interior que agudiza su mente" (59). Bobes Naves suggests that Buero Vallejo's use of blindness and the figure of the blind man in his works allows him to present spectators with a symbolic criticism of the human tendency to ignore truths and to justify weaknesses, especially, as Bobes Naves writes, "los defectos interiores del hombre y las dificultades para llegar al conocimiento de los demás y de uno mismo" (59).

In other studies that look at the representation of blindness in Spanish theater, blindness takes on a more symbolic character. In classic works such as Ramón del Valle-Inclán's *Luces de Bohemia* (1920)*,* the "esperpentic" character of Max Estrella is seen has having messianic qualities, in part because of how his blindness exacerbates but also symbolizes the injustice and the fate that befalls him and his art (Cruz Mendizábal), while pointing to Max's increasing realization of the pervasive hypocrisy and corruption in Spanish society. In still another work, *Versos de ciego* (1961) by Chilean playwright Luis Alberto Heiremans (1928-1964), a play that was performed in Spain under Franco and with great success, a group of traveling circus workers are led by a blind man towards a star through which they hope to achieve self-actualization, what one critic describes as a state of redemption: "La obra presenta una doble simbología: en una

primera dimensión existe una relación con la religiosidad popular, y por otra representa la búsqueda del ser humano de una existencia superior…el eterno peregrinar del ser humano hacia la trascendencia" (Teatro UC). In all of these, blindness is linked to knowing a form of truth in the present or past that is not apparent or readily visible. Mayorga's treatment of blindness is in line with this literary tradition insofar as seeing and not-seeing with the eyes are directly associated with witnessing, knowing, and understanding. Where Mayorga departs from this tradition is in his emphasis on the dialogical exchange in which visibility and invisibility engage in a tense dialectic.[40] In *La lengua en pedazos, "Amarillo," "La mano izquierda,"* and *"Una carta de Sarajevo,"* blindness and seeing perform a similar tension, but between the visible and invisible, a tension in which truth and memory hang in the balance.[41]

In Mayorga's works, blindness emerges as tool that can be used by characters constructively or destructively, depending on who wields or "suffers" from it and whose interests it serves. In *La lengua en pedazos,* Teresa de Jesús faces an Inquisitor in front of whom, at the risk of losing her life, she defends her having "seen" Christ with the eyes of her soul. In this instance, it is ocular seeing that emerges as deficient, while the "abocular" seeing that Teresa does with her soul renders her suspicious in the eyes of the Inquisitor, but also becomes her only means of survival. Teresa's capacity to "see" in a way that her Inquisitor cannot but also cannot mediate or control is vital her standing in religious society. From the Inquistor's perspective, Teresa's "seeing" with her soul is a source of danger, while for her it is where she draws her

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[40] This dialectic is reminiscent of what Mayorga says Benjamin refers to as the dialectic image, which Mayorga has said he attempts to achieve in his historical theater--that is, a dynamic and productive encounter between the past and the present (Camera Stylo "O Juan Mayorga").

[41] Another work of contemporary Spanish theater that features a blind character is Laila Ripoll's *"Los niños perdidos"* (2010) from her *Trilogía fantástica,* in which three children of killed or imprisoned Republican soldiers are relocated to an orphanage managed by Franco's government that is intended to indoctrinate them against their parents views and in line with Franco's views. Their instructor, however, is a blind nun (Artezblai "Micomicón"). I discuss Ripoll's work on historical memory in the final chapter of this study.

authority to speak and stand for what she has experienced. The extent to which Teresa appropriates the act of seeing as a form of power in turn infuses her inward soul's *seeing* with her own intentions in a Bakhtinian sense. That is, she gives her act of *seeing* a meaning that is inaccessible to the Inquisitor at the same time that it is an expression of her agency and authenticity (Bahktin 293-294).

Mayorga wrote *La lengua en pedazos* drawing from his reading of Santa Teresa's *Libro de la vida,* which she wrote between 1562 and 1565 at the request of her confessor. But he does not consider it an adaptation because, while he dramatizes Teresa's spirit and character using some of her original words, the conflictive dialogue that Mayorga imagines between Teresa and the Inquistor is entirely fictional. Interestingly, the clash of wills that Mayorga invents between these two characters is the first of his works that compelled him to try his hand at directing. Mayorga has mentioned among his directorial influences the creative videography of New York-based artist Bill Viola, who uses dramatic opposites and correspondences such as light/darkness, sound/silence, motion/stillness, day/night, and elemental forms such as fire, water, and wind to create short video installations featuring the rumbling performance of dramatic vitality and tension (García Vega). Inspired in part by Viola's work, and in collaboration with his two actors—Clara Sanchis and Pedro Miguel Martínez—Mayorga directed *La lengua en pedazos* for its tour of Spain in spring 2013 tour and its two-week run at the Teatro Fernán Gómez in Madrid in June 2013.[42] Among the aspects of *La lengua en pedazos* that struck audiences was the austerity of its set and the lack of period costume (Álvarez). Spectators were greeted by a

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[42] In its 2014 iteration, *La lengua en pedazos* features a different actor, Daniel Albaladejo, portraying the role of the Inquisitor, one a bit younger than the original Pedro Miguel Martínez. One possible reason for this is that, with a younger actor, the character of Teresa can explore the possibility of a subtle sexual tension in their confrontation. Please consult the Teatro Fernán Gómez link for a trailer and description of this April-May 2014 performance: http://teatrofernangomez.esmadrid.com/espectaculo/792/la-lengua-en-pedazos (26 April 2014).

predominantly dark set—black floor, black curtains in the background—with a single long table onstage accompanied by unmatched blue chairs on either end. On the table were a disordered collection of books, a water jug and cups, bunches of vegetables and the large bowl and knife with which Teresa is loudly and slowly chopping potatoes when the play opens. Rather than have Teresa wear a nun's habit, which would be an image culturally familiar to Spanish audiences, Mayorga has Teresa wear contemporary clothing: jeans, a dark pullover, a long and thick rust-colored sweater, and dark hiking/athletic shoes. Clara Sanchis, the actress in these 2013 performances, has her auburn curly hair pulled back in a loose bun. Meanwhile, the Inquisitor, the only other character in the play, in these performances played by Pedro Miguel Martínez, is a man who wears all black: black slacks, sometimes with a black sport coat and sometimes with a black long-sleeve sweater.[43] The details of the characters' modern dress are strategic on Mayorga's part. First, it is a way of shattering any expectations of a historicist reproduction of Santa Teresa's life in the vein of what Ray Loriga produced with his feature film, *Teresa: Cuerpo de Cristo* (Spain, 2007) (Díaz Yanes). Mayorga's elimination of set, costume and other markers that would date his work to the sixteenth century also has an ironic effect. Rather than distance the audience from Teresa, it invites spectators to engage with her words and her determination in ways that are undeniably present, entirely relevant to the here and now. In a recent essay, *"El pacto teatral,"* Mayorga explains his objective in directing in *La lengua en pedazos*: "Había que conseguir que, sin trucos, el espectador quisiera ver la cocina del convento de San José, y en ella a Teresa. Todo dependería finalmente de que la actriz, desde la autoridad

[43] In its spring/summer 2013 run throughout Spain, the Inquisitor and Teresa were played by actors Pedro Miguel Martínez and Clara Sanchis—daughter of playwright José Sanchis Sinisterra. Here I am comparing the two performances I saw of *La lengua en pedazos* during its national tour—the first in La Coruña on Friday, April 5, 2013, at a small theater in a public arts-focused community center and library, and the second at the municipal theater of Fuenlabrada, a city south of Madrid, on Saturday, April 20, 2013.

de su primera palabra y de su primer gesto, fuese capaz de provocar en el espectador el deseo de ver en ella a Teresa, construyendo así una cita improbable y peligrosa entre el siglo XVI y el XXI" (2014). Mayorga's strategy is also consistent with his objective in creating works for the stage that tap into the audience's intelligence and imagination (Gabriele 1098). What Mayorga has said about his play, *Hamelin* (2005), could apply easily to *La lengua en pedazos*: "Es es una obra de teatro tan pobre que necesita que el espectador ponga, con su imaginación, la escenografía, el vestuario y muchas cosas más" (Mayorga *"Érase"*). For Mayorga as for many scholars (Schlau 2002; Boluda Vías 2013; Reyes Mate 2013), Teresa's words do not pertain exclusively to the sixteenth century. Hers is an unending struggle against long-standing institutional authority—in this case, male and religious—that is deeply suspicious of a woman's intellectual capacity, defiance, and will to self-determination.[44] Reyes Mate has recently written of Mayorga's *La lengua en pedazos* that "El inquisidor, que tiene pies en la tierra, no se cree eso de la experiencia mística y le desconcierta que mujeres sin títulos ni permisos alteren el orden establecido en nombre de su libertad de conciencia. Piensa como nosotros" (2013).

In the conversation dramatized onstage, the Inquisitor pushes Teresa to justify her having read books of chivalry as a child as a way of proving his and others' claim that Teresa had been driven by unsavory impulses—or, worse, Satan—in her acts, and that everything she'd claimed about having seen Christ was a lie, a sort of imposture, and a fantasy. Teresa, however, defends her integrity in two ways. First, by describing her struggle against Satan as a dialogical and dramatic conflict and, second, by characterizing her commitment to Christ in terms of her own unique witnessing—these "visions" of Christ that no one else can see. What is most

[44] Boluda Vías writes in her review of Mayorga's *La lengua en pedazo*, only slightly tongue in cheek: "No perdamos de vista que hoy en día Santa Teresa sería remitida sin remilgos al psiquiátrico más cercano." But her point is to emphasize that Teresa's mysticism is not in what she says but in how she is and performs her experience—"Pero es que, como sabía Wittgenstein, el místico muestra, no demuestra. La fe sólo admite silencio." (Boluda Vías 2013)

disconcerting to the Inquisitor is the inaccessibility of her mystical experience. He and the other religious authorities such as Teresa's designated confessor cannot control her, especially since they cannot see what she claims to have seen with the eyes of her soul.

Colin Thompson (2009) has written of the representation of the *unseen* in the religious vision paintings of the Golden Age by painters, such as Diego Velázquez and El Greco. In his article, "Seeing the Unseen: The Representation of Visions in Golden Age Painting and Writing," Thompson writes:

> Religious paintings of the period conventionally separate the earthly and heavenly planes by a symbolic barrier of radiant clouds, which form a boundary, if not an impenetrable one, between them. Within or above them lies a reality which is accessible only to the *eye of faith* and cannot be seen and depicted by the artist as part of the visible world. . . . Not only must [painters] find a pictorial language which can represent in *invisible form a reality which lies beyond sight and sense, time and place,* but because the vision takes place within the equally unseen world of the mind or soul of the saint, they must also express the effect the inner experience has on the one who is receiving it. [45] (798, 801; italics mine)

Teresa admits that, when she was young, she often confused what was sinful with what was virtuous, and that neither the convent nor prayer had helped her distinguish between them. When the Inquisitor asks her about the role of prayer in her struggle, Teresa responds, "El demonio fue más firme que mis oraciones. Mientras yo oraba, él armaba contra mí una gran trama." Teresa's

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[45] Bill Viola, who as noted above was one of Mayorga's influences in directing, has visited the Prado Museum in Madrid several times and has also spoken of the striking effect that sixteenth century paintings representing religious visions or mystical experiences have had on him. In particular, Viola cites Zurbarán's *Aparición de san Pedro Apóstol San Pedro Nolasco,* saying in an interview with Miguel Ángel García Vega that Zurbarán's painting "cambió mi vida y me enseñó cómo incorporar sueños, visiones y estados alterados de conciencia en mis obras." Viola has also said that seeing similar paintings by El Greco, Ribera, Goya and Velázquez and others "fue una purificación para mi alma" (García Vega).

seeing in this way supersedes the language of prayer in her struggle against Satan. In some ways, too, her "seeing" with her soul trumps even the language she uses with the Inquisitor to defend and affirm her experience. Boluda Vías has written of Mayorga's Teresa and her tense relationship with language: "En su afán por describir la iluminación extática, Teresa creó un nuevo idioma, angustiosamente retorcido. La metáfora dejó de bastarle: su lengua se tensó hasta el límite y, finalmente, se rompió en añicos ante la incapacidad de expresar lo inexpresable" (2013).

To reiterate Mayorga's metaphor in *La lengua en pedazos,* Teresa's *lengua*—language/tongue—"breaks" into pieces, and it is her way of *abocular* seeing that begins to speak for her. When the "ángel del Señor" pierces her heart, she experiences a pain so exquisite and profound that she cannot speak except in moaning cries: "Y la lengua, en pedazos, se niega a dar palabras. Sólo da gemidos, porque más no puede" (24). When the Inquisitor asks Teresa to elaborate on how she managed to commune with Christ, she claims that, on more than one occasion, she has "seen" Christ with the eyes of her soul but she cannot explain exactly how. And, while Teresa's life depends on how she manages her words, as Reyes Mate suggests, what will save her is not so much what she says as what she does not say:

> Lo inquietante es lo que la palabra esconde, lo que da a entender sin decirlo claramente. A ese inquisidor, como a todos los demás, lo que le espanta son los silencios cargados de elocuencia. Lo peligroso para el orden establecido es que haya alguien que piense que no todo es apariencia porque hay algo indecible, pliegues ocultos que escapan al poder y a las verdades establecidas. ("Teresa")

Teresa's mystical, *abocular* experience of Christ constitutes a resistance against the religious order by virtue of being entirely unmediated by it. Her access to Christ is direct and is

threatening to the religious hierarchy because it bypasses it entirely.[46] In the excerpt that follows, Teresa defends herself from her Inquisitor by explaining how exactly she has "seen" and witnessed Christ in her presence.

> INQUISIDOR. Veis a Cristo ante vos. ¿En qué forma?
>
> *Teresa duda.*
>
> TERESA. No veo en qué forma. Pero que está a mi derecha, lo siento muy claro, y que es testigo de lo que hago.
>
> INQUISIDOR. No entiendo que podáis verlo a vuestro lado si no veis la forma en que está.
>
> *Teresa duda.*
>
> TERESA. Con ojos del alma lo veo.
>
> INQUISIDOR. Ojos otros que los del cuerpo, yo no los conozco.
>
> TERESA. Yo a él lo veo con los ojos del alma más claramente que lo pudiera ver con los ojos del cuerpo.
>
> INQUISIDOR. Así como en los sueños.
>
> TERESA. No es cosa de sueño.
>
> INQUISIDOR. ¿Cómo sabéis que es Cristo?
>
> *Teresa duda.*
>
> TERESA. No sé cómo sé, mas no puedo dejar de saberlo.

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[46] There is a link here between the role of institutional power and subjects' resistance that emerges not only in Mayorga's *La lengua* but also in plays such as *Angelus Novus.* In this latter play, citizens of a technocratic, futuristic society inadvertently start a sort of "revolution" that the society's leaders characterize as an epidemic. The "epidemic," however, infects its citizens through words whispered in their ears—words that its "victims" cannot recall and therefore cannot repeat but that completely transform the power dynamic in the city. The city leaders' frustration with not being able to access this infecting agent or its messenger renders futile their efforts to contain it. Similar to what happens with Mayorga's Teresa, in *Angelus Novus,* the infected victims' silence regarding what they've heard and witnessed is what is ultimately most destabilizing to the city's authoritarian power structure.

INQUISIDOR. Tenemos tiempo, Teresa. Buscad comparaciones para darme a entender lo que no entiendo.

TERESA. Para esta manera de visión no hay comparación que cuadre.

INQUISIDOR. ¿Es como una persona ciega o a oscuras, que no ve otra que está a su vera, pero la siente?

TERESA. Alguna semejanza tiene, mas no mucha. Yo no le oigo moverse, ni lo toco. Aquí no hay sino una noticia al alma. (11)

Teresa's experience of Christ as a powerful, invisible presence is not something that she can fully describe or narrate and, when she attempts to, it is in terms that are completely alien to her interlocutor—i.e. a large toad approaching, disembodied hands appearing before her, or finding herself in hell and experiencing physical pain. Teresa's alternate way of *seeing* is alien and therefore threatening to her Inquisitor and something that he, along with her confessor, would never be able to experience or replicate. Teresa explains that she *knows* Christ is present beside or before her but that it is not through her "objective" senses that she knows. Worldly metaphors are insufficient to explain it. This is the paradox that the Inquisitor cannot grasp and for which he continually asks for proof. Her only proof, however, is her experience of *seeing* with her soul's "eyes," which, beyond this phrase, she cannot describe. On the insufficiency of language to explain and contain her experience of Christ, which she equates to an overflowing love, Teresa refers again to her broken tongue, but it is here that she also discredits the role of the imagination—what Teresa calls *"la loca de la casa"*: "Ni puede la palabra recoger tanto amor, pues, como fuego que arde demasiado, no cabe a la palabra contener la llama. Se levanta en el alma un vuelo porque, loca, no ve diferencia a Dios y habla desatinos. La lengua está en pedazos y es sólo amor el que habla. Pero nadie puede hablar de ello. Es mejor no decir más. *(Silencio.*

Teresa corta cebolla. El Inquisidor sale)" (24). In this final moment of the play, Teresa's words drive the Inquisitor to absolute silence. He can do nothing more than exit the stage, leaving Teresa and spectators to the sound of her kitchen knife on the chopping block.

Boluda Vías points to *La lengua en pedazos* as a bold incursion on Mayorga's part into Spain's religious history and the spiritual transformation and assertions of a woman. She suggests that Mayorga's work is especially bold in the context of contemporary society, which focuses so heavily on the surface and appearance of things: "La vida de una monja no suena a comidilla de *[sic]* de *trending topic,* pero más pueril resultará aclarar que la *La lengua en pedazos* no pretende ser un ejercicio de fe, sino un canto a la dignidad humana, y a las perplejidades que aguardan en el umbral a la palabra, donde mística y estética, finalmente, se toman de la mano" (Boluda Vías). This pact between aesthetics and mysticism enacted in the figure of Teresa rides on the tension between visibility and invisibility. Spectators are invited to "see" at this same crux, the point at which language, representation, and imagination are not sufficient for expressing the experience of transformation. In their exchanges, the Inquisitor expresses his disbelief of what Teresa claims to have seen and experienced—mind, body and soul. Spectators of *La lengua en pedazos* must overcome a similar disbelief—they must "see" and to some extent experience what Teresa cannot explain to her Inquistor in words. Mayorga challenges his spectators to *see* through Teresa's performance what it is for her to *see* with her soul. In Mayorga's works featuring physiologically blind men and seeing characters to be examined in the following section, spectators must similarly "see" what at least one character—the blind man—cannot. In contrast to what occurs between Teresa and the Inquistor, however, Mayorga's blind men question in disbelief what their seeing helpers claim to have seen with their eyes. In the following analysis of Mayorga's *"Amarillo," "La mano izquierda,"* and *"Una carta*

de Sarajevo," all short works from Mayorga's *Teatro para minutos,* each play features a blind man that resists accepting what his seeing helper confirms is visible. Similar to what happens to Teresa, however, language emerges as only a partial means of understanding and expressing the experience of the visible. *Seeing*—and the language used to communicate it—are supplanted in the case of these short plays not by a mystical experience akin to one Teresa lives and witnesses, but by the blind man's imagination and memory.

Blindness and the Dialogical Objects of Memory

In her article titled "False Memory Syndrome: The Memory Theater of W. David Hancock," Elinor Fuchs's explains how playwright W. David Hancock's postmodern "object theater" succeeds in creating an "elaborate illusion of authenticity" by incorporating into his productions mundane, commonplace, familiar objects such as a watch or a pair of pliers, and inviting spectators to touch them (84). Fuchs argues that spectators' direct contact with the "thingness" of these objects in the performances of Hancock's plays has the immediate effect of drawing the audience not *into* but *away* from the world of the theater and into the "real" world outside theater walls (83).[47] Fuchs' treatment of Hancock's "object theater" underscores how notions of truth and authenticity promote the recovery of memory, in this way serving as "a fire wall against the loss of the past" (85). In the following plays—*"Amarillo," "La mano izquierda,"* and *"Una carta de Sarajevo"*—a seeing and a blind character debate the authenticity of a visible, tangible object in ways that construct memory, too, as an object that can be lost, misplaced or transformed. Mayorga's objectifying memory has an effect contrary to what Fuchs argues happens in Hancock's object theater. Rather than drawing spectators away from the world

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[47] With the term "thingness," Fuchs borrows a notion associated with fascist aesthetics, what in German was called, *"Neue Dinglichkeit"/*"New Thingness" (83). I discuss fascist aesthetics further in Chapter 3.

of the theater, Mayorga's strategy draws them further into it by rendering spectators' own imaginations, memories, and *seeing* critical to the theatrical experience.

In their writings over the course of the twentieth century, scholars such as Paul de Man, Maurice Blanchot, and Jacques Derrida explored ideas of how the act of literary and artistic creation constitutes a loss for which only insight and the imagination can compensate. For de Man and Blanchot, for example, this loss is a form of forgetting, what de Man explains as "the paradoxical presence of a kind of anti-memory at the very source of literary creation," whereas, for Derrida, the loss is a form of blindness in which the draftsman/writer, the reader/spectator and the critic "coincide to make the unseen visible" (de Man 66-67, 141). Centuries earlier, in 1749, Denis Diderot wrote his "Letter on the Blind," an account of his conversations with a man blind from birth who tells him of how he apprehends the world. For Diderot, what is remarkable about the blind man is the level of philosophical insight with which the he communicates his reflections on a world that has always been invisible. "These blind men," writes Diderot, "explore—and seek to foresee there where they do not see, no longer see, or do not yet see. The space of the blind always conjugates these three tenses and times of memory" ("Letter" 5-6). Similarly, the genre of short theater serves to "conjugate" these three tenses—spectators are faced with a brief interaction between characters through which the audience must imagine and explore what cannot be seen or represented. In Mayorga's introduction to his collection of short plays, *Teatro para minutos* (2009), he argues it is the dramatic tension and intensity of a play and not its length that measures its impact:

> La importancia de un cuadro no se mide por la cantidad de pared que ocupa, sino por la fuerza con que tensiona esa pared. La de una escultura o la de una composición musical, por su capacidad de dar plenitud al espacio o al tiempo, más allá de lo que ese espacio o

> ese tiempo midan. Tampoco el valor de una obra teatral depende de su extensión, sino de su intensidad. Depende de su capacidad para recoger y transmitir experiencia. De la generosidad con que enriquezca en experiencia a sus espectadores. (7)

The tension created by what is and is not visible in the following short works is what creates for spectators a challenge to conventional ways of seeing.[48]

Art historian John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* (1972) examines the effects and function of art in terms of changes in the ways humans have regarded images over time. Linking images to the imagination and life histories, Berger argues that "images were first made to conjure up the appearance of something that was absent" (10) and that "every image embodies a way of seeing" (10). In Paul de Man's compilation of essays titled *Blindness and Insight* (1971), he analyzes an idea that circulated within French criticism about the role of art and literature being "to reveal the reality that is hidden as well as that which is visible," an idea that favors the imagination over sight because it allows for multiple, invisible layers of reality to appear: "the world of the imagination then becomes a more complete, more totalized reality than that of everyday experience, a three-dimensional reality that would add a factor of depth to the flat surface with which we are usually confronted" (34). But it is not enough to see beyond the surface of reality or an image. In Mayorga's theater, those who *see* must engage not only their intuitions and imaginations, but also their memories. Moreover, in order to see, as the performances of Mayorga's blind characters show, the seeing and remembering subject must be willing to risk a tremendous amount of loss. That is, *seeing* is linked not only with knowledge of "truth," but with the trauma associated with forgetting *and* remembering.

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[48] For more on the genre of *teatro breve* in Spain, beginning with the tradition of the *entremés* through to the XXI century, see Báez Ayala (2013) and Romera Castillo (2011).

In the analysis of *La lengua en pedazos,* as with the analysis of Mayorga's short works that follows, *seeing* is strongly linked with desire and fear in memory, serving as a challenge to "objective" and institutional notions of truth. The tension between seeing and blindness, moreover, prompts a productive dialogue between characters that involves the challenge of accountability and the risk loss as much as the possibility for transformation and healing. Teresa's "seeing" in *La lengua en pedazos* functions inadvertently as a form of resistance against the religious hierarchy that would prefer her silenced, both voiceless and truly "blind." Teresa understands her inward seeing of Christ with the eyes of her soul as an extraordinary gift of insight. The privileged nature of Teresa's experience with Christ underscores the insufficiency of the Inquisitor's ocular seeing, which turns out to be effectively a sort of blindness with respect to Teresa's *abocular* experience of Christ.

In the analysis that follows, blindness does not function as a metaphor for insight or ignorance; rather, it is a catalyst for a dialogical knowing and inquiring into memory in a way that questions the primacy of the visible and gives weight to narrative imagination and memory. In *"Amarillo,"* blindness functions to symbolize denial within memory and the opposite of "true sight," whereas in *"La mano izquierda,"* the blind man's sight becomes linked to narrative and memory but slowly admits the fear, rupture, and loss that might signify the blind man's own experience. In *"Carta de Sarajevo,"* blindness produces memory through the narrative imagination used in storytelling. The blind man's inability to see corresponds to his estrangement from a longtime friend and, possibly, lover, with whom and about whom the ending of his own life's story makes sense. The seeing character's narrative imagination in *"Carta de Sarajevo"* enables the blind man to seek healing and recognition in a moment in his life that is plagued with loss and rupture. While blindness is a logistical obstacle to ocular seeing/reading and thereby at

first glance a disability, in these works, blindness also enables an alternative, distinctly productive engagement with the visible. In each of the following plays, a disagreement emerges between the blind man and his seeing helper in which the blind man questions what his helper claims is visible. The blind man counters with what he remembers and imagines—both of which he considers a more trustworthy sources of information—, prompting the seeing helper to change his story about what he sees.

"Amarillo"

"Amarillo" (2000) is a very short play that Mayorga wrote while participating in a summer residency workshop for playwrights at the Royal Court Theatre in London in 1998. In a 2012 interview with Mónica Molanés Riál, Mayorga explains how in one of their workshops, he and a small group of playwrights were given the task of deciding on a common theme or motive in response to which they would each have a limited amount of time to write a play.[49] Mayorga and the rest of writers in his group decided on the color yellow/*amarillo*. Rather than make things yellow appear in the text, for example as a part of the set or character's clothing, Mayorga chose to make the color itself not only the play's title but also the central motive of the play's dramatic unfolding, without the color itself ever appearing visibly onstage. As Mayorga explained in an interview with Ana Gorría, "Yo decidí no limitarme a introducir alguna cosa amarilla en el texto, sino exigirme que el color mismo fuese el detonante del conflicto escénico" (qtd. in Gorría "Poética" 14). The first staging of *"Amarillo"* immediately followed Mayorga's writing of it that same summer of 1998 at the Royal Court Theater in London, where it was

[49] This is a creative pedagogical challenge somewhat similar to what happens on the competitive television cooking show "The Iron Chef," in which competitors are revealed a secret ingredient and given exactly one hour to concoct a series of dishes. The only requirement is that each dish feature the same common element.

directed by Romanian director Christian Popescu.[50] From Mayorga's perspective, among the extraordinary choices in direction made by Popescu was to have the action take place in an empty space with no scenery. That is, none of the objects that the characters talk about or "touch" during the play are actually onstage. In the opening moments of this very brief play, a blind man, in mourning due to his mother's recent death, has returned to the home he used to share with his parents. He initiates a process in which he remembers his mother and their home through objects that he picks up and touches and whose color he must know. In Popescu's rendition of Mayorga's play, the blind man reaches around in an empty space, connecting to the past through touch—a touch that gives form to both invisibility and the imagination; as Kate M. Foley (1919) wrote, "to the blind, fingers are eyes." So that, the objects that the blind man remembers from his family's home make their shape and purpose apparent to him and the audience only through gestures and words. The seeing character's role in the exchange is to tell him the color of each object.

For Mayorga, Popescu's work as director of *"Amarillo"* was extraordinary because of how it played with the question of visibility itself. Invisibility, then, plays a special role in *"Amarillso,"* especially in light of the presence of a blind character and, as Mayorga notes below, the effect that this might have had on the play's spectators:

> Un director rumano, Cristian Popescu, puso en escena a un viejo y a un chaval que entraban en un espacio y lo tocaban con los dedos: un sofá, y decían *green*; luego cogían una pelota, y decían otro color. Los objetos no estaban, con lo cual lo dramático ya se

[50] *"Amarillo"* has enjoyed numerous dramatic readings and two staged performances. One, directed by Francisco Torrente, took place in Madrid at the Teatro Triángulo on 28 May 2002, as part of a larger performance project titled, *"El ojo en el bosque."* Other dramatic readings have included one in La Coruña, Spain, on 26 May 2001, directed by Fernando Bercebal, and a dramatic reading direucted by Guillermo Heras at Casa de América in Madrid on 19 October 2001.

> encontraba en la cuestión de la visión. Y, finalmente, aparecía eso, que en este caso no sabíamos si era realmente amarillo o no lo era porque, por así decirlo, valga el chiste, *nuestro punto de vista era el de un ciego*. Entonces comprendíamos como, al final, el tema iba más allá de los colores: el invidente que, de algún modo, había intentado violentar al niño para que dijese rojo, y el niño aceptaba cambiar solo por compasión o por lo que fuere, porque en el color estaba en juego otra cosa, estaba en juego la relación con su pasado." (Molanés Riál, 199-200; emphasis mine)

This parallel posture of characters and spectators, both situated as blind, question the seeing character's trustworthiness at the same time that it focuses the attention on the conflict itself. The imagined color of each object is tied to specific memories for the blind man, memories through which he tells a particular story of his past (Gorría Ferrín "Poética").

The authentic color of the objects constitutes the text and performance of *"Amarillo"* not through visibility but through dialogue. The blind man's surveying of the once familiar objects—objects he had presumably already seen prior to the accident years earlier that left him blind—is guided by memory. The conflict between what he remembers and what he hears his young helper say is visible leads the blind man to doubt the truth of the young boy's answer, raising questions about the authentic color of the object. Every time the blind man picks up an object, the boy identifies its color. In the opening moments of the play, this interaction goes smoothly because the boy's initial answers to the blind man's questions are consistent with what the blind man remembers. Mayorga's stage directions indicate that, between each of the boy's answers, the blind man picks up a new object, trying with his fingers to recognize it. With the first two objects—blue and green, respectively—this goes well. With the third object, however, the blind man does not successfully recognize what it is, as Mayorga's stage directions indicate: *"El ciego*

encuentra otro objeto. Intenta reconocer su textura, su forma. En vano, hace una señal al niño" (49). The boy answers that the object is "*amarillo,*" which to the blind man is a dreadful color. The blind man responds that it is impossible for yellow to be the object's color, because his mother had detested that color ever since his father had given her yellow shoes as a gift and she'd twisted her ankle with them on: "Ella odiaba el amarillo. Desde que mi padre le regaló aquellos zapatos amarillos y bailando se torció el pie. *(Silencio.)* Mira bien y dime" (49). However, the boy again repeats that the color of the object is yellow. This insistence prompts the blind man to further explain what the color yellow has meant to his mother—yellow had been a part of every traumatic event in her life. "Para ella, amarillo era igual a la mala suerte," the blind man explains, "el amarillo era para ella el mismísimo demonio" (50). The blind man's mother associated yellow with the day her husband lost his job, the day her husband left her, and the day her son had the accident that left him blind. As she warned her son that morning, "'No salgas a la calle. He soñado que un tigre te comía los ojos'" (50).

But despite the blind man's stories, the young seeing boy continues to insist that the object's color is yellow. And with each successive answer of *"amarillo,"* the blind man grows increasingly adamant, even going so far as to physically force the young boy's face as close to the object as possible, so that he may *see* its true color. Then, the blind man, finally exasperated, imagines an absurd world in which his mother had become altogether *other* to his memory of her:

> CIEGO. ¿Quieres hacerme creer que, en cuanto me vio salir por esa puerta con mis maletas, empezó a cambiar y a cambiar, hasta volverse loca por el amarillo? ¿Que se pintaba los labios de amarillo, los ojos de amarillo, es eso lo que quieres

> hacerme creer? ¿Que, si yo hubiese vuelto a tiempo, me habría abierto la puerta una desconocida, una extraña vieja vestida de amarillo? (50)

The blind man finally situates himself in relation to the color *amarillo* through his own personal history of loss and trauma. He had suffered an accident that had rendered him blind and at some point later decided to pack his bags and leave home, never to return until it was too late and his mother had already died. Faced with the boy's reticence, the blind man imagines in horror and disbelief that, in his absence, the color yellow has spread all over his mother's house—that if he had returned prior to her dying, he would have seen yellow as the color of her dress, her lips and even her eyes. To the blind man, the color *amarillo* signifies his own estrangement from his past and from his family. He had experienced the accident that left him blind after not heeding his mother's warning. He had become blind to the world at the same time that he'd become blind to his mother, to his family, to his home, and to his past.

The blind man's refusal to accept his own role in his estrangement, coupled with the palpable estrangement he is living and that spectators witness onstage, compels the boy to change his answer. After a pause, the play ends with the little boy's final word: "*Rojo"* (50). According to Mayorga's interview with Ana Gorría Ferrín ("Poética" 14), the boy's changing his response emerges possibly from a feeling of compassion for the blind man. I would suggest that, in addition to compassion, the boy has understood that whatever color the object is, it has to be consistent with the blind man's narrative of his own memories. The boy deliberately divorces himself from what he had reported about the visual world and entered into the blind man's memories. Only *rojo* would calm the blind man, allowing him to live with his memories. It is not the actual color of the object that is so significant—rather, what matters is how and the extent to which the absence of that color is essential to the memory of his mother. The only way that the

blind man can come to terms with her loss in the present is to palpably remember the objects in her home and mnemonically "see" them through the colors named by the little boy. In this way, the absence of yellow is as important as the fact that his mother is no longer there.[51] Not only that, it is imperative and perhaps even a matter of survival that the blind man remember his mother, her life, and the losses she suffered in ways consistent with his memory of her—that is, with what he remembers from when he still lived in her house. It may be the only way for him to alleviate the guilt that seems to underlie his frustration at not having arrived on time to see her before her death. Prior to the action in this play, it had likely been years since the blind man had faced his mother, entered her home, or faced her in old age. Just like his father, it seems, he too left his mother—and all because of the color yellow, eternal signifier of his own absence from her life and his inability to "see" her, with or without his eyes.

"La mano izquierda"

When Mayorga speaks about *"Amarillo"* in terms of the relation of power between the blind man and his seeing helper, he suggests that there is a relation of superiority and inferiority between them; that is, that the dynamic of power and the disadvantage that the blind man has with respect to sight in *Amarillo* places the young boy in a superior position (Gorría *"Poética"* 14). Mayorga then contrasts this blindness-seeing power dynamic with that which arises in *"La mano izquierda,"* suggesting that in *"La mano izquierda"* the dynamic is inverted, with the blind man in a position of advantage or superiority with respect to his seeing helper. The dialogical

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[51] Katarzyna Beilin has suggested that the color yellow may also symbolize "the impossibility to know the past which is always different from how we remember it" (personal communication). This idea links the color to memory directly by focusing on one of the tangible, visible effects of the passing of time—that is, the "yellowing" of papers, photographs and objects over time. The use of "yellowing" in this way does not translate directly into Spanish usage, but it is useful to think of the color as an effect of the passing of time and the obstacles to seeing the past as it was.

seeing in *"La mano izquierda"* surrounds a photograph in which a little boy dressed in 1990s' style clothing and, facing the photographer, stands with his right hand rubbing his right eye, while his left hand stays at his side but hidden from view. He is standing on a path cut through a field that has been prepared for cultivation. In the distance and perpendicular to the path is a train that appears to have stopped—or is it moving?—and there is no one else visible in the photograph. The discussion between the blind man and his seeing helper surrounds the interpretation of this image, but it is the blind man that pushes the youngster to "see" more carefully. The relationship between these two, as opposed to that which we saw in *Amarillo,* is that of a teacher and a pupil, in this way following in the tradition of the blind man and *lazarillo* in Spain's anonymous *El Lazarillo de Tormes.* In Mayorga's version of this relationship, the blind man uses a sort of Socratic Method of dialogue, deliberately probing beyond the youngster's answers in order to arrive at the core of his way of seeing and critically question its assumptions. This dialogue creates for the young *"chico"* an exercise in learning *how* to witness, *how* to "see" a captured and frozen moment for what is there, what may have led to it, and what may happen as a result of it. It teaches him to create a narration of what is a snapshot. The boy's initial description—not coincidentally a condensed version of mine above—is, "Un niño viene hacia nosotros frotándose un ojo. Al fondo pasa un tren. *(Pausa.)* Viene por un camino recto que divide en dos un terreno removido" (67). Pushing the young man to ask himself the why of the words he uses and what he's chosen to *see,* the blind man's next four questions ask him to elaborate on his initial, relatively superficial description:

> CIEGO. ¿Removido?
>
> CHICO. Es como si hubiesen removido la tierra con un hazadón, para sembrar.
>
> CIEGO. ¿Quiénes?

> CHICO. No hay nadie más. Pero es un terreno de cultivo, es lo que quiero decir.
>
> CIEGO. ¿Por qué se frota el ojo? ¿Está llorando?
>
> CHICO. Creo que sí. Se frota con la mano derecha. La izquierda no se ve.
>
> CIEGO. ¿No se ve? ¿Puede ser manco?
>
> CHICO. Creo que no. (67)

In provoking the youngster to see the photograph as would a witness, the blind man asks him about the causes or effects of the appearances of things—not only the superficial description of what is visible but also what of it is in progress, why, and what it may lead to. The blind man questions the boy's assumption that the train in the photograph is in movement. The boy justifies his conclusion by saying, "Se me ocurrió que era lo normal" (67). For the blind man, this response is insufficient and the youngster understands this. He has seen inadequately by the blind man's standards, apologizes to him, and they start over. The blind man holds the seeing youngster accountable for what he says he sees. The youngster, meanwhile, must respond by incurring beyond the visible into his own narrative imagination.

In the youngster's next attempt at a complete description, he begins to speculate beyond the image, projecting more details that might explain who the child is, how he came to stand there, and what the role of the train and the land might be in the image:

> CHICO. Un niño se frota un ojo. Viene por un camino que divide en dos un campo dispuesto para la siembra. Al fondo hay un tren, parado o en marcha, de al menos seis vagones. El niño es rubio, del Este de Europa quizá. Le echo unos siete años. Va vestido con ropa estilo americano de los noventa: camiseta, pantalón, vaquero, cazadora. No se ve la mano izquierda. (68)

"¿Eso es todo?" responds the blind man, prompting the youngster to pay attention to the boy in the photograph as a seeing subject and, in particular, how the boy's directly looking at the photographer indicates that he is aware of being photographed (68). Based on the information he has gathered and his own imagination, the blind man reveals that he "sees" the photograph, even more clearly than the youngster had. The blind man is able to describe the photograph spatially—that the photograph is split in two by the path that the boy is standing on; that the train forms the limit of the horizon; that the path and the train form the shape of a "T"; and that the photograph could serve as the poster for a movie (68). At this point in the play, the tables begin to turn. Now it is the youngster who asks the blind man probing questions about causes and effects such as if it was the photographer who had put the boy there. The youngster imagines out loud that the photographer had chosen the boy from a catalogue: 'Tú, el rubito, ponte ahí, mira la cámara, frótate un ojo, piensa algo triste'. ¿Fue así?" But now it is the blind man who is at a loss and, to all of the youngster's questions, answers, "No sé" (69). Part of the inversion in the power dynamic of their dialogue is that it is now the boy who questions the blind man's interpretation the photograph, in turn defending his own description and way of seeing: "No es una estación. Sólo he dicho que me parece que el tren está parado, pero desde luego no es una estación. No estoy seguro de que esté parado. Tampoco sé si el niño viene hacia nosotros o si está parado" (69). The youngster pulls back on his earlier assertions, realizing he cannot say he has seen something for which he does not have visible evidence—one of the lessons he had learned from the blind man. Ironically, now the blind man who, based on what seems like relatively little information no longer wedded to the visible detail, imagines, "making memory" of an entire scenario in which the boy's life history and its implications come into play.

> CIEGO. El niño trabajaba en el campo cuando vio al tren detenerse. Hace años, este niño ayudó a su padre a abrir la tierra, pero no tuvieron tiempo de sembrarla. El padre se fue en un tren como éste, puede que en este mismo tren. Desde entonces, este tren o trenes parecidos han pasado cada día sin detenerse. El niño ha mantenido la tierra abierta. Al ver que esta vez el tren se detenía, ha salido corriendo, ha subido al tren. Pero todos los vagones están vacíos. No hay nadie en el tren. Se oxidará en la vía. El niño crecerá viendo cómo el tren se oxida. La tierra fue abierta para nada. El niño se hará hombre, el tren se oxidará y la tierra quedará abierta para nada. (70)

In yet another shift in the dynamic between the blind man and the youngster, the blind man finishes his description of the photograph and, after a pause, asks the youngster, "¿Podemos irnos ya?" (70). Beginning to get tired, the blind man only passively responds to the youngster's probing questions, finally asking the youngster to take him home. The youngster, however, disregards the blind man's request and, clearly in control of the blind man's movements and whereabouts, insists, "Aquí estás bien" and, returning to his line of questions, asks: "¿Por qué oculta la mano izquierda?" (70). Dismissed by the youngster, who essentially silences the blind man—"No te canses. Nadie te está eschuchando" (71)—the blind man responds by insisting that he wants to leave and go home. The youngster, as if to manipulate the blind man into a state of need again, responds with silence, as if to give the impression that he is no longer by the blind man's side. Desperate now, the blind man asks of the darkened silence, "¿Estás ahí todavía? ¿Dónde estás?" and after another moment of silence, "¿Estás ahí?" (71).

The question that remains unclear—and, most likely, purposely inconclusive on Mayorga's part—is why the youngster is so insistent that the blind man continue describing the photograph despite his visceral discomfort with the situation. That is, why does the youngster use his advantage of being able to see—where they are, where they're going, and what is displayed in the photograph—in order to compel the blind man to acquiesce to staying and answering his questions? One explanation might be that there is an element central to the photograph, something inherent in its mystery, that the youngster perceives the blind man must face and explain. The blind man finally acquiesces, offering his young helper one last explanation of the photograph:

> CIEGO. El niño no sabe dónde está. Es un mensajero. Viajaba en el tren y se quedó dormido. Al despertar, ha descubierto que está solo en el tren. Por la ventana ha visto un campo abierto para la siembra. Entonces, ha tirado del freno de emergencia. Tiene miedo porque es la primera vez que lleva un mensaje. Y porque no sabe dónde está. (71)

The blind man's final attempt at explaining the photograph constitutes a dramatic turn towards what appears to be the boy's fear and the threat of danger that surrounds him. The little boy's not knowing where he is mirrors the blind man's own anxiety about his whereabouts at any given moment. While in the first two of the three scenarios, the blind man imagines the young boy abandoned by his father or a father-figure, in this last scenario, the blind man imagines the boy entirely alone. In the blind man's imagination, the little boy in the photograph has no idea where he is, he is lost and he is afraid. This is mirrored in the blind man when the youngster asks him rhetorically, "¿'Aquí'? ¿Qué es 'aquí'? Ni siquiera sabes dónde estás" (71).

Susan Sontag, in her *On Photography* (1973), wrote of the disconnectedness inherent in a photograph, something that confers on the photograph almost endless possibilities of interpretation:

> The ultimate wisdom of the photographic image is to say: "There is the surface. Now think—or rather feel, intuit—what is beyond it, what the reality must be like if it looks this way." Photographs, which cannot themselves explain anything, are inexhaustible invitations to deduction, speculation, and fantasy. Photography implies that we know about the world if we accept it as the camera records it. But this is the opposite of understanding, which starts from *not* accepting the world as it looks. (23)

The photograph in Mayorga's *La mano izquierda* is an object of scrutiny *because* it is mysterious and *because* its surface does not "shout" at its spectator with a shocking element. It becomes an object that challenges characters' ways of seeing, *because* it "speaks too much," to use a phrase employed by Barthes to describe Life Magazine's rejection of the photographs of Hungarian-born photographer André Kertész (1894-1985) in 1937.[52] According to Barthes, *Life* Magazine had explained that the photographs "made [them] reflect" by suggesting a meaning different from whatever was obvious at first glance (38). What was threatening was the photograph's beyond-the-surface capacity to destabilize not only normative ways of seeing, but also normative ways of understanding. "Ultimately, photography is subversive not when it frightens, repels, or even stigmatizes, but when it is *pensive*, when it thinks" (Barthes 38). Adding to this is Sontag's notion of the photograph as closely linked to death and the irremediable loss not only of that

[52] André Kertész (1894-1985) was known as a surrealist photographer and also one of the first to practice what would later become photojournalism. In a recent review of a 2009 exhibit of his photographs at the Photographers' Gallery in London, which featured photographs whose theme is reading—the exhibition title was "On Reading"—critic Florence Waters wrote, "Kartész was one of the first artists to realize that black-and-white photography can 'write' a narrative using nothing but light" (Waters 22 July 2009).

moment in time, but possibly of the subject of the photograph itself. Sontag wrote that "all photographs are *memento mori"* (15). That is, photographs are "touched with pathos" and mystery by virtue of capturing, or "freezing," a moment that is forever lost (15, 23). Following this, argues Sontag, "To take a photograph is to participate in another person's (or thing's) mortality, vulnerability, mutability" (15).

Roland Barthes, in his *Camera Lucida* (1980)*,* identifies the two elements of a photograph as the *studium* and the *punctum.* While the *studium* is the spectator's experience of harmony with the photographer's intention as a photographer, according to Barthes, the *punctum* is that which grabs the spectator, literally "punctuating" or even metaphorically "puncturing" their visual and emotional experience of the photograph's surface. The *punctum,* according to Barthes:

> It is this element which rises from the scene, shoots out of it like an arrow, and pierces me. A Latin word exists to designate this wound, this prick, this mark made by a pointed instrument: the word suits me all the better in that it also refers to the notion of punctuation, and because the photographs I am speaking of are in effect punctuated, sometimes event speckled with this sensitive points; precisely, these marks, these wounds are so many *points.* . . . A photograph's *punctum* is that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me). (26-27)

The culminating moment in *La mano izquierda* is when the blind man's seeing helper asks him repeatedly why the little boy in the photograph is hiding his left hand from view. The seeing youngster speculates that it is because he is holding a message in his left hand—the message that the little boy is delivering. The blind man's reading of the photograph is similar to how Roland Barthes might have read the photograph. That is, that it is not the "obvious" incongruity of the

little boy's hidden hand that strikes him as a spectator. Though he certainly notices this detail, what is more disturbing to the blind man is not the boy's hidden left hand but the boy himself.

In one final shift in their dialogue, Mayorga has the blind man again invert the power dynamic between him and his helper. Having heard the blind man emphasize the boy's fear, the young seeing helper now suspends his insistence on staying and offers the blind man his shoulder to lean his hand on as they walk out. But, now, empowered by arriving close to what they might both realize is the photo's *punctum*—its essence and critical danger—the blind man refuses to leave despite his own anxiety of place. The final lines of their dialogue and the closing lines of the play recast the photograph and its seeing subject entirely:

> CHICO. Apoya tu mano en mi hombre. Nos vamos a casa.
>
> CIEGO. Yo me quedo aquí.
>
> CHICO. ¿"Aquí"? ¿Qué es "aquí"? Ni siquiera sabes dónde estás.
>
> *Silencio.*
>
> ¿Quieres que te lleve a algún sitio?
>
> CIEGO. Estoy bien aquí. Vete.
>
> *Pausa.*
>
> CHICO. ¿Por qué esconde la mano izquierda? ¿Lleva ahí el mensaje?
>
> CIEGO. Él es el mensaje.

What strikes both the blind man and his seeing helper is the boy's direct gaze at the photographer's lens; his facing the photographer while a moving—or stationary?—train is behind him; his being alone and in the middle of a field prepared for cultivation; his left hand being hidden; and his being alone. But for the blind man, it is the boy's presence and existence in

that field—his entire existence—that "pricks" him. It is not just the hiddenness of the left hand, but the extent to which it signifies the unseen "truth" of the boy's presence in that field.

Sontag wrote that "the effectiveness of photography's statement of loss depends on its steadily enlarging the familiar iconography of mystery, mortality, transience" (67). The blind man's initial attempts at a narrative of the photograph include the boy as part of a family—his father had abandoned him; his father was on his way to see him; the child was waiting for his father. However, in the final narrative description, it is no longer the father, but a larger, more dangerous force that has entrusted this child to deliver a message—to deliver himself—in a way that the blind man fears puts the child in danger for his life. *La mano izquierda* takes spectators from the familiar and mundane, which is what the young helper initially sees in the photograph, to the dangerous and life-threatening, which is where the blind man, perhaps since the beginning of their discussion, had felt the photo's *punctum.* It is the not what they can see in the photograph but what they cannot see—how the child's presence already signifies absence and invisibility that signifies nothing short of death. It is this threat that increases the blind man's anxiety with regard to his helper but also the same threat that brings the blind man to recognize the *punctum*—that the young boy is very the message he his delivering. As Barthes also wrote, "Whatever it grants to vision and whatever its manner, a photograph is always invisible; it is not it that we see" (6).

"Una carta de Sarajevo"

In the previous two plays, the *"lazarillo"* character communicates details of a visible experience for the blind man. In the case of *Amarillo,* the young helper communicates what the color of an object is in the context of the blind man's memory, while in the case of *La mano*

izquierda, the young helper translates an image onto which the blind man projects and imagines a ruptured narrative of abandonment and risk. In *Una carta de Sarajevo,* the third and last of Mayorga's short plays featuring a blind man and his seeing helper, a similar dynamic emerges, only this time the communication of the visible is much more directly an act of translation—a translation of languages, of memories, and of the imagination. In "The Task of the Translator," Walter Benjamin writes of what is the "essential content" in a literary work that is to be translated: not details and information, but rather, as Benjamin suggests in the second paragraph point of his list, "the unfathomable, the mysterious, the 'poetic,' something that a translator can produce only if he is a poet" ("Translator"). Benjamin writes in the fifth point of "The task of the Translator" that the act of translation between works of different languages forges their kinship in a way much more profound than merely highlighting their similarities, or assuming that one is a copy of the other. The act of translation not only transforms each language—including the language of the translator—it also transforms the work of literature or art that it acts upon. Benjamin writes that translation would not be possible if the objective were to create a copy of the original: "For in its afterlife—which could not be called that if it were not a transformation and a renewal of something living—the original undergoes a change. Even words with fixed meaning can undergo a maturing process" ("Translator"). In Mayorga's *Una carta de Sarajevo,* the object of translation is a letter written in a non-specified Serbo-Croatian language that, in its original form, is not only unintelligible to the blind man because he doesn't speak that language, it is invisible to him because he cannot read it with his eyes. Beyond this, *Una carta de Sarajevo* is the unfolding of a narrative of pain and loss—an epistolary performance of how translation can act upon memory, resisting forgetting and rupture by way of the imagination.

No longer a boy or a *chico* as in the previous two plays, the seeing *"lazarillo"* or helper in *Una carta de Sarajevo* is a young man versed in a Serbo-Croatian language and mature and trustworthy enough to be entrusted by the blind man to send, receive, and translate into Spanish the blind man's personal correspondence. As spectators soon learn, however, the letter that the young man begins to read/translate out loud has the potential to continue or put an end to an intensely emotional friendship—one with subtle homosexual undertones—between the blind man and his longtime friend in Sarajevo, Darko Sukic, from whom the blind man has not received word in years. Three years earlier, during an ongoing Bosnian War, and with the help of the young man and translator in the play, sent a desperate letter addressed to the librarian of the National Library of Sarajevo.[53] The letter asked the librarian to inquire after his friend. The blind man had just lost his wife and had since developed a friendship with Sukic that was as close and intimate as any the blind man had had. But the blind man had not heard from Sukic since the early months of the War, when on July 3, 1992, Sukic had called him. After that call, he'd heard nothing more. This abrupt break in their communication prompted the blind man's 1992 letter to the librarian. And now, at the start of Mayorga's play, the blind man has finally received his long-awaited response, which the translator begins reading out loud and word for word.

The translator's reading of this long-awaited letter is not a simple task for either the blind man or the translator. That is, in addition to reading the letter "*con la inseguridad que suele entrañar una traducción,"* as Mayorga's stage direction instructs, the translator is aware that this letter has the potential to change the blind man's life in devastating ways. The young man

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[53] Mayorga does not make mention of the Bosnian War in *Una carta de Sarajevo,* but he does specify the dates of the original letter and the librarian's response—3 July 1992 and 6 April 1995, respectively. (As a side note, Mayorga's birthday is April 6, 1965, and so his dating of the letter is does not seem a coincidence.) This means that Sukic's disappearance from the blind man's life, and the time it has taken for the librarian to respond to his original letter spans the almost four years during which the Bosnian War took place (March 1992-December 1995), an armed conflict recognized as the bloodiest and most violent in Europe since World War II.

remains hesitant in his reading, despite his familiarity with the blind man and the subjects in Sarajevo with whom the blind man corresponds. The young man seems almost as intertwined as the blind man in the drama involving Sukic, but the relationship with the blind man is strained—and it is unclear whether it is a friendship, a professional relationship or collaborative exchange, or something possibly more coercive. One thing is certain: the youngster does not want to hurt the blind man with words, especially those that are not his and that he "gifts" with his audible translation of the letter's content. The translator even pauses at one point because the content of the letter is such that he deems it heartbreaking: "Esto es penoso para mí. Preferiría no hacerlo" (73).

The blind man, meanwhile, is in a vulnerable state. He is older and a widower and wishes little more than to know that there is someone in the world whom he can love. As he had written in his original letter to the librarian, "'Necesito pensar que aún vive alguien a quien yo pueda querer'" (74).[54] This line is repeated when the librarian includes it—citing the blind man's original letter and thereby proving to the blind man that the young man, his bilingual assistant, had indeed sent his original letter to the librarian. Surprised, he says to his young translator: "Te he juzgado mal. Al no llegar respuesta, te culpaba a ti. Pensaba que no habías transmitido bien mi mensaje. 'Necesito pensar que aún vive alguien a quien yo pueda querer'." (74) The assistant reveals that his own feelings about the matter were involved in his volunteering to translate and transmit the blind man's original letter:

[54] The impetus for the writing of *Una carta de Sarajevo* is a letter that Mayorga had read while engaged in his doctoral study of Walter Benjamin's works. Mayorga was studying a late 18th century collection of letters originally written in German that Benjamin had analyzed and critiqued. In one of the letters dated 19 December 1799, Clemens Brentano had written a letter inquiring after his long lost friend, Ludwig Aquim Arnim, imploring of his addressee something very similar to what the blind man in "Una carta de Sarajevo": "¡Sería tantísimo para mí poder saber, dentro de esta finitud, si aún vive alguien que me quiera!" (Benjamin, *Personajes alemanes*; personal communication).

JOVEN. Pensé que nunca llegaría a su destino. Por eso acepté traducirla. Hice mal. No debí intervenir. No era asunto mío.

CIEGO. ¿No era asunto tuyo? Era tu única oportunidad. Por eso me estás ayudando ahora. Continúa.

JOVEN. No voy a leer ni una palabra más. Darko y tú, los dos, por mí os podéis ir al diablo.

(Devuelve la carta al ciego. Pausa.)

CIEGO. ¿Quieres que la rompa? ¿La rompo y nos olvidamos de Darko para siempre?

(Amenaza romper la carta. Pausa. El joven la toma y vuelve a traducir.) (74)

There is a seemingly coercive sort of exchange that is ongoing between the blind man and his translator—on the one hand, the translator has the power to "see" on the blind man's behalf. On the other hand, the translator is at an apparent disadvantage with regard to the blind man and has some obligation to him, though whether legal, physical, or political is not clear. But the librarian's letter brings sad tidings. The librarian reassures the blind man in his letter that Sukic is still alive. However, he also recounts that Sukic had appeared at the National Library that morning. According to the letter translated onstage, Sukic had asked for the poems that the Abad de Dubrovnik had written to his lover, a monk named Vlado (75). Finally, the librarian recounts how he approached Sukic about the blind man's personal desire to reestablish communication, but Sukic's response was a violent rejection of the love poems and, together with these, the blind man: "'Estimado colega, el señor Sukic no quiere que entre usted y él haya otra relación que el olvido. Tras arrojar a mis pies los poemas del abad, me ha jurado que nunca volvería a la biblioteca y me ha rogado que no le siguiese. Crea que desearía tener otro mensaje para usted'"

(75). The translator's words make clear that it had pained the librarian to write a letter that can have no other effect than to bring the blind man suffering. In closing the letter, the librarian expresses how he wished he'd had more fortunate news to share. He also expresses camaraderie by saying to the blind man that he hopes the illness that had been affecting his sight had not worsened. At this moment in the play, spectators learn that the blind man only recently went blind—that he is not a blind man from birth. And, yet, to the translator's words recalling this illness, the blind man has a swift physical reaction. He stands up, gestures to leave and demands that the young man give him the letter. But the young translator is apparently not quite done and unexpectedly adds, "Hay una posdata." (75).

It is here that the dynamic between the men shifts dramatically. Instead of confirming that what he has read so far is the entire letter as it is in his hands, the young translator invents an ending, one that he cannot see on the written page but that exists only in his imagination. The young man invents another ending to the letter, imagining out loud another ending to this story. He describes the subtle changes in the slant of the handwritten letters on the page and those parts of the original letter had been crossed out as if they were visible to him, even using visual imagery to describe the shapes: "La letra es aquí más angulosa. Crispada. Se diría que ahora escribe con la mano izquierda" (75). Mayorga's stage directions at this point describe a shift in this epistolary performance from a reading/translation to an imagined translation: *"El joven ya no lee. Finge traducir"* (75). The young assistant and the blind man now engage in a different dialogue, one unleashed by the act of translation between languages and cultures; one that begins to transform the letters and memories themselves. The young man continues to perform his task, inventing the following ending for the blind man in what Mayorga might designate—as he does the young boy's switching from *"amarillo"* to *"rojo"* at the end of *"Amarillo"*—as an act of

compassion towards the blind man (Gorría "Poética"). In this new, invented ending, the translator's addendum has the librarian being visited by Sukic unexpectedly. The librarian, imagines and recounts the translator, recounts how he had fallen asleep in his office the day he wrote that letter. Believing himself alone in his office after the library's closing, he is startled to hear a knock at his door. It was Darko Sukic. Sukic begins to tell the librarian endless stories about pain of his own wife's final days. The first step in the translator's newly-invented ending is to create a parallel trauma in the two men's lives. The blind man now learns that Sukic, too, had widowed. The young man then invents a new dramatic twist to the writing of this letter—that Sukic sees the letter, recognizes the address as belonging to the blind man, and, ignoring the librarian's insistence that he not read it, proceeds to open it and do so. At this point, Mayorga's stage direction indicates, there is a pause pregnant with silence and only gestures. It is here that spectators first begin to see what the blind man's experience of this plot twist might be. The blind man again gets up to leave and gestures to the young man to give him the letter. But the young translator insists he stay and continues his story: "Espera. Hay algo más. Una tachadura y una anotación al margen" (76). At this point, indicates Mayorga, the blind man is to act in a way that shows his apprehension. The blind man insists again that the young man give him the letter. But the young man refuses, insisting on finishing this story and ensuring that the ending that the blind man cannot now imagine but had certainly hoped for, is one that becomes even more real than the letter itself. This, according to the young translator's imagination, is what is crossed out and written in the margins of the letter.

> JOVEN. Ha tachado: 'El señor Sukic no quiere que entre usted y él haya otra relación que el olvido.' En su lugar, al margen, ha escrito: 'El señor Sukic siente que no ha sido justo con usted. Reconoce que sólo la desesperación

> le llevó a hacerle responsable de la desgracia. Todavía no se siente preparado para volver, pero sabe que algún día lo hará. Mientras tanto, que entre usted y él no se imponga el olvido. Le pide cualquier noticia de su vida. El nombre de un lugar al que dirigir sus pensamientos. Necesita pensar que aún vive alguien a quien pueda querer'. Esta última frase está escrita por otra mano. Es su letra. La letra de Darko. (76)

In the final moment of the play, there is a silence during which the blind man takes in what the young man, unbeknownst to him, has invented in order for the blind man to live his final days. The young translator has wanted to ensure that the blind man know that there is someone in the world whom he can love, even if that person is no longer alive and no longer wants to have anything to do with him. Just before the stage goes dark, the blind man walks away as he had threatened to before, only this time he does not gesture for the young man to give him the letter. He walks away only with the memory, sadness, and love that the letter's translation, or rather, its translator, has given him.

In his *Camera Lucida,* Barthes writes that "in order to see a photograph well, it is best to look away or close your eyes" (53). Then he tells a story of conversation between Gustav Janouch and Franz Kafka in which Janouch told Kafka that "'the necessary condition for an image is sight'," to which Kafka responded: "'We photograph things in order to drive them out of our minds. My stories are a way of shutting my eyes'" (53). Kafka's response implies that telling a story and taking a picture are ways of taming the pain or fear of a moment or an experience. These creative acts make the experience instantly visible and/or tangible, thus objectifying the memory itself by attempting to fix it in time. The difference between a story and a photograph, however, is immense. The photograph freezes an instant, making it unchangeable.

Meanwhile, a story—and the narrative imagination that writes or tells it—is free to make an imprint on it. As we've seen in *Una carta de Sarajevo,* the young translator does not limit himself to embellishing the letter from the librarian. He also invents erasures and mistakes, creating not a seamless, alternate ending, but what amounts to an account of the dialogical process of memory-making. Just like the discussion that the blind man has with the young man over the content of the letter, so does this fictionalized Sukic have a conflict of sorts with the librarian that is played out in the reimagined and scratched out parts of the letter. It is as if the young translator has effectively, to recast Barthes phrase, "looked away and closed his eyes" in order to see the truth of what the blind man had asked of him. For the blind man in *Una carta de Sarajevo,* the young man's translation becomes much more than what may or may not be written in the letter. The young translator's words become the blind man's life line, the only way the he will be able to drive this story out of his mind, as Kafka wished for himself in writing his novels and spectators might wish for themselves upon entering a theater.

Conclusions

In Walter Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator," Benjamin establishes a relationship between the original and its translation as a sort of kinship—one in which the translation is not an exact copy of its original but rather a close relative, a relative that is recognizable as such from the outside. The link in meaning between the original and the translation is organic—the translation must "lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's mode of signification, thus making both the original and the translation recognizable as fragments of a greater language" ("Translator"). In this chapter, seeing and blindness have a similar kinship—they are each part of a greater realm of perception and imagination, both of which draw upon memory for

confirmation of its truth. In his works incorporating blindness, Mayorga places visibility and invisibility on an equal plane—that is, as two distinct registers of information, each of which is critical to the construction of memory as a dialectical struggle over how to see and tell the truth of the past.

Mayorga's use of the one-one-one dialogue in each of these works—*La lengua en pedazos* as well as the short works from *Teatro para minutos*—places spectators before an intensely conflictive discussion of what is and can be true in a world that gives primacy to the superficially visible. Spectators, whose primary task is "to see," are challenged by these works to understand not only the mystical experience that Teresa de Jesús tries to explain with insufficient words—her seeing with her soul—but also the experience of the visible from the perspective of the blind. What makes their discussions contentious is not only what is visible but what the characters know to be true based on their own imagination and memories, often of the trauma of a past experience that they have in some way witnessed. The blind man in "*Una carta de Sarajevo,"* similar to the blind men in *"Amarillo"* and *"La mano izquierda,"* are driven to a way of seeing their past that will allow them to live. In each of these works, the imaginative act of storytelling enters into a direct and conflictive dialogue with the blind man's memory. In all cases, both seeing and blind characters, or those who can access a sort of abocular seeing like Teresa, construct a non-visible realm that is critical to their construction of the truth. The strategies that Mayorga's characters use to express this truth, however, are not in direct correspondence with it. In this way, the truth of a past experience that they have witnessed manifests itself as a testimonial "translation" in the sense that Benjamin argues for. More than a mirror-like reflection, this alternate means of accessing the truth creates an experience of reality that requires both characters, whether blind or seeing—and spectators—to be capable of two

simultaneous and critical postures: they must be able to “look away” or “close [their] eyes” while critically engaging with what they know is objectively visible.

In the chapters that follow, the act of seeing as it relates to memory and traumatic events of the past and present will underscore how Mayorga constructs vision as an agent in the making and erasing of memory. In Mayorga’s works, a character’s decision to see or not, to testify to one’s memories or not, and to come forth and bravely tell a critical truth always carries with it the potential for total rupture, the risk of abandonment or, in its worst cases, oblivion and death. The next chapter’s analysis of *El arte de la entrevista* and *La Tortuga de Darwin* looks further at how Mayorga constructs seeing, invisibility, and truth through the intentional “excavation” of potentially dangerous or disruptive memories. The protagonists’ willingness to offer testimony to others about their past puts their well-being at risk, however, in turn compelling each of them to assert their respective way of seeing as though it were their only means for survival.

Chapter 2

Interviewing, Storytelling, and the Excavation of Memory in Juan Mayorga's *El arte de la entrevista* (2013) and *La tortuga de Darwin* (2008)

> The memory is a living thing—it too is in transit. But during its moment, all that is remembered joins, and lives—the old and the young, the past and the present, the living and the dead. (104)
> -- Eudora Welty

In his brief reflection on history and memory titled "Excavation and Memory" (1932), Walter Benjamin writes that one must approach the task of accessing a "buried past" the same way an archaeologist approaches the task of digging for artifacts—that is, by going beyond merely creating an inventory of unearthed artifacts. The "person who remembers," he writes must also methodically revisit and turn over the layers of soil and matter that have accumulated over and around these memories, examining and contextualizing these artifacts/memories "in the same way a good archaeological report not only informs us about the strata from which its findings originate, but also gives an account of the strata which first had to be broken through" (576).[55] Benjamin's "Excavation and Memory"—both as method and metaphor—points to several conditions endemic to the challenge of remembering. The first is that, in order to access authentic memory, the "person who remembers" must be able to practically "touch" the memories themselves. Like artifacts, memories must be present and in some way tangible or visible, whether in the form of a memento or a recorded testimony. But it is not enough to

[55] See also Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969) and Carmen González Marín (2010: 160) for another use of the metaphor of archaeological investigation as a way of understanding history and memory. Also, Paul Hamilton writes in his *Historicism: The New Critical Idiom. 2nd edition*: "There is not, in Foucault's view, a unified truth, which people may disguise from themselves and keep unconscious; and so the interpreter's task is not to unearth this bedrock lying beneath its contradictory manifestations. Instead, Foucauldian archaeology takes cross-sections of the contradictory significance existing at any one time. The mapping of historical strata exposes the discursive formation whose tolerance of these contradictions keeps itself in power" (119).

recognize the memories, to identify and to have them. The remembering subject must also meticulously examine the strata of sediment that have rendered these memories inaccessible over time and in the present. For Benjamin, this mixing of the past and the present is "the matter itself." We can also logically infer from Benjamin's instructions that the impulse to "excavate" for genuine memory emerges from an uncomfortable, untenable state of amnesia, *"desmemoria,"* or from a rumbling anxiety about memory's inaccessibility, distortion, or the possibility of its erasure. Benjamin's use of archaeological excavation as a metaphor for accessing a buried past resonates painfully with any society that struggles with exhuming mass graves, as is the case in contemporary Spain (Silva and Macías 2003; Ferrándiz 2011; Fernández de Mata 2010). The act of excavating—and exhuming—memories, together with the physical remains linked to disappearance and loss of human life, are the subject of the final chapter of the thesis, which examines the theatrical stage as a space of exhumation (and the exhumation site as a theatrical space), as well as exhumations as the performance of memory in Mayorga's short work, *La biblioteca del diablo,* and his full-length play titled *El Jardín quemado,* which features a mass grave onstage.[56]

This chapter considers how Benjamin's excavation-like method of accessing memory functions as a metaphor for the "digging" into the past and constructing memory that Mayorga's characters perform by addressing each other with critical questions in the form of investigative interviews. In both *El arte de la entrevista* and *La Tortuga de Darwin,* the dialogical process of uncovering, recovering, or extracting memory, coupled with the equally important and

[56] See Mayorga's essay, *"Muertos sin tumba,"* and Francisco Ferrándiz's *"La exhumación como puesta en escena de la violencia,"* both published in *Primer acto,* no. 337 (2011). Both essays formed part of original presentations for the November 2010 meeting of Mayorga's monthly seminar, *"Memoria y pensamiento en el teatro contemporáneo."*

inseparable step of recording or archiving these memories, works to resist forgetting and prevent the erasure of memory. In the process of interviewing or being interviewed, Mayorga's characters interweave the past and the present, another metaphor used by Benjamin to understand memory, much like "'el trabajo de Penélope' del recuerdo"— the recovery of memory is a constant and active interweaving of the past with the present (101 *Revolución,* footnote 149). As Mayorga writes: "Lo que encuentra Benjamin en la escritura proustiana es precisamente una constelación de la actualidad y el pasado. No la vida como fue, ni tampoco como la recuerda quien ha vivido, sino 'la tejedura de su recuerdo' entre el pasado y el presente" (101 *Revolución*).

In *El arte de la entrevista* and *La Tortuga de Darwin,* Mayorga writes his characters' capacities to remember and the memories themselves as "artifacts" unearthed in and interwoven with the present. The protagonists' memories are influenced by a good measure of forgetting and often take the form of exaggeration. Their memories are also threatened by the interests of those who seek to record or erase them. In both works, there's an added complication to the moment of excavation: once a memory is narrated, out in the open and subject to being recorded, other individuals appropriate them and, in a Bakhtinian dialogical process similar to the one we saw in the previous chapter, infuse it with their own meaning, even going so far as commodifying them (Bakhtin 294). That is, in Mayorga's works, memory, just like the "word" for Bakhtin, "lies on the borderline between oneself and the other" (293). Following Bakhtin, as explained in the Introduction, in Mayorga's theater, memory "becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word [read: "memory"], adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention" (293). In the dramatic space of the theater in Mayorga's works, these memories enter into play as the object of a battle,

one in which both the interviewer/investigator and the interviewee battle to claim and control them.

El arte de la entrevista (2013), which recently saw its debut performance in December 2013 in Avilés, Spain, is one of Mayorga's most recently published plays, first published in April 2013. As its title suggests, the play is built around the interview process as a means of accessing what the youngest character in the play, a teenager named Cecilia, refers to as the *"grieta"* of a person's life and memory. The *"grieta"* is a term used numerous times throughout the play to denote the moment when an interviewer "breaks" into a memory, creating a kind of productive fissure of unexpected links and meaning. This *"grieta,"* I will argue, can be seen as the Mayorga equivalent of Barthes' *punctum*, relevant to the previous chapter's analysis of blind "seeing" and the photographic image. The informal inquiry of a high school interview project in *El arte de la entrevista* gradually becomes recorded "testimony" thanks to the constant presence of a video camera in every scene and almost every dialogue in the play. The video camera functions as a mediator between individual family members whose interest in "excavating" for each other's memories ultimately ruptures their relations. In the introductory write-up for the Centro Dramático Nacional's website and projected February-April 2014 performance run of *El arte de la entrevista,* Mayorga writes that the recorded interactions between the four characters—a granddaughter, a mother, and a grandmother, as well as the grandmother's male physical therapist, all of whom interview and are interviewed by each other—lead them to see each other in an entirely different light (Centro Dramático Nacional). The newly-uncovered information about their shared pasts garnered through these interviews irreversibly destabilizes the relationships between the women. Recording their memories on camera converts these "new" memories into permanent but also questionable and threatening record. I argue that the recording

or archiving of memories objectifies recollections in ways that compel the remembering subjects in *El arte de la entrevista* and *La tortuga de Darwin*—Rosa and Harriet, respectively—to exercise her deliberate, discursive will over the interview and take control of her own remembering and retelling.

Harriet, the protagonist of *La Tortuga de Darwin,* is a nearly two-hundred year-old anthropomorphized turtle who walks and talks like an old lady while maintaining certain turtle-like tendencies and physiological traits. As a result of the traumatic historical events that Mayorga's Harriet has witnessed over the last two centuries of human history—including the Dreyfus Affair, WWI, the bombing of Guernica, the persecution of the Jews in the Holocaust, and the Cold War, Harriet began to develop human attributes: not only does speak and walk, she also reasons and remembers. Mayorga, who wrote *La Tortuga de Darwin* after having come across a newspaper article about one of Charles Darwin's turtles finally dying at the age of 175, creates "Harriet" who appears on the stage as an old lady, an "evolved" version of one of the turtles Darwin had brought from the Galapagos Islands to Europe in the late 1800s. The play begins with Harriet operating through what appears to be a practical and "transactional" relationship to her memories. When the play opens, spectators learn of her interest is to return to the Galapagos Islands in order to die there. However, she must return in an under-the-radar way—she, after all, has no legal papers with which to travel conventionally, by air for example, and is too tired to swim across the ocean. Her strategy is to exchange her memories for this ticket home; Harriet decides to offer a prominent European historian the testimony of what she's witnessed so that he might correct the historical record. In exchange, she expects the professor to facilitate her way back home. In the process of recounting her memories, Harriet twists and exaggerates the truth for dramatic effect and her own diversion. But she inadvertently puts

herself at risk when the professor—and, through him, a pseudo-scientist/doctor—both fixate on extracting and investigating Harriet's extraordinary human capacity for speech and memory. Harriet initially trusts that their intentions and efforts are in the name of research, until she realizes that they are indifferent to her well-being. They are only interested in her insofar as they can use her to advance in their own careers at the expense of her life and body. Only when she realizes the extent of their "inhumanity" does she begin to defensively safeguard herself, lashing out in an unexpectedly "surprising" and aggressive way. In the play's ironic twist, it is Harriet that turns on them, making the researchers victims of her cunning. Mayorga's ending arguably levels the playing field on the issue of the characters' "inhumanity." That is, the humans had shown themselves to be as or more "monstrous" than Harriet in their unethical disregard for her life, but in her act of retaliation—or attempt to survive, depending on how spectators see and read her actions—Harriet is exactly at their level.

In both *El arte de la entrevista* and *La tortuga de Darwin*, the content of the strata that cover up memory in the present are what render memory and the excavation process potentially dangerous and a possible negative catalyst. Memory that has been erased or silenced becomes, in the excavating interview or scientific inquiry in *El arte de la entrevista* and *La tortuga de Darwin*, an artifact that can be manipulated and lost. In the wrong hands—hands without scruples or ethical sense, for example—, the excavation of memory has the power to disjoin the remembering subject from her memories. In these works, Mayorga undermines the idea that memory is automatically accessible or recoverable. The method Mayorga uses in *El arte de la entrevista* and *La tortuga de Darwin* to make this clear—the investigative interview or scientific experimentation—situates characters and spectators before an active critical inquiry that calls memory into question. Whether memory is recoverable or "true" remains inconclusive. The

added element of a technological means of extracting and recording memory, such as the video camera and the archive or tape recorder, further objectifies memory. Subjected to acts of recording and mass reproduction, memory ironically faces an even greater risk of being "wiped out" or erased, ultimately risking an irreversible state of amnesia.

Turning over the Strata of Memory

In a recent interview, Jesús Ruiz Mantilla asked Mayorga to comment on the interview itself as a genre in theater. Mayorga characterized the interview as a sort of productive conflict: "Una forma de diálogo muy tenso, una especie de invasión, un arte, un juego de defensa también. En una entrevista buena aparece un tercero imaginario que desconocemos y media" (qtd. in Ruíz). In *El arte de la entrevista* and *La tortuga de Darwin,* this third imaginary interlocutor can be the recording device in a testimonial-type interview. In *El arte de la entrevista,* it is the video camera and its promise of uploading its recordings to the internet, while in *La tortuga de Darwin,* it is the living archive of a historian and his history books or the "scientist" and the instruments of his research. In neither case is the investigative interview without risks and, in both works, once characters relay their memories to others through the interview process, the memories become subject to others' manipulation. Through this, the memories themselves take on the potential to hurt and devastate both those who remember and those who seek to forget.

El arte de la entrevista

Juan Mayorga's *El arte de la entrevista* (2013) was published for the first time in 2013 in the yearly publication of the Luxembourg-based literary journal, *Abril.*[57] *El arte de la entrevista*

[57] In his work with actors and director "Cuco" Afonso in preparation for and in response to *El arte de la entrevista*'s debut performance in December 2013 in Avilés, Spain, Mayorga has made changes to the 2013 published text in the

recently had its debut performance at the Palacio Valdés theater in Avilés, Spain, on 20 December 2013. Based on this initial performance, Mayorga will likely modify his text and director Cuco Afonso will work with actors to fine-tune the *puesta en escena* in preparation for its two-month run at the Centro Dramático Nacional's Teatro María Guerrero, where the play opened on 21 February 2014. *El arte de la entrevista* is a departure from the norm in Mayorga's work, not only because it features a cast in which there is a majority of women, but also because the action takes place completely in an outdoor setting within the space of the theater—the garden of a home shared by three women—a granddaughter, her mother, and her grandmother.[58] The third element that I feel marks *El arte de la entrevista* as a departure within Mayorga's works is the introduction of an element of technology—the video camera—which, as we will see, takes on a "dialogical" role almost as influential as that of any of the play's speaking characters.

As mentioned above, the action in *El arte de la entrevista* takes place in the domesticated garden of a house, so that the stage might be lined with a hedge on one side and the walls of the house with its windows and doorways onto the garden on the other. Characters' entrance onto the stage is also an exit from the enclosed, domestic sphere. It is this walled, outdoor space where the play's interviews take place, the space within which all of the play's dialogues are "witnessed" by the video camera as a third party, whether the video camera is recording or not. By situating the action in the outdoor garden of a home, Mayorga allows for the space and theatrical experience to have a sense of limited openness—the garden both holds onto *and* lets

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journal *Abril.* While I have access to these newly revised versions, for the purposes of this study, I will respect the pages and content of the original publication. If there is a line or phrase that I cite from the original which is different in from Mayorga's revision, I will note it in a footnote with the updated version.

[58] Among Mayorga's works that feature an all women cast are his brief works *La piel, Justicia, Manifiesto comunista,* and *Mujeres en la cornisa,* all published in his *Teatro para minutos* (2009). *El arte de la entrevista* is Mayorga's only full-length original work featuring a majority of women characters.

memories go. It also both encloses *and* releases memory's "guardians," those characters who keep, record, or deny their and others' memories (González Marín 158). Audiences for *"El arte de la entrevista"* may similarly sense that the relationship between space and memory includes not only the action onstage and the interactions between characters, but also the space that spectators enter and exit with their own memories. In *El arte de la entrevista* there is a dynamic tension between what is inside and enclosed within the space of a garden—bodies, memories, desires—and the camera recorder whose role is to compel the release memories into the open air, into cyberspace, by capturing them in a digital archive as they "whiz by," to use a phrase from Benjamin's *Theses on the Philosophy of History* (1940).

El arte de la entrevista features three generations of women who share the home that surrounds the garden that occupies almost the entire space of the stage. They are Cecilia, a precocious seventeen year-old high school student who dreams of being a journalist; Cecilia's mother, Paula, an attorney at a local hospital who is divorced from Cecilia's father; and Rosa, Cecilia's grandmother and Paula's mother, who has of late been displaying symptoms of what Paula presumes may be Alzheimer's disease. In addition to these three women, there is male character, Mauricio, the young man in charge of visiting Rosa on a regular basis to do physical—and mental, insists Mauricio—therapy to keep her active, a character that Mayorga describes as an *"intruso"* in his presentation of the play for the Centro Dramático Nacional's website. Mayorga's use of this word to describe Mauricio refers to his being the only male character in an otherwise female cast who is also not a part of the family. That is, Mauricio "intrudes" into the domestic space shared by Cecilia, Paula, and Rosa, as well as to the memories held therein. As I allude to above, I would argue that there is an additional *"intruso"* in that scenario, one that comes by way of Cecilia's high school homework assignment—the digital camera recorder, the

inanimate "character" responsible for "witnessing" and essentially testifying to the "excavated" memories that will forever change the women in this family.

The entire play is centered on Cecilia's journalism assignment, for which she has brought home a camera recorder and tripod borrowed from her high school. Cecilia's task is to videotape and interview someone *"interesante"* and then edit the interview and post it online by midnight for her classmates and teacher to access and download. A journalist that had come to speak to Cecilia's class had explained that anyone could be an interesting interviewee: "Cualquiera es interesante si se le mira de cerca" (9). The journalist also explains how the *where*, *what* and *how* of an interview are hardly ever accidental. Details such as where the interview takes place, how the interviewer and interviewee's voices sound, whether there's background music, whether the camera moves or is fixed on a tripod while recording—all of these are not only aesthetic decisions, they are ethical decisions that the journalist in Cecilia's class had referred to as the 'Ética de la entrevista'" (9). Indeed, part of the "arte de la entrevista" in Mayorga's play consists of how characters negotiate ethical considerations such as truth, confidentiality, and whether memories can be harmful, even going so far as to accuse each other of being unethical in their roles as interviewers or interviewees.

The play opens with Cecilia alone in the garden of the home, fidgeting with the video camera and testing whether it works. She records herself singing an old song that her grandmother, Rosa, had taught her when she was little. On one take, Cecilia can see her image but not hear her own voice; on the next take, she can hear her voice but not see herself on the screen. Meanwhile, her mother prepares for a special but unexpected outing—Cecilia's father, from whom both Cecilia and Paula are estranged—is in town for a Bruce Springsteen concert and Paula is going to meet him at a bar to discuss child support payments for which he is

delinquent. Paula is both nervous and excited for their meeting, so she insists that Cecilia stay home to take care of her grandmother. When Cecilia explains why she can't stay home because she must find someone to interview, her mother mocks the assignment and her daughter's schooling in general, suggesting that having to interview someone is essentially the equivalent of playing with children instead of teaching them: "¡Qué bonito, qué divertido! En vez de explicar Sócrates, jugamos con los niños, que es más divertido" (9). The assignment, however, takes on a seriousness that the three women can hardly anticipate.

Cecilia's afternoon plans of going out and finding "una persona interesante" are squashed by her mother's unexpected outing. Cecilia must now stay home and take care of her grandmother, Rosa, whose apparent dementia has made her a challenge to any therapist doing home visits like Mauricio, expected to arrive later that afternoon. The deterioration in Rosa's memory is responsible for her erratic behavior, exemplified by recent incident in which Rosa had confused Mauricio with someone from her past and in reaction to him, threw a glass at his head. While Rosa's daughter, Paula, minimizes the importance of the episode, saying it had just been a brief moment of disorientation, she nevertheless insists that Cecilia interview her, citing the impending disappearance of grandmother's memory. Justifying herself further, Paula insists to Cecilia that she interview Rosa.

> CECILIA. ¿Entrevistar a la abuela Rosa? Pero si está…
>
> PAULA. Precisamente. Darle la palabra, antes de que todo desaparezca.
>
> CECILIA. ¿Qué interés puede tener una entrevista a la abuela Rosa? Aparte de para ti y para mí.
>
> PAULA. Ninguno. Tu abuela ha pasado por la vida sin hacer nada que merezca recordarse. (11)

Cecilia seems to agree with her mother that her grandmother's life story is unremarkable and not worthy of an interview. Perhaps because of that, after her mother leaves, Cecilia uses her

grandmother to do a practice run. But what initially seems like a rough rehearsal of how Cecilia might conduct herself with a "truly" interesting person—formally, professionally—quickly becomes the real thing. Practicing protocol, Cecilia warns her grandmother that anything she says to the camera will be posted online for all to read and see (13). In response, Rosa gets up as if refusing to be videotaped, when what she's actually doing is preparing for the filming, putting on make-up and dressing-up for the camera. As indicated by Mayorga's stage direction describing her return to the stage: "*Rosa vuelve. Se ha peinado y pintado con la intención de ponerse guapísima, y está segura de haberlo conseguido. Se sienta donde antes. Cecilia se apresura a montar trípode y cámara. Pero vacila"* (13). Cecilia again mounting the camera on the tripod, suggests to her grandmother that, instead of in the garden, they conduct the interview in her bedroom surrounded by her mementos from when she was younger and married. But Rosa refuses—the interview, Rosa insists, must take place in the garden (14).

Still working on her own *"arte de la entrevista,"* Cecilia initiates the interview by addressing her grandmother formally, asking her to state her name, age, and where she was born. But Rosa again takes the reins of Cecilia's interview, indicating that she will not answer those questions because those details should be left for the end of the interview (14). In responding this way, Rosa asserts her agency but also a measure of control over her identity as it is to emerge through the interview. By resisting identifying herself from the beginning, Rosa begins to admit the unsettling potential of recorded memory. Memory made "permanent" through a recorded interview has the potential of fixing her identity in a way that might potentially contradict both who she is and how and what she remembers. Rosa's reaction to Cecilia's request—*"Eso luego, al final"*—superficially affirms her identity as if it were a matter of no concern, while at the same time placing it in the balance. González Marín has written of a perturbing dialectic linking

memory and identity—that just as memory can appear to guarantee a coherent identity, it can both perturb our construction of memory and how we conceive of ourselves morally: “Si la memoria puede perturbar nuestra construcción identitaria, no en menor medida puede perturbar nuestra (auto)consideración moral” (152). Throughout *El arte de la entrevista,* the interview process gradually dismantles Rosa’s identity as a given. The coherence of Rosa’s identity suffers at a somewhat superficial level when, for example, she doesn’t remember certain key people or events, such as when Cecilia asks her to sing a song from when she was a child and Rosa cannot remember the lyrics (14). Rosa, on two tries, remembers only the first part of the lyrics, which her own grandmother and which Rosa paraphrases: *“La niña buena se pierde en el bosque y se encuentra con la niña mala. Las dos tienen miedo. La mala más”* (14). While it is true that forgetting the lyrics to a song is relatively commonplace, even for people of sound mind, the fact that it was a song Rosa had learned from her grandmother as a child and had repeatedly sung to Cecilia when she was younger gives it all the more weight.

But there is another dimension to Rosa’s unsettling and unsettled identity that is not limited to what “forgetting” her dementia might claim. The truth—though, from Cecilia’s perspective, not the validity—of Rosa’s memories comes into question throughout the play, and it is a question that Mayorga purposely does not answer. Mayorga constructs the interview as a performance of self and an internal dialogue with truth—truth that can render memory a destabilizing force. It is this volatile, internal dialogue that only a keen, prepared, and observant interviewer will know how to access. As Cecilia explains, the interviewer must be prepared for the unexpected: “Cuando la cosa se va de control, ahí puede abrirse la grieta. . . . Estás entrevistando a un boxeador y de pronto descubres que colecciona crucifijos. Entrevistas a una top model y resulta que tiene una gemela que trabaja en el metro. La grieta. Ahí está la

entrevista. (10) Whether *"la grieta"* actually reveals truth is the question that destabilizes the lives and relations of these three women in their successive interviews of each other and Mauricio. The interviews happen organically as characters come out onto the stage—and into the garden—and go back into the house and out to the street, and occur in the following order: Cecilia and Rosa; Rosa and Mauricio; Mauricio and Cecilia; Paula and Mauricio; and the final, climactic interview, Paula and Rosa. As the play progresses, it becomes less important to the interview's destabilizing potential whether the camera is actually recording and much more that the camera is present. As long as the camera is "seeing," though not necessarily recording, the interviewee feels authorized and actually must speak.

After Cecilia interviews her grandmother and Mauricio arrives to help Rosa with her physical therapy, Cecilia goes inside the house—that is, she exits the stage—to edit the interview with her grandmother (18). Rosa and Mauricio begin doing exercises together and dancing, which leads to Rosa sitting in front of the camera again. She asks Mauricio to interview her, which he does, though not before Rosa mistakes him again for someone else, saying suggestively, "Tienes muy buenas manos" and, while dancing, "Júrame que no van a separarnos. Aunque te amenacen. Júramelo" (21). The confusion—or fiction—in Rosa's regarding Mauricio as a former lover sets up the possibility that her answers to Cecilia's questions, and any others throughout the play, are similarly peppered with the confusion of misnamed and misremembered memories.

After editing her interview with Rosa, and with Rosa having entered the house and exited the stage, Cecilia turns on the camera again and, acting out her crush on Mauricio, interviews him while asking him do physical therapy exercises with her. Here again, Cecilia explains more about journalism and the art of the interview, only this time, she invents herself for Mauricio and

before the camera, which she has made sure is recording. In ways that mirror her grandmother's misremembering, Cecilia performs the deliberate fictionalization of her memories and the unreliability of words. Lying about her professional experience and expertise, and possibly inspired by the journalist that had visited and taught her high school class, Cecilia tells Mauricio that she's written hundreds of articles for the *New York Times,* describing herself to her unsuspecting interlocutor as a *bona fide* journalist instead of high school student in the midst of completing her first interview assignment. In her inventing of her identity, however, Cecilia further explains the art of finding the *"grieta"* in an interview, the "knock out" punch—known colloquially as the *"K.O."* (pronounced "kah-owe" in Spanish)—that shifts the entire interview, opening it up to what neither the interviewer nor interviewee could foresee (26). When Cecilia explains it, she seems to understand, too, that the interview is much more than words:

> CECILIA. Es el trabajo más emocionante del mundo. Estar frente al otro, observar sus gestos, dónde titubea, dónde baja la mirada. Hasta que, por fin, la ves: la grieta. Es un combate, y sólo vale el K.O. Para, para llegar al K.O., tienes que hacer que el otro se te entregue. El entrevistador es un seductor. Como Sócrates, él fue el primer entrevistador. Según Sócrates, nuestras vidas no merecen la pena si no las examinamos. Filosofía es interrogar la vida. Entrevistarnos unos a otros en una entrevista sin fin. (26)

Taking Cecilia's lead, Mauricio, a man likely in his twenties, begins to ask her questions about her family, her mother, and her father, until, finally, he asks her whether she is afraid of anything. Here Cecilia responds with what seems like brutal honesty: she says she's afraid no one will love her. Something in this answers shifts the power dynamic in their interview and,

instead of the interviewer being the one to draw out the interviewee, it is Cecilia that begins to "seduce" Mauricio with her answers (27). Paula, who returns home at this moment from the reunion with her ex-husband, enters the garden and is alarmed to see Cecilia and Mauricio dancing. Initially disapproving and wanting Mauricio to leave, Paula ends up asking him to go see Rosa in the room and ask her to show him her mementos: her beach glass collection, the watch her father gave her. But before leaving, Mauricio asks Paula if he's seen her before, perhaps on TV. Paula responds that she has a twin sister, Concha, a character who never appears onstage but is a catalyst for parts of the dramatic tension between Paula and her mother. As an Olympic fencer, Concha had been the more competitive and attention-grabbing sister, the one for whom the family would travel to see compete (27). Mayorga's choice of fencing as the professional sport practiced by Paula's sister, Concha, is not a coincidence. Fencing is, after all, the bloodless, stylized, performative art of combat, one that aims for the heart and is, in a metaphorical way, much like the act interviewing. When Cecilia reveals to her mother that she's conducted the interview, she also insists that her mother see it, but Paula doesn't understand the urgency. Instead, Paula, who has just returned from seeing Cecilia's father, asks her daughter: "¿No vas a preguntarme por tu padre?" But for Cecilia, in light of what she's just learned about her grandmother's life, her mother's meeting her father is irrelevant (25). Paula, without realizing it, is about to walk into a *grieta* that will rupture the way in which she sees her mother and irreversibly change the way she sees her past.

In the interview between Cecilia and her grandmother that spectators see at the beginning of the play, after Paula has left and before Mauricio arrives, Cecilia begins to ask her grandmother questions about her personal life: her list of favorite movies, for example. When Cecilia asks her about the movie "Splendor in the Grass," Rosa says that, having seen it six

times, she cannot see it anymore (15). When Cecilia asks Rosa with whom she'd seen "Splendor in the Grass," Rosa doesn't answer and instead asks Cecilia a question: "¿Tú cuándo tienes mejores ideas, de día o de noche?" (15) to which Cecilia quickly retorts, "Yo hago las preguntas, ¿vale? (15). The questions that follow this one seem relatively innocuous, about whether Rosa has gotten drunk, ever robbed, and what she'd eaten that day. Until Cecilia asks her grandmother whether she has been happy and Rosa responds, again, with another poignant question: "¿No te da miedo preguntarme eso?" Cecilia's response—"Sí"—is accompanied in the text by Mayorga's stage direction: "Silencio" (15). Throughout *El arte de la entrevista,* Mayorga peppers his dialogues with moments of silence, signifying a pause, a thought, or a shift in perspective but also, almost always something much more critical. Mayorga's silences are signposts that indicate to spectators—and to the characters themselves—that they are approaching the critical *grieta;* that the "excavation" of memories in the interviews onstage has broken critical ground and is about to unleash the unexpected. As Cecilia says to Paula as she prepares her mother for their interview, if she chooses to respond with silence, that, too, is a response: "Si no contesta, también eso es una respuesta" (30). Silence, just like dialogue, is critical to the interview; it is used to evade questions, to "seduce" the interviewee into answering, to answer a question with a question, to change the topic completely or to answer with silence itself.

When Cecilia asks her grandmother if she'd ever had a boyfriend before marrying her husband, Rosa says, "No," and then asks her granddaughter if she'd ever wished to change her name "y todo lo demás. Ya sabes a que me refiero" (16). But Cecilia responds, "No sé a qué se refiere," to which Rosa responds with a cryptic, "Yo he sido más valiente que otras" (16). Here, the two are missing each other, but while Rosa evades Cecilia's initial question, she also seems

to come around with an answer to the question that she thinks Cecilia should have been asked: whether Rosa had ever been brave. Rosa's "he sido más valiante que otras" might seem out of place if it weren't for what is to come in the interview—Rosa's confession. Rosa tells her granddaughter of a secret she'd held for years until the moment when her granddaughter put a camera recorder on a tripod, promising to capture and disseminate her memory. But the *grieta* that Cecilia is so intent on finding happens not exactly in Rosa's disclosure but just prior, when Cecilia asks her grandmother with regard to what had she been brave. When Rosa's response is to get up and try to lie down in bed, Cecilia takes control of the conversation and her grandmother: "Pronto va a poder descansar. Todavía no" (16).[59]

> ROSA. Me echo un rato y vuelvo. Te lo prometo.
>
> CECILIA. Todavía no.
>
> *Rosa vuelve a su sitio. Silencio.*
>
> ROSA. Lo que me llamó la atención fue las manos. Era hábil con las manos. Todo lo contrario que tu abuelo, que sólo era cabeza.
>
> CECILIA. Puede ir a descansar.
>
> ROSA. No.
>
> *Silencio.* (16)

In this exchange, the *grieta* is that moment when the present and the past seem to collide. Mayorga has written of his memory or historical theater as one that forges an often contentious encounter between the past and the present, as cited in the previous chapter. I argue that

[59] This clash of wills between Cecilia and Rosa is similar to the one in the previous chapter that takes place between the blind man and his seeing helper in *La mano izquierda.* The blind man, uncomfortable with the question his seeing helper has asked, responds by getting up and saying he's tired and is leaving. The seeing helper, however, insists that the blind man stay. Just like Cecilia says to her grandmother, the young seeing helper insists to the blind man that he will be able to rest later. In both cases, it is the younger generation that pushes the older one to dig further into those memories that are most difficult to face.

Mayorga's term "grieta" in *El arte de la entrevista* intentionally points to similar dialectical type of encounter between the past and the present, interviewer and interviewee, old and young. Suddenly, Rosa begins to speak of someone that Cecilia could not have anticipated—a man that was not Cecilia's grandfather. Instantly, the flow that was once there—the continuity of narratives and family history that Cecilia must have expected when she sat her grandmother down for the practice interview vanishes. The irony is that Rosa's initial resistance, almost fear, turns into an emboldened sense of authority over her own story, her own truth.

It had been a five month affair. The girls were little, and after dropping them off at school, Rosa would visit him in his shop on the pretext of getting the watch that her husband had given her fixed. Rosa fell in love with the clock repairman—the *relojero*. With his hands, at first. Hands that were later badly injured and bandaged. "'Quién te ha hecho eso?' '¿Te han hecho eso por mí?'" Rosa had asked him just before he turned and asked her to leave the country with him (17). The *relojero* left the country and Rosa had no news, until one day, as she recounts to Cecilia, "a la puerta del colegio, un hombre se me acercó, a las niñas les dio miedo, un hombre que se parecía a él, quería darme algo, una carta con sellos extranjeros" (17). The doorbells rings at this point during the interview, and Rosa wants to answer it but Cecilia doesn't let her, insisting again that her grandmother continue with her story: "No importa. Siga" (18). Then Rosa reveals that what she thought was a letter was actually a map in which all the names were German, and on which a small house was marked with a circle. Rosa left her husband and twin daughters, Paula and Concha, to be with the *relojero* in Germany. Paula and Concha were still young girls and, to explain Rosa's absence, her husband—Cecilia's grandfather—had told the girls that, for those months, their mother was in the hospital and couldn't receive any visitors. Meanwhile, Rosa was in Germany, watching movies like "Splendor in the Grass," that she and

her *relojero* could not understand because of the language barrier, but continued to watch again and again. "Me fui sin maletas," Rosa recalls, "una foto de las niñas es todo lo que me llevé. Tu abuelo les dijo que estaba en el hospital" (18). Spectators also learn that, while Rosa had been away during those five months, the girls received daily drawing from their mother. But, according to Rosa, she hadn't been the one to draw them. Each day, recounts Rosa, her husband had drawn a picture for the girls saying their mother had drawn it from her hospital bed. Spectators later learn from Paula that when she'd talk to her mother over the phone during those months, she could hear the hospital sounds in the background. Rosa, however, responds that she has no idea what Paula is talking about. Mayorga, of course, leaves this and any conclusive answer out of reach for both characters and spectators.

The questions that Rosa's story brings up is one of truth, but also the perturbing self-questioning and moralizing or *"auto-inculpación"* as Mayorga has noted, that can come from revealing secrets of the past for which one feels ashamed or guilty.[60] Two factors in Rosa's memory are significant to how her daughter and granddaughter receive it, the extent to which they validate it, and the effect it has on them individually and as a family. The first is whether Rosa seems remorseful for what she'd done, a factor not unrelated to Paula's later inability to forgive her mother. Paul Ricoeur (2004) relates amnesia to amnesty similarly to how he relates forgetting to forgiveness, where amnesia is like forgetting (but not the same thing) and amnesty is like forgiveness (but not the same thing) (453).[61] The second has to do with the reliability of

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[60] Mayorga has compared Rosa and her secret, but especially her revealing it late in life, to that of Günter Grass's relatively recent confession—or as Mayorga wrote, *"autoinculpación"*—about having enlisted as an SS as a teenager (personal communication). Their stories and their alleged "misdeeds" are of very different characters, of course, but both have significant, and possibly devastating, effects on their present. In Rosa's case, as spectators realize only in the final minutes of the play, she ends up an old lady sitting alone in the garden of her home, now abandoned by her daughter.

[61] This is something I discuss in more detail later in the thesis, in the chapter in which I analyze *La biblioteca del diablo* and *El jardín quemado*.

her memory. While Rosa's daughter, Paula, is initially supportive and encouraging of Cecilia's interviewing her grandmother, she is much less in favor of it after having seen the recording of Rosa's confession, what Paula calls "puro delirio" (28). As she says to Cecilia, "No me digas que te lo has tomado en serio. ¿Te lo has tomado en serio? Yo sé quien me llevaba a la escuela. Quien nos llevaba al colegio era tu abuelo, de camino al trabajo. Lo que tu abuela te ha contado es puro delirio" (28). And Paula is intensely and adamantly against Cecilia's posting the video for her classmates and professor or any public consumption, because of what harm it could cause the family, including the memory of her grandfather, Paula's father (28).

Whether Paula's disapproval of the interview comes from her questioning its truth because of Rosa's apparent dementia; or whether it comes from Paula's knowing Rosa's story is true, remains an open question in Mayorga's work. In an interesting conflict of perspectives that falls along generational lines, even though Paula insists she can point out to Cecilia all of the lies in Rosa's story, Cecilia insists on the interview's validity, "incluso si todo fuese mentira" (28). If Rosa's memory is already of questionable functioning, is the memory of this affair, as she relays it to Cecilia and the camera, true? Is it an artifact of memory that has survived intact and that Rosa has kept to herself for so many years? Or is it a creation prompted by the moment when Cecilia pointed the camera at her grandmother and started to record? For the purposes of the theatrical experience and from the perspective of spectators, does it matter? From Cecilia's perspective, this question is a moot point—even if her grandmother's memories are not trustworthy, the interview is still valid. In Rosa's defense, Cecilia says to her mother, "Yo le he hecho preguntas y ella ha contestado. En eso consiste una entrevista. Incluso si no todo lo que ha hecho fuese verdad…" (28). And, in response to her mother Paula's complaint about the

interview, Cecilia insists on its integrity: “No sé si es un delirio, sé que es lo que ella ha querido contar” (28).

As an interviewee, Rosa becomes both agent and subject of the camera’s gaze. The enigma of truth in Rosa’s story is belied only by how determined she is to achieve what seems like her own vision and version of *“el arte de la entrevista.”* In her interview with Mauricio, for example, Rosa plays the role of both interviewee and interviewer, managing to employ the precepts she imagines make an interview a good interview. But at the same time, spectators, together with Cecilia and Paula, have reason to be skeptical. Rosa is living a moment in her life in which the presence of a video camera compels her to speak the most difficult aspects of her life story, whether she is telling the truth or not. There is a critical point in the interview between Rosa and Mauricio in which Rosa, embodying a strong sense of negativity and anxiety, curls into fetal position for what might seem to spectators like a few minutes. When she comes to, she seems disoriented and she looks at Mauricio “*con extrañeza,”* only to suddenly spot the video camera (20). It is Rosa that now looks at the camera and, seated in the same position she was in while being interviewed by Cecilia, asks Mauricio to begin asking her questions. This interview, however, is not actually recorded because Cecilia has just gone inside to download the previous interview from the memory card. That detail doesn’t seem to matter to Rosa. For her it is the investigative interview itself that helps her remember. As she instructs Muaricio: “Se pone ahí y me pregunta cosas. Sirve para recordar” (21).

> MAURICIO. ¿Qué cosas quiere que le pregunte?
>
> ROSA. Cosas más difíciles. De usted.
>
> *(Silencio.)*
>
> MAURICIO. ¿Cuándo murió su marido?

ROSA. Más difícil.

(Silencio.) (21)

What emerges unexpectedly in the exchange between Rosa and Mauricio is that Rosa seems not only to take control of the interview, but also to "teach" and show Mauricio what *her* art of the interview consists of. Rosa's art of the interview hinges on asking not only the right questions but the most difficult ones. Mauricio must excavate for the truth in a way that challenges Rosa beyond where she feels comfortable. Mauriciobegins to understand this and responds accordingly. But, then, so does Rosa.

MAURICIO. ¿Qué es lo último que le dijo su marido?

ROSA. "Prométeme que cuidarás a las niñas." Ya estaban casadas, las niñas. Para nosotros siempre eran las niñas. Para mí siguen siendo las niñas.

MAURICIO. Su marido, ¿cómo era?

ROSA. Tiene que preguntarme cosas que pueda responder.

MAURICIO. ¿Lo echa de menos?

ROSA. Con el tiempo. No dormíamos juntos, aunque dormíamos en la misma cama.

MAURICIO. ¿Ha hecho lo que su marido le pidió? ¿Ha cuidado a las niñas?

ROSA. He cuidado a las niñas más que a mí. A las dos igual.

MAURICIO. ¿Las quiere igual a las dos?

ROSA. *Eso, ese tipo de preguntas.* No las quiero igual. No se quiere igual. ¿Cómo se va a querer igual?

MAURICIO ¿A quién quiere más?

ROSA. *Muy bien.* A Concha la quiero menos.

MAURICIO. ¿Por qué le hizo su marido prometer que las cuidara? ¿Es que temía que no las cuidase?

ROSA. Sí.

MAURICIO. ¿Qué razones tenía su marido para temer eso?

Silencio.

ROSA. Tengo la boca seca. ¿Me puede traer un vaso de agua? (21-22)

Mauricio has arrived at the *grieta* in Rosa's memory, the moment that breaks her and where she cannot or won't answer because it's too painful, too raw. Instead of answering with words, Rosa experiences a sort of K.O.—"knock out." She cannot respond. Her mouth is dry. She must have a drink of water to recover. Once Mauricio brings it to her, she drinks it quickly, and then there's a "*Silencio.*" Following the pause and silence, Rosa finally responds.

ROSA. Lo dijo para castigarme. Él sabía que yo iba a cuidarlas. Decir a una madre 'Prométeme que cuidarás a tus hijos', es lo peor que se puede decir a una madre."

Silencio. Mauricio da por acabada la entrevista. Pone otro tema en el reproductor y empieza a dar un masaje a Rosa en el cuello.

Más preguntas, por favor.

Pero Mauricio continúa dándole el masaje.

Tienes muy buenas manos. . . . (22)

Rosa, as the "person who remembers" is performing her own excavation. By repeatedly putting herself in front of the camera and, in this interview, asking Mauricio to ask her questions that break through to her past, Rosa is turning over the strata of the past through which she

remembers—her thoughts, his questions, and that day's way of seeing and telling what she experienced in her life.

When Paula's initially encourages Cecilia to help capture and record what might soon be gone forever—her mother's mind—she does so from a place of affection (though perhaps also self-interest, since it allowed her more time to meet her ex-husband at the bar called the Yakarta.) However, this affection is complicated by the intense resentment that Paula feels after having seen Cecilia's interview with her mother. The excavation of memories has taken, from Paula's perspective, a dangerous turn. But Paula is also right to recognize that the camera recorder—what I called the fifth character in Mayorga's play, the true *"intruso"*—has been the catalyst for Rosa's confession. But Paula downplays the camera's potential role as a "truth serum" by suggesting that what had prompted Rosa more than anything had been her own looking back on her life and seeing nothing of note.

In her interview with her mother, Paula accuses her of just that—inventing a more dramatic life for sake of the camera, while carelessly hurting the entire family. Paula attempts to discredit her mother's story by asking her technical questions about how she knew certain things, like that the map was in German (and not another language)—to which Rosa responds, "Tampoco sé chino" (41); whether she should look at hospital records to verify that her mother was a patient there for five months; and if she remembers anything more than the few details she'd mentioned to Cecilia about her five months in Germany.

> PAULA. Un reloj del que salía un guerrero, ¿eso es todo lo que recuerda?
>
> ROSA. Conforme pasa el tiempo, me voy acordando de más.
>
> PAULA. ¿Cómo se dice "Tengo frío" en alemán?

ROSA. No llegué a aprender. Ponía las cosas en la caja y miraba la pantalla para pagar. Frío se dice “kalt”. “Ich bin kalt”, o “Ich habe kalt”, no sé. ¿Por qué quiere demostrar que miento?

PAULA. No quiero demostrar que miente; quiero saber la verdad. Le gusta a usted pensar que vivió una gran aventura, ¿eh? Como esa gente de películas.

ROSA. No fue una aventura. No digas “aventura”.

PAULA. Resulta duro mirar hacia atrás y pensar que la vida ha sido poco emocionante. Pero todo tiene arreglo delante de una cámara. Sueltas la lengua delante de una cámara y aparece un pasado precioso. Cinco meses preciosos. Cinco meses de aventura.

Silencio. Rosa echa un trago al vaso de agua hasta apurarla. Acaricia el vaso.

ROSA. No fue una aventura. (41)

The tension here is between Paula’s feeling so certain of the untruth of the story and the creeping realization of having been betrayed. The happiness that Rosa expresses having experienced in those five months during which had abandoned her family, begins to take on a much more weighty presence. But there must be enough truth in Rosa’s story for Paula to begin to wonder if it is actually true—were that not the case, this shift in Paula’s reaction and resentment wouldn’t escalate the way it does. Were Paula convinced that Rosa’s story were completely imagined, she would not then pack a suitcase in order for someone—she’s not sure who yet—to leave the house. As Paula says to her mother when Rosa asks, “Para quién es esa maleta?”: “Todavía no lo sé” (43).

There is a lesson in Paula's understanding of Rosa that has equally to do with the "art of the interview" as practiced by each of the characters. In her interview with Cecilia, Paula asks her daughter to recall some childhood memories, especially those having to do with her father. Cecilia does, and in great detail, only to have her mother "burst her bubble" by pointing out all the ways in which circumstances, timing, photographs, and even stories had planted seeds that had affected Cecilia's capacity to remember her childhood accurately (31). Instead of an art of the interview, what Paula is getting at is the art of memory—or, as established earlier with the interviews, the ethics and aesthetics memory. Cecilia, however, resists accepting this "eye-opening" lesson her mother is trying to impart. "¿Estás queriendo explicarme que los recuerdos pueden inventarse? Ya sé que pueden inventarse. No es esa la cuestión" (31). For Cecilia, the idea that memories can be invented and that they're subject to the influence of time, desires, and regrets, is not incompatible with another precept that the young teenager upholds—that, for her, invented or not, everything that is said in an interview is valid. When Paula interviews Cecilia, she asks her daughter how she thinks this interview with her grandmother could possibly be helpful to anyone in the family. Referring to Rosa's interview as "truth," even aware that it may have been invented or imagined, Cecilia responds using Paula's own pedagogical reference: "La verdad es saludable, según Sócrates" (31).

As an attorney, Paula is well-versed in Sócrates, but the lesson she is trying to teach her daughter has more to do with the ethical choices an interviewer/excavator must make. To this end, she presents her daughter with the following scenarios:

> PAULA. Suponga que fuese usted periodista, una periodista de verdad. Está entrevistando a un nazi y se da cuenta de que el nazi la está utilizando. Se da cuenta de que el nazi está sirviéndose de la entrevista para difundir

ideas espantosas, ideas que hacen daño a la gente. ¿Emitiría usted esa entrevista?

Silencio.

CECILIA. No. No la emitiría.

PAULA. Está entrevistando a un gilipollas y el tío se burla de un niño autista, ¿cómo se llama ese niño autista de su clase?

CECILIA. Alberto.

PAULA. Se burla de Alberto, de cómo habla, de cómo camina. ¿Lo emitiría usted, para que otros gilipollas se rían a costa de Alberto?"

CECILIA. No.

PAULA. Está entrevistando a su padre y su padre cuenta a la cámara que usted lo echó de casa. *(Lo imita.)* "Mi propia hija. No paró hasta echarme de casa". ¿Emitiría esa entrevista?

CECILIA. No.

PAULA. No entiendo por qué no emitiría esas entrevistas. ¿Por qué contienen mentiras que pueden hacer daño a personas indefensas?

Silencio. Cecilia toma la cámara y enfoca a Paula. Esta ocupa la posición donde Rosa fue entrevistada. Cecilia va a hablar, pero Paula la interrumpe:

De usted, por favor.

Silencio. (31-32)

In Paula's interview with her daughter, she uses precisely the Socratic method of inquiry, which in this case, seeks to get Cecilia to understand a contradiction in her attitude with respect to her

grandmother's interview. The questioning is moreover ethical in nature, and drives Cecilia to think in terms of her own role and responsibility as an interviewer with respect to her subject matter and the repercussions that posting the interview online could have. But Cecilia returns to her conviction—that what is in the interview, whether true or not, is valid and critical to pass on: "Si lo que su madre, mi abuela… Si lo que esa mujer ha dicho puede ser verdad, si puede ser en parte verdad, ¿qué derecho tengo yo a censurarlo?" (34). But the *grieta* in Paula's interviewing her daughter results in Cecilia's silence, a moment that drives Cecilia to take control of the interview and point the camera at her mother, as Mayorga's stage directions instruct. When Cecilia finally asks her mother why she thinks Rosa has chosen to tell this story now, Paula responds: "Porque le has puesto esa cámara delante. A la gente le pones una cámara y se vuelve loca" (34).

El arte de la entrevista ends with Paula making a final decision as to who will be using the suitcase she's prepared. In the end, it is her. Paula abandons her mother. But not before "siguiendole la corriente"—or, perhaps, telling the entire truth of what she knew of Rosa's romantic interlude. Paula admits, for example, to having been the one that had had the *relojero*'s hands crushed. When Rosa, seeming speechless, asks her daughter who she thought she was and how she could have done such a thing, Paula responds: "No lo hice por castigarlo. Lo hice por protegerte. Y por proteger a la familia. Me salió mal. A él no le ocurrió nada irreparable. Sólo se trataba de asustarlo un poco. No perdió ningún dedo. Se lo hubiera merecido. Ese relojero tuyo era un cobarde. ¿Cómo podía gustarte?" (46). Rosa, horrified by too much truth, responds with the same accusation her daughter had earlier launched at her: "Estás mintiendo. Te lo estás inventando todo" (46). Finally, Paula makes to leave, with her suitcase in hand and clearly about

to abandon her mother, and not, as Rosa had earlier suspected, sending Rosa to the nursing home.

ROSA. Tu padre te hizo prometer que cuidarías de mí.

PAULA. No lo recuerdo.

Silencio. Va a irse por la puerta del jardín. Pero deja la maleta, va hacia Rosa y le arregla el pelo.

Quizá alguien vea esa entrevista y venga a hacerte compañía. (46)

In the final moments of the play, spectators see Rosa alone in the garden. She begins to take the old drawings out of the box of mementos that Cecilia had brought out into the garden earlier. The drawings are the ones that Rosa insisted her husband had drawn while she was in Germany with her *relojero*. The same drawings that her husband had told their daughters Rosa had drawn for them from her hospital bed. Rosa begins to take them out, one by one, laying them out on the grass in the middle of the garden. As Mayorga's stage directions indicate, once Rosa has taken out all the drawings, she seems disoriented. That is, until her eyes spot the camera again. She sits in the same spot that she'd sat in for the original interview with Cecilia. After another moment of silence, and while alone onstage, Rosa speaks directly to the camera: "Más preguntas, por favor." Then, as if responding to a question, Rosa goes into a lengthy explanation about a movie called *Splendor in the Grass*, in which Laurel and Hardy, who have been separated for years, are reunited. Though she is splicing and confusing movies, actors, and memories, in what is now a dialogical monologue (Ubersfeld), there is one thing of which Rosa is certain. It is with this certainty that she ends her interview and, with this, Mayorga ends his play: "Con quién veas la película, eso es lo único que importa" (47).

Spectators are left with a striking image. Rosa, the "person who remembers," is alone, surrounded only by the hand drawn images that signify her betrayal and abandonment of her family. Reminded by the drawings that her husband drew to preserve an image of her as a loving mother—an image that her daughters could live with. An image that Rosa now sees and may or may not believe is her. This silent image of Rosa before the artifacts of her memories gives way to Rosa's return to the act of making memory. Taking control once again of the "interview," she faces the only companion that can alleviate the disruption caused by her remembering—the camera recorder. The interview helps her remember. By sitting before it again, she invites the camera to continue its excavation—the only way she can stave off oblivion. The great irony of *El arte de la entrevista* is that it is not Rosa's forgetting—and the apparent onset of Alzheimer's disease—but her remembering and retelling that are destructive to her well-being and that of her family (29). It is Rosa's memory that others feel must be destroyed. Not by the disease but by her daughter, Paula, who had grown accustomed to the relative state of forgetting in which she'd grown. Rosa's remembering becomes a devastating threat to her daughter and compels drastic action. Either the total destruction of the recorded memories—something that Cecilia absolutely refuses to allow—or the total abandonment of the remembering subject. The impulse is the same. Paula's walking out allows her to turn her back to her mother and the painful past she'd unsuccessfully demanded that Cecilia destroy. Though Paula's *"lo"* in the following excerpt refers to Cecilia's recording of the interview, it may as well refer to Rosa's memory and what is most threatening about it—its validity in their lives: "No quiero que me prometas que no vas a difundirlo. No quiero que me prometas que vas a destruirlo. Quiero que lo destruyas delante de mí" (29).

The link between truth and memory established in *El arte de la entrevista* and the idea of the Rosa's memories as a threat to the family bring us back to Benjamin's notion of excavation and the unearthing of authentic memory. The way that Mayorga constructs the remembering process for Rosa, including the active role of the video camera, adds a component of volatility that is missing in Benjamin's brief essay. The successive interviews that Cecilia, Paula, Mauricio, and Rosa conduct with each other destabilize and transform Rosa and her family, but not just because the interviews are being recorded nor just because of the content of their memories. The disruption also comes from how each character sees and remembers, causing past memories to be buried in the first place. Rosa's husband may have covered up her affair and lied to his daughters, creating a fiction that intended to "erase" the truth. It is this previous condition of erasure within Rosa's story that made the "excavation" of her memories so utterly transformative. From Paula's perspective, Rosa's possible dementia invalidates those memories. And, yet, it is the inability to be conclusive and definitive on the point of whether her memories are true that makes Rosa's interview so threatening. In *La Tortuga de Darwin,* in contrast, Harriet's memory poses a threat to her and others because of its (and her) extraordinary proximity to the "truth," both physically and historically. As we'll see, Harriet's unusual circumstance as an anthropomorphized turtle enables her to be an eye-witness and participant in major catastrophic events, giving her recollections an apparent authority over the historical record that Rosa's memories, for example, cannot claim.

La tortuga de Darwin

In Thesis VI of his "Theses on History," Benjamin admits an element of danger in the process of capturing and retelling a memory: "To articulate what is past does not mean to

recognize 'how it really was.' It means to take control of a memory, as it flashes in a moment of danger" ("Theses" VI). This suggests that not only the witnessing and the remembering but also the retelling can constitute a "moment of danger." In this sense, and at almost any turn, the excavation process can encounter forgetting, conflicting memories, the "inexpressible" memory of trauma, and manipulated and altered memories (Ricoeur 448-452). In the case of Harriet, the nearly two-hundred year old anthropomorphized turtle and protagonist of *La Tortuga de Darwin'*s protagonist, "danger" was surely present in her act of witnessing some of Europe's most catastrophic events. Arguably, however, it is also present in her remembering and retelling of these events, which takes place onstage in Mayorga's work. It is onstage and before spectators that Harriet is interviewed and investigated for her memories and her extraordinary human capacity for speech, reason and feeling.

La tortuga de Darwin is one of Mayorga's most widely recognized, performed and translated plays. Since its publication in 2008, it has garnered Mayorga several awards, including the Premio Max for best playwright in 2009 and the Premio Teatro de Rojas for best playwright in 2008 (Brizuela 246). Theater groups have taken the anthropomorphized Harriet to stages as near as Madrid's Teatro de la Abadía (6 February 2008), with Ernesto Caballero as director and Carmen Machi playing the role of Harriet the turtle, and culturally and geographically as far as South Korea's Seojong M Theater (9 October 2009) with Donghyum Kim as director. In the performances for Spain's audiences, the play was remarkable for Carmen Machi's performance as well as for the play's resonance with Franz Kafka's 1917 short story, "A Report to an Academy," in which an ape trapped on a ship that sails from Africa to Europe chronicles his anthropomorphosis before a scientific audience (Doria; Craig). In its global reach, *La tortuga de Darwin* has been remarkable as well for its historical content. In a 2011 radio interview for "Seúl

en contacto con el mundo," Mayorga described D. Kim's Korean production of his play as *"excelente."* In "La tortuga en Corea," Mayorga's introductory essay for Chesom Kim's 2009 translation, Mayorga wrote, "ninguno de mis personajes ha llegado tan lejos como esta tortuga." The historical/cultural distance separating Korea from Spain and Western Europe brought director D. Kim, in preparation for the 2009 performance in Seoul, to ask Mayorga an usual favor: permission to open the play with a scene not written by Mayorga. D. Kim's idea was for the character of the professor to give a preview lesson on European history and in particular on the Dreyfus Affair (Zola).[62] Kim explained his rationale to Mayorga, saying that he feared Korean audiences wouldn't be as educated as European audiences in this specific episode in western European history, one of the first that Harriet recounts to the professor. Mayorga granted Kim permission, but later remarked in an interview with Ana Gorría Ferrín how it was an extraordinary naïveté to assume that Western European audiences would be not only in their majority but also meaningfully familiar with the Dreyfus Affair: "No quise aclararle que el nombre de Dreyfus dice hoy al europeo medio tan poco como al coreano medio." And, yet, even with Harriet's eye-witness retelling of historical events to audiences perhaps unfamiliar with its details, the objective of Mayorga's *La tortuga de Darwin* is far from merely relaying historical facts to spectators. Harriet's testimonial retelling places before audiences a lived experience, "un testimonio extraordinario que ha sido testigo de la Historia desde abajo, a ras de tierra" (Mayorga "Historia desde abajo"). Even more than that, the objective is more so to perform memory and

[62] This controversial episode of late 19th century European history brought writer Émile Zola, in a 1898 letter of protest, to wisely but tragically predict that Europe was sowing the seeds of the anti-Semitic sentiment that would a few decades later "explode" catastrophically in the form of the Holocaust. Zola's famous letter of protest, *"J'Accuse,"* was printed in the 13 January 1898 edition of *L'Aurore.* I discuss this further in the Conclusion to this thesis, which begins with an excerpt from Zola's letter and a discussion of its implications for the treatment of ethics and accountability in Mayorga's theater.

History as a crossroads. And, in Harriet's retelling, to perform for audiences a sort of dialectic in which archival ways of knowing History, scientific or objective understandings of events, and the lived experience of the past intersect and vie for a voice (Craig). As Gordon Craig writes in his review of the 2008 Madrid performances, *La tortuga de Darwin*'s treatment of History and memory falls along the tension between these three ways of seeing and recording it, beginning with

> el contraste entre la visión de la Historia como ciencia organizada en torno a la idea de progreso que representa el Profesor y el concepto de Historia como 'experiencia del pasado' que encarna Harriet. Por otra parte se contrapone también la ciclópea figura del autor de *El origen de las especies* y lo que representa para la ciencia a la de los dos infatuados arribistas y amorales 'investigadores' con los que tiene que vérselas nuestra protagonista y que con sus actitudes y comportamiento acaban por confirmarla en la idea de que el hombre es el más tonto y peligroso de los seres que pueblan la tierra. (Gordon).

There is a reason Harriet fears for her life when she first encounters the professor, asking him to promise he will not tell anyone of her existence. There are many, she says, far more interested in her forgetting than in her remembering. This is in addition to the danger she will face just in her "confidential" retelling with the professor. She does not anticipate at first that this, too, will put her at risk of losing her life. She does not expect that these humans, in addition to those many she witnessed commit atrocious crimes, would be willing, in the end, to annihilate her as well. The interview-excavation of Harriet's memory brings with it a deeply disruptive and disturbing potential that responds as much to the remembering subject's engagement with History and traumatic memory as to the investigator/interviewer's degree of self-interest and lack of ethical regard.

In Harriet, as in Rosa, Mayorga creates a remembering subject interviewed and "excavated" for her knowledge, memories and experiences. But, while in *El arte de la entrevista,* the "excavation" happens through informal and unplanned successive interviews between characters who in general know each other well, in *La tortuga de Darwin,* the "excavation" interviews are part of a deliberate transaction between a anthropomorphized turtle and two "professionals" in the scientific and research community. In the opening scene of the play, As has already been noted, Harriet comes to the home of a professor with one express purpose: to offer her eye-witness memories to a professional historian of Europe in exchange for safe passage to the Galapagos Islands where she's from so she might live out her final days there. With her "artifacts" of memory, the historian will be able to correct the historical record and in this way change humanity's perception of major historical events, while Harriet's clandestine return home—she, after all, has no legal papers with which to travel—would be arranged by the historian. As the professor says of Harriet: "Es un testigo excepcional y quiere un notario excepcional. Está poniendo bajo mi custodia sus recuerdos" (9). There is a second scenario of excavation that takes place in a parallel and converging plot—that of the doctor of questionable professional integrity and his physiological "excavation" of Harriet as a specimen of scientific research. The doctor's objective, carried out through interviews and physical examinations and experiments, is to find the formula for living a longer life so that he can bottle it and sell it, of course, at Harriet's expense. Whether conducted by the professor or the doctor, the "excavation" of Harriet has the potential of destroying her altogether. But the irony in this plot is that it is Harriet that manages, in the end, to "destroy" her excavators.

In the initial scenes of *La tortuga de Darwin,* which take place in the professor's home, the professor and his wife, once she realizes Harriet is a turtle with human attributes, begin to

realize not only the value of Harriet's memory but the numerous ways in which they can take advantage of her. The professor, for example, can use her memory to advance his own career, while Beti, his wife, eventually sees in Harriet the potential for a traveling freak show. But it is Harriet that takes the first step in regarding her memory as a commodity. As Harriet remarks to the professor, "Nunca pensé sacar provecho de todo eso, pero últimamente me he dado cuenta de que mi memoria es un capital. La gente se mata por el pasado, y eso yo tengo más que nadie. ¿Por qué no ofrecérselo a un profesional a cambio de una pequeña ayuda?" (6). This opens the door for the professor and, later, the doctor, to treat Harriet similarly as a commodity whose value they can increase for their benefit even if it is at an enormous cost to her.

Harriet's need to exchange her memories in this sort of clandestine way responds to conditions somewhat or at least metaphorically similar to those that produce and strengthen a black market economy. That is, judging from what the professor says about historians' no longer being able to distinguish fact from fiction, there is a scarcity of historical truth—or, in any case, of the *whole* story—in history books. Beyond this is the sense that historical truth is monitored and constantly under surveillance, which is why Harriet insists on concealing her identity and insists the professor protect it, too (7). This initial exchange reveals fear-based societal attitudes towards remembering. It is this context of fear and the objectification of memory that frame Harriet's purpose and, as we'll see, the ways in which she wields her remembering—both as a commodity to consume and exchange, and as a weapon.

Mayorga's play does not make explicit who those who would seek to destroy Harriet are, but Harriet links them to the professor's official sources of historical knowledge: the archives that only she is able to correct. The implication is that those most interested in Harriet's demise are in positions of power and would be threatened by "authentic" eyewitness accounts that

contradict in any way the archived versions of the last two centuries' most catastrophic events. Even the professor, who initially assumes the zealousness with which he must guard Harriet's identity, is eventually seduced by the possible notoriety and advantage over and above that of other historians. Referring to Harriet and his own self-aggrandizement, he says: "Su cabecita encierra doscientos años de Europa. ¡Los historiadores del mundo se rendirán a mis pies!" (18). Harriet is the professor's means of acquiring the historical "truth" to which no other historian could possibly have access.

John P. Gabriele has included Mayorga in a list of Spanish playwrights such as Ramón del Valle-Inclán, Jerónimo López Mozo, Itziar Pascual, and Luis Araújo, whose works emerge from a "compromiso social" reflecting a "profunda reflexión sobre las injusticias sociales de su época," characteristics that are associated as well with documentary theater ("Forma" 129). Gabriele identifies the task of the writer of documentary theater as expository, didactic, often revisionist, and tending to focus on current events using news media and other documentary sources as evidentiary props with a revisionist objective: "Su material se deriva directamente del ambiente inmediato y de los males sociales como la guerra, las huelgas, el desempleo, la opresión, y la persecución de individuos, etc. . . . La realidad en dicho teatro se presenta episódicamente, o sea en segmentos, con un fin periodístico y testimonial y con la ayuda de una variedad de materiales" (130). While *La tortuga de Darwin* is not documentary or even historical theater, there are some elements of the excavation of Harriet's historical memory that echo documentary theater's methods and objectives. The role of the archive in *La Tortuga de Darwin* is similar to that in documentary theater, except that, once the fixed archive of historical and scientific knowledge comes into contact with Harriet, they are both subject to transformation. In turn, Harriet herself is a "living archive" who is similarly vulnerable to forces

seeking to alter or discredit her. Carol Martin, in her article on documentary theater titled "Bodies of Evidence," writes:

> Documentary Theater takes the archive and turns it into repertory, following a sequence from behavior to archived records of behavior to the restoration of behavior as public performance. At each phase, a complex set of transformations, interpretations, and inevitable distortions occur. In one sense, there is no recoverable "original event" because the archive is already an operation of power (who decides what is archived, and how?) (10).

In *La tortuga de Darwin,* there are several archives, none of which can claim to be a "recoverable 'original event,' in large part for same reason that Martin points to—because each is laden with an "operation of power" and the individual interests of whoever and/or whatever controls the flow and content of its information. One of the archives in *Tortgua* is the fixed, "dead," historical archive bound and catalogued in books and, by implication, in the minds of what Harriet is sure are narrow-minded historians. It is this archive that is held in the professor's multi-volume *Historia de la Europa contemporánea,* two volumes of which Harriet had read prior to meeting the professor, and which prompts her to come to his office in the first place. Through the eyewitness account of experiences of the past offered by Harriet, the professor's published textual history begins to open up to new information and the possibility of history as seen *desde abajo*. In this sense, the historical and scientific archive goes from being fixed and bound to being alive and malleable. The other archive is a purely living archive—Harriet herself. The professor's constant note-taking based on Harriet's firsthand accounts thrills him—he, after all, regards Harriet as "un archivo con patas" (18). Meanwhile, Harriet is also subject to changes

and even complete obliteration, not only at the hands of the professor and the doctor, but as a result of the human catastrophes that she has witnessed and her disquieting retelling (18, 20).

The issue of truth in eye-witnessing emerges in various ways throughout *La Tortuga de Darwin.* The first and most obvious case is early in the play, when it becomes clear to spectators that Harriet has misled the professor by presenting as part of her testimony something that she did not directly witness. When he encounters discrepancies in her story—for example, in how she tells of having witnessed the launching of the Titanic and how she'd gone to the top of the Eiffel Tower on the day of its inauguration—the professor immediately stops and demands that she look at him directly to tell him the truth: "Harriet, míreme a los ojos. Míreme a los ojos, Harriet" (10). But it turns out that the version of the Titanic's launch was second-hand and she watched the Eiffel Tower's inauguration from the ground, not from its top. And, yet, when she admits to having misrepresented "her" memories, she does not outright admit to lying. The professor speaks of truth and lies as opposites—"De todo lo que me has contado, ¿qué es verdad y qué es mentira?" (10). But from Harriet's perspective, there is a qualitative, almost categorical difference between a "mentira, mentira," a "true" lie like her saying she'd been present at the launching of the Titanic, and a slight or creative stretching of the truth which, considering her old age, she feels justified in doing: "Los viejos fantaseamos un poco, pero eso no es mentir mentir" (10). In addition to Harriet's propensity for distorting and exaggerating her own alleged memories, what emerges from this is a more problematic construction of the question of "truth" when recovering or uncovering the past. That is, this conflict between Harriet and the professor on the question of her lies permits him as a historian to assert his own professional claim on truth as opposed to the "fiction" of literature in the recording and writing of history. "Recoja sus cosas y búsquese otro historiador," he orders Harriet when he discovers her lying, then additing: "Le

será fácil encontrarlo, la mayoría ya no sabe distinguir entre la Historia y la Literatura" (11). Harriet, in a fascinating act of populating language with meaning—to borrow Bakhtin's concept, again—then appropriates the historian's own discourse, promising him that she will not lie or exaggerate again, exclaiming, "¡Objetividad! Sólo lo que vi con mis propios ojos, lo juro. La verdad y nada más que la verdad" (11).

I would argue that Harriet's "humanizing" archival history constitutes the performance of an image of "authentic memory" in the sense Benjamin proposes in his "Excavation and Memory." For example, explaining her experiences in the trenches during World War I, Harriet describes a soldier's face upon reading a letter from his girlfriend while in the middle of the warzone. It was yet another catastrophe Harriet had witnessed but, just like Benjamin's Angel of History, could do nothing about. The professor's reaction is a negative one—he does not consider the image of a distraught soldier a valid piece of historical data, insisting it is "literatura, Harriet, y nada más que literatura" (12). Both in her eye-witnessing and remembering as well as in her not being completely human nor completely animal but a combination of both, the figure of Harriet recalls Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus* (1920), the painting that prompted Benjamin's theory of the Angel of History who looking down on the catastrophes of the past while being pulled towards the future by the winds of progress ("Theses" IX). When she speaks of WWI, for example, Harriet recalls the force of progress in terms similar to Benjamin's: "¡Progreso! Con sus máscaras antigás, arrastrándose bajo nubes de veneno, palmando como chinches, el europeo evolucionaba hacia el insecto. ¡Progreso! Aquella guerra la pasé en una trinchera, contando los muertos…" (11).

In her review of the September 2008 Barcelona performances of *La tortuga de Darwin,* Iolanda G. Madariaga emphasizes how Harriet's marginality is critical to her being able to see

and experience the world as she does ("Animal"). Harriet, after is not only a turtle-human, she is an "indigenous," aging immigrant woman/reptile without legal papers or citizenship, who has survived some of history's most devastating catastrophes. Mayorga's Harriet is an accumulation of marginalities: "Harriet no puede acumular más atributos para convertirse en el paradigma del paria de la tierra" (Madariaga "Animal") The professor hones in on Harriet's unique position and perspective when he describes Harriet to his wife, Beti: "La señora Harriet ha visto mucho. Pero lo más importante es la perspectiva. Ella ha visto la Historia desde abajo" (9). In her 1988 essay, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," Donna Haraway writes of the pretension of disembodied, scientific objectivity, similar to that of the professor and doctor in *La tortuga de Darwin,* versus the embodied, "situated knowledge" of the subjugated who "see" from below, similar to Harriet's perspective (576, 581). Haraway describes "seeing from below" as a posture that requires critical examination and accountability—that is, the situated knowledge of the subjugated is preferable to disembodied, detached mode of objectivity but it is not exempt from critical scrutiny. As Haraway writes:

> The positionings of the subjugated are not exempt from critical reexamination, decoding, deconstruction, and interpretation; that is, from both semiological and hermeneutic modes of critical inquiry. The standpoints of the subjugated are not "innocent" positions. On the contrary, they are preferred because in principle they are least likely to allow denial of the critical and interpretive core of all knowledge. They are knowledgeable of modes of denial through repression, forgetting, and disappearing acts—ways of being nowhere while claiming to see comprehensively. (584)

Between Harriet's marginalities and her unique position as a turtle who is witnessing—that is, "seeing" critically—throughout her life, hers is an extraordinary "situated knowledge" that the doctor and scientist cannot ignore. Madariaga's Darwinian reading of Mayorga's Harriet suggests that it is Harriet's marginality that allows her to survive. The implication is that it is humans' animalistic humanity—behaving like *"bestias"*—that compels them to destroy each other and themselves, but it is Harriet's human-like animal nature that allows her to see, understand and experience empathy as she does.

In the 2008 performance run of *La tortuga de Darwin* in Madrid at the Centro Dramático Nacional, directed by Ernesto Caballero, and in Seoul, South Korea, in October 2009 at the Seojong M. Theater, directed by Donghyum Kim, the actresses that portray Harriet perform the most intensely traumatic moments of Harriet's witnessing with chilling and dramatic emotion. Among the most moving moments in both performances are the scenes in which Harriet explains her transforming from turtle to human. The anthropomorphosis of Harriet occurs in two traumatizing episodes. The first is the instant when she takes her first step, which occurs moments after incredulously looking up at the sky at fighter bombers flying over the town of Guernica, Spain. Having just witnessed the horrors of the First World War, Harriet had arrived to Spain believing she had escaped the worst, only to find herself confronted by more. As she says, "Llegué a España huyendo de la catástrofe que venía venir, sin saber que la catástrofe se estaba ensayando allí, en España" (24). Looking up at the sky in horror, she thinks to herself:

> HARRIET. No van a hacerlo. No van a tirar bombas sobre mujeres y niños". Lo hacen. ¡Huya quien pueda! Yo maldigo mi lentitud, que me condena a morir abrasada. Con toda mi alma deseo ponerme en pie y echar a correr. Y eso es lo que, para mi asombro, sucede. Me duele aquí, en la ingle, me escuecen las piernas, pero el

> miedo me empuja a seguir hacia delante. Por el camino tropiezo con una vieja muerta, me pongo su ropa y sigo sin mirar atrás. Adelante, Harry, sin mirar atrás.

In both the Seoul and Madrid performances, this scene is performed in such a way that Harriet seems to be in pain when she transforms and takes her first bipedal steps. Harriet's expression of horror mixes with the fear of death and a desperation to remain alive. These emotions and the circumstances of war compel a physical, weighty, slow motion performance onstage of the initial steps of the turtle-turned-human. As if awaking from a long slumber, the limbs of the actresses playing Harriet barely move, seeming to weigh tons—that is, until they do move and Harriet not only walks for the first time, she runs in order to desperately save her own life.

Harriet's anthropomorphosis is what saves her at the same time that it allows her to *see* more—something that puts her again at great risk of annihilation. Harriet tells of how, upon leaving Spain after the bombing of Guernica, the horror became infinitely worse. It is witnessing the Holocaust that Harriet utters her first word, the desperate "¡No……" described above, a word that had emerged from the need to escape the horror of war and human-made catastrophe. It is during this time that Harriet begins to understand the destructive potential of language and especially the idea that everything is possible. Harriet hears Hitler say "¡Todo es posible! ¡Todo es posible!" so convincingly that even she starts to believe it. The extent of what is "possible" becomes unimaginable when materialized in the Nazis' genocidal human engineering campaign: a Holocaust designed and carried out with the express purpose of wiping out all of European Jewry. Linking language to this degree of annihilation of human life, Harriet explains: "Ahí empieza siempre todo, en las palabras. Lo he visto en todas partes: las palabras preparan muertes; las palabras matan. Las palabras marcan a la gente que hay que eliminar: 'judío', 'burgués', 'comunista', 'fascista', 'terrorista'" (24). But, if it is in the context of Hitler's

speeches that Harriet becomes aware of the rousing potential of words, it is the Holocaust that makes her finally use them. Harriet took her first step and spoke her first word because these were her only means of surviving certain death at the hands of other humans: "Evolución exponencial bajo estimulaciones extraordinarias," as the professor says, echoing Darwin (18).

In the play, Harriet has now fallen in the hands of a doctor who, similar to the professor, is interested in investigating her as an extraordinary specimen. He treats her like an extraordinary mutation—a turtle capable of human speech and movements. The doctor is fascinated by her relationship to language and asks Harriet to explain, for his recording device, how she came to say her first word. Asked what her first word was, Harriet clearly states, "No." As she recounts to the professor:

> HARRIET. Varsovia, Agosto del 42. Tres soldados de caza por las calles del gueto. Veo acercarse a un niño. Pienso: "¡No!". El pensamiento me sale por la boca: "N… N… Nnnn… ¡NO!". Qué sorpresa, sentir que la palabra pasa de la mente a la boca y de la boca al mundo: "¡NO!". El resto brota como un chorro: "¡Ven! ¡Métete aquí!". Escondo al crío en mi caparazón. Los soldados sólo ven una Tortuga. (26-27)

It is the ethical moment of empathy, however, that prompts her *evolución* versus the *involución* of humans, as she eventually calls it. "El horror de la involución del ser humano," as one critic calls it, occurs ironically in *La tortuga de Darwin* —it is not a return to an animal nature, as an initial interpretation might suggest (Paisano). The "involución" apparent in Harriet's witnessing is the phenomenon of human beings whose behavior becomes unimaginably violent and unethical the more they have access to the technological advances and so-called progress. Another critic reflects, only somewhat tongue in cheek, on how, if Darwin were alive today,

Darwin would have to modify his theory of evolution in light of the last two hundred years as recounted by Harriet:

> Durante la Ilustración los filósofos se empeñaron en demostrar que la razón conducía al progreso de la humanidad. Pero la realidad actual debe hacernos cuestionar tal progreso. Gente que se muere de hambre porque los recursos no están repartidos, pueblos que matan entre sí en virtud de banderas e himnos, niños que mueren porque no hay dinero para pagar sus tratamientos, políticos que abogan por la paz mientras se lucran vendiendo armamento a los países en guerra, etcétera. Si Darwin levantara la cabeza redactaría una nueva teoría sobre "la involución" del ser humano. (Ostios)

When Harriet pretends that she is "involucionando" toward the end of the play—"Creo que estoy involucionando," she says while gurgling and sputtering—she pretends to become more turtle-like, and successfully dupes the professor and doctor (37). What drives Harriet's evolution is not only the traumatic events she experiences, but also the intensity of her compassion for their victims—which, in her case, immediately translates to action. It is this aspect of her experience as a witness that she expresses when she insists to the professor that it is painful, maybe even harmful, to be the keeper of traumatic memories.

As happens in *El arte de la entrevista,* in *La tortuga de Darwin,* spectators encounter the *grieta* in Harriet's life and memory. In recounting the events she witnessed during the Holocaust, Harriet stumbles upon the fractured place from which her memory unleashes its most profound pain—her most intense moment of fear and danger. Part of her "evolución/involución" from animal to human was a period during which she could choose whether to be in human or turtle form. And, during the Holocaust, being a turtle saved her from ending up in the gas chambers.

Pointing out her marginality relative to the devastating marginality of Jews during the Holocaust, Harriet explains:

> HARRIET. Durante la guerra, en todas partes resulta peligroso ser tortuga, porque en todas partes hay gente hambrienta capaz de comerse cualquier cosa. Pero a veces es más peligroso ir de vieja, a causa de este pico, que algunos toman por nariz hebrea. Ser tortuga es más peligroso que ser persona, pero ser judío es más peligroso que ser tortuga. (25)

In the performance with Carmen Machi in Madrid, the moments during which Harriet speaks of the Jews and the Holocaust garner a sober recognition from the audience. Even in the brief, potentially comical moment in which Machi gestures to her own *"pico,"* the laughter is dull. The Madrid-based audience shows an awareness of the devastating danger and horror that Harriet alludes to, creates a deafening silence in the space of the theater. It is this silence that is repeated when Harriet is unable to continue recounting what she witnesses after being thrown in a train car full of people rounded up like cattle. She threw off her old lady garb, she says, and transformed herself back into a turtle. But then, in her story, she cannot go on. "Esto preferiría saltármelo," she softly tells the professor. The professor urges her to continue. And, oblivious to the traumatizing memory she is recalling, he reminds her they have made deal in which she is obligated to tell him everything she knows. "Hicimos un trato," he warns her (25). But Harriet cannot continue. She is rendered speechless by the trauma of having witnessed so many *muertos.* Then she admits to the professor that she had never before told anyone her life story. She had never before "excavated" her memories to find, as she does in this instant, that some memories are unspeakable. Memories flash before her eyes—beautiful, joyful scenes, but also those that she can barely stand to remember, as Harriet says: "También cosas que hace daño recordar.

Ahora sé que para vivir hay que olvidar, y cuando se ha vivido mucho hay que olvidar mucho. De golpe, siento el peso de tantos muertos. Todos esos muertos, yo los llevo dentro" (26). But Harriet proceeds, finding it in her to describe what she witnesses from the train car. Human beings being filed off the train cars like cattle, only to be sorted between the strong and the weak. The weak—the old, children, and the ill—are deprived of their clothing and possessions, their hair is cut off and they're led to the gas chamber. Witnessing an ongoing Holocaust, Harriet sees evidence of Hitler's rallying cry, "¡Todo es posible!" Looking on as thousands of Jews file into the gas chambers, Harriet—who had turned herself into a turtle to save herself—reflects on what she'd seen from on top of a heap of discarded eye-glasses: "Todo, desde el tren hasta la chimenea, todo funciona como una máquina. Yo lo veo subida a un montón de gafas, porque a la gente le quitan las gafas. Entonces comprendo que se ha cumplido la promesa del payaso [Hitler]: 'Todo es posible' (26).

In the scenes in which Harriet is in the hospital being examined by the doctor, her stories recorded by his hand held tape recorder, Harriet tells some of the most disturbing events she witnessed. The "excavating" relationship between Harriet and the doctor are of a different nature than that between Harriet and the professor. While the professor is off teaching one day, his wife, Beti, believing that during one of Harriet's sudden deep sleeps, that she's experiencing a medical crisis. Beti then defies the professor's order not to tell anyone of Harriet's existence, and takes Harriet to the hospital. There, Harriet falls under the clinical-scientific gaze of a doctor who becomes fascinated by Harriet's physiological "abnormalities." The interested "excavations" conducted by the historian and the physician essentially have the same goal: to isolate, extract and essentially disembody the Harriet's memories and her capacity for longevity—those parts of Harriet that make her extraordinarily valuable to him.

Included in this opportunistic intent is Beti, the professor's wife, who begins to see in Harriet a spectacular goldmine. Beti draws up a plan, including an actual contract, to market and feature Harriet in documentary films or circus freak shows. She has even sewn a shimmery cape for Harriet that says in large letters, "La Tortuga de Darwin." In both the Madrid and Korean performances, for a few moments Harriet dances, sings (horribly), and pretends she is entertaining a crowd. Beti, just like Harriet, had objectified and attempted to commodify Harriet's body and memory. Her enthusiasm and indifference to how this would affect Harriet's well-being is apparent: "Lo estoy viendo: 'La Tortuga de Darwin'. Como la gente no se creerá que eres Tortuga, como pensarán que eres una actriz disfrazada, al final del show les dejamos subir a tocarte. Pagando. Tú no vas a tener que ocuparte de nada, yo me encargo de todo, yo soy tu representante" (30-31). In fact, Beti later goes on to describe to the professor what kind of "theater" she imagines doing with Harriet: "Científico musical. Didáctico. . . . Pero ligerito, que no se puede aburrir a la gente, que eso de reunir gente en un teatro para que aburran juntos, eso yo no lo concibo" (32). While Beti's plans to make a spectacle of Harriet are perhaps more overtly profit driven, they are not any more opportunistic than the professor's intent to make her speak her memories for his edification as a historian, or than the doctor's attaching nodes and wires to Harriet's head and injecting Harriet with mind-altering drugs in order to find the secret of her longevity. They both seem enamored of her universal significance, and, yet, they are also all too willing to dispose of her. The professor dreams of changing the world and becoming nothing short of the most important historian in history: "Ha llegado la hora de la revancha. Gracias a ti, Harriet, tan animal, tan humana, gracias a ti voy a descifrar el enigma del ser. Voy a abrir el juguete de la vida. La vida por dentro" (33). This "abrir" is tantamount to an excavation of all that Harriet is and has, very similar to the kind of extraction and dissection that the doctor

dreams he will perform on Harriet's body to discover the truth of the universe."Tu cuerpo encierra el sentido del universe," the doctor says to Harriet (33).[63] But the "plans" that the professor, Beti, and the doctor develop with regard to Harriet ultimately threaten to destroy her by extracting from her all that makes her extraordinary.

Harriet, however is a figure of resistance and not merely a victim of their pseudo-scientific and consumerist interests (March; Mayorga "Chesom"). Mayorga, as with all of his *víctimas* and *verdugos,* ensures that spectators have a difficult time feeling wholly compassionate or sympathetic towards Harriet—she is neither defenseless nor innocent. To begin, as mentioned earlier, Harriet admits to misleading the professor early on with her exaggerations and lies, but her final act in the play offers a telling, if still ambiguous reflection of Harriet's humanization. In the moments leading up to an ending in which Harriet poisons the doctor, the professor and his wife, Harriet expresses a stunning and disconcerting reflection on humanity. Addressing the three, she says: "De todos los animales, el hombre es el más tonto y dañino. Mire donde mire, sólo veo gente que se comporta como bestias y gente que es tratada como bestias. Charly no lo previó. No previó que evolucionaríais hacia algo tan monstruoso. A ver si con el cambio climático mutáis y sale algo más decente. Me diste tu palabra. ¡Llévame a la isla!" (36). But the professor had no intention of ever upholding his end of the bargain and facilitating Harriet's return to the Galápagos Islands. Realizing this, she, too, abandons her task, no longer willing to live as an archive: "No tengo estómago para más atrocidades" (35). Human evolution, she has

[63] There is one scene towards the end of the play, when Harriet has an opportunity to be alone in the doctor's examination room, where he has inadvertently left the small personal recorder with his diagnoses and about Harriet. She listens to them, and it is here that she realizes she's been "scientifically" objectified and nearly killed—the doctor dismissively refers to the possibility that if Harriet dies as a result of his experiments, there are hundreds more like her in the Seychelles Islands (34).

realized, is the furthest thing from that—it is, as mentioned above, a catastrophic “involución”: “La evolución culmina en el hombre-bomba” (36).

It is when Harriet realizes that she can become and, indeed, has become the victim of the destructive potential of humans that she finds a way to escape, the same way she did hundreds of times, especially in the face of humanity’s greatest catastrophes. There are two sides to how Harriet ends her “excavating” interview with the doctor, the professor, and his wife. In the middle of a conversation with the professor, she begins to fake her own “involución,” as if her exposure to humanity had caused her to devolve. The professor, the doctor, and Beti read from Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* in order to verify what Harriet had begun to say. They read the following out loud: “‘La evolución exponencial bajo estimulaciones extraordinarias puede ser reversible bajo condiciones asimismo extraordinarias’.” Harriet is bluffing, however. In her performance of “involución” she pretends to return to her original condition as turtle. But what happens next is ambiguous and spectators are left without a definitive answer—is Harriet’s retaliation an act of self-defense or an act of unjustified aggression?

Unaware that Harriet is faking her involution, the professsor, doctor and Beti begin to negotiate Harriet’s fate, each trying to get rid of her and blaming the other for what has happened. They even go so far as to suggest selling her as an exotic item on the black market or selling her to a taxidermist, which is Beti’s idea; or, the professor suggests, perhaps a better possibility would be shooting her to take her out of her misery; finally, the doctor’s offers to kill her by lethal injection (38). They’re debating her fate when Harriet, who has disappeared offstage without their realizing it, returns with a birthday cake for herself, surprising them and laughing at their having believed her performance of “involución.” She says to them that she figured they’d forget her 200th birthday, so she went ahead and baked a cake herself, using

ingredients she'd found in Beti's kitchen. As she begins distributing pieces of cake to the three and they gradually begin to convulse, Harriet, laughing, reveals and that she'd included all of Beti's pills in her baking. As they begin to react from the poisoned cake, Harriet gives them the truth they most feared. She turns the tables, and they are the ones who suffer and may die as a result. As they struggle with the poison in their system, Harriet has her last speech: "Teoría de la involución: llegado a un punto, el hombre retrocede hasta la bestia. Me habéis utilizado, queríais devorarme. Pero para comer tortuga hay que darle la vuelta, y la vuelta os la he dado yo. Yo tengo más conchas que un galápago. (39) The question is whether to see Harriet's act of killing or poisoning as a form of self-defense or aggression that is as unethical as any of those that she'd witnessed. When she says, "Pero qué va, si lo mío no tiene marcha atrás," the idea is that she has indeed become more human—which, as she has established it, implies not that she is more animal-like but, as Charly could not have predicted, Harriet has become a bit like them—monstrous in her own right (39).

Conclusions

I would like to establish a link between Mayorga's Rosa in *El arte de la entrevista* and Mayorga's Harriet in *La tortuga de Darwin* in terms of the method each protagonist uses to conceal or reveal her memories. In *El arte de la entrevista,* Rosa's husband had created a smokescreen fiction to cover up Rosa's absence, whereas in *La tortuga de Darwin,* it is the precedent of incomplete or partial data in the professor's historical archives that allows Harriet to exaggerate or invent her memories. At the same time, both women make themselves vulnerable to abandonment, in Rosa's case, or destruction, in Harriet's case. In *El arte de la entrevista,* Rosa's daughter, Paula, reacts negatively to Rosa's "memories," calling them *"delirio"* and

fantasy. Paula's reaction, however, is not due to Rosa's capacity for invention or even her possible Alzheimer's disease. I would argue that it is instead the *possibility* of the *truth* in Rosa's story that Paula finds most unsettling. According to Rosa, the fact that her husband had created a fictional story made of drawings, phone calls, and the story of her hospitalization to explain her absence to their daughters only adds to the disruptive nature of Rosa's memories. Without meaning to, it seems, Rosa destabilizes her entire family and their notion of the past by sitting before a video camera and answering her granddaughter's interview questions. Cecilia's initial questions tap into an unexpected *grieta* in Rosa's past, one that the teenager feels instantly compelled to explore and "excavate" further. It is this need to further open herself up to questions—because as she says to Mauricio, they help her remember—that makes Rosa a relentlessly remembering subject. It is as if the excavating interview process could slow down the onset of her Alzheimer's disease, bringing the past to permanently bear on the present, before it disappears. From the spectator's perspective, Rosa's memories are likely compelling for different reasons. First, because her memories have been effectively silenced for years by the fiction her husband created in her absence—signified by the drawings that spectators see surrounding Rosa in the final minutes of the play. And, second, because Rosa may or may not be telling the truth. What's more, Rosa may or may not be of sound enough mind to know the difference. Mayorga does not answer this question for spectators.

Despite these differences, and beyond their both being women who are near the end of their lives, Harriet is in a predicament on the surface similar to Rosa's. Both Rosa and Harriet have memories that they want to and ultimately need to communicate. They both sense that their memories could have a transformative or productive value if communicated to someone else or in a public way. Rosa realizes this after Cecilia asks her the first few questions, while Harriet is

certain of this from the beginning. Both Rosa and Harriet are sought after for their memories, but their remembering is valuable for entirely different reasons. Rosa is initially interviewed by Cecilia because, as Paula suggests, it would be nice to be able to capture Rosa's memory before it disappears and succumbs to Alzheimer's. For Rosa's daughter, Paula, it is the possibility of truth in Rosa's story that makes it impossible to dismiss. What starts out as *"puro delirio"* in Paula's words, becomes so potentially, painfully true that Paula must abandon her mother and the house in which these memories are kept. In *La Tortuga de Darwin,* and regarding the historian and doctor, both take deliberate steps in the name of scientific and/or objective research to control Harriet's mind and body. I have focused on their use and attempted extraction of her capacity for memory and language; the ways in which each wields a controlling power in the name of scientific, objective or archival "research"; and the ways in which each—and included here is Beti, the professor's wife—follows Harriet's cue of allowing for the commodification of her memory with their plans to commercialize Harriet's mind and body as an attraction for public consumption. Framing the analysis is the discourse established by the professor and Harriet in their initial conversations, regarding what constitutes truth in historical/archival knowledge and, especially, what the public knows and doesn't know. Further, framing Harriet's commodification of her memory is her particular perspective on history. Finally, *La Tortuga de Darwin* illustrates what in Mayorga's memory-theater counts as "witness," "witnessing," and "testimony." Both *El arte de la entrevista* and *La tortuga de Darwin* point to the question of the reliability of memory but, beyond this, to the transformative and potentially destructive effect of the interview and examination process as a way of making memory.

Chapter 3

A Dramaturgy of Invisibility:
Truth-Seeing and *Truth-Telling* in Juan Mayorga's Holocaust Theater

Toda Alemania se ha vuelto ciega y sorda. Tienen ojos que no ven, tienen oídos que no oyen. Ya no tienen miedo de Dios, sino de sí mismos.[64]
-Max Aub, *"De algún tiempo a esta parte"* (1939; qtd in Oleza Simó)

In 1948, just before returning to France after having fled a Hitler-led Germany fifteen years earlier, playwright Bertolt Brecht visited Prague's Jewish cemetery, the oldest Jewish cemetery in Europe (Listoe 51). Brecht's diary entry recounting this visit begins with a description of what he sees in this centuries-old cemetery: a bunch of jumbled and neglected tombstones tossed to one side to make way for new construction. Aside from this obvious neglect, the tombstones signified for Brecht another layer of loss, this one tremendous. Of the 37,000 Jews that were deported from Prague during the Holocaust, only 800 had returned alive (Brecht *Journals* 395; Listoe 51). The Holocaust's dead, reflects Brecht, had become a massive and traceless void—there would be no remains to bury and no tombstones on which to tell their story. For Daniel Listoe, Brecht was coming to understand that humanity could not meet the Nazis' sweeping, horrific genocide with any conventional way of mourning such as tombstones and cemeteries. In its place, writes Listoe, "Brecht suggests we witness the powerful *non-presence*—the *nothingness* of the absent dead. . . . Recognizing the nothingness of the scene

[64] Max Aub's plays that treat the issue of anti-Semitism and racial/social divisions span the pre- and post-Holocaust era. They are: *De algún tiempo a esta parte* (1939), *San Juan* (1943), and *Comedia que no acaba,* written in 1947 but published in 1950 (Oleza Simó 476). This Aub epigraph is taken from Volume VII of Oleza Simó's edition of his works (401). In a recent conference presentation at The Graduate Center of CUNY (April 2014) in which I presented on Mayorga's *El cartógrafo,* one audience member asked if I had explored the significance of Aub's having written in 1939 toward the end of the Spanish Civil War and considering the context of his own exile from Spain in Feburary 1939. It is a question I would like to explore further.

means *absorbing the annihilation of the very cultural symbols that would seem to hold the promise of mourning* what was lost. . . To see *nothing* where there should at least be the symbol of death necessarily throws us into a psychical void (Listoe 52; my emphasis).

The challenge for Holocaust Theater is similar to the one Brecht identifies in his diary. In the space of the theater, it is characters—and, therefore, spectators—who are faced with the task of seeing what cannot be entirely visible, saying what is practically unspeakable, and showing what is almost unimaginable. Listoe's reading of Brecht emphasizes the act of witnessing and seeing in relation to the tracelessness of the Holocaust's dead, a challenge faced by victims, survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust far before the world knew the extent of its horror. This chapter looks at how Juan Mayorga's Holocaust Theater addresses the following questions: How do the staging and performance of invisibility and danger to signify the ongoing Holocaust compel the writing and performance of alternative modes of "seeing" and "telling"? How is the Nazis' systematic concealment of the Holocaust—its horror hidden behind ghetto walls and secluded camps—become apparent to characters and spectators? How do characters communicate this horror to each other and beyond the stage? And, finally, how do these performances communicate and insist on justice for the victims of the Holocaust? Considering these, this chapter argues that, in plays such as *Himmelweg (Camino del cielo)* (2003) and *El cartógrafo. Varsovia 1:400.000* (2010), Mayorga challenges his characters to communicate the truth of the Holocaust using an intuitive, ethical mode of seeing and telling what is both invisible and unspeakable.[65] What I will refer to as *truth-seeing* and *truth-telling* and how and whether Mayorga's characters choose to do so are the catalysts for each of the dramas' unfolding.

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[65] *El Cartógrafo* was likely written in 2008 or 2009 and published for the first time in 2010 in the edited volume, *Memoria – política – justicia. En diálogo con Reyes Mate* (2010), but has never seen a full-length onstage performance. It is projected to enjoy its debut production in April 2014 in Warsaw with the idea of commemorating the sixty-one years that have passed since the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of April 19-May 16, 1943.

In a recent essay titled *"Cartografía teatral de espacios de excepción,"* Mayorga writes of contemporary theater's task in creating works that represent mass death and its profound losses. Citing Polish playwright Tadeusz Kantor, Mayorga writes: "Se trata, y cito palabras de Tadeusz Kantor, de dar a ver lo que 'vive fuera del alcance de nuestra vista' y de superar 'el umbral de lo visible', lo que constituye un desafío enorme para ese arte de la visión que es el teatro" ("Cartografía teatral"). José-Luis García Barrientos, in his analysis of Mayorga's Holocaust works, echoes this tension between the visible and invisible in Holocaust Theater when he asks, "¿Cómo poner en escena lo literalmente irrepresentable, lo que no puede ser mostrado *en vivo,* aquello cuya visión *inmediata* ningún ojo humano puede soportar?" (39).[66] In a similar vein, though referring to literature more broadly, in his essay titled "Seeing the Invisible Dimensions of the Holocaust," John K. Roth writes that "The greatest Holocaust literature makes visible the invisible dimensions of history. Moving beyond the analysis of cause and effect, penetrating subjective experience deeper than any science can, it strives to reveal what cannot be seen because once-existing eyes have been glazed by death" (149).[67] Robert Skloot has identified five objectives for "serious playwrights" who take on representing the Holocaust in their plays. These are "honoring the victims, teaching history to audiences, evoking emotional responses, discussing ethical issues, and suggesting solutions to universal, contemporary problems" (Skloot 1988: 10 and 1982: 14; Plunka 2009: 16). Skloot has also written of the challenge to playwrights who choose to represent genocide and the strategies they use to overcome them. Using as examples plays that address the genocide of native populations

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[66] For discussions of the nothingness and invisibility in the Holocaust and historical memory, see Bernard-Donals (2009), Listoe (2006), Keilbach (2009), Obrán (2007), and Roth (1986).

[67] The original title of *El cartógrafo* has undergone a few changes. It was originally *El cartógrafo de Hurbineka. Varsovia 1:400.000* and, following this, *El cartógrafo de Polonia,* while in its 2010 publication, the play appeared as *El Cartógrafo. Varsovia, 1:400.000.*

worldwide, Skloot notes how successful playwrights “invent images and action which have the capability to engage audiences in a way historical or critical writing cannot, asking those who came after the genocide/ethnocide to ponder the magnitude of the loss to the human community and the damage done to the ethical structures by which we live” (1990: 198-199). Mayorga approaches his own Holocaust-themed works with a similar critical and ethical intention, writing plays that challenge audiences to question their own assumptions and (mis)conceptions about the causes of the Holocaust and the characteristics of its perpetrators, bystanders, and victims. He also creates characters who engage their ethical responsibility in ways that reveal their strengths and weaknesses, in turn situating spectators in a similarly critical position. At a fundamental level, for Mayorga, the most effective Holocaust theatre compels spectators to ask themselves whether the evil that led to the Holocaust might still and in the future remain.

Among the enormous challenges for the Holocaust’s representability is how to perform the unimaginable suffering and loss of its victims. But it is not, as Gene A. Plunka has suggested, that the Holocaust is wholly unrepresentable; were it impossible to represent, he writes, then Holocaust literature would not continue to flourish as it does (2009: 15).[68] As Skloot has argued similarly, “There is no basis any longer for speaking of the Holocaust as unimaginable for, in addition to the historical fact that it was imagined by the German state fifty years ago, it has been reimagined in artistic fact numerous times since” (1988: 116). This does not take away from the difficulty of the Holocaust for theater, with the Holocaust’s degree of suffering and genocide defying any obvious or easy visual representation or performative enactment. The question of

[68] Plunka’s entire statement follows: “Although it is true that the Holocaust has no recognizable historical antecedent and is thus a unique event, the Shoah is not so incomprehensible or unfathomable as to relegate it to the realm of mysticism; if this were true, Holocaust literature would be virtually nonexistent instead of flourishing. Even the literature of atrocity, replete with acts of violence that seem incomprehensible to the civilized mind, can be perceived as an explicable event; in short, a logical person can make sense of an illogical phenomenon. Wiesel and Adorno, however, do serve an important purpose in Holocaust studies, for they are the watchdogs for writers who may go to extremes in their callous or trivial treatment of a sacred historical event” (2009: 15).

representing the Holocaust must in some way address questions not only of historical accuracy but also ethical questions that suggest—without knowing—what only its victims could have understood. What this has meant for theater, whose means of communication are spatial, visible/audible, and temporal, is that how a playwright and director choose to communicate the Holocaust in the space of the theater stretches actors' and spectators' capacities to "see" what is both silent and invisible.

In his 2010 study on the Theater of the Imagination, William Gruber analyzes the two spaces of action in theater—the mimetic and the diegetic—originally contrasted in Plato's *Republic* (Books II, III, and X) and then again in Aristotle's *Poetics* (Chapters 23 and 24). Mimetic, onstage action—derived from the Greek word *mimesis,* meaning "imitation"—is the action that spectators can see taking place onstage *as it is happening*, while diegetic action—derived from *diegesis,* the Greek word meaning "to guide through" (Halliwell)—has taken or is taking place offstage, so that spectators' only way of "seeing" it is through words, usually in the form of an *onstage* narration or description (Gruber 6). Fundamental to *diegetic* action, then, is its dependence on language as the path to the spectator's imagination. But if the action *is not* or *cannot be* narrated, as is so often the case of the Holocaust's unspeakable fear and silence-inducing horror, it may be equally impossible for spectators to "see" it with their imaginations. I argue that Mayorga recasts the classic distinction between *diegetic* and *mimetic* action in his Holocaust Theater by displacing language and narration as *diegetic* action's exclusive or primary means of guiding audiences to "see" or imagine it.[69]

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[69] For more on theater and the representation of absence and horror in the context of the Holocaust see Listoe (2006); Plunka (2012 and 2009); Rokem (2000); Isser (1997); and *Staging the Holocaust: The Shoah in drama and performance* (1998), edited by Claude Schumacher. For studies on the representation of the Holocaust in Mayorga's theater, see Colombo (2012), Floeck (2012), March; Gabriele (2010); and Gorría Ferrín (2013).

In *Himmelweg (Camino del cielo)* (2003) and *El cartógrafo. Varsovia, 1:400.000* (2010), Mayorga replaces language-based narration of the Holocaust's horror with visual, performative, and "cartographic" ways of making the Holocaust's concealed horror known. The following analysis of these two works explores how Mayorga addresses the (in)visible and ethical aspects of *truth-seeing* and *truth-telling* as well as their deeply negligent counterpart: what is ostensibly neutral but in reality willful and negligent blindness to the *truth*. *Truth-seeing*, I argue, is distinct from witnessing insofar as it is more intuition-based than vision-based, while *truth-telling* is distinct from testimony because it takes on a visible and tangible rather than narrative form, being in this way not traditionally linked to language or diegetic description. *Truth-seeing* and *truth-telling* as they appear in Mayorga's Holocaust Theater have a clear objective—to warn the rest of the world and, with equal urgency, future generations, of the devastating risk of not-*seeing* the signs that warn of or indicate an impending or ongoing catastrophe of the Holocaust's proportions. In *Himmelweg* and *Cartógrafo,* the movements and decisions of most characters are constrained by the Nazis' systematic concealment and silencing of the ongoing genocide. The analysis of these two works addresses the in/visibility of the Holocaust's horror from the perspective of whether and how Mayorga's characters *truth-see* and *tell.* But being entirely surrounded by unimaginable danger and aware of the Holocaust's "invisibility" to the outside world compels certain of Mayorga's characters to *truth-see* and *truth-tell,* even at the risk of losing their lives.

***Truth-Seeing* and *Truth-Telling* in Counterpoint**

> *I give you truth in the pleasant disguise of illusion.*[70]

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[70] This quote from Williams' play also appears in the epigraph to Chapter 4 of Robert L. King's *The Ethos of Drama: Rhetorical Theory and Dramatic Worth* (2010), a chapter titled "Memory and Ethos."

-Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*

When Joseph Goebbels forbade art criticism on November 27, 1936, he sought to replace it with "art reporting" which, in his words, "should not be concerned with values, but should confine itself to description" (Goebbels; qtd. in Mosse 2003: 162-163).[71] Goebbels was setting the stage for a sinister mixture of art, superficial seeing, and genocide that made way for Holocaust's systematic invisibility. I would argue that Goebbels' art project for the German nation was expressly counter to *truth-seeing*, since it allowed for only the most superficial engagement with art, essentially promoting the idea of remaining willfully blind to anything that was not immediately visible to the spectator's eyes. Philosopher Zygmunt Bauman writes that the Nazis' intent to orchestrate a genocide as a way to reengineer Europe's population was akin to a gardener pulling weeds—the intent was to extract what was undesirable in order to engineer a "new" population in their image of a "model of a perfect universe" (198). Writes Bauman of the Nazis, "Their destruction was *creative* destruction, much as the destruction of weeds is a creative act in pursuit of a designed garden beauty" (198).[72] Bauman writes that, even when internationally renowned and "civilized" newspapers such as *The Times, The New York Times,* and *Le Figaro* reported on the Nazis, they painted the picture of an idealized society, waxing "lyrical . . . of the streets shining with cleanliness and with law and order—no strife, no mass demonstrations, no protest marches, no terrorist acts, just peaceful, hospitable, well fed and smiling people" (194-5). Similarly, Stanley Payne has compared the Nazis' genocidal operation to the medical performance of surgery, whose objective is to extract any diseased parts of the

[71] Goebbels original declaration was published in *Der Deutsche Schriftstellar,* Jargh. I, Heft 12 (1936), pp. 280 ff. Reprinted in Rolf Geissler, *dekadenz und Heroismus* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1964), p. 30, n. 20.

[72] Bauman's *Life in Fragments: Essays in Postmodern Morality* (1995) offers a retrospective, postmodern study of the dismantling of an ethical code and fragmentation of society in the scientific, systematic genocidal campaigns carried out by both Hitler and Stalin.

body (98). Combining these two metaphors, the Nazis conceived of themselves arguably like modern-day cosmetic surgeons, engaged in a process of creatively destroying—that is, cutting out, transferring, and eliminating those parts of society they considered ugly or noxious and replacing it with a desired image. The Nazis' use of visible media and propaganda and their emphasis on appearance and physical traits to communicate the *image* of their racist-nationalist program and "new" population made the act of seeing itself an active part of political discourse. Since the Nazis systematically disguised the horrors of their actions with an aestheticized and "beautified" reality, what was visible to the outside world was never a complete or "true" picture. The Nazis' emphasis on the appearance of order is related to both the hiddenness of the *truth,* whose very invisibility I argue challenges Mayorga's characters to use alternative means of *seeing* and *telling*—that is, intuitive, ethical ways of seeing and visible, tactile ways of telling. I argue that, under these conditions, and with millions of lives at stake, *truth-seeing* and *truth-telling* are the only effective ways of accessing the *truth* of the Holocaust—an argument we'll see echoed and performed in *Cartógrafo.*

In her 1945 essay, "Approaches to the 'German Problem'," Hannah Arendt argued that fascism—but perhaps more accurately Nazism—had devised a "new," pervasive, and sinister form of lying, "the most devilish variation—that of *lying* the truth" (111). The Nazis' gross manipulation of reality took the form of a clean, positive, orderly image of German society, an image they disseminated throughout the nation and the world through films and other propaganda. These visual media displays and staged "documentary" films exemplify Arendt's notion of the Nazis' "lying truth" as well as what scholars have termed "fascist aesthetics," the "fascist spectacle," and the "beautification of politics," to use Benjamin's phrase (Koepnick 85). Hannah Arendt wrote in 1945:

> It was always a too little noted hallmark of fascist propaganda that it was not satisfied with lying but deliberately proposed to transform its lies into reality. . . . The essential characteristic of fascist propaganda was never its lies, for this is something more or less common to propaganda everywhere and of every time. The essential thing was that they exploited the age-old Occidental prejudice which *confuses reality with truth*, and made that "true" which until then could only be stated as a lie.[73] (Arendt "Seeds" 146-147; my emphasis)

For Arendt, the Nazis visibly performed a "reality" based on its own untruths. "Reality," as it were, appeared to be "true" despite being a gross, cosmetically altered surface that systematically concealed the horrors the Nazis were committing. Susan Sontag wrote in her article "Fascinating Fascism" (1975) that in the fascist system, rather than reality being used to create an image, it was reality that was refashioned and reengineered— or, as Arendt writes above, it was reality that "lied"—in the service of the image. The Nazis used art and aesthetics to transform civic and spiritual life by making visible *only* those elements of society that promoted and performed their myth of social order and beauty to the absolute exclusion, eradication and subsequent extermination of any undesirable element of society (Mosse 1999: 157). As if to exemplify the Nazis' pervasive lies, Leni Riefanstahl, a filmmaker friend of Hitler who produced Nazi propaganda films, denied in a 1965 interview that any of the Nazis' propagandistic images were false or staged: "'Everything is genuine. And there is no tendentious commentary for the simple reason that there is no commentary at all. It is *history*—pure history'" (Sontag).[74]

[73] Arendt's "The Seeds of a Fascist International" was first published in *Jewish Frontier* in June 1945.
[74] Susan Sontag, in her article "Fascinating Fascism" (1975) writes of filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, who helped Hitler produce Nazi propaganda and then, after the war, denied that any of it was fake, saying in a 1965 interview for the French magazine *Cahiers,* "Not a single scene is staged" (Sontag "Fascinating Fascism").

In the analysis that follows, spectators are faced with two sides of the "lying truth"—one constructed in the form of unconventional maps created in order to survive and prevent further inhuman cruelty (*El Cartógrafo),* and the other in order to uphold and perpetuate it *(Himmelweg).* Mayorga arranges both works in chronologically fragmented accounts, through vignettes, performances, hand drawn images or maps, and frozen moments in time, all of which purposefully betray a classically narrative diegetic account of the Holocaust's history. Critic Wilfredo Floeck suggests that the non-linear strategy that Mayorga uses in both *Himmelweg* and *Cartógrafo* to make the Holocaust a reality onstage exemplifies a particularly Spanish iteration of postmodern theater—one that, for Floeck, has "sostenido una pretención ética" and is not attached to fixed truths (2012). By appealing more to spectators' intellect and senses than to their emotions, writes Floeck, Mayorga also places more of the imaginative burden on spectators to actively and ethically "see" the horror that is invisible to them (2012). Both works speak to Benjamin's notion of the aestheticization of politics and fascism mentioned above, and touch upon on the role of Nazi propaganda and Nazi-sponsored concealment, distortion, and manipulation of the *truth* to enact and perpetuate fear and the Holocaust itself. *Truth-seeing* and *truth-telling* emerge as acts of intuitive, ethical perception and responsibility. Both *Himmelweg* and *Cartógrafo* take place both during the Holocaust and in the present day, with both plays using distinctly different strategies for jumping back and forth between historical moments and contexts.

Himmelweg takes as its impetus the 1944 International Red Cross visit to the Theresienstadt/Terezin concentration camp during the Holocaust for which the Nazis "beautified" the camp, forcing its prisoners to perform an idyllic, pleasant existence for the outside world. As is the case with all of Mayorga's works that treat historical subjects and

events, these plays does not pretend to be historicist or to reproduce historical events as they were. That is, while there are elements of the historical events surrounding this Red Cross visit to the camp as well as aspects of the Terezin camp that appear in the play, there are many more elements that Mayorga does not derive directly from this history. These are elements, I argue, that appear as an unfolding—*un despliegue*—of the layers of meaning surrounding this past and meant to reveal moments, postures, actions and words that Mayorga sees as critical to an ethical engagement with the Holocaust's reality in the present (Brizuela). *Himmelweg* opens with the Red Cross worker speaking to the audience from the present day in an extended monologue/dialogue in which he shows himself painfully aware of what he catastrophically did not *"see"*—or *truth-see*, as I will argue—at the time. In subsequent scenes, spectators must take on different historical and ethical postures. In one scene, spectators are privy to the rehearsals of Jewish prisoners trying to follow the Nazi Kommandant's script, while in another, the audience takes the very position of the Red Cross worker, with the Nazi Kommandant speaking directly to them in an extended monologue that seems to take place both during the Red Cross visit and after the Holocaust. In *Cartógrafo,* meanwhile, Mayorga adopts an entirely different strategy of making the past present and the present literally, spatially enter into the past. In 37 brief scenes, Mayorga intermixes two plots—as mentioned above, one featuring a young girl and her cartographer grandfather living in the Warsaw Ghetto during the Holocaust, and that of a modern day Spanish couple, Blanca and Raúl, he a Spanish diplomat recently assigned to Warsaw. Eight of the total thirty-seven scenes in *Cartógrafo* are still or semi-still silent scenes of a sort of photographic moment such as the little girl and her grandfather hiding in silence in an attic, or a scene in which characters cross each other's paths in silence, each engrossed in her own *truth-seeing* endeavor. With a focus on the ethical, visual, and temporal dilemmas that the protagonists

of each work face, I consider both the tangible forms that *truth-seeing* and *truth-telling* take as well as the far-reaching ethical, historical, and life-saving/sacrificing ramifications these acts can have.

Himmelweg (Camino del cielo)

Mayorga has treated the issue of neutrality with respect to the Holocaust's horror in two of his dramatic adaptations, both derived from Holocaust survivor narratives: *Wstawac: Homenaje a Primo Levi* (2007) and *Job (A partir del Libro de Job y de textos de Elie Wiesel, Zvi Kolitz y Etti Hillesum)* (2004). In these texts, Mayorga constructs neutrality as an unethical posture in the face of atrocity, a form of willful blindness that is tantamount to complicity. I define willful blindness as the deliberate and unethical turning away from others' suffering, in this case the ongoing mass-murder of innocent victims. Both *Wstawac* and *Job* underscore Paul Celan's idea that, even though language was rendered "answerless" by the Holocaust, language was also the only thing to survive its horror (Celan "Bremen"; qtd. in Felman and Laub 25).[75] The protagonists in Mayorga's *Wtsawac* and *Job* consciously shift their burden of witnessing and traumatized "answerlessness" onto their interlocutor, demanding a response. A critical element of this ethical dialogue is that the interlocutor—whether bystanders, spectators, or God—are imbued with a similar expressive incapacity, derived not from the Holocaust's *truth* as a silencing trauma, but from the interlocutor's own posture of ethical refusal, "neutrality," and neglect. The issue of neutrality was especially relevant during the Holocaust—not only because

[75] Shoshana Felman writes of Celan's "Bremen Speech," that it was an address he gave as an acceptance speech for the Literature Prize of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen in 1958 (25, footnote 22). Felman uses John Felstiner's translation of the "Bremen Speech" as it appears in "Translating Celan's Last Poem," in *The American Poetry Review,* July/August 1982. P. 23.

of certain nations declaring themselves neutral with respect to the Axis or Allies, but also with respect to how the International Red Cross addressed rumors of mass deaths in the Nazi camps.

Himmelweg (Camino del cielo) (2004) is Mayorga's most widely-known, performed, and translated play; it is also the one that Mayorga himself considers *"menos mala"* relative to the rest of this work (Mayorga "Resistencia").[76] As mentioned above, Mayorga's *Himmelweg* is based on the infamously failed International Red Cross visit to the Terezin/Theresienstadt concentration camp in 1944. The visit was called for and intended to verify that the Nazis were not committing rumored atrocities in the camps after the Danish delegation of the Red Cross responded to Danish Jews having been deported to camps. In preparation for the visit, however, the Nazis orchestrated a "beautification" campaign that successfully deceived the Red Cross workers into believing and reporting to the world that nothing wrong was happening inside the camps. Mayorga's *Himmelweg* begins with the extended monologue of the Red Cross worker who, years later, remembers and laments but ultimately justifies having not-*seen* the concealed *truth* of the atrocities the Nazis were committing behind closed doors. In Mayorga's *Himmelweg*, the stance of neutrality, far from neutral, amounts to a form of negligent, willful blindness to the *truth*. Though Mayorga does not judge the Red Cross worker in his play, there is, underlying the character's monologue, the idea that there was a critical moment during his visit in which the Red Cross worker had the choice of whether to *"see"* the invisible *truth* of the Holocaust, having *chosen* instead not to *see*.[77] The actions, motivations of the Red Cross Worker, the Nazi Kommandant, and the Jewish leader can be analyzed in terms of the tension between ethical acts

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[76] See the Appendix for information on performances and translations of *Himmelweg*.
[77] One assessment of the role of neutrality during the Holocaust suggests that the neutrality adopted by the International Red Cross and nations like Switzerland amounted to a form of compromised, neglectful blindness, see Favez (2000).

and conditions that lead to the "neutralization of the moral constraints of action" (Bauman *Fragments* 195).

The Nazis' 1944 "beautification" campaign of the Terezin/Theresienstadt camp was intended to dispel the so-called rumors of Nazi atrocities. To this end, the Nazis forced and trained the Jews to rehearse and perform a charade of joy and pleasantness, as seen in the propaganda film titled *The Führer gives the Jews a Town*, made just after the Red Cross visit.[78] Mayorga's *Himmelweg* opens with the Red Cross worker—a fictional character that Mayorga based on Swiss delegate Maurice Rossel, the Red Cross delegate who in 1944 wrote a report confirming the camp's acceptable conditions. The Red Cross worker's opening monologue addresses spectators directly from a moment in time *after* the Holocaust's end—presumably the present day—now tragically aware that he was so catastrophically deceived by the Nazis' intentional "beautification" of a community of Jews who were all sent to their deaths. The play is structured in five distinct parts, each of which sheds light on the others but none of which follows the previous one chronologically. In the first part, *"Relojero,"* the Red Cross worker speaks directly to the audience in an extended diegetic monologue relaying his account of what happened years earlier when he visited the camp and was guided through its buildings by the Nazi Kommandant and the Jewish elder, Gershom Gottfried. The second part, *"Humo,"* consists of successive rehearsals of different scenes performed by the Jewish prisoners—their words are stilted and their movements are stiff, and they are clearly nervous. The third part, titled *"Así será el silencio de la paz,"* the Nazi Kommandant speaks to the audience directly, but in this case the

[78] Only about twenty minutes of the Nazis' documentary-propaganda film, *The Führer gives the Jews a Town*, by Kurt Gerron, survived. The movie was filmed on the grounds of Theresienstadt between August 16 and September 11, 1944, and using all Jewish prisoners who were soon thereafter transported to a death camp and gassed in the chambers. The original title of the movie is *Der Führer schenkt den Juden eine Stadt. Bilder – Impressionen – Reportagen – Dokumente* (Käthe Starke, Berlin: Haude aund Spenersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1975; Roy Kift "Reality and illusion in the Theresienstadt cabaret" in *Staging the Holocaust,* ed. Claude Schumaker (149).

audience takes on the identity of the Red Cross worker. The same description that the Red Cross worker had given of his visit is now corroborated in the first person by the Kommandant enacting or re-performing the same visit—it is as if he is guiding the entire audience through the camp, situating the audience in the position of the Red Cross worker who had neglected to *truth-see.* In the fourth section, titled *"Corazón de Europa,"* the Nazi Kommandant engages in a dialogue with Gershom Gottfried, elder and de-facto leader of the Jews in the camp, instructing Gottfried on how the Jewish "actors" should perform the script that the Kommandant has created for them. Gottfried tries to explain to the Kommandant, for example, that people don't naturally speak in such a stilted fashion and/or that the "actors" are nervous or anxious about remembering their lines and performing them correctly. Underlying his concern is an "ugly *truth"* that is never made explicit in the play—that is, that the "actors" are aware that their missing their lines or mis-performing any aspect of the script will result in their being sent to their deaths. At this point in the play, the audience has already seen these successive performances in Scene II "Humo," in which the "actors" who mess up their lines are swiftly replaced by others who will more likely do as they're told without modifying the script. In his conversation with Gottfried Gershom, the Kommandant expounds on the role of theater, performance and the role of the actor, and speaks about the youth as the future, a future that Gottfried must realize does not include those young Jewish "actors" in the camp. The fifth and last scene of the play is titled *"Una canción para acabar"* and it is here that Gottfried is seen interacting with the Jews, helping them remember their lines and fearful of what mistakes they might make. In the final scene of the play, the young girl who, in the rehearsed scenes, is supposed to perform herself teaching her doll how to swim in the river, goes off script, aware, as are the other female characters in the play, that what they are performing is a farce—that the sounds of the train and the ashes that wash down the river

signify only their certain, traceless death. Mayorga reveals in the final line of the play that this young girl is indeed Gottfried's daughter and that they have both already suffered an immense loss—the little girl's mother, Gottfried's wife, was either separated from them when they were taken or has already been murdered by the Nazis.

When *Himmelweg* opens with the Red Cross Worker addressing the audience directly, the audience is immediately placed in the position of having to determine the Red Cross worker's credibility in a way that cannot but put each audience member in his shoes. Just as the Red Cross worker berates himself for not having *seen* the ongoing *truth* behind closed doors—for having taken at face value what he saw and what was said to him, so must spectators ask themselves those same questions. What, in his shoes, might spectators have done in similar circumstances? What would they do today if faced with the same challenge? He explains to the audience in the opening scene how deeply he laments his not having seen what was truly going on, but ultimately justifies his own "blindness" by insisting that he was doing as he was told. His task was to report on what he saw with his eyes or captured through his camera lens. Recalling his tour of the camp, he recounts how he'd thought to himself, "Yo he venido a mirar. Yo soy los ojos del mundo. Yo voy a salir de aquí con muchas fotografías y un informe contando lo que he visto" (6). He uses the neutrality of his post with the Red Cross as a way of justifying not only his not having *seen* the *truth,* but also his non-critical posture. He had leaned on his neutrality in order not to inquire beyond the Nazi Kommandant and the Jewish mayor's words. In particular, he had neglected to question the validity of the Kommandant's description of the use and purpose of each building in the camp. Tragically, if the Red Cross worker had pushed beyond the door of what the Kommandant said was the infirmary at the end of the ramp called the *himmelweg* or "way to heaven," he might have seen the horrifying reality that the Nazis'

"beautification" campaign was concealing—that the infirmary was not the infirmary but the gas chamber and that the *"camino del cielo"* was not the way to heaven but its exact opposite: the way to hell and a certain death for any and all Jews who entered.

The Red Cross worker, as an outsider, bystander and observer, hides behind the rules that define his job—the "simple" task of seeing and reporting he has been given. As he repeats, he had only reported on what he'd seen with *los ojos del cuerpo.* He even insists to the audience that he felt satisfied that he was doing his job well—he'd reported "objectively" on what was visible to him and his camera. But, in his reflection, he also tells the audience about his regret upon completing his task upon returning to Berlin: "Mi memoria vuelve a escribirlo todas las noches. La gente me pregunta: '¿No viste los hornos?'. '¿No viste los trenes?'. No, yo no vi nada de eso. '¿El humo?'. '¿La ceniza?'. No. Todo aquello que dicen que había aquí yo no pude verlo" (9). The question that this raises is whether he was unable or unwilling to see. I would argue, based on his own doubts and his having noticed certain automaton-type movements and speech in the character of Gottfried—the Jewish assistant to the Kommandant—, that the Red Cross worker had been *unwilling* to push beyond the door and *see* the *truth.* His decision, however, had been based on fear. In not pushing beyond the door, he does not have to face the darkest evidence of whether the monstrous rumors that were circulating outside the camp were true. It is in this way that his decision not to *truth-see* or *tell* emerges as a deliberate, fear-based choice.

As mentioned earlier, Mayorga is careful not to make characters who are victims of violence simple or wholly innocent or faultless, while constructing villainous characters as similarly not one-sided. In this sense, the Nazi Kommandant in *Himmelweg* is a complex character that has challenged audiences. Spectators, aware of the violence he must be capable of

in order to carry out his post, also see a Kommandant that is an avid reader of literature and philosophy's greatest works and speaks fondly of high culture. This makes spectators have a difficult time condemning the Kommandant as monstrous in a way that easily justifies their own inculpability and moral standing against the Holocaust. Mayorga's idea here is to challenge spectators' conception of how close to oneself this degree of violence against humanity can reside. The Nazi Kommandant speaks of Europe in terms of its cultural virtues and its greats, among them a plethora of great works by authors the likes of Shakespeare, Corneille, and Calderón. These make up his library in the camp, which as he points out consists of the 100 books he was allowed to bring from his home. In his view, these great works and authors serve as the foundation of a "civilized" European culture (20, 24). He uses these, however, to justify the Nazis' actions. The Nazi Kommandant in Mayorga's *Himmelweg* cites Spinoza's *Ética*, for example, specifically the idea that the greatest love will overcome hatred and pain. In the Kommandant's view, Spinoza's idea will lead to a "unified" Europe where there are no winners and no losers. He then asks spectators to close their eyes so that they can "imagine" this new world:

> COMANDANTE. Cierren los ojos: así será el silencio de la paz. Cierren los ojos. Spinoza dice que el odio será superado por un amor tan intenso como el odio que lo precedió. El mundo marcha hacia la unidad. Esta guerra es un paso enorme hacia eso. Una aceleración en un movimiento inevitable hacia la armonía. Un sólo idioma, una sola moneda, un sólo camino. . . . Todos ganaremos esta guerra. Algún día no sabremos distinguir entre vencedores y vencidos. Entretanto, habrá dolor, pero todo ese dolor es necesario. (Act III, p. 20)

In the Kommandant's vision of a unified Europe—which he tries to describe and have spectators imagine—, he also portrays Germany and the Nazis, his *"nosotros,"* as those who have finally resolved a "problem" that the rest of Europe has been trying and failing to battle for centuries.

In both the Kommandant and the Red Cross worker's diegetic accounts, the Kommandant, who is clearly aware of the presence of the gas chamber at the end of the "way to heaven" and behind the door that the Red Cross worker neglects to push, does not make obvious efforts to dissuade the worker from pushing beyond the door. In fact, Mayorga has the Kommandant jokingly make indirect references to what truly happens there in an act of incredible self-confidence. In the Kommandant's monologue he even encourages the spectators—whom he speaks to as if they were also workers—to go ahead and take pictures: "Fotografían las flores, si quieren. Hagan fotografías. Nosotros queremos que hagan fotografías. Y, sobre todo, abran bien los ojos y cuenten al mundo lo que han visto. El mundo necesita saber. Ustedes son los ojos del mundo. Va a servirles de guía uno de ellos" (22). Meanwhile, what the spectator sees in the scenes with the rehearsing "actors" is a façade. And if the stage features a ramp, as it has in various productions of this work, it leads to nothing—total emptiness, a void, the powerful non-presence of the Holocaust's genocide. As he "guides" the audience through the deteriorated camp, he comes to the ramp called the *himmelweg*/"way to heaven," which leads to the gas chamber, the absent space behind the door that he deceptively refers to as the infirmary. It is here that the Kommandant engages in the following rhetorical "dialogue" with the audience:

> COMANDANTE. Y allí estaba, claro, el 'Himmelweg', ¿lo recuerdan? No sé si fueron ellos o si fuimos nosotros los primeros en llamarlo así. ¿Sabrían decirlo en alemán? 'Jim-mel-beck'. Díganlo en su idioma: 'Camino del

cielo'. Todo eso ha desaparecido, pero ellos siguen aquí. Todos, no falta ninguno. Los columpios, la sinagoga, todo se lo tragó el bosque, pero ellos siguen aquí. Ellos y el reloj de la estación, marcando siempre las seis en punto. Si no fuera por ellos y por ese viejo reloj, nada diferenciaría este bosque de cualquier otro. Me estaba preguntando si no se habrían confundido de bosque, si la sombra del humo sería suficiente. Sí, éste es el bosque. Sean bienvenidos una vez más. Y, una vez más, permítanme recomendarles prudencia. *No confíen en lo que vean*." (Act III, p. 21; my italics)

With this final line, the Kommandant invites spectators into the charade, telling them they should be prudent and not believe what they see. By asking spectators directly to repeat the word *himmelweg* in their native language (not German), the Kommandant is having them literally and physically place this catastrophic irony in their mouths, making the *himmelweg* more "Spanish" just by virtue of its translation. In his monologue, the Nazi Kommandant speaks to spectators as though they, too, had been there with the Red Cross workers and carried out this same inspection when the camp was still functioning as such. In so doing, he implicates the audience as well. He tells them that, if they are interested in seeing the trains, they must hide out in the forest overnight. What they will *see*, however, is unimaginable and, he assures them, no one outside the camp will believe them:

COMANDANTE. Todo es posible. Todo lo que podamos soñar, podemos hacerlo realidad. Aquí, en este mundo. Incluso lo que nunca nos hemos atrevido a imaginar. Eso es, señoras y señores, lo que les aguarda en el bosque: aquello que se puede ver, pero que no se puede imaginar. Por eso, sea lo

> que sea lo que vayan a ver aquí, no lo cuenten. No serían creídos, y si insistiesen, serían tomados por locos. Permítanme un consejo: nada más salir de aquí, *empiecen a olvidar.* (Act III, p. 22; emphasis mine)

The Kommandant's addressing the audience in this way makes the spectator an interactive participant or bystander of the violence that had taken place there even if he or she does not move from the theater seat or say a word. Spectators, then, are the cultural and historical outsiders that cannot pronounce *"himmelweg"* in German and must instead mouth *"camino del cielo"* translated into Spanish.

The two critical moments of transgression in *Himmelweg* are in the hands and words of the two female speaking characters—the young woman on the park bench and the little girl in the river asked to teach her doll how to swim. The Jewish prisoners playing "actors" that perform and rehearse the Nazi Kommandant's script hide their very condition, but with every successive rehearsal, spectators notice a slight alteration or adjustment, either in the "cast"—the Kommandant switches "actors" out when he's dissatisfied with their performance in a rehearsal—or the characters' lines. For example, from the first to the second rehearsal, "actors" playing one role in the first are replaced by other "actors" in the second. The morbid implication is that the Nazi Kommandant has exterminated the actors in the initial performance because he has deemed them inadequate and therefore expendable. In other cases, for example, the little girl breaks out of character and makes direct contact with an audience member. However, with each subsequent rehearsal, her performance is further stripped of its masking effect and the audience sees the gradual deterioration of the play within the play. The "actors" gradually shed their theatrical façade so that the only thing that is left is the downtrodden, confused, and forlorn concentration camp prisoner. Interestingly, it is the female characters, in particular the young girl

showing her doll how to swim and the first young Jewish woman in their rehearsals who, though eventually replaced by a different "actress" in successive rehearsals, nevertheless performs a *seeing* that constantly searches for the truth of their reality. In the Kommandant's hoax is a scene in which a young man and woman sitting on a park bench have a romantic exchange in which he gives her a gift. While they are sitting and performing their scene, the sound of the trains and the sight of smoke continue to take her out of character. "¿Tú no los oyes? Los trenes." He completely ignores her question and stays in character, continuing to talk about his successes at "work." "¿Qué haces para no oírlos?" she insists. "El humo. ¿No lo ves? ¿Qué haces para no verlo?" (16). The woman and the little girl, in *Himmelweg* are similarly capable of *truth-seeing* and, moreover, risking all to *truth-tell.* The woman in this scene is searching for the truth, questioning those that surround her, and unwilling to conform to what she's been asked to do, while the young man repeatedly ignores her question, pretending to be entirely oblivious to the *truth* they can both *see.* That he is a victim as well reveals the dimension of desperate danger amongst victims in the Kommandant's hoax; this young man undoubtedly acts oblivious in order to protect his standing and garner favor in the camp—or, of course, simply to survive.

In Act IV, a multipart scene titled *"El corazón de Europa,"* the character of the Jewish mayor in the camp, Gershom Gottfried, is summoned by the Kommandant to "translate" Jewish culture to him while he develops the script that the Jews will perform for the Red Cross worker. The Kommandant has also asked Gottfried to select among the prisoners those that will appear in the beautification performances for the Red Cross delegation—performances that take on titles just like scenes in a play: "Vendedor de globos," "Niños de la peonza," "Niño con muñeco," and "Pareja del banco" (32-33). Gottfried's choices for the performances are, by a process of elimination, selections for death—those that Gottfried did *not* choose would be transported off

the camp. Like the young man on the bench, Gottfried must similarly act. Gottfrield occupies the "gray zone" that Primo Levi designated as the zone in which Jews served as intermediaries between the Nazis and the Jews and often had to make choices that resulted in more deaths for the Jews (*Drowned* 2). And Gottfried is clearly aware of this eventuality. At the end of one of his dialogues with the Kommandant, after the Kommandant asks him to lessen the number of "actors" in the scene of the plaza, Gottfried's reaction is to have his attention elsewhere.

> COMANDANTE. . . . ¿Me escucha, Gottfried? ¿Qué está mirando?
>
> *Gottfried está mirando hacia lo alto, a lo lejos.*
>
> GOTTFRIED. El humo. (33)

There is another critical moment of transgression in Gottfried, which according to the Red Cross worker's monologue, occurred when Gottfried is giving the Red Cross worker the tour along with the Kommandant. Gottfried, too, has a script he must follow, and he digresses. When the Kommandant later points this out to Gottfried, disgusted at the "actors'" imperfect performances of the script, the Kommandant calls Gottfried out for the same: "¿Y su monólogo? El monólogo del reloj, Gottfried, ¡el monólogo del reloj!" (34) Moments later, when rehearsing Gottfried's monologue, the Kommandant acts as director again—as if Gottfried were more a puppet than a human: "Es su gran momento, Gottfried, no puede desaprovecharlo de ese modo. Se ve que no sabe dónde meterse las manos. Si necesita un objeto, empléelo. Un libro, un palo… ¡Un bastón! Un bastón, eso es: necesita un bastón para caminar. Además, así tapará otros detalles. Si eres manco y tienes ojos azules, nadie se fija en tus ojos" (35). Then, in a painfully ironic act, the Kommandant instructs Gottfried to draw from his personal experience, on his having a wife and daughter (36)—he asks Gottfried to draw from these relationships the passion and commitment he'll need to describe the Nuremburg clock to the Red Cross Worker: "No está pasando un

examen oral en el colegio, está hablando del reloj de su ciudad. Está orgulloso de este reloj, muy orgulloso. Fíjese en mi mirada…" (36) But Gottfried, again, is transfixed, and says absently: "Sigo oyendo los trenes. No sólo yo, todos los oímos. No dormimos esperando el ruido del tren. Nos pasamos las noches mirando el techo del barracón, a la espera del tren" (36). We can assume from the Kommandant's comments and Gottfried's own words at the end of the play when he is no longer acting as "mayor" or translator, that Gottfried complies and "helps" the Kommandant in order to protect himself and his family. Up until the very end of the play, it is never obvious that Gottfried *"truth-sees,"* except in his conversations with the Kommandant in which he occasionally communicates his worried state and mentions hearing the trains and seeing their smoke. In a scene in which the Kommandant is evaluating the different "actors'" and their performances, Gottfried becomes distracted in a way similar to the young woman. He hears the sound of the trains and, diverting his attention from the Kommandant, who is midsentence and deep into a high culture tirade, Gottfried absently says: "Sigo oyendo trenes. No sólo yo, todos los oímos. No dormimos esperando el ruido del tren. Nos pasamos las noches mirando el techo del barracón, a la espera del tren" (36). The Kommandant responds, though dismissively, treating Gottfried as if he were a child: "Concéntrese en este pensamiento, Gottfried: 'Yo no viajo en ese tren. Mientras esté aquí, yo no viajo en ese tren'" (31). But the only assurance that the Kommandant can give him, cruelly, is that "his" people should repeat the following words to themselves: "'Mientras estemos aquí, no estamos en ese tren'" (37).

The malicious, purposeful blindness of the Kommandant, and the neglectful blindness of the Red Cross, coupled with the circumscribed *truth-seeing* of Gottfried points to yet another *seeing*-related issue—the role of fear and the impulse for survival. In his *The Darkness We Carry: The Drama of the Holocaust* (1998), Robert Skloot analyzes the notion of "choice and/or

survival" in theories about the Holocaust and in Holocaust-themed plays. Skloot suggests that the dramatic representation of choice/survival is practically constitutive of Holocaust Theater itself:

> In a definite way, our understanding of Holocaust history as well as Holocaust drama depends on our understanding the nature of the victims' choice presented to the audience. Conventional wisdom, historical and social, indicates that without exercising choice we cannot insure survival; theatrical wisdom insists that without dramatizing choice we can have no theatre, certainly not in the ways we are used to knowing it (11).

In the fifth and final act of *Himmelweg*, it is Gottfried that plays the role of the director of the Kommandant's play, as he directly passes along the Kommandant's instructions for how the "actors" should rehearse their roles. In the final moments, Gottfried is directing the young girl whose task it is to perform teaching her doll how to swim. He grabs the doll, shows her how to hold it, and how she should greet the man—the Red Cross worker—when she sees him. It is at this point, at the very end of the play, that spectators learn for certain that the little girl with the doll is Gottfried's daughter. "Si lo haces bien," Gottfried tells her, "volveremos a ver a mama. Ella va a venir en uno de esos trenes. Si hacemos lo que nos piden. No vamos a perder la paciencia, ¿verdad, Rebeca? Lo haremos tantas veces como sea necesario hasta que mamá vuelva, ¿verdad que lo vamos a hacer tantas veces como haga falta? Si tú puedes, yo también podré. Y si yo no pudiese, si yo perdiese la paciencia, tú no la perderás. Tú vas a seguir hasta el final" (45). Gottfried shows himself to be at the limits of his own ability to respond, to make any decision at all to save himself or any of the others, and puts his energy into saving his daughter—into passing on the ability to survive the *truth.* He reminds her to sing the song that her mother used to sing, "¿Te acuerdas de aquella que mamá te cantaba para dormir? Una canción para acabar" (45). In this final moment of *Himmelweg,* Mayorga chooses a young girl to carry on the

glimmer of hope in the space of certain death—it is Gottfried that sings Rebeca the song. She gets up, takes the doll in her hand, and begins to sing.

Fear, the threat of death and consequential, potentially life-saving compliance of victims/survivors are factors in how and whether a character decides to *truth-see*. Under the inhuman conditions of the Holocaust, victims or survivors' possibilities for making decisions at all are circumscribed by the desperate need to survive coupled with the threat of absolute death for merely existing. To the extent that *truth-seeing* and *truth-telling* are deeply transgressive in these circumstances, it is ethically unfair to expect victims or survivors of the Holocaust both to *see* and then *tell* or communicate any part of this horror. In so many cases, victims' only allowable way of interacting with others might have been silence or an empty, speechless gaze. In the following analysis of Mayorga's *El cartógrafo. Varsovia 1:400.000,* we will see the role of fear, the need for survival, and the possibilities for *truth-seeing* stretched to their visual and imaginative limits.

El cartógrafo. Varsovia, 1:400,000.

In their introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1987), Gilles Deleuze and Feliz Guattari propose their theory of the rhizome as a singular metaphor for any meaningful engagement with reality. In their view, the rhizome's "interbeingness," which they see in its tuber-like mode of growth, consisting of multiple access points and no beginning or end, comes closest to a tangible manifestation in maps, both in the acts of drawing them up and using them. Deleuze and Guattari write that, like a rhizome, a "map is open and connectable in all its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, and reworked by an individual, group or social

formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as political action or as a meditation" (12). Mayorga's view of the past is that it is an open, active space that continues to change depending on how we see, dialogue and interact with it in the present. Citing Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the rhizome, Mayorga suggests that the past—like a map, like a rhizome—is a space that is unpredictable, intersected with accidents, and unexpected turns and possibilities *(*Mayorga *"Historiador")*. For Mayorga, maps say more about how people imagined the world at the time than about the world itself (Elkins 126). In addition to being constituted by multiple points of entry, the past is also in a constant state of renewal—it cannot be reproduced as a tracing or as an objective, fixed transposition of historical events. Mayorga's objective is to "hacer [del pasado] mapas que destaquen puntos, líneas, accidentes relevantes para el hombre contemporáneo y quizás para el hombre futuro" ("Historiador"). In speaking of his historical theater, Mayorga has insisted that his task is not to reconstruct or reproduce the past as it was, but rather to present spectators with the past as it lives in the present. Drawing from Benjamin, Mayorga has written, "En lugar de mirar el pasado colonizándolo desde el presente, se trataría de construir una cita peligrosa entre el pasado y el presente. Una cita en que, sin embargo, el tiempo transcurrido entre el pasado y el presente no quedase anulado. A mi juicio, lo importante no es tanto lo que nuestro tiempo pueda decir sobre un pasado como lo que ese pasado pueda decir sobre nuestro tiempo" (qtd. Cortina). In the case of works such as *Cartógrafo* and *Himmelweg,* Mayorga does so by approaching the past as a cartographer does a map, interactively, in ways that construct the past as open, unpredictable, and critically relevant in the present and future.

In Mayorga's *El Cartógrafo,* maps are useful precisely *because* they represent something other than what is visible to the eye. Maps reproduce, explain, and in some cases urgently warn of an experience, a series of events, a moment of extreme danger, and even an entire lifetime,

each using its own (in)visible, ethical and imaginative language. *Truth-seeing,* in a context of fear and danger so extreme as that of the Holocaust requires learning and honing techniques that fall outside the conventional ways of *seeing*, remembering, communicating and knowing a present or past reality. These decisions, as Mayorga shows in *Himmelweg,* are deeply circumscribed by the threat of immediate death during the Holocaust. Every decision made by the victim/survivor is a matter of survival, framed by the "conditions of moral confusion that the perpetrators of the evil fashioned for their victims" (Skloot 1988: 9).

In John K. Roth's "On Seeing the Invisible Dimension of the Holocaust," he writes how, in the concentration camps and ghettos, Jewish artists who painted for the Nazis often hid secrets about camp or ghetto conditions in their work, sometimes hiding what *truth* they held by burying their artwork behind walls or containers, or even affixing them to their bodies during marches: "All across Europe, the artist-victims created. Putting art in the service of history, they left behind glimpses of the Final Solution. Perhaps even more importantly, these works themselves are documents whose sheer existence tells what no words could ever say" (147-148). The idea of "personal maps" or "memory maps" in *El cartógrafo* links similarly with Walter Benjamin's experience of waiting in a Parisian Café, as described in his "A Berlin Chronicle." As John Docker and Subhash Jaireth write, Benjamin "was struck by the idea of drawing a diagram of his life, and suddenly realized exactly how he could do it. He interrogates his life, and the answers to his self-questioning write themselves as it were on a sheet of paper he fortunately has with him" (5). What Benjamin creates is a sort of personal map intersected with memories of his own life. It is in "A Berlin Chronicle" that Benjamin realizes, through writing about his explorations of cities and his own memories of them, that memory "'is not an instrument for exploring the past but its theatre'," as cited in the epigraph to this thesis (Benajamin "Berlin" 314; qtd. in Docker

and Jaireth 6). Bringing together the idea of personal maps with Deleuze and Guattari's idea of the rhizome as akin to a past of multiple and interactive entry and growth points, I look at the complex learning and decision-making that surrounds *seeing,* recording and *telling* the Holocaust's horrific *truth* through means alternative to narration.

El Cartógrafo takes place almost entirely in Warsaw, Poland, and features two parallel plots, one of which takes place in the Ghetto during the Holocaust, around the time of April-May 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, while the other takes place in the present, largely within what would have been the walls of the former Ghetto. As Mayorga's opening stage direction indicates: *"En Varsovia, entre 1940 y la actualidad."* Mayorga structures the play so that spectators are constantly having to jump between time periods, compelling them to make connections between similar spaces in different historical moments and two different plots that slowly converge throughout the play. The play is arranged into 37 scenes, 8 of which are silent near-still "photographic" scenes featuring characters from one or both time periods and plots. The opening plot features Blanca and Raúl, a contemporary married couple who has just move to Warsaw due to Raúl's diplomatic post. Blanca, his wife, becomes immediately involved in an investigative quest. Having come across photographs of the Ghetto during the Holocaust, Blanca is struck by the absence of traces of this horrific past in her walks through the city. She then makes it her daily task to create a daily "map" of the absent presence of the Ghetto's past. Raúl, meanwhile, is very resistant to her project, feeling instead that Blanca should not be meddling in the traumatic history of a nation that is not theirs. In her initial encounter in the synagogue, Blanca learns of a "legend" that circulated about the Ghetto during the Holocaust—a legend in which an old cartographer, whose movements had been limited by old age and illness, lived and hid in an attic in the Ghetto along with his granddaughter, a young girl. The legend indicated that the little girl

had learned from him the art of map-making, while he had taught her how to "see" the ghetto—as he insists, *"Abre bien los ojos,"* for her to *see* only the most essential moments, interactions, places, and events in the Ghetto. This hiding grandfather-granddaughter cartographer team has one objective—to have the little girl walk through the Ghetto unnoticed and gather the information they need to "draw" a map that will tell the story of the 400,000 lives at stake within its walls in a way that ensures its *truth* is urgently passed on to the outside world and future generations. The "essential" information is nothing less than the extent of the danger and suffering that surrounded them within the Ghetto walls. Like *truth-seeing,* their method of cartography is itself unconventional. The "map" that the grandfather and granddaughter create is akin to a "tactile map," the kind traditionally designed for the blind and which can only be perceived sequentially, in bits and pieces—a process of *"seeing"* that requires the map-reader's memory and intuition in the careful conceptual reconstruction of space, time, and specific events.

As mentioned above, while *Cartógrafo* has enjoyed several dramatic readings, it has yet to be performed on stage and in its entirety. Its plot and map-making present challenges to any stage production.[79] Part of this has to do with the map-making not being conventional—the little girl makes her map by marking lines on the underside of the bricks that make up the floor of the attic in which she hides with her grandfather. But spectators may not realize that this is where her map is until the final scene of the play, in which Mayorga's stage direction reads: *"La Niña elige una baldosa del suelo, la levanta; en el reverso de la baldosa hay marcas. La Niña saca un punzón y hace más marcas. Si diésemos la vuelta a todas las baldosas, las veríamos como*

[79] Gene A. Plunka identifies three other plays about the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, covering three distinct generations of writers: New York-based playwright Morton Wishengrad's *The Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto* (1943), a script that Wishengrad's wrote in ten days just after the Uprising's end and also the first Holocaust drama ever performed (Plunka 2012: 51-52); Millard Lampell's *The Wall* (1960); and Hanna Krall's *To Steal a March on God* (1996) (2012: 51).

cuadrículas de un mapa de Varsovia" (Scene 37). Up to this point, Mayorga's stage directions are not explicit; the little girl makes marks—on a map? on bricks? on the wall?—but it is unclear where. In one particular "teaching" scene, the grandfather explains to the little girl some of the history of cartography, referring specifically to the "instruments" used by the great map-makers in history. He refers especially to the Cassini family, who in the eighteenth century drew the first map of France without the assistance of tools (Scene 5, p. 12-13). According to the grandfather, the Cassinis surveyed and divided the territory of France into 400 triangles. In the triangle, they drew hills, villages, and rivers to look three-dimensional and to a degree of detail never seen before. Their primary weapon, says the old cartographer, hinged upon their knowing *how* to *see* the land they were imagining, for the first time and visibly, as both a physical and symbolic whole: "Sus armas eran sus ojos y las matemáticas. Y una nación que los empujaba. Los franceses fueron los primeros en entenderlo: Francia es el mapa de Francia" (Scene 5, p. 13).

In *El Cartógrafo,* the grandfather tells his granddaughter that if he had the physical strength to do so, he would go out into the Ghetto so that he could draw the map himself: "Si Dios me devolviera un poco de fuerza, aunque tuviese que arrastrarme, saldría ahí a mirar y luego haría el mapa de esas calles en que hombres cazan a hombres." (15) Seeing the Holocaust as a world in which men hunt men, as the grandfather says, a world in which its 6 million victims were hunted as anonymous "prey," allows us to analyze Holocaust theater more broadly in terms of its pervasive sense of danger and the visceral, instinctual need to self-protect. Mayorga's call to Spain and the world's audiences echoes that of the old cartographer's when teaching his granddaughter how to *see*. The little girl's task is to draw a map of the Ghetto by selecting bits of information that she gathers while on her daily walks. In order to do so, however, she must learn

how to ask herself the right questions, a task her grandfather deems more difficult than measuring or drawing (Scene 10, p. 24):

> ANCIANO. Esos hombres que fabrican balas para los alemanes, ¿qué esperan de su trabajo? Esos policías judíos, ¿cómo han sido reclutados?, ¿quién los eligió? . . . ¿Qué es lo importante cuando hay cuatrocientos mil seres humanos en peligro? Vuelve a la calle y abre bien los ojos. Y pregúntate qué es lo esencial, qué debe ser custodiado. Serás tú quien salve o condene. En eso yo no voy a ayudarte. (Scene 10, p. 25-26)

A society's capacity or willingness to *see* catastrophe while it is ongoing and inquire about the past openly and critically calls for a collective "excavation" of the past, beyond the readily available scraps of evidence and archival accounts of what happened. Tools and statistics, even testimonies, will not be enough. What is important is to know *how* to *see*. As the grandfather says of the measuring and drawing tools the cartographer may use: "Los aparatos te ayudarán, pero nada sustituye un ojo que sepa mirar" (Scene 5, p. 13). The little girl in *Cartógrafo* learns a kind of seeing and map-making that is more strategic, defensive, deceptive, and protective. When her grandfather teaches her about the beginnings of cartography, he gives a few examples, among them Spain's sixteenth century map of the battle of Lepanto: "No está hecho para orientar a las naves españolas, sino para desorientar a las turcas." The cartographer, she learns, is the one who sees and then selects what is essential in order to communicate information *strategically* to a specific audience: "la fuerza de un cartógrafo es esa capacidad para mirar y elegir lo esencial. Mirar, escoger, representar: ésos son los secretos del cartógrafo" (Scene 5 p. 13). A map charts a physical territory through the cartographer's capacity to imagine time and space symbolically. And it is the cartographer's imaginination and skill of *seeing* that renders the map useful as a

tool, whether for navigation, conquest, as it has been used in context of colonial/imperial enterprises, or to protect populations. It also is the tool that allows people to appropriate a space, argues the grandfather, easing our fears of the unknown within: "Hasta que lo dibujamos, el espacio nos da miedo" (13).

In the opening scene of *Cartógrafo,* Raúl and Blanca are having a discussion. Raúl is reacting in frustration to Blanca's explanation for having missed that evening's formal dinner with the ambassador (Scene 1, p. 3). She defends her absence, explaining how on her way home she'd stumbled upon a small synagogue she'd initially mistaken for a church.[80] Inside the synagogue, a man was arranging an exhibit of photographs depicting Holocaust-era scenes from inside the Warsaw Ghetto, everything from the mundane to the extraordinary: a wedding, policemen and prostitutes standing on a street, a barbershop, children, and streetcars.[81] Using each photo's captions, she'd marked on her map the location of each photo, and had lost track of time while trying to trace the photographer's steps. Blanca wanted to see what the photographer had seen, but was surprised to find that, with the exception of two monuments, there was barely a trace of the Ghetto's past. What had struck her most was the sense of absence, however. It was not only the Ghetto and its victims that were missing; it was as if consciousness and memory of the Ghetto's tremendous history of loss and suffering had been entirely erased: "No es sólo la gente que falta. Es como si todo se hubiese evaporado" (Scene 1, p. 5). In this initial scene,

[80] The experience that Blanca recounts in this opening scene is one that Mayorga shares and experienced personally. It was his chance finding of a former synagogue in Warsaw hosting a photo exhibit, and his own subsequent walk, map in hand, through the streets of what was the Ghetto that prompted his writing of *El Cartógrafo. Varsovia 1:400,000,* to be analyzed in this chapter (March and Martínez 2012: 116).
[81] According to Judith Keilbach, most of the photographs taken of the ghettos and concentration camps were taken by perpetrators and meant to serve as documentary evidence, usually used to support negative stereotypes of the Jews (63). Exemplifying this are the 50 or so captioned photographs commissioned by Jürgen Stroop during in the aftermath of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943 (Keilbach 63). Keilbach also writes that other Holocaust-era photographs were taken by German soldiers—amateur photographers--on weekend excursion, for example: "Like tourists they recorded their impressions in photographs. Their pictures show typical street scenes, and can be read as documents of the systematic isolation and insufficient provisioning of the Jewish population" (64).

Mayorga introduces the idea of "seeing" what is no longer visible—through photographs and maps, in this case—as a way of accessing the history of the Ghetto's walled-off horror and especially the illness, fear, starvation, and violence that claimed the lives of 400,000 Jews during the Holocaust.

In this initial scene, Blanca seems to take on what Walter Benjamin describes as the historian's task—to "excavate" for the truth of the past, as we saw in the previous chapter with Mayorga's interviews and the practice of historical inquiry. Throughout *El cartógrafo,* Blanca commits to "excavating" and telling the story of Warsaw's buried or "evaporated" past. Like a detective faced with an unexplained cadaver at the scene of a crime, Blanca decides to draw the Ghetto's silhouette on both her map of Warsaw and, with chalk on the city's sidewalks each day as though each "map" were a diary. In order to understand and *see* the past, Blanca asks Raúl to trace the silhouette of her body on the ground as if she were a cadaver mysteriously deceased and their task were to trace the steps of a crime backwards in time. In this way, Blanca embodies Benjamin's "image of the person who remembers," retracing the steps of those who perished after having been confined within the Ghetto's walls. Like Benjamin's "archaeologist" working the soil, Blanca repeatedly "scatters" and "turns over" her findings, tirelessly questioning, investigating and interrogating those who, like the man in the synagogue hanging photographs, are custodians of the Ghetto's "artifacts."

The discourse that Raúl and Blanca establish is an ethical one seeped in the subjectivity of sight and the strategic use of visual representation. It is also a discourse that makes Raúl and Blanca's relationship one that functions metonymically. I would add that the differences in their approaches to the past are not unlike the ones currently dividing Spain as it continues to debate or combat the nation's collective *desmemoria,* as we'll see in the final chapters of this study.

Blanca's sense of responsibility vis-à-vis uncovering Warsaw's "evaporated" or "buried" past creates an image of the contemporary Spaniard as an involved, self-aware, non-conformist—albeit imperfect—citizen aware of her role and responsibilities in a global society. Blanca's digging so actively into contemporary Warsaw's past, however, may seem unreasonable and even uncouth to a Spain-based audience. After all, she is Spanish, does not speak Polish, and is unfamiliar with the city and Poland in general. She is, therefore, unequivocally an outsider getting involved in someone else's business, at least from Raúl's perspective. In trying to convince his wife to stop her incessant digging and searching for answers, Raúl expresses this side of the debate to Blanca:

> RAÚL. Imagina que un extranjero llegase a Madrid dándonos lecciones sobre nuestra historia. Que se le ocurriese marcar en el mapa, en el suelo, las atrocidades de nuestra Guerra Civil. ¿No te sentirías ofendida? . . . Lo único importante es no hacer nada que pueda molestar. No somos polacos, no somos judíos, no somos alemanes. ¿Qué ciudad no tiene sus heridas, sus sombras? (Scene 7, p. 18)

Raúl implores her to stop meddling in a wounded history that is not theirs. At the same time, by putting his argument in terms of what they as Spaniards are *not*—Poles, Jews, or Germans—he also places Spain in the context of a global and, in this case, European community. The tension between Raúl and Blanca plays on similar underlying questions of identity, power, and responsibility in the context of the nation—looking inward only—or the nation as part of belonging within and beyond what seem like blurred borders. Added in Mayorga's play, of course, is the element of ethical responsibility. Raúl's public and professional role at the embassy requires him to represent Spain in the role of something similar to what he argues she should do: passively observe—"no hacer nada que pueda molestar"—and, most definitely, not try to tell

Poles what the lessons of the Holocaust and the Warsaw Ghetto are. The irony is that Raúl, as an attaché working at the Spanish embassy in Poland, prepares reports detailing hypothetical political conflicts in the future and in Poland that might threaten Spain's interests and call for intervention. The difference is that he doesn't see Blanca's "intervention" as something that is resolving a conflict detrimental to their "Spanish" interests. As he tells Magda, his Polish language instructor, when explaining to her what he does at the embassy: "Leo informes. Con esos informes hago más informes. Análisis sobre escenarios en que nuestros intereses nacionales puedan verse comprometidos. Conflictos en que España pueda influir. Se trata de hacer pronósticos, anticipar movimientos en esta parte del mundo" (Scene 26, p. 53). Raúl spends his days looking outward to the future of Poland to see where Spain might hypothetically step in, whereas Blanca looks back and into the past to see this atrocity that affects all of humanity emerge from within its absence on Warsaw's streets. Raúl believes that his investigative work is well-founded on facts and precedent, whereas Blanca's, from his perspective, is based on seeing what is atrocious, yes, but disappeared and, in any case, none of their business. In contrast, the Red Cross worker in *Himmelweg*, who sees and validates only the surface of things in the moment and the reality of things in retrospect, misses what is concealed and disappeared—he misses the "hell" at the end of the "way to heaven." Like Raúl, the Red Cross worker is or means to be unobtrusive but is inadvertently, carelessly or, perhaps willfully, blind—that is, he looks but he cannot *see*. Raúl's initial disapproval of his wife's fixation on the past makes him feel estranged not only from her in their home but also from a city and a country that are not his. As a Spaniard in Poland, Raúl knows that he is an outsider—he does and sees everything from the city's cultural and historical margin and feels strongly that it is not their place as Spaniards to be digging up Warsaw's painful past.

When Raúl decides to take Polish language lessons from Magda, his instructor and a professional translator/interpreter, his perspective with respect to a traumatic past begins to change. In their first lesson, Magda explains to Raúl her most recent project, a German-to-Polish translation of a scientific journal featuring a study of avalanches. The scientists, she explains, are trying to develop a model that reenacts an avalanche so that they can carefully examine its contents and thereby prevent these disasters in the future. With the use of new technology, scientists can detect even the slightest structural and microscopic changes deep beneath the visible surface layer of snow still subject to the winds and natural elements of change. The model, Magda explains to Raúl, consists of the layers of snow that underlie a potential avalanche. Once complete, it will reveal what happens structurally within and between the weaker layers of snow that get toppled by increasingly heavier layers when it snows. Scientists believe that the loose and unstable structural bonds within the weaker layers cause the avalanche. Magda explains, “El objetivo es entender qué factores causan qué cambios en la estructura cristalina y en las fuerzas de enlace entre los cristales. Si entendemos eso, entenderemos las avalanchas y podremos preverlas” (Act 17, 39). Once Raúl understands this insight, he begins to see that Blanca’s investigation into the Ghetto’s past is showing them a new way to *see* and make a record of the past, one that allows for a true “working through” a painful shared past. Magda’s explanation points to a particular way of seeing—a scientific and microscopic investigation of what has come before and what lies below and behind the visible surface of snow, events of the past, etc., just prior to a catastrophe. Seen as an analogy, the avalanche is related to the Holocaust itself and the lesson is similar. Individuals in society, organized by economic class, political position and power, or ethnicity, are in a constant state of tension and metamorphosis; moreover, these individuals vary in strength, cohesion, stability, and intensity,

with the "stronger" ones exerting unimaginable pressure over the weaker ones, causing a devastating catastrophe. Mayorga, much like the scientists in Magda's magazine, stages history and society as action and metamorphosis. The spectator sees the Holocaust from the inside, from "the ghetto," and from the bottom—essentially from those "layers" that were neither accessible nor visible to the outsider. In this way, the performance calls the spectator to actively *see*, as though through a microscope, the human connections, language, and power dynamics that characterized the Holocaust on the smallest scale possible—in this case, 1:400,000. Through this, the performance challenges spectators to adjust their own ethical posture with regard to the Holocaust in ways that are committed to preventing a catastrophe of this degree from ever happening again.

Embodying what initially seems like "willful blindness," Raúl initially takes on an attitude of neutral indifference to what Blanca sees of Warsaw's past. He resists uncovering, evaluating or judging the information that comes to him. By the same token, Blanca's searching obsession makes her in some way blind to the negative effect it is having on her marriage to Raúl. Raúl is unusual for a male character in Mayorga's Holocaust works because he, too, learns to *see* and map the past by watching Blanca engage with maps—the emptiness contained within the silhouette of her body that Raúl has helped her draw on the ground. Raúl learns how to *see* because the painful wound that Blanca maps with her body is the death of their only daughter, Alba. For Raúl, engaging this painful past feels immediately threatening to him and his marriage to Blanca. When Blanca asks him why they never talk about Alba, he responds, "No hablamos de ella porque nos hace daño hablar de ella" (Scene 36, p. 67). The *truth* that Blanca and Raúl have resisted *seeing* is that of the death of their only daughter. One cold early morning in London, their teenage daughter, Alba, had woken up, hastily chopped off her hair, left their flat

and walked barefoot and aimlessly through the city's streets to a park not far from her parents' place until she laid down alone and was finally able to "cerrar los ojos y dormir" (Scene 36 p. 68).

If, in Mayorga's *Himmelweg,* the concealment of the concentration camp's *truth* was effected through a performance that deceived the Red Cross worker and the world into believing a "lying reality," in *El Cartógrafo,* a young girl learns from her grandfather to "see" the truth—that is, to *truth-see* and *truth-tell*—by misreading and mislabeling what she sees with her eyes. The young girl learns the skill of intentional deception as a means of survival, one she carries with her far beyond the Holocaust, far beyond Warsaw, and far beyond her childhood into an adult career in mapping atrocities. After the scenes in which the little girl reports to the cartographer that Jews in the Ghetto are uprising, the plot featuring her begins to transform significantly, accelerating in time. The grandfather no longer appears in the post-Holocaust scenes, and the little girl seems to have become or been replaced by single woman named Deborah, now a professional and later aging cartographer. The adult Deborah appears primarily in professional contexts, however. In one scene, she looks for a job; in another, a bit older now, she is fired from a job after being accused of having made maps for the political enemy during a war; and, finally, she is an old, retired cartographer when spectators last see her. In one of the last scenes of the play, Deborah, now an old former cartographer, meets Blanca in the present day. Blanca has not stopped trying to uncover the truth of the legend of the old cartographer and the little girl in the Ghetto and her search brings her to Deborah. Deborah, meanwhile, admits to knowing about the legend, but denies that she is that little girl and even doubts that story of the little girl and her grandfather is even true. Then she says to Blanca that, even *if* the story were true and even *if* Blanca were to find the original "map" that the little girl had made, she wouldn't

recognize it as such: "Ellos se habrían asegurado de que no cualquiera pudiese utilizarlo" (71-72). Everything that appeared in that map would be an answer to a specific question posed by the cartographer. As the old cartographer had told his granddaughter when teaching her of the differences between a photograph and a map, "Un mapa no es una fotografía. En una foto siempre hay respuestas a preguntas que nadie ha hecho. En el mapa sólo hay respuestas a las preguntas del cartógrafo. ¿Cuáles son tus preguntas?" (Scene 10, p. 24). In Mayorga's theater, maps are deliberate, instrumental, and *do* something. The maps that Deborah and her grandfather create in *Cartógrafo* are capable of starting wars, deceiving the enemy, evading censorship, and betraying—or saving—an entire population. In this sense, maps both constitute and represent movement, time, and space, actively conjuring what they represent while simultaneously telling its story.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I analyze how, in his Holocaust theater, Juan Mayorga configures the act of *seeing* as an ethical, critical, and, in some cases, life-threatening imperative, despite the object of perception—*truth*—being concealed, disguised, or distorted. In the context of the Holocaust, the *truth* refers to the deepest horrors of the Holocaust—those that are, and were made to be invisible—at the smallest scale possible, the level of the individual. I also proposed and developed a theory of dramatic seeing that I call *truth-seeing,* which I define as the conscious integration of a spectator's ("spectator" in the sense of anyone who sees) senses of intuition, empathy, and ethics in apprehending what is invisible or concealed. I discuss *truth-seeing* in terms of its dialogical dynamic, taking into account how the threat of violence and death constrains how conventionally characters *see* and respond to the *truth*. Because the Holocaust's

invisibility was arguably its lifeline, I also suggest that what distinguishes *truth-seeing* from *seeing* and *imagining* is that, while seeing and imagining derive from visual mechanisms such as the eyes or "mental picturing,"[82] *truth-seeing* requires that spectators eschew conventional vision-oriented tools and even in some cases their memories, and consciously replace them with non-visual, cognitive, and/or conceptual tools that allow them to *see truth* and *do* with it what is most ethically responsible.

In plays such as *El cartógrafo* and *Himmelweg,* among others of Mayorga's Holocaust-themed works, what spectators ascertain *a primera vista* grants them only a partial *notion* of what is essential about the characters' experience of and ways of *seeing* and being in the Holocaust. *How* spectators see and not so much *what* they see determines the extent to which they will come to *know*—though hopefully never understand—Holocaust. [83] Tragically, there are two sides to this absence or "nothingness" in the context of the Holocaust. The first is the devastating and traceless deaths of its six million victims, their ashes dissolved in a flowing river that left only their "absence" in its wake. The other is the invisibility of the Holocaust campaign as seen from the outside. It was precisely the *invisibility* of the Nazis' acts, concealed and hidden from the rest of the world, which permitted the Holocaust to continue how and as long as it did. In Mayorga's *Himmelweg,* the Holocaust was "invisible" even to those who came from the outside world into the Holocaust itself and had a chance to *see* it from the inside. The "willful blindness" that fueled the Holocaust while it was ongoing has also formed a part of how Holocaust remembrance—or denial—has come to be in the present. While by no means drawing

[82] David Gilbert *Stumbling on Happiness,* David Gilbert suggests that even imagining activates the visual cortex.
[83] In his recent article, *"Primo Levi, el testigo. Una semblanza en el XX aniversario de su despaparición,"* Reyes Mate writes Primo Levi questioned the possibility of understanding the Holocaust because, to him, it seemed akin to justifying the Nazis' actions. Instead, wrote Levi in his 1987 *Si esto es un hombre* (208), "if understanding is impossible, then knowing is necessary, because what has happened can happen again" (my translation of a translation in Reyes Mate's article (6).)

a parallel between the Holocaust and Spain's twentieth century history, I do argue that there are similarities between the processes of Holocaust remembrance and those that have emerged from conflict between *olvido* and *memoria* in Spain since Franco's death in 1975. Remembrance of each is tied to the profound "tracelessness" or at least invisibility of lost lives and the dearth of witnesses. Moreover, included in each context are those who remember their past much like Blanca does in Warsaw, from the perspective of historic, cultural, or political outsiders. As Spain's public discourse continues to trade blows on how and whether to make its still-open national wound literally visible on the national landscape, the process of remembering is characterized in terms of *seeing* and *knowing* on a national scale.

In his Holocaust theater, Mayorga presents spectators with the enormity of the *truth*—the *truth* as a concealed genocide; the *truth* as a catastrophic tearing apart of the ethical fabric of an entire society, disrupting common understandings of good and evil, of culture and violence. Just as *El Cartógrafo*'s little girl and grandfather living in the Ghetto during the Holocaust create a "cartography of erasure" / *"cartografía de la desaparición"* (*Cartografía* 70), so does Mayorga create a dramaturgy of invisibility, absence, and *truth*. The ever-present "nothingness" of the 6 million Jews and other victims of the Holocaust are constantly a part of what is physically though (in)visibly on the stage—it is a space that contains an impenetrable void. Spectators are privy to what is visible and invisible on and off stage as well as what certain characters don't, cannot, or refuse to see. Mayorga constitutes deceptive concealment by creating characters that purposely mislead others away from the *truth* and allowing for onstage spaces that are empty, mislabeled, or deliberately diegetic and inaccessible.

This chapter conceptually and thematically bridges the previous chapters' discussions of blindness and excavating memories in Mayorga's works with that of the following chapter,

where I will look at the function of isolation, and enclosed spaces of traumatic memory. I will show, through the analysis of Mayorga's Spanish Civil War-themed plays, that some version of *truth-seeing* is vital to both accountability *and* the "making" of collective historical memory in Spain. I argue that *truth-seeing* is a *necessary* strategy and response to a particular kind of socio-historical context. *Truth-seeing* as a concept emerged from questions about the Holocaust and accountability, such as how exactly was the world to *see* what it could not see or witness with their eyes. Considering how could the outside world verify the truth of something whose most direct evidence was precisely the "nothingness" and absence of its victims seems a critical question not only for Holocaust memory studies, but for today's highly technological world, built so systematically on strategic visibility. What are the mechanisms by which we *see* the *truth* of a past or present reality so circumscribed by layers of information and intentional smokescreens? And, what do we do when a governing power structure replaces its *truth* almost wholesale with a precisely visual manifestation of an idealized standard of perfection, unity, and beauty? In the case of the Holocaust and in order to carry out the genocide of six million victims, the Nazis' primary strategy of survival was to systematically ensure the *invisibility* of its *truth*—that is, it deliberately concealed its most horrific acts by hiding them behind concentration camp and ghetto walls, orchestrating "beautification" campaigns, and "losing" evidence in the evanescent smoke and river-washed ashes of the Holocaust's victims. I argue that Mayorga's constructiong of this encounter between the present and the Holocaust's deeply tragic *truth* underscores an imperative—that we must be ever-vigilant in the face of invisible *and* inconceivable horror and heed the old cartographer's command: "*Abre bien los ojos.*"

Chapter 4

"Muertos sin tumba": Memory and the Legacies of Political Violence in Juan Mayorga's Spanish Civil War Historical/Memory Theater

A fin de cuentas, el pasado nos obliga recurrentemente a hablar de él, pero no nos dice cómo hacerlo.
-- Sebastiaan Faber, *et al.* (472)

Federico García Lorca's last play, *La casa de Bernarda Alba* (1936), ends with Bernarda's demanding that the death of her youngest daughter, Adela, not be mourned with tears in public—only with silence. But it is not only the mourning that she seeks to control—it is also the memory of her dead daughter that Bernarda feels she must fashion, it seems, in her own image. Adela had died a virgin, Bernarda insists, contrary to what she and everyone in her household knew was true—that Adela and Pepe el Romano had been lovers: "No quiero llantos. ¡Silencio! ¡A callar he dicho! Las lágrimas cuando estés sola. Nos hundiremos todas en un mar de luto. Ella, la hija menor de Bernarda Alba, ha muerto virgen. ¿Me habéis oído? ¡Silencio! ¡Silencio he dicho! ¡Silencio!" In José Monleón's editorial essay, *"La memoria rebelada,"* which he wrote to introduce the 2011 issue of *Primer acto* dedicated to the topic, *"Las voces del silencio,"* he notes that what is chilling about Bernarda's famous last words is not only her demand that there be no public display of mourning, but also her insistence on an untruth as a way of remembering her youngest daughter (García Lorca; qtd. in Monleón 5). Bernarda's demands resonate painfully with what would happen a mere two months later: Lorca's murder at the hands of Franco's soldiers, who would similarly cover up the circumstances of his death with silencing lies. But Monleón draws a further connection, this time between Bernarda's statements and Spain's current memory politics—that Bernarda's order of *"¡Silencio!"* is the same

censoring strain in the culture of silence and impunity manifest in Spain's 1977 Amensty Law and, more recently, the reticence, especially in Spain's more conservative circles, to publicly address and support the exhumation of its *fosas comunes* (Ferrándiz 2010: 307). Monleón identifies three distinct spaces or "voices" contributing to Spain's memory politics. The first is the one occupied by Bernarda's words—the space of un/officially imposed silence and "untruths" intended to gloss over losses and crimes (4). As Monleón writes, words like Bernarda's "conjugan la imposición del silencio con la invención de una realidad inexistente. Es decir, no basta callar, hay que mentir para llenar el silencio" (5). The second is the space of the victims, whose very "presence" as nearly-forgotten if not entirely "disappeared" remains continues to demand justice and challenge the untrue claims of society's "Bernardas." These two spaces and the tension between them in turn produce a third space, writes Monleón, that of the reader/spectator who engages—one could say even witnesses—the confrontation between *el olvido*'s silences, too often filled with untruths, and the trauma of political violence ever-present in the bodies of the dead and "disappeared" still lying in mass graves that, with their loved ones and advocates, increasingly refuse to let *el olvido* rest in peace (5).

In this chapter, I explore how two of Mayorga's memory politics plays—the short work *La biblioteca del diablo* (2009) and the full-length *El jardín quemado* (1998)—perform Monleón's three spaces of collective historical memory. Both works, anchored in the history of the Spanish Civil War and the repressive decades that followed, feature exchanges between those who have witnessed or experienced political trauma and those who, from an outside judicial or investigative capacity, seek to extract these memories and use them as evidence in cases of legal import. However, the witnessing and testimony of political violence and its losses manifest themselves as rupture—that is, as disordered language, fictionalization, silences, or the inability

to speak or write at all. Common to both works as well is the function of the stage space, in each case serving to confine the bodies, minds, and memories of the remembering subject or witness. In each work there is an unspoken discourse that justifies the use of political violence and, like Bernarda, calls for *olvido* and *silencio* by rationalizing acts of violence through untruths, indifferent to the possibility of accountability or public mourning of the victims of political violence. In *La biblioteca del diablo,* these *"¡Silencios!"* take the form of a collection of books that gradually increase in the intensity of a single message: that it is justified to do unlawful harm to others in the name of social order and control. In the case of *El jardín quemado,* the controlling voice that induces "silences" amongst the remembering subjects ironically does so by encouraging them to speak. This dominant voice/force knows what only gradually becomes apparent throughout the play—that the witnesses' stories are so deeply filled with voids, lies, and denials, and that, even if they speak, they will not be able to testify to the truth of what happened. The remembering subjects' corrupted or truncated memories of the trauma they witnessed are doubly circumscribed by the controlling gaze or discourse of those who have justified political violence in the past in the name of order and continuity.

Finally, as an intersection of power, memory, and trauma, the onstage spaces in both works contain the "presence" of political violence through the absence of its victims. In the case of *La biblioteca del diablo,* this traumatic "absence" takes the form of the three missing brothers of Ana, the protagonist, who were "disappeared" from their house during the Spanish Civil War, a house that she has, in the decades since, refused to leave. This "absence" takes a much more direct and tangible form in *El jardín quemado,* whose stage, set in the interior patio of an insane asylum, features a mass grave containing the bones of twelve innocent men executed during the Spanish Civil War. In addition to the physical confinement of characters' bodies and movements

is juxtaposed to the "present absence" of political trauma, so that these onstage spaces also function metaphorically. That is, in both works the stage's "four" walls—the fourth being both imagined and constituted by the audience—signify the "asphyxiation," to use Robert March's term, of characters' minds and memories, their lack of dialogical exchanges with the outside world, and the effective silencing of memory and mourning that their lack of movement—or, can we say, freedom?—produces (March "Nadando").[84]

In both *La biblioteca del diablo* and *El jardín quemado,* characters who may have witnessed or experienced violent acts committed during the *Guerra Civil* find their memories of violence, trauma, and loss almost entirely inaccessible. Their access to the past is fitful—they can neither fluidly speak nor readily write of their memories. "Remembering" in these works looks more like the void-like *anamnesic* memory that Michael Bernard-Donals has described in the context of Holocaust survivor testimonies as "forgetful memory" (5). Deriving in particular from Maurice Blanchot's *The Writing of the Disaster* (1995) and Emmanuel Lévinas' works on Holocaust survivor memory, Bernard-Donals conceives of the space between the event and its witnessing and, later, its testimonial retelling or writing, as constituted by a rupture, a void, a space where memory is disordered and unpredictable, resistant both to narration and to representation (Bernard-Donals 20). It is this that Blanchot refers to as the "disaster": "The disaster is related to forgetfulness—forgetfulness without memory, the motionless retreat of what has not been treated—immemorial, perhaps. To remember forgetfully: again, the outside" (3). Bernard-Donals structures his argument around what he sees as two interrelated aspects of memory—*mneme* and *anamnesis.* He defines *mneme* as that part of memory which is mimetic,

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[84] Robert March, in his 2013 interview with Mayorga, titled "Nadando entre medusas: conversación con Juan Mayorga," describes as "asphyxiating" the enclosed spaces in Mayorga's works such as Blumemberg's train car in *El Traductor de Blumemberg*.

coherent, rational, “narratable,” and “available through representation, and which—for better or for worse—we consider to be what we know about the past” (101). Anamnesis—not *mneme*’s opposite but rather its counterpart—, meanwhile, is a disturbance, a flash of memory that “provides access to absent events by pointing precisely to that absence, the void of memory, which disrupts knowledge and representation” (102). It is between these two that Bernard-Donals recasts Blanchot’s notion of the “disaster” as that which exists between the event and its troubling (re)telling—“a memory that is not a representation but a moment of seeing without knowing, a moment perhaps of witness, but a moment that annihilates both past and present and creates, instead, a presence that can only be made available for the viewer . . . or the reader . . . through a speaking or writing that is precocious, out of control, and utterly troubling” (8). My task in this chapter is to examine how Mayorga’s characters negotiate this void of memory within a confining, silencing space that encircles their “forgetful memory”—a nearly insurmountable rupture in which language, which here can only be “precocious, out of control, and utterly troubling,” proves insufficient (Bernard-Donals 28).

The Spanish Civil War and *“los muertos sin tumba”* in Mayorga’s Theater

The 23 November 2010 meeting of Juan Mayorga’s monthly seminar, *Memoria y pensamiento en el teatro contemporáneo*, organized by the *Instituto de Filosofía del Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales* (CCHS) and sponsored by the *Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas* (CSIC) in Madrid, was dedicated to what Mayorga described as “*el muerto al que se niega una tumba”* (“Muertos” 17).[85] Mayorga’s intention in organizing the

[85] Please consult the following link for the poster and Juan Mayorga’s introductory remarks to the 23 November 2010 session of *Memoria y pensamiento en el teatro contemporáneo* seminar organized by Mayorga and sponsored by CSIC and the Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales: <http://www.cchs.csic.es/en/node/282919>. 23 February 2014.

seminar was to gather scholarly and dramatic works that would place theater in the midst of the historical memory debate in contemporary Spain. To this end, Mayorga invited playwright Laila Ripoll and forensic anthropologist Francisco Ferrándiz to discuss how their respective work addresses the memory debates surrounding the ongoing exhumation of mass graves throughout the country. In the seminar's introductory remarks, later published in *Primer acto* (I/2011) with the title *"Muertos sin tumba,"* Mayorga juxtaposed Sophocles' classical *Antigone* with contemporary works in Spain that treat the issue of *"muertos sin tumba,"* such as *"Antígona 18100-7"* (2010) by Carme Teatre, Laila Ripoll's *"Santa perpetua,"* and *"NN 12 (Nomen Nescio)"* (2010) by Gracia Morales. Mayorga argued, through these examples, that a community with improperly buried dead is a dramatic microcosm, one made infinitely more dramatic when the performance of the nameless or improperly buried dead occurs not in the mythic or abstract world of ancient Greece, but on the very soil that spectators themselves tread upon every day ("Muertos" 17, 18).[86] Under these circumstances, suggests Mayorga, theater takes on the tremendous potential of being an active agent in the creation and transformation—or erosion—of historical memory ("Muertos" 18).

Forensic anthropologist Francisco Ferrándiz, invited to present at Mayorga's November 2010 CSIC seminar mentioned above, refers to Spain's current map of mass graves as *"una cartografía de terror*" (Ferrándiz 2011: 21). Ferrándiz, who has overseen hundreds of mass grave exhumations in Spain alongside the Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (ARMH) for over ten years, presented a talk titled *"La exhumación como puesta en escena de la violencia,"* in which he explained Mayorga's initial request—that scholars invited to the seminar explore the possible theatrical elements of the exhumation process and to consider

how the *fosas comunes* might function as dramatic stages for the memory of political violence (Ferrándiz 2011: 20). In his reflections, Ferrándiz recounts his experience as a spectator of Laila Ripoll's *Santa Perpetua,* a fragment of which was performed at Mayorga's seminar that day, which features as part of its plot a *fosa común*. Watching *Santa Perpetua*'s drama unfold provoked intense reactions in Ferrándiz—he'd found it to be simultaneously humorous, devastating, and deeply moving, an experience through which he began weaving together how the laborious process of exhumation shares parallels with that of unearthing and rescuing memory through theater and performance (Ferrándiz 2011: 20):

> Desde el primer instante de la obra empezaron a tejerse homologías y disonancias inesperadas entre exhumar fosas comunes con picos, palas y protocolos técnicos, y exhumar pasados dolorosos con libretos, escenografías e interpretaciones teatrales. Aunque ambos actos de desvelamiento se mueven en registros disímiles, compartían una confrontación racial, dura, política y conmovida con los fantasmas del pasado… y también un buen número de elementos escénicos. (2011: 20)

In Ferrándiz's analysis, the symbolism and history of the *fosas comunes* mark them with multiple layers of fear, all of which he sadly believes persist in Spain today. Ferrándiz explains, for example, how the Franco regime had used the *fosas comunes,* many of which were a product of executions that took place after the war, to symbolically function as *"fosas de la derrota"*—that is, as constant and terrifying reminders to Spain's population, especially in rural areas, of the consequences of dissent (Junquera). "'El hecho que hoy siga siendo tan polémico abrirlas'," writes Ferrándiz, "'quiere decir que de alguna manera aun, son eficaces en ese sentido, siguen funcionando como amenaza'" (Ferrándiz; qtd. in Junquera). Reflecting on Spain's map of mass graves, Ferrándiz writes of them as a performance of terror and the cultivation of fear:

> Como si el país fuera un inmenso escenario para el cultivo y amplificación del miedo y la parálisis política y emocional primero de los antagonistas y luego de los vencidos, las fosas consumaron desde el principio su papel pedagógico, irradiando muerte, terror y consternación hacia el tejido social al que apelaban más directamente. Imposibilitando la mayor parte de las veces el acceso a los cadáveres, impidiendo el conocimiento de las circunstancias específicas de las muertes y, por supuesto, negando la posibilidad de concebir los fusilamientos como acto represivo o criminal, por no hablar de la eventualidad impensable de promover el enjuiciamiento de sus perpetradores. (2011: 21)

Antonius C.G.M. Robben has painted a simpler though perhaps less bleak picture of Spain's politics regarding its *fosas comunes*: "The significance of these mass graves has changed over the decades. Silenced during Franco's reign and ignored by subsequent democratic governments, they have recently become the center of national commemoration, historical debate, and public and private mourning" (264). Robben captures what many describe as a movement towards more openness in Spain, or, at the very least, a discursive climate that makes it increasingly untenable for the nation to ignore its past.

Following Robben, Liliana Dorado writes that in the early years of the XXI century, Spain began to see a sort of *"boom de memoria* que se expresa en un florecimiento de obras literarias y cinematográficas que tratan del tema de la represión franquista" (169). However, until very recently, this "memory boom" seems not to have applied as readily to theater that represents the national trauma of the unnamed dead in *fosas comunes*. In a 2010 article, José Manuel Reyes argued that the historical trauma of mass graves and the unnamed buried of the Spanish Civil War has been largely underrepresented in contemporary Spanish theater due in part to what can be seen as a legacy of the Franco regime—the deeply-seated fear of negative consequences for

such a public revisiting of Spain's repressive past.[87] This makes it especially striking when recent works that perform this memory trauma in Spain earn marked, enthusiastic attention from contemporary audiences. Ripoll's *Santa Perpetua,* for example, third in her Spanish Civil War history and memory-themed *Trilogía fantástica,* which Ripoll herself has said could be retitled "*Trilogía de la memoria,"* is about a village "saint," an old woman with healing and visionary powers, who can look into the future and into the past.[88] There is a moment in the play, otherwise parodic and humorous, when Santa Perpetua goes into a paranormal trance as if possessed by the voice and identity of a Spanish Civil War era victim executed and still buried in a *fosa común* in a plot of land near Santa Perpetua's home. In critic David Ladra's review of *"Santa Perpetua"* he writes that when the protagonist goes into this trance in the voice of the victim in a *fosa común*, the audience seems stunned, overcome by the devastating truth: "no hay ya ningún asomo de comicidad ni risas en el púbico, sino el escalofrío que produce la verdad revelada" (2010). "Y es que, por un momento," continues Ladra, "la 'santa' se convierte en 'santera' y se deja llevar por el hechizo de un ritual, el de enterrar dignamente a los muertos, que también está presente en la exhumación de los restos de las víctimas de la guerra civil" (Ladra). Regarding Perpetua, Ripoll herself reflects: "'Perpetua habla de la memoria de miles de restos

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[87] For a more detailed panorama of censorship in theater related to the Spanish Civil War history and memory of the Franco regime in Spain, including the circumstances surrounding Mayorga's *El Jardín quemado* and *La biblioteca del diablo,* please see the dissertation's introduction.

[88] The first two works in Ripoll's trilogy include *Atra Bilis (Cuando estemos más tranquilas)* (2001) and *Los niños perdido* (2005), about the babies kidnapped from their imprisoned mothers during the *Guerra Civil* and given up for illegal adoption. Ripoll's *Atra Bilis (Cuando estemos más tranquilas)* had its debut performance at the Cuarta Pared for the Festival Escena Contemporánea in 2001. *Los niños perdidos* first published in 2005 *(Primer acto,* no. 310, IV/2005) was first performed onstage at the X Festival Madrid in 2005 and, later, at the CDN's *Teatro María Guerrero* (Ripoll 2011: 30). Ripoll cites the TV3 documentary by Montse Armengou and Ricard Belis, *Los niños perdidos del franquismo* (2002)*,* as having opened the door for her and her theater group, Micomicón, to prepare for the writing of her play by interviewing witnesses and victims related to these crimes (Ripoll 2011: 31). For a critical article on the issue of historical memory in Ripoll's *"Los niños perdidos,"* see Liliana Dorado (2011).

que hay bajo tierra, de la necesidad de recordar y de las ganas de no recordar y de echar tierra encima que tiene otra mucha gente'" (Ripoll; qtd. in Prado).[89]

Gracia Morales' *NN 12 (Nomen Nescio)* brings the bones of the *fosa común* literally out into the open, placing them in a box labeled "12" and later spreading them out on a table onstage for the performance of a forensic analysis.[90] The skeleton, in this case, has no name, but the forensic analysis performed as part of Morales's play discovers that this victim was a woman between the ages of 29 and 32, who had likely been tortured by a soldier before being shot in the head and who, as the onstage forensic analysis reveals, had given birth to a son weeks before being executed (Henríquez 39). This otherwise scientific process materializes dramatically when the victim appears onstage, alive, and sits alongside her own bones on the table to witness, together with spectators, the process the forensics expert undergoes to put together story of her death. When the woman's son appears onstage, the forensics expert realizes that the military man that had sequestered, tortured and killed the son's mother, is also the young man's father (40). From the perspective of spectators, writes José Henríquez, Morales's work "nos hace pensar en la España actual, cuando nos invita a convertirnos, si estamos dispuestos, en investigadores, forenses, en testigos de 'todo lo que nos traen los huesos para contarnos'" (Morales; qtd. in Hénriquez 40). Henríquez also suggests that, while the first part of *NN 12* makes spectators feel that they are exhuming the skeletons in a Spanish Civil War era mass grave in Spain, the play's ultimate message, its "comprometida y arriesgada investigación forense," seems to speak

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[89] Among the unsettling aspects of the work for Ladra is the difficulty of placing it historically—as he asks, "¿Suceden los hechos a la muerte de Franco, en la Transicón o en esta transitada Democracia?" but he also suggests that this "indefinición temporal" renders its message and performance all the more moving and timely (Ladra). This same aspect of (a)temporality and the play's resistance to historicity, I would add, underscores an underlying current in Spain's memory politics as relates to public performances—that is, it is not only what is said about the war and *el franquismo* and its legacy but *when* it is said that renders it controversial.

[90] *NN 12* had its debut performance in 2009 at the 18th Muestra de Teatro Español de Autores Contemporáneos in Alicante, Spain, a performance put together by Morales's theater group, Remiendo Teatro (Henríquez 39-40).

globally of other cases of human rights violations and recently discovered mass graves, as well as that of other governments in places such as Chile, Argentina, Guatemala, Colombia, Mexico, Iran, and Irak, that had made it their express purpose to "sembrar el miedo" (40-41).

Mayorga's most recent dramatic adaptation of classical text directly treats the issue of *"muertos sin tumba,"* though in a context, like that of *Antigone*, much more remote in time and place than *Santa Perpetua* and *NN 12.* In 2013, Mayorga "resurrected" Euripides' tragedy *Hecuba* (424 B.C.) in the form of an adaptation with the same title, *Hécuba* (2013). Directed by veteran director José Carlos Plaza, Mayorga's adaption of *Hécuba* had its debut performance in August 2013 at the 59th Festival de Teatro Clásico de Mérida, Spain. The play has since seen performances in cities such as Zaragoza and Murcia, and most recently, in a three week run in February 2014 at the Teatro Español in Madrid. In all instances, the play has been tremendously successful, having been favorably received by audiences throughout Spain (García Garzón). Mayorga's choice of adapting Euripides' text is an interesting one in light of its being a tragedy that is rarely performed onstage in its totality and had before Mayorga's version never reached the stage in Spain.[91] That *Hécuba* would resonate so powerfully in contemporary Spain owes as much to Mayorga's adaptation in making Euripides' language "speak" to a contemporary audience as it does to the work of its director and actors, especially Concha Velasco, with her award-winning and impassioned performance as Hécuba. I would argue, however, that the resoundingly positive reception of *Hécuba* from audiences in Spain nearly four decades after Franco's death may also indirectly derive from Spain's historical memory crisis. The voices of families with relatives still buried in *fosas comunes* in Spain, continuing to struggle for

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[91] In April 2005, Vanessa Redgrave interpreted the role of Hecuba along with the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Albery Theater in London and, again, in June 2005 at the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music. Both performances received lackluster and even scathing reviews (Isherwood).

accountability and justice for their "disappeared" loved ones are a persistent if sometimes under-spoken undercurrent in Spain's popular discourse on memory. I suggest that, under these circumstances, the theme and plot of *Hécuba* cannot but resonate.

In *Hécuba,* it is a woman—in this case, the enslaved former Trojan queen and mother of a betrayed and murdered son, Polydorus, who takes justice into her own hands and, in a devastating act of revenge, kills the sons of the king who had tricked and murdered her own, in the process blinding the king by gouging out his eyes. In an August 2013 interview with Concha Velasco, the actress who plays Hécuba, she reflects upon the impact that this tragedy could have on a contemporary audience. In answer to the interviewer's question of what parallelisms there may be between the themes and issues presented in *Hécuba* and "lo que estamos viviendo hoy día," Velasco responds:

> 'Desgraciadamente, los clásicos siempre están de moda porque, por desgracia, la vida, las gentes, las naciones, los políticos, siguen comportándose igual a través de los siglos. ¿Qué denuncia *Hécuba*? Lo que no debe hacerse. . . . Llegar a la venganza, a la venganza total y absoluta, no conduce al ser humano a nada. . . . Y otra de las cosas que denuncia *Hécuba* es cómo el ser humano puede llegar a la desesperación si no encuentra justicia. Es una obra en la que [se] habla mucho de la justicia . . . y de la dignidad del ser humano.'[92] (Hoyesarte.com)

In Mayorga's own description of *Hécuba,* which he refers to as, singularly, "la tragedia de la venganza," he notes that through Hécuba's vengeance, which occurs when she is at her weakest, she becomes what is at once "acusador, juez, y verdugo": "Qué enorme personaje esta anciana

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[92] This quotation is taken from the video posted in this Hoyesarte.com article, which also appears independently YouTube under the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Okm0wNU7xjA#t=455>, with a published date of August 1, 2013.

que nació en un palacio, esposa de rey y madre de hombres llamados a ser reyes, y que hoy solo espera la hora de ser arrastrada como esclava hacia la tierra extranjera. Y qué paradoja que precisamente entonces, cuando parecía más débil, esta madre desdichada se revuelva—con furia animal, pero también cargada de razones—y devuelva un golpe tan irreparable como el que ella recibió" (Mayorga; qtd. in Hoyesarte.com). The plot of *Hécuba* and the predicament of its protagonist cannot but reverberate in a society with its collective historical memory in a state of crisis. A nation still riddled with mass graves is one in which justice has not been served.

This crisis of memory is exemplified by the trajectory of the virtual lack of full-stage performances seen by Mayorga's *El jardín quemado.* While the play has enjoyed numerous dramatic readings, the first and only attempt to bring *El jardín quemado* to a nationally-funded stage in Spain is equally revealing of the nation's uncomfortable relationship with its repressive past, and specifically with any public performance that recognizes its *"muertos sin tumba."*[93] In the mid-1990s, Mayorga's *El jardín quemado* was selected for the 1996-1997 season of the Centro Dramático Nacional (CDN) in Madrid. The Centro Dramático Nacional, founded in 1978 by the Instituto Nacional de las Artes Escénicas y de la Música, together with the Ministerio de

[93] Considering *El jardín quemado*'s controversial past, having been taken off the CDN's 1997-1998 season after Aznar's election in 1996, it may not be surprising that it has made it to the stage only once, on 18 June 2009, at the Txaika Teatro in Bilbao, Spain, directed by Marina Shimanskaya. Its multiple dramatic readings, however, started before Mayorga even published the text, with the first one taking place in Madrid at the Teatro García Lorca on 3 April 1997, directed by Luis Blat. That same week, on 9 April 1997, there was another dramatic reading at the Royal Court in London, directed by Caroline Hall. A few years later, Marina Shimanskaya, the same director that would eventually take the play to the stage in 2009, directed a dramatic reading of *El jardín quemado* for the 2002 Casa de América-sponsored *Salón del Libro Teatral Español e Iberoamericano,* organized as well by the Asociación de Autores de Teatro (AAT). More recent dramatic readings of *El jardín quemado* include that which took place at the Sala Beckett in Barcelona, directed by Ada Vilaró, on July 18, 2005, and earlier, in the United States, with a September 22, 2000 dramatic reading in the Juan Carlos I Auditorium in New York City, directed by Nathalia Martínez. Part of what explains the lack of complete stage productions of *El jardín quemado* is the topic that it treats—it is one of Mayorga's only full-length works—in addition to *Siete hombres buenos,* Mayorga's earliest work—that directly addresses the context of the Spanish Civil War and the Franco regime. But, unlike *Siete hombres,* Mayorga's *El jardín quemado* also addresses the problem of historical memory as it relates to Spain's *fosas comunes*. This, of course, makes the work doubly controversial.

Educación, Cultura y Deporte, is a federally-funded performing arts organization with two main theaters in Madrid—el Teatro Valle-Inclán and the Teatro María Guerrero—, and as such, it is subject to the proclivities of whichever political leadership and party is in power. At around the same time that the CDN had slated *El jardín quemado* for its upcoming season, Spain was in the midst of its 1996 presidential election season. The conservative *Partido Popular* candidate, José María Aznar, was successfully elected, ending the almost fifteen-year *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE) social-democratic party presidency of Felipe González. Almost immediately after Aznar's election, Mayorga's *El jardín quemado* came under fire and was swiftly cut from the Centro Dramático Nacional's 1996-1997 season (Aznar Soler). The irregularity with which Mayorga's works that incorporate the subject of *fosas comunes* have made it to the stage at all, let alone nationally-funded stages, reflects some of hesitation in Spain with embracing directly and on mainstream stages the issue of the mass graves and the culture of impunity.

In *La biblioteca del diablo* and *El jardín quemado,* Mayorga's treatment of *"los muertos sin tumba"* differs from the classical *Antigone*, Euripides' *Hécuba,* and even the contemporary examples offered by Ripoll and Morales described above. In Mayorga's works, the possibility of exacting revenge or compelling accountability, justice, not to mention even accessing the truth of the traumatic events, is a near impossibility. These efforts in *La biblioteca del diablo* and *El jardín quemado* are hindered by structural, institutional, and unspoken forces—in some measure, that of the traumatic memory itself—that block the witnesses' or victims' access to the outside world and to their own memories. The dramatic process of "excavating" for memories, as we've seen in previous chapters, is similar to that of exhuming bones insofar as it is a process rife with conflict. Bones, like memories, writes anthropologist and historian Ignacio Fernández de Mata, are not "neutral scripts" and revisiting them through exhumation brings up the trauma of memory

in addition to that of its victims: "Digging up a grave entails digging up the past—reencountering buried feelings of fear, pain, frustration, shame, and guilt. . . . Old fears are rekindled; guilt is brought to the fore, shame for things done and things not done, regrets. Exhumations make these emotions urgent by revealing the hard evidence of death in the midst of communities used to the silent and often complicit cover-up of the past" ("Rupture" 292). In Mayorga's *La biblioteca del diablo* and *El Jardín quemado,* the "recuperation" of memories is an act that compels destruction. In *La biblioteca del diablo,* it calls for a decisive tearing down of the walls that house the memory of the "disappeared," whereas in *El jardín quemado,* it calls for a further fictionalization of memory accompanied by the physical exhumation of unidentified remains, all processes enclosed with a prison or tomb-like onstage structure.

"La biblioteca del diablo"

"La biblioteca del diablo" (2001), included in Mayorga's collection of short works, *Teatro para minutos* (2009)*,* was originally published in 2001 in a collection of short works by Spanish and Argentine playwrights, titled *La noticia del día. Textos breves argentinos y españoles* (2001). That Mayorga wrote *"La biblioteca del diablo"* just a few years after writing *El jardín quemado* in the mid-late 1990s indicates that Mayorga's work at that time was going through a phase in which he entered more readily and directly into the controversial territory of Spain's memory politics. Unfortunately, and perhaps owing to a fate similar to that of Martín Recuerda's *La Llanura* in the late 1940s or Amestoy's *Dionisio Ridruejo* in the post-Franco period, among other many works discussed in this study's introduction, those of Mayorga's works that treat the topic of memory politics in the explicit context of Spain and its *fosas communes* must follow a much rockier path to the theater stage. In 2005, *"La biblioteca del*

diablo" would see its only complete onstage performance as César Martínez's Catalán translation of Mayorga's text, titled *"La biblioteca del diable."* It was a one-time performance that took place on 8 September 2005 at the Fira de Tárrega and Teatre L'Escorxador in Lleida, Spain, directed by Jorge Raedó.[94] In a 2012 interview with Mónica Molanés Rial, Mayorga explains how *"La biblioteca del diablo"* is a play he wrote in response to a challenge he received from an Argentine writer: the idea was to scour the newspapers from the day of their birth—in Mayorga's case, April 6, 1965—and choose one authentic news story on which to base a play. Among the news items for that day, recounts Mayorga, the most compelling was that of a woman who had to declare publicly that she had been in search of her missing brothers for forty years in order for her to be able to declare them legally dead, which in turn was the only way she could settle the family inheritance (203). What Mayorga does with that news story is create the short play, *"La biblioteca del diablo,"* refashioning the original newspaper notice so that the dates on which the woman's brothers go missing are the same dates that bookend one of the most painful periods in Spain's history—the Spanish Civil War: 1936 and 1939. Mayorga's fictionalization centers on a legal proceeding that takes place on April 6, 1965, in the library of the large home in which lives the play's female protagonist, Ana. The purpose of the legal proceeding is for Ana to sign an official document in which she declares she has not heard any news of her brothers despite her public attempts search for them, and that, therefore, they are dead.

According to Fernández de Mata, it was a common practice in Spain to seek the signing of death certificates for the "disappeared" in the decades after the Spanish Civil War, despite the continued violence and especially repressive first decades of Franco's dictatorship. In Francoist Spain, writes Fernández de Mata, the most common official reason for a "disappeared" death

[94] This 2005 performance of *"La biblioteca del diablo"* formed part of director Jorge Raedó's larger project of working with Mayorga's *Teatro para minutos.*

was declared to be the war itself—"por causas de la Guerra," a phrase as devastating as it was ambiguous (296 "Rupture"). Many of the family members that sought to sign death certificates for their "disappeared" loved ones did so in order to receive the pittance of remuneration—financial or legal—for the death, something that might allow them to move on or heal from the loss, whether that meant selling a house or land or remarrying. The "rupture of the world" that Fernández de Mata argues was experienced by the loved ones of victims, began with the events of the summer 1936 in Spain and occurred, he says, at the individual and collective levels. Fernández de Mata writes that the "culture of terror," which he derives from Michael Taussig's phrase, intensified the devastation of the moment of "rupture," that moment in which normal, everyday life would never be the same (Taussig; qtd. in "Rupture" 283-284). This "rupture" at the individual level is what Mayorga textualizes in his *La biblioteca del diablo* through a protagonist that cannot write or speak her trauma, yet expresses it in two ways: through the books held passively on her shelves and through her one intention: to destroy the house from which her "disappeared" brothers went missing decades earlier, one in 1936 and the other two in 1939.

The play opens with two men—a young judge and his nearly retired secretary—perusing the library of the large home that belongs to Ana, while she has stepped offstage for reasons they ignore. The motive behind the men's visit to her home is to carry out a legal proceeding at the end of which Ana is to sign the death certificates of her three brothers. The reason the judge and secretary have come to Ana's home, however, is that Ana has voluntarily confined herself there, not having left her house—or written a word in her diary, which she'd titled *"Pesadilla"*—since the last of her brothers "left" decades earlier. As the judge and secretary proceed to ask and record Ana's "official" answers to questions about her brothers and the steps she's taken to find

them over the years, spectators learn that the only concrete details Ana has in these decades are from the day they "left." She'd last seen her oldest brother, "César Harper Lemus," in 1936: "Entre Navidad y Nochevieja. Ya no estaba con nosotros en Nochevieja" (121). Dimas and Dámaso Harper Limus, the younger two of her brothers, meanwhile, had left together, a little over two years later, at around the same time of year that César had: "En 1939. El día de Reyes" (122). When the judge asks her whether she'd heard from them since, she says that she hadn't, and then details the "legal" efforts she'd made to find them. The protocol for the declaration of death in the case of Ana's brothers is that once she has placed missing-persons announcements in public newspapers with no response, she can declare them dead. But once they are declared dead, even if there are guilty parties in her brothers' death or "disappearance," no one needs to take responsibility. The death certificate frees the State and anyone else from responsibility for their disappearance.[95] While the judge acknowledges that the State owes Ana and her family a "moral debt," merely stating this does not constitute accountability. Indeed, the judge takes on a paternalistic posture of comforting Ana while she takes this difficult step, reassuring her that she is not alone in being faced with this decision: "No se sienta culpable. Es una situación más corriente de lo que pudiera parecer. . . . Hay quien pretende mover un muro de su casa y no puede hacerlo. Gente que quiere vender un reloj y no puede. *(Al secretario.)* ¿Exagero? . . ." and

[95] This is the reason that Judge Garzón recast the "disappeared" in *fosas comunes* as "missing persons" cases when he opened the case against the Franco regime. By declaring that these individuals, whereabouts unknown, had been missing for so long allowed him to suggest that they had not been murdered but rather kidnapped, which allowed him to declare each of their cases legally still open. By doing so, his idea was to bypass the 1977 Amnesty Law disallowing the prosecution of confirmed crimes. However, the judiciary in Spain declared Judge Garzón's action to be an overstepping of his jurisdiction and a violation of the law. The judiciary later successfully disbanded Judge Garzón from the practice of law for the following 11 years for his having violated attorney-client privilege in the money laundering and corruption case known as the caso Gürtel. As one editorial on these events notes, the fact that Judge Garzón was disbarred for a lesser case and not the one that tried to bring the crimes of the Franco regime to justice indicates a terrible irony in Spain's memory and political culture and operative notion of "justice," "una justicia que actúa más diligentemente contra quien persigue el delito por supuestas extralimitaciones en su función que contra los presuntos delincuentes. . ." (*El País.* "Auto contra Garzón." 13 April 2011.)

then goes on to cite similar cases in which the lack of a declaration of death inhibits relatives from selling or giving away loved ones' possessions (123). The judge tries to "comfort" Ana further, saying she should not feel bad or embarrassed: "No tiene que avergonzarse. Hay quien vive estos trámites como si estuviese matando a alguien. Es un procedimiento legal, no un homicidio" (123).

The only indication of homicide, however, besides the likely deduction spectators might make that Ana's brothers did not merely "leave" her house but, rather, that they were sequestered from their house and executed during the *Guerra Civil*, is the series of books that Ana keeps in her library. Accompanying the three characters and onstage during this entire play is Ana's bookshelf, which the judge's secretary peruses in the opening scene of the play, curious as to what seems to him to be the unconventional order of her books. While on one side are her mathematics books, on another shelf are the following, as the secretary reads its titles out loud: "El proceso." "Guía de Nueva York". "Corán." "Reglamento de navegación aérea". "Biblia". "Moby Dick"…" (119). The judge, however, dismisses the secretary's speculation, suggesting that such random and drastically different titles cannot but be haphazardly-ordered. And yet, defying the judge and just before Ana has her opening entrance onstage, the secretary picks up the last book on the shelf, a hand-written book titled *"Pesadilla,"* and reads its first line: "'Al final del mundo hay una casa cuya mera arquitectura es malvada'" (120). This line, which Ana later reveals to the men is a line by G.K. Chesterton, remains unexplained for most of the play but hangs over the entire legal proceeding, as a sort of omen. Then, just as the judge reassures her that it is a legal proceeding and not a homicide and makes a motion as if to sign the legal declaration, his action is interrupted by his secretary, who becomes distracted, again, by the mysterious order of Ana's bookshelves (123).

The characters' attention then turns to the secretary who, as if thinking out loud to himself, reads off the library's titles again, trying to make sense of their order: "Los primeros son 'Job', 'Los hermanos Karamazov' y 'Si esto es un hombre'. Los tres últimos, 'Mi lucha', 'Teología política' y 'Pesadilla'" (123). When he asks Ana if her library has any order, Ana responds chillingly, "Del Bien al Mal" (124). The secretary, not quite understanding, says, "No sabía que hubiese tantos libros malos" (124). It is Ana's clarification at this point, near the end of the play, that gives the entire proceeding and Mayorga's work a gravity entirely absent in Ana's dry and systematic exchanges with the judge about her missing brothers. "Hay libros malos y libros de los que se puede hacer una lectura maligna," she says (124). Between these two extremes—el Bien y el Mal—are the books that the judge's secretary had read off in the beginning moments of the play, as listed above: "'El proceso', 'Guía de Nueva York', 'Corán', 'Reglamento de navegación aérea', 'Biblia', 'Moby Dick'" (119). Taken as a whole, these texts begin to reveal how Ana might understand the events that took her brothers from their house. Spectators might also begin to understand why Ana has not been able to write in her diary, which she titled, *"Pesadilla,"* since the day she last saw the last of her brothers. The books that for Ana point to "el Bien" are all stories of intense suffering and the experience of abandonment and disillusionment, as in the case of Job and Primo Levi's Holocaust survivor narrative *If this is a Man* (1947), also published under the title *Survival in Auschwitz.* Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880), meanwhile, features the episode of "The Grand Inquisitor," in which Ivan recounts to his younger brother Alyosha an encounter between Jesus and the Grand Inquisitor that takes place in Sevilla during the Inquisition, and in which the Grand Inquisitor argues—against Jesus—that the principle of free will has been the cause of human suffering. In each of these three texts, there is a dialectical-dialogical battle of sorts in which what is presumed to be

good—in all three cases, God—is questioned in light of the suffering and calamity that befall the innocent.[96] The books that occupy the middle of this range between Good and Evil, meanwhile, derive from current and catastrophic events from around the time that Mayorga wrote *La biblioteca del diablo*—namely, and anachronistically, the terrorist acts that caused the events of 9/11. It is here that Ana's library seems appear even more random to the judge, who cannot make any sense of a guide to New York following the *Koran*, or a rule book for piloting a plane following Kafka's *The Trial* (119).[97] But it is the books at the furthest right of the shelves which seem the most disturbing, because of how Ana qualifies *el Mal*. As she clarifies for the secretary, there are books that are bad and books that is possible to read with evil intent and malice. The three on this far end are Adolf Hitler's 1925 prison manifesto, *Mein Kampf,* Carl Schmitt's *Political Theology* (1922)*,* also linked to Nazi thought and the idea that evil is a natural state, and finally, Ana's *"Pesadilla,"* the diary in which she could not write a single word after 1939. It is the penultimate text that perhaps relates the most directly—though ironically—to the juridical proceeding that takes place in Ana's home. In the section of his dissertation that Mayorga dedicates to Schmitt's *Political Theology,* a section that Mayorga titled, "La justicia del fuerte. El estado de excepción en Schmitt," Mayorga writes that Schmitt's justification of dictatorship and absolute sovereignty hinged upon the idea that in order to maintain order, it is justified to

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[96] Not coincidentally, these first three texts on Ana's bookshelf have been adapted into dramatic form by Mayorga. Mayorga adapted Dostoyevsky's text with the title *"El gran inquisidor,"* and made Joven 1 and Joven 2 replace the brothers' names from Dostoyevsky's original. *Job* is the title of the text Mayorga adapted from multiple stories of suffering and calamity including the biblical story of Job; the Holocaust survivor narrative of Elie Wiesel; the *Diaries* of Holocaust victim Etty Hillesum; and Zvi Kolitz's 1948 short story titled, "Yosl Rakover talks to God," in which a man, fighting the Nazis during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943, challenges God directly to answer for the Hell that the Jews were suffering. Mayorga also adapted Primo Levi's survivor narrative, *If this is a Man,* incorporating Levi's poetry as well as his narration as monologue in an adaptation that Mayorga titled *Wstawac,* the Polish word meaning "Get up!".

[97] Kafka's *The Trial,* written in 1914-1915 and published in 1925, is a novel in which a man is arrested and put on trial for a crime of which he is never informed. The inclusion of Kafka's text in this middle section of the shelf of books *may* be a reference, Mayorga has said, to the victims of 9/11 themselves, whom the master minds of the 9/11 terrorist attacks had determined were guilty of crimes they would never be informed of, let alone tried for (personal communication, 3 April 2014).

suspend the rule of law, making any action permissible and justifiable—dictatorship a state of exception (*Revolución* 168). But, more than this, Schmitt's text is a meditation on the goodness or evil of humankind and its relationship to order and governance; as Mayorga writes, for Schmitt, a belief in "la bondad natural del hombre" constituted a negation of the State, which could only lead to disorder and was therefore, fundamentally dangerous (*Revolución* 180). That is, for Schmitt, all sound political theory—and, therefore, any dictatorship—had to assume that humankind was naturally evil (*Revolución* 180).

I argue that the spectrum of Good to Evil that resides on Ana's bookshelves tells the story of what her brothers suffered at the same time that it writes the memories and the *"pesadilla"* that she can no longer access or recount. Moreover, Ana's house contains the only proof of her brothers' existence—her photographs of them, her memories of their childhood—but it is also the space that witnessed their loss and now contains the only explanation possible for their disappearance as told through *la biblioteca del diablo*. It is an explanation that she herself could not put into words. It is here that Ana's truncated diary and the house that contains it signify the "disaster" in Blanchot's sense. It is her destroyed memory, the "rupture" of her brothers' "disappearance," and the void that can find no words of its own. The books, which seem to breathe the same malice and repression that drew her brothers out of that house are books that, by the end of the play, not even the judge's secretary dares to touch. As Mayorga's stage direction indicates: "*El secretario se acerca a la biblioteca, pero no se atreve a tocar ningún libro"* (124). The bookshelf, but also the house, have surrounded Ana like a tomb-like nightmare that she cannot escape except by destroying it. In this way, Ana's house, as with Chesterton's quote, "cuya mera arquitectura es malvada," functions like an above-ground *fosa común.* The only way she can give her brothers any semblance of a proper burial is to perform a sort of

inverted act of exhumation, destroying the only space that that can testify to the malice that murdered them. As Ana says in the final line of the play, just before the judge and his secretary both sign her declaration: "Con la ley o contra la ley, la haré tirar. Esta casa es mala" (124).

El jardín quemado

Hace falta muy buena memoria para olvidar.
-Felipe Juaristi

In *El jardín quemado*, we will see a similar inability to access and express memory, this time enclosed within the walls of structure that seems to block not only characters' access to the outside world, but also access to their own memories. *El jardín quemado* takes place in an insane asylum on the island of San Miguel. What is now an asylum/sanatorium under the direction of Dr. Garay was once used as a hospital and, during the Spanish Civil War, as a prisoner-of-war camp briefly occupied by Franco's forces. The play takes place in the late 1970s, in the same years known as Spain's *Transición,* the period during which Spain enters its so-called *pacto de silencio* with legal declarations and laws, such as the 1977 *Ley de Amnistía,* which effectively declared—much like Bernarda—that Spain would only be allowed to shed its tears of mourning in private for the Spanish Civil War and Franco-regime dead and still buried in thousands of *fosas comunes* throughout the country, outlawing any legal redress of the crimes committed in the decades previous. Mayorga's *El jardín quemado* opens with a sort of intrusion—the youthful idealism of young professional psychologist named Benet, who seeks to uncover the truth of the fate of certain missing dead. Included among the missing is the poet Blas Ferrater, whom he believes was among the twelve innocent men executed within the garden's walls and then buried in a mass grave in the asylum's now ash-covered garden. Soon after beginning his investigation, and suspecting that the asylum's archives have been tampered with, Benet realizes that his only

source for the “truth” of the executions might be in the minds and memories of the patients who Benet believes witnessed the executions. Benet observes that the patients refuse to walk on top of the area of the garden that is covered in ashes—the *jardín quemado.* Judging from the patients’ odd behavior and considering that ashes now mysteriously cover what was once a garden, Benet deduces that underneath the *jardín quemado* is the mass grave underneath which the bodies of twelve innocent men still lay. Yet, when Benet questions Dr. Garay as to the “truth,” what he encounters initially is an ambiguously confident denial of any wrongdoing. Towards the end of the play, however, and armed perhaps with the confidence he may feel was granted by the newly-passed amnesty law, Dr. Garay boldly admits having facilitated the executions. But what he had done, in his reconstruction of the events, cleared him of guilt. The Nacionalistas had requested 12 Republican soldiers to execute. Garay approached the soldiers, telling them that, if they did not want to die, they had to choose an innocent patient to die in their place. That, in Dr. Garay’s account, is what the soldiers had done—chosen innocent men to die in their place. What Benet finds when he questions the “patients” about these events and the missing poet, however, is that the ashes covering the ground signified not only the crumpled bones of the dead, but also the withering memories of the living. All that the patients can offer him is a slew of corrupted, fantastic memories, with bits and pieces of truth wrapped in fiction and fragmentary delusion.

In Jeannette R. Malkin’s *Memory-Theater and Postmodern Drama* (1999), she writes that the “disconnected stimuli” characteristic of post-modern memory-theater consists of “conflicting discourses, intruding images, overlapping voices, hallucinatory fragments” that resist order, organization, and linearity. “The images often reach back into the pasts of a society, but their arrangement does not suggest historical reconstruction; rather, chaotic memory—perhaps even *traumatized* memory—seems to be at work” (29). Mayorga’s *El jardín quemado* is not a post-

modern play by any means—in fact, scholars tend to point out its classic unity of time and space, and its classic structure, consisting of a prologue, five acts, and an epilogue (Marchena Segura). But in its representation of memory, made up of fragments, fictionalizations, delusions, and stunned silences, I would like to argue that it captures some the movement of chaos that Malkin writes is in essence postmodern. The remembering subject in *El jardín quemado* expresses him or herself through an inability to completely recall or express details from the past. What Bernard-Donals describes as the trauma witness or survivor's "anguished memories" is made up of "flashes" or "kernals" of an "absent origin" that riddles the mind, making the testimonial narration of memory nearly impossible:

> The movement—the absent origin, absent source of memory—is like the kernel that troubles the shell, like the event that haunts the survivor or the witness and compels her to testify and to speak in a language that is only partly, if at all, under her control. The flash of recollection, anamnesis, is not the making present of the event, then, but an incessant movement, a compulsion to speak. (10)

In *El jardín quemado,* Mayorga constructs the remembering subjects through a dynamic akin to Malkin's chaotic, fragmented movement and Bernard-Donal's notion of a traumatized, chaotic memory. Remembering subjects performs "the disaster" of memory through a certain "compulsion to speak" that is characterized by a disordered language full of intrusions, fictionalizations, and silences.

In Benet's archival investigation of the "patients" of San Miguel, he begins to realize that they had not arrived originally patients, but rather as the Republican soldiers imprisoned on the island when it was occupied by the Nationalist forces during the Spanish Civil War. After decades of isolation on the island and no contact with the outside world, the soldiers-turned-

patients are suffering from senility and delusion—a fact deeply troubling to Benet. That these soldiers-prisoners-patients may have witnessed the execution of innocent men gives Benet enough cause, he believes, to accuse San Miguel's director, Dr. Garay, of unethical behavior, if not human rights violations. But, despite living in a society that is transitioning to democracy and being ostensibly "free" to seek justice and give testimony of the atrocity they witnessed, as the idealist Benet tries to remind them, these soldier-patients are unreliable as witnesses. Benet finds instead a series of docile bodies, deluded into misremembering. Their identities and memories have been distorted, replaced by invented, fantastical "characters" that make Benet's investigation and search for justice impossible to carry out. Mayorga constructs the space in which characters reside as a space in which they are perpetually confined and isolated, though they are too deluded now to realize it. Benet suspects that they have witnessed and possibly suffered the effects of injurious acts committed during the war or by Dr. Garay himself, whom Benet suspects has in some way abused his patients. For example, one of the patients of San Miguel, Néstor, is lame and limps. According to Garay, Néstor suffered an "accident" which remains unexplained in the play (57). This physical ailment, together with the patients' broken access to memory, are "symptoms" that are never clearly or directly linked to Dr. Garay's criminal acts but that Benet assumes—and spectators are likely to assume along with him—that these ailments of the mind and body are a consequence of actions committed by Dr. Garay.

One immediate parallel between Mayorga's *"La biblioteca del diablo"* and *"El jardín quemado"* is the idea that the offstage area that spectators and characters cannot see, the space outside the "four" walls that enclose the characters onstage, is or appears beautiful. In *El Jardín quemado,* the beauty of San Miguel is most certainly in its surroundings—in the ocean waters that the prisoner-patients cannot see because of the high walls that block their view. The walls of

San Miguel presumably have the appearance of continuity from the outside, which neither spectators nor the "patients" ever see, while inside the scene is somewhere between a circus and a funeral. In *El jardín quemado,* the same wall that blocks the prisoner-patients' views of the port was the one against which twelve innocent men stood before being executed, their bodies dumped in a *fosa común* in the middle of the garden whose surface was later burnt to ashes. It is within these walls and in close proximity to this mass grave that the prisoner-patients who witnessed the executions have no choice but to live, "forget," and die. In both cases as well, it is as if time, language, and memory have stood still, paralyzed by the trauma of loss and silenced by a controlling structure and the passing of time. Various scholars of Mayorga's work that have studied *El jardín quemado* suggest that the way that Mayorga organizes space and the tension between opposite types of spaces corresponds, as well, to his construction of time and memory—inside/outside, closed/open, far/near, above/below, function operatively and metaphorically as present/past and forgetting/remembering (Marchena Segura; Ferreyra). Mónica Sandra Ferreyra (2006), for example, has written of the tension between inside and outside spaces in Mayorga's *El jardín quemado* as transmitting a sense of isolation. As Ferreyra writes, "Podemos ver que la isla se presenta como un paraíso, como una tierra prometida, como la arena de luchas, pero sobre todo como un espacio "aislado". Este aislamiento permite plantear las acciones de los personajes en términos de adentro/afuera: de la isla se sale o se entra. El puerto con su función de 'entrada' y 'salida de la isla, abre y cierra la acción representada" (3-4). I would add that this dynamic of enclosure as Ferreyra explains it is ironically intertwined with Mayorga's construction of memory. While memories enclosed within the asylum of San Miguel seem hermetically sealed, the shreds that appear to be accessible come from within and not from outside its walls, is the opening scene featuring an *"hombre estatua"* indicates—that is, that out beyond the walls of San

Miguel, the memories of what happened inside San Miguel becomes literally petrified, as silenced as they are "set in stone."

The play opens with a prologue—a conversation between Benet and a street-performing "statue." The street performer, his face scarred, has struck a pose. Facing outward, he is frozen in motion, as if he were about to dive into the port's ocean waters. But upon being addressed by Benet, the statue comes to life, coming down from his pedestal. In the statue's conversation with the young investigator, he points to and emphasizes the depth of the scar on his face for Benet to see. Benet insists that he cannot see the scar, beginning to believe, as a result, that the statue is lying. But, as if to verify its existence, the statue looks at his reflection in the water, insisting to Benet that the waters don't deceive. Indeed, it is in the waters that the statue locates the truth of what has happened. Only the waters can "testify" to how he received his scar: "Pero no hay otra verdad que la de las aguas del puerto. Estas aguas no engañan: la cicatriz es más fuerte cada día" (48). When Benet asks the statue if he had lived in San Miguel for a long time, the statue's response suggests a strong desire—but also a fear—that the truth of what has happened in San Miguel's *jardín quemado* might come to light: "¿Mucho tiempo? Es curioso que me haga esa pregunta precisamente hoy: he soñado que metían toda la ceniza del jardín en un reloj de arena" (48). The statue then gets back up on his pedestal—*"fatigosamente,"* says Mayorga's stage direction—and then issues a somewhat ominous warning to Benet: "No entre con Garay en el jardín" (48).

This initial conversation between Benet and the statue establishes a correspondence between time, memory, truth, and justice. It also constructs the act of witnessing in an unconventional way. That is, it is the ocean that surrounds San Miguel, and not the human being standing outside its walls, that is capable of witnessing and remembering. The statue's statement

also points to how he and the "patients" of San Miguel engage the topic of memory. That is, the statue does not consider himself a witness. Or, rather, he spends his days as a statue precisely *because* he is a witness—as Ferreyra writes, "un testigo de piedra, una inmutabilidad artificiosa, una suspensión especial y temporal"—though one that is incapable of giving testimony of what he has seen and experienced. Instead, as the statue asserts, only the waters know the truth and are willing to tell it (3). At the end of this scene, Benet asks the statue to tell him about his time in San Miguel. By this point, however, the statue is back on its pedestal and has assumed a petrified, lifeless form incapable of responding—incapable, it seems, of remembering.

When spectators meet Dr. Garay, it is because Benet has finally emerged from his research in the San Miguel archives for a moment in order to meet Garay in his office. The office, as Mayorga's stage directions indicate, has a large window that looks out onto the enclosed patio where the patients walk around, though never too near the *"jardín quemado"* covered in ashes (51). In the first lines of interaction between the young psychologist and Dr. Garay, spectators learn that it is Garay's birthday and that both patients and staff are preparing a surprise party. When speaking of his birthday, Garay makes a typical—though in this context, stinging—connection between time and justice, almost lamenting to Benet that there is a celebration at all: "La mala leche de cada año, cosa de los muchachos. Le juro que yo no tengo que ver, no tengo nada que festejar. ¿Cómo voy a celebrar semejante injusticia, la vejez? La jubilación se me acerca como una sombra siniestra. Si el asno aún tiene ganas de tirar del carro, ¿por qué arrojarlo al matadero? Un par de años más y guillotina" (51). The morbid images that Garay uses to speak of his own career and mortality point to aspects of what spectators later learn is his attitude toward the patients themselves, whom Garay refers to as *"los muchachos."*

Somewhat saved from Garay's morbid notion of aging are the patients that Garay refers to as the *"ángeles viejos,"* those that witnessed atrocity but are incapable of remembering the event.

When Michel Foucault presents, in his *Discipline and Punish,* the inner workings of the panoptic structure and its effect on unruly, infirm or criminal bodies, he does so by focusing on the disciplinary function of the gaze of the centralized power. In the case of the panoptic prison structure, this would be the watchtower that sits with darkened windows in the middle of a cylindrical structure lined on its exterior with prison cells. The prison warden who sits in the watch tower is invisible to the prisoners—he is behind the darkened windows, nearly opaque from the outside. This means that he can always look out at any of the prisoners without their knowing for certain whether he is actively looking or whether he is inside the watch tower at all. Meanwhile, each prisoner can always see the watch tower, but because of the cylindrical structure, he cannot see the prisoners immediately on either side of his cell. That is, the prisoners are constantly aware of the possibility of being seen but they themselves cannot see. For Foucault, there is a very fine line between the disciplinary structure intended to control bodies that are harmful to society, to themselves, and to each other, and the therapeutic, medical structure in which bodies are also isolated and constantly under surveillance, ostensibly in order to protect the health of the patient but also the welfare of others and, ultimately, the state (144 *Discipline).* Indeed, as Foucault affirms, "Out of discipline, a medically useful space was born" (144), meaning that hospitals and sanatoriums are all built on the idea of a supervising gaze that is, according to Foucault, "both general and individual" (145). As he writes in *Discipline and Punish*, "The perfect disciplinary apparatus would make it possible for a single gaze to see everything constantly. A central point would be both the source of light illuminating everything, and a locus of convergence for everything that must be known: a perfect eye that nothing would

escape and a centre towards which all gazes would be turned" (173). Foucault's emphasis on the gaze, for the purposes of the the anlaysis of *El Jardín quemado,* is twofold. On the one hand, Foucault's theory emphasizes the disciplinary and sanitizing effect of an ever-seeing centralized gaze on the bodies and minds of patients/prisoners. On the other, this gaze is only effective as a mechanism for control if the prisoner-patient is constantly aware of the ever-present possibility of being monitored and watched (187 *Discipline*). "Disciplinary power," writes Foucault, "is exercised through its invisibility; at the same time it imposes on those whom it subjects a principle of compulsory visibility. . . . It is the fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his subjection" (187 *Discipline*).

This analysis suggests that the memories of the prisoner-patients of San Miguel have been corrupted by several factors: time, isolation, and the gaze of Dr. Garay. Four decades have passed since 1937 and the execution of the twelve innocent men. Presumably, the prisoner-patients have spent decades isolated and walled off from the world, both visibly "out of sight" and in terms of the contact they've had with people and events outside of San Miguel. As Benet observes of the interactions between Dr. Garay and his patients, the doctor continues to exercise a marked amount of control over them without needing to exert any physical or verbal force. From Benet's perspective, the extent of the patients' docility is incomprehensible. But, he continues to believe that both Spain's new democracy and his search for the truth will liberate the patients of San Miguel from their incarceration in both mind and body. As he warns Garay, "La democracia va a levantar muchas mascaras. También en ese patio" (14). When Benet bends down and runs the ashes of the *jardín quemado* through his fingers, he reflects, "La verdad se esconde bajo las cenizas" (19). In light of the outcome of Benet's investigation, I believe that Mayorga is here pointing to the pitfalls of idealism that may have been present in the younger

generations at the time of Franco's death. The spirit of this idealism believed that as the nation transitioned to democracy, the "truth" the years of repression the nation had suffered would easily come to light. In this sense, Benet embodies this idea, which may have still be sprouting before the Amnesty Law was passed in 1977, that those responsible for crimes committed during Franco's regime—including those he presumes were committed by Dr. Garay—would be held accountable. Dr. Garay, meanwhile, seems almost bemused by Benet's search for "truth": "¿La verdad? ¿Ha llegado usted a nada menos que a la verdad?" (60). Benet insists that he will find it, but that his only source of truth is in the patients themselves: "Prefiero preguntar a esos otros, a quienes nunca nadie pregunta nada". . ."Ellos tienen la verdad y quiero que esté usted delante para escucharla" (61).

Betraying Benet's idealism is the ever-present, controlling gaze of Dr. Garay. In the patients' interactions with Garay and Benet, they seem constantly aware of Garay's constant presence as well as of the possibility of always been seen by him. There is not a word they can utter or a move they can make that Dr. Garay might not see, hear, or, what might be more threatening, sense and disapprove of. This kind of pseudo-panoptic ("pseudo" since the patients can always or generally see Garay), in addition to whatever nefarious or injurious acts Garay might have committed, compel the soldier-patients to "forget." These conditions have created a state of misremembering or oblivion in which the truth of past events become jumbled, confused, and nearly entirely inaccessible. Adding to this, Benet's interactions with Garay's "patients" test the young investigator's patience as well as his optimistic confidence in democracy's ability to enable truth to come to light and call forth justice. Confronting Garay's boastful confidence in Benet's inevitable failure to find the truth, Benet asks, ideally: "¿Cree que no testificarán contra usted? ¿No ve que están deseando gritar la verdad? Hasta ahora, sus vidas sólo han sido mentiras

que usted puso en el archivo" (68). Garay's response is chilling: "Aunque le gritasen la verdad, usted no podría escucharla. Ni siquiera podrá entenderse con ellos. . . . Hablan distintas lenguas. Ellos hablan la de los ángeles" (69).

Benet's first contact with the patients' possible rehabilitation and misremembering begins with the statue-man in the opening scene/prologue described above. Perplexed by this encounter, Benet comments to Garay that the statue-man does not respond to questions about the past, reacting instead by performing the silent stillness of a statue: "En cuanto nota que me meto en su vida, enmudece como una auténtica piedra" (53). Dr. Garay casually responds that perhaps that "statue" is a former patient. Dr. Garay takes advantage of this opportunity to discourage Benet from engaging in direct contact with any of the patients, warning Benet of the disruptive effect his investigative incursions could have on them. As Dr. Garay insists, "Los muchachos viven en un equilibrio precario, pero precioso, que por nada del mundo voy a arriesgar" (54). Dr. Garay, meanwhile, speaks of himself as though he were a shepherd of sorts, "un modesto curandero" (54). Even Benet confirms this image of Dr. Garay, noting that it is his impression that the doctor lives for his patients and, further, is an extraordinary "ejemplo ético." (53). With this "example," Benet is referring to Dr. Garay's never having abandoned the hospital during the Spanish Civil War even when the Nationalist forces occupied the island, meaning that Garay was there, and either a witness or an accomplice, during the executions of innocent men that took place during the war (59). But Dr. Garay's attitude, however, and somewhat indifferent to this history, is that of jaded indifference. Aware of Benet's youth and that his educational training took place just before and after Franco's death, Garay warns Benet that his impulse to change everything may be a potentially negative one. There is such a thing, Garay insists, as *too much* change: "Se acabó la dictadura y el país entero está ansioso por cambiar de arriba abajo. Usted sabe que el nuevo

régimen cuenta con todas mis simpatías. Pero temo que tanta ansiedad traiga algunas precipitaciones" (54). It is an ambiguous prediction for the nation, but an ominous one for Benet. It is as if Garay were sure that the young psychologist's investigation would not be successful. Underlying Garay's comments throughout the play is a self-assuredness that is unsettling to Benet. Dr. Garay speaks as though he were not at all worried about the possibility of being accused in an investigation. But Benet is relentless and insists he can make a case strong enough to take the doctor to trial and before a medical board—a sort of local truth commission.

Despite Dr. Garay's self-assuredness, Benet's impulse to transform and open the structure of San Miguel sits uncomfortably with Dr. Garay. The young psychologist plans to knock down the wall that blocks the patients' view of the port waters—the same waters that, according to the statue, contain the truth of the past and the same wall that Benet later realizes the innocent men stood against before being executed. Dr. Garay looks out through his office window onto the patio and the *jardín quemado* as if he were looking into a fishbowl. Marchena Segura connects the enclosure of patients and the watchful eye of Garay to the *jardín*'s potential to double as a tomb. She also suggests an analogy between the island of San Miguel and the interconnected layers of an onion, suggesting that, not only are the patients enclosed, but so is the hidden inner layer, the "heart" of the onion: the unidentified victims lying in the mass grave that sits onstage. As Marchena Segura describes San Miguel:

> Una isla aparentemente ficticia—o no—donde a su vez está el hospital y dentro del cual se halla el jardín quemado y dentro del jardín la fosa común. Los personajes están en un lugar completamente cerrado, tipo cebolla, cuyo corazón palpitante y expectante es una fosa común cubierta de cenizas. Fosa que contiene cuerpos anónimos, víctimas inocentes,

> identidades falsas: la evidencia incriminatoria o la revelación de una verdad distinta. (Marchena Segura 5)

Benet's task is to peel away the outer layers of this onion like island in the hopes of finding its truth—the truth, however, may always elude him. Having observed how the patients are completely isolated from family and the outside world, Benet suggests to Garay that they be gradually socialized with exercise, being introduced to family members, integration into the city, and working—strategies of socialization and rehabilitation that have worked in Germany, according to Benet (59). One of the indications that perplexes Benet is the fact that the patients do not need to be monitored, scheduled or even medicated. They don't really follow a schedule of meals and activities. They don't seem to want to leave and there is there any danger that they will rise up. Not understanding why the men seem so passive and almost inert, Benet remarks that the patients seem like "sombras flotando en el vacío" (59), surrounded by "la misma voluntad de ruina" that Benet says is everywhere.

In her *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996), Cathy Caruth writes of traumatic memory, and the "forgetting" that so often accompanies it, as an inability to know what was witnessed. As she explains it, this kind of misremembering, this "breach in the mind's experience of time, self, and the world suggests a certain paradox: that the most direct seeing of a violent event may occur as an absolute inability to know it" (91-92). In his investigation, Benet meets several of San Miguel's "patients," all of which are deluded renditions of themselves that seem capable only of expressing partial, fictionalized or corrupted memories of the events in question. None of them can verify the existence of, for example, the "disappeared" poet, Blas Ferrater, a photograph of whom Benet carries with him. Supported by lacunae in San Miguel's archives, Benet claims that Blas Ferrater arrived to San Miguel on a

small flotilla of poets during the Civil War, and was never heard from or seen again. Armed with a photograph of the poet, Benet asks the patients about whether they remember him, saying: “Haga memoria. Qué recuerdos tiene de él” and insisting as he does with Don Oswaldo, “No puede no acordarse, todo el país lo conocía. No puede haberlo olvidado” (73). But, what Benet discovers is not a wholesale forgetting. Rather, the memory of Blas Ferrater and the events of the execution have been rendered only partially accessible and, then, only through layers of fiction and delusion.

Don Oswaldo initially comes off as a reliable witness to Benet, but soon into Benet’s investigation, Benet realizes that Don Oswaldo is a patient who imagines himself a dog trainer and tamer of a pack of imaginary dogs, each with their own name and recognizable histories and personalities. Benet’s strategy is to insert himself into Don Oswaldo’s fiction in order to get at the truth but, disoriented by Benet’s strange questions, Don Oswaldo pulls back, looking disoriented and in search of Dr. Garay for reassurance. As Mayorga’s stage direction reads, *“Angustia de don Oswaldo, que mira hacia todas partes como buscando ayuda. Sus ojos encuentran a Garay”* (79). All the while, Garay stands by, observing, and occasionally encouraging his *“muchachos,”* as he calls them, to answer Benet’s questions and provide him with the evidence the young investigator is looking for. This interaction creates a palpable dramatic tension, since Garay seems unreasonably confident in his own impunity despite the unpredictability of the patients’ delusional responses. This tension is deepened by several implications throughout the play that Dr. Garay must have committed the crimes that Benet is so certain he is guilty of. The patients’ delusions, therefore, may at any point contain the seeds of evidence—the slivers of testimonial truth that Benet needs in order to incriminate Garay and bring a formal case against him. The irony is that Garay all but admits to having ordered the

executions. He does so brazenly, too, remaining confident that his *"muchachos"* are incapable of saying anything about it. Encouraging Don Oswaldo, for example, Garay insists: "Deberías cooperar con el señor Benet, de profesional a profesional. Le han enviado en busca de una prueba sobre la que basar una acusación contra mí. Dásela" (80). In response, Don Oswaldo can only elaborate on his own fiction, explaining—tellingly—that Garay is the man who feeds the dogs and is ultimately responsible for their obedience. In a curious parallel between *El jardín quemado* and *La biblioteca del diablo,* two of Don Oswaldo's dogs, in addition to "Felipe Segundo" of the best pedigree and "Emmanuel Can," a reference to the philosopher Kant, also appear on Ana's *biblioteca del diablo*—"Job" and "Schmitt" (74). As Don Oswaldo describes them, "el Bueno de Job" specializes in sacrifice, and is a specialist in the detection of cadavers underneath tons of rubble, while "Schmitt," a reference to Carl Schmitt, is in Oswaldo's view un "autentico hijo de puta," whose specialty is the hunting of humans, a clear reference on Mayorga's part to Schmitt's ties to the Nazis (75).

Mayorga explained in his interview with Vanessa Montfort, that it was with this scene between Benet and Don Oswaldo and the dogs that Mayorga first experienced comic possibility in a work that treats such a serious topic. When the work had its dramatic reading at the Royal Court Theatre, Mayorga explains, the British actor who played the role of Oswaldo performed the part of talking to his imaginary dogs so inventively that the moment drew laughter from the audience. For Mayorga, this was an instructive moment for his own creative process. As he explains in the interview, "El actor inglés, interpretando como si lo rodearan perros que sólo existían en su cabeza, consiguió hacer reír al público sin que la situación representada dejase de ser terrible. Yo descubrí allí que en mi teatro podía haber humor" (Monfort). One effect of humor in this context is that it juxtaposes levity with the parallel drama of "taming" living beings

within the walls of San Miguel. Just as Garay feeds Don Oswaldo's imaginary dogs, which as we've just seen is a scene that can elicit laughter, Garay also "feeds" his patients, only what he likely feeds them are untruths and fictions upon which to build more fictions—hardly a laughing matter. Don Oswaldo's fictionalization of Garay as a dog-tamer actually underscores his silently controlling nature—one that can discipline his dogs with just one glance. Don Oswaldo whip is the equivalent of Garay's gaze, as he says to Benet: "Yo no sería nadie sin mi látigo. A él basta mirarlos para que queden en paz como corderos" (80). Dr. Garay's performative panoptic—the equivalent of Oswaldo's "whip"—"cures" the patients of their unruly memories, making them docile and incapable of resistance. The revealing irony of Benet's interaction with don Oswaldo, despite his story about the dogs, is that Oswaldo seems to suffer when he sees the photograph of Blas Ferrater. In a gesture similar to that of Periquito Lila, the petrified statue-man in the epilogue, Oswaldo is rendered speechless. All Oswaldo can do in response is look at Garay, who almost mocks his sentimentalism: "Por qué me miras con esos ojillos de chucho apaleado?" (30).

In the fourth act of the play, there is a chess match that is about to start on a chess board that has been drawn in the ashes of the *jardín quemado*. Chess, a game centuries old, consists of a fictionalized battle fought to the death and it is only the certain death of the king that constitutes a win. The chess match onstage in *Jardín quemado* a powerful presence when visually and physically superimposed above the ashes that cover the *fosa común* onstage (83). And, just as he did with don Oswaldo, Benet fuels the patients' fictions, playing along with their delusional scenarios in order, he believes, to get closer to the truth. The patients surround the chessboard drawn on the ground. Benet begins to talk about the chess pieces, in particular the knight, always in the shape of a horse. Benet imagines out loud for the patients that the horse is capable of jumping over the wall of executions and being free: "Lindo animal. Apuesto a que

podría superar ese muro de un salto" (86). The chess match that Benet pretends to play with the patients atop the ashes of the *jardín quemado* is a metaphor for what has happened in San Miguel. The chess pieces themselves, the concept of playing and fighting until the death, and even the idea that there would be a history of chess matches, previous wins and losses against specific opponents that the patients-players can refer to and in which they can cite themselves, gives the chess match a resonance that it cannot have except in the space of the theater. Played on top of the ashes that symbolize the execution of innocent men, the chess board and the game constitute a battlefield—a field of contested memories. The fact that, at the insistence of his patients, Garay adopts the role of arbiter makes the chess game and the chess board even more ironic. Garay continues to exercise ultimate control over the movement of pieces and people on, beneath, and surrounding the *jardín quemado* of San Miguel. While two patients, Néstor and Pepe, play their chess match, Benet monitors the game timer while Garay makes comments that are indicative of how he sees the game. These comments, I suggest, reveal how Garay perceives historical truth and traumatic memory. After a chess move in which Pepe takes a white pawn and lets it fall in the box on the edge of the board, Garay comments that he sees this match as an extension of real life: "¿No se le clava en el corazón el estruendo de la pieza muerta al ser devuelta a la caja? Después de tantas víctimas, ¿quién puede creer que es sólo un juego? Vivimos en el dolor. En el sacrificio" (90).

During the chess match, Benet brings up Ferrater and continues to inquire about Garay's practices at San Miguel and his treatment of his patients. Benet insists, for example, when he presses Pepe for answers, that there's no way Pepe could have missed incidences of wrongdoing. "No haga de nuevas," Benet says to Pepe, "Si no está usted ciego, habrá visto al señor Garay cometer irregularidades" (92). Not getting an answer that way, Benet presses on the issue of

rules. In his match with Pepe, who is protesting to Garay that Benet is not following the rules, Benet looks imploringly at Garay, saying, ¿A qué espera para intervenir?" (91). But Garay doesn't and instead takes advantage of the opportunity to encourage Pepe to provide Benet with the answers he seeks. Pepe's response confirms his own delusion as well as Garay's control, but does so in terms of the metaphor for a chess match: "No encontrará esa prueba. Garay siempre ha velado por la limpieza del juego. Gracias a él, las partidas no acaban en enormes trifulcas. Es necesario que alguien conozca las reglas en estos tiempos tan confusos. ¿Con qué ley quieren ustedes juzgarlo? Al contrario, allí donde la ley calla, su palabra crea ley" (92). From the patients' perspective, then, Dr. Garay's words exist outside of the law and, together with his silent gaze, create a sort of state of exception in which they patients seem complicit. This is why, even when Benet tries to remind the patients of the "freedom" granted by Spain's transition to democracy, his words fall on deaf ears: "Hasta hoy, sólo ha valido la palabra de Garay. Pero ahora, todos pueden hablar" (92). Garay's response, "Quien tenga algo que decir," suggests one of two things—either there is nothing that was repressed and must now be told, or the memory of the events is no longer accessible, no longer "tellable." In response to Benet's insistence that everyone is free to speak their minds, Garay responds, "Ya hay demasiadas palabras" (92).

In the fifth act of the play, Benet has ordered the exhumation of the *fosa común* and finds what he was looking for—the bones of men he had theorized had been executed and buried there under Dr. Garay's watch. The "truth" offered by the bones themselves, however, is not enough to satisfy Benet's investigation. In a sort of metatheatrical act, Dr. Garay asks Benet to close his eyes and imagine the *"militares victoriosos"* occupying San Miguel during the war, standing behind the same office window that Dr. Garay looks through each day. "Cierre los ojos y mire hacia allí," says Dr. Garay to Benet, invoking the scene as though he, Dr. Garay, were the

director in a sort of puppet show: "¿Ve cómo se nubla la mirada de los soldados? ¿Ve cómo están a punto de olvidar qué les ha traído a San Miguel? ¿Ve cómo el vino de Garay los transforma en pacíficos corderos?" (99). Here, Garay is referring to the "*militares victoriosos"* who in May of 1939 have become metaphorically and literally drunk on their victory, but also somehow subject to the influence of Dr. Garay who, having facilitating the execution of twelve innocent men, reflects to Benet: "Hay que ayudar a caer a lo que va a caer. Es necesario que alguien venza en la Guerra. Porque si nadie vence, la Guerra no acaba jamás" (100). But Dr. Garay's intention is to continue to taunt Benet with the possibility of truth—in this case, that Blas Ferrater is still alive and may be able to testify to what happened inside the walls of San Miguel. Garay brings to Benet the unnamed man that Pepe had attacked in the previous scene, who believes himself to be the missing poet, Blas Ferrater, though Benet knows from his records that it is a patient named "Máximo Cal" (101). This patient's fictionalization takes place entirely during the war; Cal imagines that he is part of the rebellion of poets and writers who sought to defend the *República,* and when he speaks to Benet, he imagines him a wartime photographer. Within this fictionalization, the patient, Cal, speaks as if he were Blas Ferrater currently still on the flotilla of poets destined to save San Miguel. He insists that Benet will be instrumental in the war, but only if he is passive and indifferent to suffering, focused only on the task of recording events with his camera. Benet must limit himself only to the act of "seeing":

> CAL. ¿Se da cuenta de lo importante que es usted para nosotros? No lo olvide: ahora es un miliciano de la República. Con su cámara, usted puede detener la guerra, todas las guerras. Por eso, tiene que prometerme que no ayudará a las víctimas. Prométame que, si ve a un niño ensangrentado, no le dará

> auxilio. Limítese a captar su dolor, meta en su cámara todo el dolor de ese rostro. Fotografíe el dolor del mundo. (103)

By insisting that Benet occupy the role of bystander, Cal further frames Benet within his impotence to make any change in San Miguel. When Benet tries to insist to Cal that he is free and can speak his mind freely, Cal ensconces himself further in his delusion and fiction. When Benet insists to Cal, "Ya no hay razón para el miedo. La guerra ha acabado para siempre," Cal's only response, directed at Dr. Garay, the flotilla's "captain," is whether they will arrive too late because of the storm at sea. Exasperated, Benet accuses Dr. Garay of having thrown his "prisoners," as Benet finally refers to them, into an abyss, and tells Dr. Garay that he will pay for his crimes through a just and democratic trial (107). But Garay, in an impenetrable evasion of guilt, insists to Benet that what he has done is save them, guaranteeing them *"una primavera eterna"* (108). Outside of San Miguel, Dr. Garay explains, no one waits for these men, besides that it is a nation they will not recognize. "Estos hombres fueron vencidos," says Dr. Garay: "No pueden volver a un país que no fue posible. Fuera del jardín, enfermerían" (110). The statue-man from the prologue is Garay's example of this scenario: "Hay tanto dolor al otro lado del muro… Sólo una estatua podría soportar tanto dolor" (111). In his final lines of the play, Dr. Garay seems to plead with Benet to leave the men alone and to leave the bones in their grave: "No les traiga el tiempo y el dolor. No les traiga la guerra. Olvídese de San Miguel. Deje a los muertos enterrados" (111).

In the final scene of *El jardín quemado,* the epilogue that bookends the work along with the prologue with the statue-man overlooking the port's waters, Benet is seen leaving the island with his suitcases in hand. He stops at the statue again, and attempts once more to ask the statue, Periquito Lila, whether he recognizes Blas Ferrater in the photo. Periquito Lila doesn't answer,

but, despite his silence, Benet doesn't relent. The final words of the play are Benet's continuous questions, answered only by the *estatua*'s immutable silence:

> BENET. ¿Por qué Garay le dejó a usted salir?
>
> *(Pausa.)*
>
> ¿Por qué los demás se quedaron?
>
> *(Pausa.)*
>
> Dígame si hay otros hombres estatua.
>
> *(Pausa.)*
>
> ¿Cuántos hombres estatua hay?
>
> *(Pausa.)*
>
> Mi barco está a punto de partir, ¿no va a hablarme? Si le golpease a martillazos hasta que sólo le quedasen los pies, ¿entonces me hablaría? Dígame quién quemó el jardín.
>
> *(Pausa.)*
>
> Dígame cuándo se volvieron locos.
>
> *(Pausa.)*
>
> ¿Fue su sonrisa lo que les volvió locos?
>
> *(Pausa.)*
>
> ¿Sonreirá siempre?
>
> *(El Hombre Estatua no se mueve.)* (115-116)

Benet asks questions when he arrives in San Miguel. He asks uncomfortable questions—unfortunately, he also leaves with questions. Perhaps more than when he arrived. This condition of unanswered questions experienced by Benet is, according to Ferreyra (2006), not far from

what the spectator will experience: "El espectador, igual que Benet, saldrá de la isla con puros interrogantes, chocándose a cada paso con su limitación para llegar a la verdad, con esa necesidad de develamiento que en el epílogo Benet exhibe" (14). Some of this uncertainty stems from Mayorga's construction of the act of remembering, in which not only delusions but impostures can abound. In a metatheatrical analysis that casts doubt on the few tenuous certainties in *El jardín quemado,* Gwynneth Dowling writes that the prisoner-patients could be inventing the entire thing. "It is unclear," she argues, "whether all the inmates in the hospital are truly insane or whether their performance is an effective tool they use to conceal the truth from Doctor Benet about what happened to Blas Ferrater and the other missing poets. These charades performed by characters exemplify Mayorga's concern to expose performative deceits, especially 'the everyday states of exception that masquerade as unexceptional forms of behaviour'" (22). Dowling's analysis is provocative because it assumes that the "patients" are engaged in a conscious theatrical performance that would essentially protect them from Dr. Garay; it also underscores the lawlessness within the walls of San Miguel. The inconclusiveness with which Mayorga ends his play—and as a general trait with most of his works—leads the reader and spectator to consider asking questions similar to those posed by Benet throughout *El jardín quemado*. Paola Marchena Segura writes of Mayorga's resistance to providing definitive answers: "Se trata de plantar la duda, de hacer entender que no todo es lo que parece ser. Mayorga no nos permite asumir como espectadores una posición definida sobre el asunto, no nos provee de las pistas suficientes para tal cosa, por lo que se trata de crearnos más preguntas, de hacernos desconfiar de la opinión común o, más allá, de las posiciones morales asumidas por tradición" (Marchena Segura).

In *El jardín quemado,* remembering is, to different degrees and ends, considered to be threatening, if not sickening. The memories of the prisoner-patients have been subjected to a coercive, metaphorical kind of burial—they have been silenced, corrupted, and rendered practically inaccessible. In this sense, the remembering subject in *El jardín quemado* has been sadistically "cured" of memory by being coerced into a delusional or amnesic state. Benet, the young researcher, arrives to San Miguel and spends entire days in the archive, which not coincidentally makes it so that he, too, is unable to "see" the beauty that surrounds the island. As Dr. Garay tells the young Benet early in the play, "ese maldito archivo no le deja pisar la playa," a condition that could extend metaphorically to Garay's patients as well and his own control over them (52). Beyond this, while Benet expects to find "nada menos que la verdad" in the archives, what he confronts in its stead is exactly the opposite—inaccurate, incomplete records of a period in San Miguel's history in which a traumatic event occurred, one that San Miguel's functionaries had, Benet believes, gone to pains to cover up. Benet, meanwhile, feels authorized by the democratic transition in Spain to address all criminal acts committed during the Civil War and years of dictatorship, and to search for genuine memory among the nearly erased and possibly forgotten traces of what really happened in San Miguel. But, as a naïve search for "truth" in remembering, Benet's efforts are fruitless. Mayorga has suggested that Benet feels a kind of historical entitlement to "correct" the past, in what Mayorga has described as a gesture of colonization (March "Nadando" 134). Meanwhile, the patients are petrified—fixed—in their delusion and, quite possibly, their fear, much like Periquito Lila is frozen like a statue with petrified memories, always on the verge of an unreachable plunge into the truth to which only the ocean's waters can testify.

Conclusions

In neither *La biblioteca del diablo* nor in *El jardín quemado* is the witnessing, "remembering" subject entirely capable of demanding justice or accountability, let alone revenge (Blanchot 3). In Blanchot's words, "The disaster, depriving us of that refuge which is the thought of death, dissuading us from the catastrophic or the tragic, dissolving our interest in will and all internal movement, does not allow us to entertain this question either: what have you done to gain knowledge of the disaster?" (3). The circumstances surrounding the event and any "knowledge" they or others may have of it further compound the inaccessibility of memory. There is little to no evidence of wrongdoing—except that which marks the victims' traceless absence—and the culprit, *el verdugo*, those guilty of the political crimes suffered by the "disappeared" or executed, are either not easily identifiable or they have not been truthful about their acts. Cut off from the truth of these devastating events either by a lack of evidence or by a deprivation of information, the remembering subject remains in this sort of "void" with nearly no way to access the information that would explain their circumstances decades after the events in question. There is no way for the remembering subjects—these "witnesses"—to contextualize or narrate their losses; no way for them to point a finger or make demands of those guilty; no chance of justice.

La biblioteca del diablo and *El Jardín quemado* offer different responses—or, rather, new questions—with regard to that memory and power dynamic. In this respect, the two plays counter each other. In *La biblioteca del diablo,* the remembering subject—Ana, sister of the two disappeared brothers—works within her relative incapacity to express her memory to resist and bypass the law that prohibits her from demolishing her home. Her objective becomes an extension of an underlying need to extricate herself from the paralyzing memory of her vanished

brothers and the Spanish Civil War that seemed to swallow them whole, with no explanation. In contrast, of the soldier-prisoners-turned-patients in *El jardín quemado,* enclosed within the walls of the asylum on the island of San Miguel, only one had ever attempted to escape the asylum's walls and the memory of what he'd witnessed. But, though this "patient"—later known as Periquito Lila—had made it to the outside world, having escaped Dr. Garay's direct gaze, he had immediately become a petrified statue—a man effectively "dead" in both memory and speech. Meanwhile, the other soldier-turned-patients remained confined to the asylum, their only means of escape being their own delusion—a sort of unbelievable "forgetting" of trauma. Adding to characters' complex relationship to memory, the institutional—medical, judicial, or scientific—gaze serves to control bodies and silence speaking subjects, inhibiting their ability to remember. Meanwhile, those characters whose ability to remember is threatened by these panoptic, scientific/medical means of control follow one of two routes. Either they remain as they are, letting themselves be passively controlled and, in all likelihood, having their memories erased or corrupted, or they resist by evading surveillance and physically escaping the bounds of panoptic control, thereby resisting the fragmentation that would make it impossible for them to remember. They confine themselves—whether voluntarily or not—to spaces that function as mechanisms of oblivion that function to capture and either freeze or corrupt a memory time. The confining spaces in these works, moreover, have the potential for both destroying *and* creating memory. Finally, to the extent that these spaces and the memory dynamic they foster can be transposed onto the nation, Mayorga's works suggest that the sealing off of traumatic memories through repeated calls for "silencio" ultimately has a destructive effect on the individual and the nation's capacity to cohere, even despite the differences in its ways of remembering. And, moreover, that clear expressions of identity and understandings of past may or may not be readily possible. But

there is another way in which the present can seem to "seal off" access to the past, which is by presuming that the present can impose itself on the past much like Benet idealistically assumed he could upon arriving in San Miguel. Referring again to Benjamin's figure of the ellipsis—whose two equally important poles are the present and the past—in his conception of historical theater and *El jardín quemado* in particular, Mayorga has said:

> La elipse es una figura sin centro; depende de sus focos, esos dos puntos que, con peso equivalente, la constituyen. Entre el presente y el pasado solo puede haber una relación de conversación, de aparición de un tercero, porque de lo contrario lo que se da es un ejercicio de dominación de un tiempo sobre otro, de ocupación de colonización. De algún modo, esa colonización es lo que practica Benet en *El jardín quemado.* Benet es un ilustrado que se siente lleno de razón para, desde su presente, establecer una teoría total sobre el pasado. Con su discurso dominador, pretende ajirdanar el pasado: las cosas fueron así y en este orden. Sin embargo, cuando se acerca a ese pasado—a los testigos—, se encuentra con experiencias que son inconmensurables a su presente" (March "Nadando" 134)

Mayorga's work in these plays suggest that revisiting memory in meaningful ways may need to incorporate and validate "forgetful memory," those expressions of the "disaster" of political violence and trauma that cannot be limited to words. The idea that the present can "colonize" the past indicates as well that the past cannot be expected to conform to standards in the present of how past events should be remembered and retold. In this sense, as Benjamin suggested, just digging up memories without doing the work of "turning over the soil" in which they lie or just exhuming bones is not enough for the work of memory. As José Antonio Landera has said: "'Si empezamos a desenterrar cadáveres, pero sin recuperar la memoria, sin hacer un archivo de la

represión, si sólo mantenemos una excavadora y un arqueólogo y sólo sacamos huesos, lo estamos haciendo mal: esa persona desaparecerá otra vez'" (Armengou and Belis 219; qtd. in Ferrán xxxix).

Conclusions: Excavating Historical/Memory and the Uncovering of Spain's Buried Past

On January 13, 1898, French novelist Émile Zola published his famous open letter titled *"J'Accuse"* in the newspaper *L'Aurore.* The letter, addressed directly to the President of the Republic of France, protested the false imprisonment of French artillery officer Alfred Dreyfus (1859-1935) of Jewish and Alsatian ancestry, who had been unjustly accused and convicted of spying for the Germans during the Franco-Prussian War based on inconclusive evidence later discovered to have been intentionally fabricated by his fellow officers. Among the controversial elements of Zola's letter—which led to Zola's imprisonment for libel—is the implication of his accusation. Dreyfus's accusers, whom Zola refers to as *"des entités, des esprits de malfaisance sociale,"* had targeted and framed Dreyfus *because* he was Jewish. The false accusation was, as Zola notes, flagrantly anti-Semitic. In Zola's opinion, the court having turned a blind eye to the case's inconclusive and, as it was later revealed, corrupted evidence, not only betrayed any standard of justice and truth, it established a deeply disturbing precedent that Zola found especially ominous on the eve of the new century. As he says in the letter's final lines:

> I repeat with the most vehement conviction: truth is on the march, and nothing will stop it. Today is only the beginning, for it is only today that the positions have become clear: on one side, those who are guilty, who do not want the light to shine forth, on the other, those who seek justice and who will give their lives to attain it. I said it before and I repeat it now: when truth is buried underground, it grows and it builds up so much force

> that the day it explodes it blasts everything with it. We shall see whether we have been setting ourselves up for the most resounding of disasters, yet to come.[98]

What came to be known as the Dreyfus Affair had divided France—its politicians, its military personnel, and its public—for over a decade (1894-1906) right at the turn of the century. But, writing in 1898, Zola could not have entirely foreseen how catastrophically prophetic his letter would be. The burial of *truth*—in this case, the *truth* of the anti-Semitism that had led to the false accusation and imprisonment of Captain Dreyfus—would indeed "explode" and realize its unprecedented, devastating potential in the Holocaust, a mere four decades later. In this context, the fact that Spain's democratic transition politicians sought to bury—that is, to silence and attempt to "forget"—the *truth* of the nation's historical, political memory of the *Guerra Civil,* is especially troubling and ironic: the reason for burying this *truth* was specifically to prevent it from ever exploding again. Zola's notion of a burial of *truth* leads us to its redemptive counterpart—the possibility of unearthing this *truth* in ways that lead, not to divisive, explosive conflict, but to accountability, justice, and understanding.

Returning to France, but over a century earlier, Enlightenment scientists had begun to revolutionize one of the standard methods of acquiring scientific, medical knowledge. In *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (1963), Foucault explains how the mid-eighteenth-century introduction of the autopsy, with its investigative dissection of human cadavers, completely transformed the meaning and function of death: "A fine transmutation of the corpse had taken place: gloomy respect had condemned it to putrefaction, to the dark work of

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[98] This translation derives partly from David Short's translation and partly from my own in consultation with Mario Loyola, whom I thank for his help. Short's original translation reads as follows: "I have said it elsewhere and I repeat it now: when truth is buried underground, it builds up and acquires an explosive force that is destined to blast everything away with it. We shall see whether we have set ourselves up for the most resounding of disasters, yet to come."

destruction; in the boldness of the gesture that violated only to reveal, to bring to the light of day, the corpse became the brightest moment in the figures of truth. Knowledge spins where once larva was formed" (125). For the first time, the autopsy would allow medical scientists to gaze and probe beneath the visible surface of the body in order to *see* the manifestation of disease and thereby diagnose the individual's cause of death. Prior to this, the end of life also meant the end of knowing about disease: "with death, the limit had been reached and truth fulfilled, and by the same breach: in death, disease reached the end of its course, fell silent, and became a thing of memory"—it, too, would be forever buried and gone (140). Ironically, it was death, the very evidence of "medicine's failure," writes Foucault, that had become as or more instructive to the medical profession as the body in life. "Was it not necessary," asks Foucault, "that medicine should circumvent its oldest care in order to read, in what provided evidence of its failure, that which must found its truth?" (*Clinic* 146). This revolutionary act of investigation located the *truth* of the disease beneath the visible surface of the body. It was now possible to "see" beyond the surface peering into what had always been the body's mysterious, feared darkness. Framed as it was by death, the uncovering of *truth* had become an act of "making" memory.

I argue that Zola's buried *truth* and the unexplored, mysterious disease in Foucault's cadavers pose, inversely and metaphorically, the same risk to society. As Zola implies in his letter, the burial of *truth* functions like a progressively debilitating disease that, if left untreated, will be ultimately—and tragically—destructive. Similarly, though from a different angle, not having the tools to look beyond the surface of traumatic events such as war into the root causes that unleash them can irremediably cut off a society from its possibilities for the knowledge that would allow it to "heal." The investigative, scientific gaze that penetrates beneath the visible surface of Foucault's cadavers is the same gaze that seeks to critically understand the causes of

catastrophes' unleashing in order to prevent their happening in the future. As Magda, the translator and language instructor from Mayorga's *El cartógrafo. Varsovia, 1:400.000* explains to Raúl, the scientists in her magazine that were investigating the causes of avalanches were no longer looking at what was happening at the top layer of snow, but rather at how the structural bonds between the hidden layers were weakening.

In this dissertation, I have examined how, in Mayorga's historical/memory theater, *seeing* and witnessing function like a deliberate, ethical choice. Those of Mayorga's characters who can access memory, *produce* it in ways metaphorically similar to how a medical doctor conducts an autopsy—by probing carefully and at a very small scale into the inner workings of the past in the present. Memory, however, like Zola's *truth,* is something that can be appropriated, buried, distorted, and subjected to the influences of institutions and individuals who seek to use it for their own interests. The chapters have followed a progression that started with the analysis of ocular seeing and blindness in those of Mayorga's short works featuring a blind man and his seeing helper. The purpose in the first chapter has been to to explore how Mayorga constructs *seeing*—and its metaphorical and actual counterpart, blindness—in ways that are intimately tied to both memory and the imagination. In each of the short works analyzed—*"Amarillo," "La mano izquierda,"* and *"Una carta de Sarajevo"*—the presumed *truth* of an intensely personal memory held by the blind man is thrown into question when his young helper, gifted with sight, debates the blind man about whether what is visible necessarily correlates with what is true. In each of these short works, too, the discussion of what the blind man cannot see becomes much less important than what the blind man imagines or prefers to believe is *true.* Through the analysis of *La lengua en pedazos,* the first play analyzed in the first chapter, I argued that the way Teresa discursively constructs her *seeing* of Christ with the eyes of her soul enters into the

realm of what Derrida refers to as *abocular* seeing, in which memory and the imagination—though imagination remains for Teresa as for Mayorga, *"la loca de la casa,"*—engage with visible reality in the characters' meaningful construction of *truth* through memory. This discussion of seeing and blindness as they relate to memory and the use of the imagination served as basis for the following chapter's look at the hyper-mnemonic protagonists—Rosa in *El arte de la entrevista* and Harriet in *La tortuga de Darwin*—to focus more directly on the discursive agency of the remembering subject or interviewee and her capacity to resignify and take control of her memories through the dialogical interview process. The works in this second chapter also both featured a third party—a "living" or textual archive, an audio or video recorder, and an investigator or interviewer's questions. The presence of a recording device or archive informs how the protagonist remembers, "forgets," and retells her memories to those who seek to use them for their own purposes. As remembering subjects, Rosa and Harriet both fall further on the *mneme* end of Bernard-Donals' "forgetful memory" spectrum, meaning that both women not only have "narrative" access to the events of their past, they almost remember *too* much, so much so that how others receive their remembering ends up threatening their well-being. In both these first two chapters, I also examined how Mayorga constructs memory as a product of three different but interrelated mechanisms of perception and understanding—memory, *seeing,* and the imagination function in these works as the three sides of the same triangle. That is, it is impossible to *see* without also engaging both memory and the imagination, just like it is impossible to remember without also imagining and *seeing* beyond the visible.

The third chapter sought to bring together some of the ideas developed in the first and second—namely, that blindness can be "willful" if it deliberately chooses not to *see,* remember, or imagine; and, second, that subjecting the remembering subject to a limiting spatial enclosure

and/or to the dominant, perhaps ill-meaning will of others, can have one of two effects: either it will rupture characters' access to memory, leaving them almost exclusively in the realm of the imagination, or it will compel the them to seek alternative modes and means of *seeing*, remembering, and retelling. Through Mayorga's Holocaust Theater, I analyzed blindness, not as a disability, but as a willful, ethical act with potentially devastating consequences. The willful blindness of the Red Cross worker in Mayorga's *Himmelweg,* for example, manifested itself in his opening monologue, when he justified his not having seen the Holocaust's horrors because he had been following instructions he was given—namely, to write down *only* what he had seen with his eyes. In contrast, in *El cartógrafo,* in the exchanges between the cartographer-grandfather and his granddaughter, his primary focus is to teach her how to see and what critical questions she should be asking herself about the Ghetto, the dreadfully enclosed and horrific world in which hundreds of thousands of lives were at stake each day. His objective of making sure his granddaughter learns to *see* by placing herself in the midst of the Ghetto's danger suggests that in order to *truth-see,* the seeing subject has to deliberately place him or herself in a relation of ethical responsibility vis-à-vis those who are suffering or whose lives are threatened.

In both *Himmelweg* and *Cartógrafo,* there is an "inside" view, whether from the ghetto or the concentration camp, as well as an "outside" perspective that always looks back and views the Holocaust through the lens of the present. *El cartógrafo*'s Blanca and Raúl, Mayorga's present-day characters are similar to any contemporary spectator in that they *see* the catastrophe of the Holocaust from its chronological, cultural, and socio-political margins. Considering these different contexts, what both plays underscore is that a nation cannot exist except in relation to another—it can neither commit atrocious acts nor heal from its *heridas* as entirely isolated entities. Moreover, neighboring nations and bystanders have a *responsibility* to uphold ethical

and human rights standards and denounce violations publicly. What both *Himmelweg* and *Cartógrafo* underscore is that a nation must uncover and face its past atrocities directly, even if it means stepping outside of its borders and seeing itself more objectively and in a global context. While Mayorga here is not suggesting that foreign "intervention"—like Blanca's—is the only way to *see* a nation's past, he *is* suggesting that a nation must see itself simultaneously from the outside and from within it layers of "silence" and *desmemoria*.

In the context of Spain, this act of self-mapping would mean that the nation would draw its own "silhouette" on the ground and look directly at the void and absence within. With the exhumations of hundreds of mass graves in Spain and the maps and digs dedicated to charting and honoring the otherwise anonymous and absent dead, I would argue that some measure of this is finally happening in XXI century Spain. The nation must push beyond the door to its own *way to heaven/hell*, stepping into the invisible and anonymous absence and loss, and invoking its past to literally *appear*. Jo Labanyi has written that "Memory is not a slice of the past waiting hidden to be 'recovered'; it is a process that operates in the present and cannot help but give a version of the past colored by present emotions and affected by all sorts of interferences from subsequent experiences and knowledge" (196). The element of interference in memory, and the rupture caused by Spanish Civil War losses as a result of political violence are the subject of the fourth and final chapter of this project, the only chapter to directly address Spain's history and the issues surrounding historical memory. In both *La biblioteca del diablo* and *El jardín quemado,* the memory of the remembering subject is either truncated and silenced, as in the case of Ana, who has been cut off from any information about her "disappeared" brothers' fate; or the remembering subjects have had their memories corrupted, in part due to the passing of time but, much more than this, to the trauma of the event of loss itself—a trauma that in Mayorga's works

manifests itself through a ruptured retelling. For the soldiers-turned-patients of San Miguel, the delusion in which they live has everything to do with both the space and the controlling gaze that encloses their bodies, minds, and memories. The only part of these men that seems to have the freedom to express itself is their imagination. Missing both memory and *seeing,* their imagination communicates as anamnesis, with fragmented bits and pieces of memory and nothing reliable for Benet the investigator to take home.

Through this dissertation's chapters, I have examined some of the discursive and dialogical but also social-spatial mechanisms through which Mayorga constructs the "making" of memory or memory as a process. The analysis of the works in the latter two chapters underscore the relationship between traumatic memory and the confining spaces that attempt to condition their inhabitants to forget. Mayorga constructs in each case the potential for either a mnemonic or an amnesic space—that is, they are spaces laced dangerously with the power to distort memory and rupture the ties that link the present and the past. In *"La biblioteca del diablo,"* for example, Ana's home is a space that frames her "remembering" as what appears on the surface to be a functional amnesia. That is, the onstage space of memory is one in which the tension of forgetting and the "rupture" of remembering has its only inhabitant inching towards *olvido* and her only way "out" of *el olvido* is to tear down her house. She cannot use any of her own words to access or express the *"pesadilla"* she has lived since she last saw the younger two of her brothers twenty-five years earlier in 1939. Ana can only "remember" indirectly through the diabolical books on her bookshelf—words that seem to contain and account for all the malice in the world.

One idea fundamental to my argument throughout the chapters is that in Mayorga's historical/memory theater, individual and collective memory, together with archival history, are

"things" whose authenticity are not self-evident. Mayorga's historical/memory constructs the "image of the person who remembers," to reiterate Benjamin's phrase, as a subject who may or may not be capable of conscious resistance to society's silencing forces. I have argued, further, that the performance of archival history, individual, and collective memory in Mayorga's theater operates by way of characters treating memories as "objects" that are potentially threatening to their own welfare and that of others, but also potentially useful and critical to the characters' identity and agency.

Where in this debate and between these powerfully and painfully charged visibilities of *truth* can we locate theater's potential impact on memory and the potential for justice and accountability in Spain? A guiding principle for this dissertation has been similar to that which guides Mayorga's understanding of the potential for theater in its treatment of memory. In preparation for the October 2010 meeting of his seminar, *Memoria y pensamiento en el teatro contemporáneo*, Mayorga prsented on the works of Hungarian playwright and director George Tabori (1914-2007), whose father was murdered in Auschwitz and whose play, *The Cannibals,* was immensely influential in Mayorga's thinking about the Holocaust in terms of theater.[99] Mayorga writes that in Tabori's treatment of the past, it is not just "memory" that is performed onstage, "sino también—y esto me parece esencial—los límites de la memoria, sus sombras y oquedades. El teatro de Tabori, sin duda animado por la voluntad de resistir al olvido, sucita una y otra vez la pregunta por la posibilidad misma de hacer memoria—y, en particular, por la posibilidad de hacer memoria a través del teatro" ("Tabori"). The theatrical strategies that Tabori uses, which Mayorga identifies as "la elección de situaciones extravagantes, el rechazo del

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[99] Mayorga wrote this essay in preparation for the October 2010 meeting of his *Memoria y pensamiento en el teatro contemporáneo,* on this day dedicated to the works of George Tabori. The seminar included presentations by Eduardo Pérez Rasilla, José Sanchis Sinisterra and Mayorga himself, and ended with a dramatic reading from one of Tabori's texts. Please consult the following link for more information: http://www.cchs.csic.es/en/node/282871.

naturalismo y la omnipresencia del humor" are not just strategies, argues Mayorga, but specific ethical postures Tabori takes with respect to the representation of memory ("Tabori").

This brings us, again, to the question of how theater, recalling Juan Ramón Resina's phrase cited in the introduction, is uniquely equipped to engage in the collision, and not the further estrangement, of these "moral planets" in ways that reduces the ethical and maybe historical distance separating the "spectator" from the "action" of historical/memory theater. In this dissertation's introduction, I quoted Resina as having written that "Never before has there been so much fascination with historical memory and so much resistance to its implications. Our relation to the past has become *spectatorial*, as if mediated witnessing of the atrocities and injustices of previous generations happened in a different moral planet and could not claim our moral response to the lived present" (226; italics added). The debates over historical memory in Spain point to the logic that led the political elite of Spain's transition to democracy to decide that justice and open access to the *truth* of the previous decades under Franco would destabilize their mission to establish the new democracy. But this very rationale succeeded in constituting a relationship between the present and the past that is occupied not by the void of memory that Bernard-Donals talks about, but by an insurmountable barrier in which, on one side is the present with its one moral universe and fading testimonial memory, while the other is the past, whose moral universe is difficult to conjure without reviving its values. But this is precisely where the impass lies. Where can thought go when the chasm between the past and the present is so profound? As philosopher Reyes Mate has said, referring to seemingly endless explorations of historical memory through art and writing: "La guerra civil ha sido una mina para escritores y artistas, pero un cementerio para el pensamiento" (2006: 78).

Policies such as Spain's 1977 *Ley de Amnistía* attempted to govern the "burial" and silencing of truth in the name of consensus, effectively mandating amnesia, as Resina has argued (224). José Colmeiro goes even further, arguing that "Se evidencia en la España contemporánea un aparente estado de identidad esquizofrénica, entre la imperante amnesia histórica generalizada y la excesiva gestualidad rememorada" (32; qtd. in Ferrán 23). Spain was and continues to be stuck in a bind, a bind that Mayorga has transformed into both a challenge and a goal: "¿Cómo conciliar el deber de memoria con el anhelo de reconciliación? ¿Puede restituirse en su dignidad a la víctima sin dar castigo a su verdugo? ¿Cómo resolver la colisión entre el derecho de la familia y otros derechos—el de la ciudad, el del Estado….--cuando, invirtiendo el modelo de Antígona, son los deudos los que no quieren abrir la tierra? ¿Qué hacer con los espacios de la desaparición? ¿Cómo evitar la manipulación de los muertos desde los intereses de los vivos? ("Muertos" 18) Here, and returning to Zola's notion of the potentially cataclysmic danger of burying the truth, it is not enough just to uncover and unearth this *truth.* As Walter Benjamin asks rhetorically, "Are we not touched by the same breath of air which was among that which came before? Is there not an echo of those who have been silenced in the voices to which we lend our ears today? . . . . If so, then there is a secret appointment between the generations of the past and that of our own." (Thesis II). Juan Mayorga's theater performs *seeing*, the imagination, and the construction of memory in the present as critical components of an ethical posture committed to justice and a sense mourning for the victims of a buried *truth.*

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---. "Enzo Corman, un utopiste du théatre." *Registres. Revue d´études teatrales* Spring 2010: 150-152. Print.

---. "Elipses de Benjamin." *Constelaciones. Revista de Teoría Crítica.* 2 (December 2010): 372-374. Web. 4 May 2014. http://www.constelaciones-rtc.net/02/02_24.pdf

---. "Espiritualidad y subversión." *Religión y laicismo hoy. En torno a Teresa de Ávila*. Eds. Díaz-Salazar, R. *et al.* Barcelona: Anthropos, 2010: 111-112. Print.

Also published in *Primer acto* 342 (2012): 57-58. Print.

---. "El teatro piensa; el teatro da que pensar." *Primer Acto* 337 (2011): 16. Print.

---. "Muertos sin tumba." *Primer Acto* 337 (2011): 17-19. Print.

---. "Hacia una justicia general anamnética." *Isegoría. Revista de Filosofía Moral y Política* 45 (July-December 2011): 715-718. Print.

---. "Teatro y cartografía." *Boletín Hispánico Helvético* 19 (Spring 2012): 85-87. Print.

---. "Un Quijote del siglo XX." *La Razón* 29 (April 2012): 81. Print.

---. "¿Quién escribe estas palabras?" *El ciervo* 734: 12-13. Print.

---. "¿Quién escribe nuestras vidas?" *'La vida es sueño'* de Calderón de la Barca. *Cuadernos pedagógicos de la Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico* 42 (September 2012): 48-51. Print.

---. “Muy lejos y muy hondo.” Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *La vida es sueño*. Madrid: CNTC, 2012. 11.

---. “La carga crítica de Calderón.” *El Cultural* (12-18 October 2012): 40.

---. “De Nietzsche a Artaud: el retorno de Dionisio.” *Pausa* 24: 13-15.

Mayorga, Juan and Reyes Mate. “‘Los avisadores del fuego.’ Franz Rosenzweig, Walter Benjamin y Franz Kafka.” *Isegoría* 23 (2000): 45-67.

- Also published in: Mate, Reyes, ed. *La filosofía después del Holocausto*. Barcelona: Riopiedras, 2002. 77-104.; Cohen, Esther and Ana María Martínez de la Escalera, eds. *Lecciones de extranjería. Una mirada a la diferencia*. México D.F.: Siglo XXI, 2002. 13-37.

II. Theater. The following are Mayorga’s full-length plays along with production info.

Mayorga, Juan. ***Siete hombres buenos*****.** *Marqués de Bradomín 1989*. Madrid: Instituto de la Juventud, 1990. 97-185.

- Awards: Accésit del premio Marqués de Bradomín 1989.

---. ***Más ceniza.*** *Primer Acto* 249 (1993): 49-87.

- Awards: INAEM, Accésit Premio Calderón de la Barca" 1992, ex aequo.
- Onstage Productions: 1) 20 May 1994, Sala Cuarta Pared, Madrid. Dir. Adolfo Simón; 2) 26 Nov. 1997, Casa del Teatro de Valera (Venezuela), TNJ-Núcleo Valera. Dir. Javier Yagüe.
- Dramatic Readings: 9 March 1994, Sala Manuel de Falla S.G.A.E., Madrid. Dir. Guillermo Heras.
- Translations: 1) Italian: Trans. Frasca, Federica. *Altra cenere* (Bilingual Edition), Florence: Aliena Editrice, 2004.

---. ***El traductor de Blumemberg*****.** *Nuevo Teatro Español* 14. Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 1993. 25-84; *Animales nocturnos / El sueño de Ginebra / El traductor de Blumemberg*. Madrid: La Avispa, 2003. 73-111.

- Onstage Productions: 16 Aug. 2000, Teatro Nacional Cervantes, Buenos Aires. Dir. Guillermo Heras.
- Dramatic Readings: 27 March 1994, Teatro María Guerrero, Madrid. Dir. Joaquín Vida; 10 Aug. 2000, ICI, Buenos Aires. Dir. Guillermo Heras; 1 Mar. 2001, Casa de América, Madrid. Dir. Guillermo Heras; 3 Oct. 2007, Soho Studio, London. Dir. Simon Breden; 11 Sept. 2004, Piccolo Teatro, Teatro Grassi, Milán. Dir. Andrea Taddei; 20 Oct. 1997, Teatro da Aliança Francesa, Botafogo.

- *El Traductor de Blumemberg* has been translated into and/or had onstage productions in Greek, English, Italian, and Portuguese.

---. ***El sueño de Ginebra.*** *Panorámica del teatro español actual*. Eds. Leonard, Candyce and John P. Gabriele. Madrid: Fundamentos, 1996. 95-114; *Monólogos de dos Continentes*. Buenos Aires: Corregidor, 1999. 225-249; *Animales nocturnos / El sueño de Ginebra / El traductor de Blumemberg*. Madrid: La Avispa, 2003. 51-72.

- Onstage Productions: 4 Sept. 1996, Sala Cuarta Pared, Madrid. Dir. Guillermo Heras; Dramatic Readings: 29 May 2002, Bodegas El Pimpi, Málaga. Dir. Jorge Rivera.
- *El sueño de Ginebra* has been translated into and/or had onstage productions in Greek.

---. ***El jardín quemado.*** *Escena* 43 (1998): 43-58; Universidad de Murcia, Murcia 2001; 2ª edición: 2007; Digital: http://www.caoseditorial.com/libros/ficha.asp?lg=en&id=3 4 May 2014.

- Onstage Production: 18 June 2009, Txaika Teatro, Bilbao, Dir. Marina Shimanskaya; Dramatic Readings: 1) 3 April 1997, Teatro García Lorca, Madrid, Dir. Luis Blat; 2) 11 Feb, 2002, Sala Manuel de Falla, Madrid, Dir. Guillermo Heras; 3) 22 May 2002, Teatro Arriaga, Bilbao, Dir. Marina Shimanskaya; 4) 18 July 2005, Sala Beckett, Barcelona, Dir. Ada Vilaró.
- *El jardín quemado* has been translated into and/or had onstage productions in English, Italian, and Portuguese.

---. ***Angelus Novus.*** Unpublished.

- Onstage Productions: 14 May 1999, Teatro Valle Inclán, Madrid, Dir. Salomé Aguiar.
- ***Angelus Novus*** has been translated into Catalan (Trans. Orensanz, Toni, 2010) and been performed onstage in 2010 at the Teatre Bartrina, Reus, Dir. Miquel Àngel Fernández.

---. ***Cartas de amor a Stalin.*** *Primer Acto* 280 (1999): 65-88; *Signa* 9 (2000): 211-255; *SGAE*, Madrid 2000; in *Testimonios del teatro español: 1950-2000*, Vol. I. Ottowa: Girol Books, 2002.

- Awards: Premio Caja España 1998; Premio Borne 1998; Premio Celestina al mejor autor en la temporada 1999-2000.
- Onstage Productions: 8 Sept. 1999, Teatro María de Guerrero, Centro Dramático Nacional, Madrid, Dir. Guillermo Heras; 2 Nov. 2000, Sala Beckett, Barcelona, Dir. José Sanchis Sinisterra; 29 Mar. 2004, Centro de Arte Lía Bermúdez, Maracaibo, Venezuela, Dir. Guillermo Heras; 23 Mar. 2007, Sornotas Aretoa de Amorebieta, Dir. Paco Obregón; 6 July 2007, Centro Cultural de la Cooperación, Buenos Aires, Dir. Enrique Dacal; 25 Sept. 2008, Teatro Jovellanos, Gijón, Dir. Gemma de Luis; 17 Dec.

2008, Teatro Victoria, Talavera de la Reina, Dir. Helena Pimenta; 20 Aug. 2011, Espacio Teatro, Montevideo, Dir. Eduardo Cervieri; 20 April 2012, Teatro Abanico, Miami, Dir. Alberto Sarraín; 16 May 2012, Teatro Juan del Encina, Salamanca, Dir. Zoe Martín; 14 Sept. 2012, Compañía Nacional de Teatro, Teatro Casa de la Paz, México D.F., Dir. Guillermo Heras; Radio Transmissions: 8 Feb. 2009, Radio France Culture, performed by Michel Sidoroff.

- *Cartas de amor a Stalin* has been translated into and/or been produced onstage in Catalan, Croatian, French, Galician, Greek, English, Italian, and Portuguese.

---. *El Gordo y el Flaco.* *Acotaciones* 7 (2001): 95-138; *Palabra de perro / El Gordo y el Flaco*. Madrid: Teatro del Astillero, 2004, 59-111; Digital: www.celcit.org.ar.

- Onstage Productions: 1) 29 January 2000, Teatro Adolfo Marsillach, San Sebastián de los Reyes, Dir. Luis Blat; 2) 6 Dec. 2007, Sala Triángulo, Madrid, Dir. Carlos Marchena; 3) 25 Mar. 2012, Centro Párraga, Murcia, Dir. Juan Rivas; Dramatic Reading: 8 June 2001, Goethe Institut, Santiago de Chile, Dir. David Ojeda.
- *El Gordo y el Flaco* has been translated into and had onstage productions in French, Portuguese, and Italian.

---. ***Animales nocturnos.*** *Animales nocturnos / El sueño de Ginebra / El traductor de Blumemberg*. Madrid: La Avispa, 2003. 7-49; *El teatro de papel* 1: 175-251; 3) Digital: www.cnice.mecd.es/wt/index.html.

- Onstage Productions: 1) 27 Nov. 2003, Sala Guindalera, Madrid, Dir. Juan Pastor; 2) 6 July 2005, Sala Beckett, Barcelona, Dir. Magda Puyo; 3) 21 May 2009, Teatro Lagrada, Madrid, Dir. Carlos Bolívar.
- *Animales nocturnos* has been translated into and/or had onstage productions in Czech, French, Greek, Hungarian, English, Italian, and Portuguese.

---. ***Sonámbulo* (A partir de "Sobre los ángeles," de Rafael Alberti).** *Primer Acto*. 300 (2003): 27-53.

- Onstage Production: 16 October 2003, Teatro Falla, Cádiz, Dir. Helena Pimenta.

---. ***Himmelweg (Camino del cielo).*** *Abril* Oct (2004): 9-45; *Historias de las fotografías.* Madrid: Caja Madrid, 2002. 121-131; *Primer Acto* 305 (2004): 29-56; *Diputación de Málaga*, 2004; Pasodegato, México, 2007; Losada, Buenos Aires, 2007; Ñaque, Ciudad Real, 2011.

- Awards: Premio Enrique Llovet 2003.
- Onstage Productions: 17 Oct 2003, Teatro Alameda, Málaga, Dir. Jorge Rivera; 18 Nov. 2004, Teatro María Guerrero, Madrid, Dir. Antoni Simón; 14 Mar. 2007, Teatro San Martín, Buenos Aires, Dir. Jorge Eines; 27 May 2010, Teatro El Galpón, Montevideo, Dir. Eduardo Cervieri; 17 Aug. 2010, Auditorio Parque Almansa,

Murcia, Dir. Paco Macià, 26 May 2011, Casa del Cuño de la Dirección de Cultura, San José, Costa Rica, Dir. Fernando Rodríguez Araya; Dramatic Reading: 4 Feb. 2004, SGAE, Barcelona, Dir. Sergi Belbel.
- *Himmelweg* has been translated into and/or had onstage productions in Danish, French, Galician, Greek, Hebrew, English, Italian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, and Romanian.

---. *Palabra de perro* (A partir de "El coloquio de los perros", de Cervantes). *Palabra de perro / El Gordo y el Flaco.* Madrid: Teatro del Astillero, 2004. 5-57.

- Onstage Production: 13 June 2009, Teatro Pilar Bardem, Rivas Vaciamadrid, Dir. Sonia Espinosa.
- *Palabra de perro* has been translated into Portuguese (2008, Trans. Antonio Gonçalves.)

---. ***Últimas palabras de Copito de Nieve.*** Ciudad Real: Ñaque, 2004.

- Awards: Premio Telón Chivas 2005; Finalist for the Premio Max 2005 al Mejor Autor.
- Onstage Production: 22 Sept. 2004, Nuevo Teatro Alcalá, Madrid, Dir. Andrés Lima; Dramatic Reading: 4 May 2004, Universidad Carlos III, Madrid, con dirección de Andrés Lima.
- *Últimas palabras de Copito de Nieve* has been translated into and had onstage productions in French and Portuguese.

---. ***Job* (A partir del Libro de Job y de textos de Elie Wiesel, Zvi Kolitz y Etti Hillesum).** *La autoridad del sufrimiento. Silencio de Dios y preguntas del hombre*. Eds. Bárcena, F. *et al.* Barcelona: Anthropos, 2004. 115-136.

- Onstage Production: 11 May 2004, Iglesia del Real Monasterio de Santo Tomás, Ávila, Dir. Guillermo Heras.

---. ***Hamelin.*** Ciudad Real: Ñaque, 2005.

- Awards: Premio Max al Mejor Autor 2006, Premio Ercilla 2006, Premio Telón Chivas 2006, Premio Quijote de la Asociación Colegial de Escritores al mejor autor en el año 2005.
- Onstage Productions: 1) 12 May 2005, Teatro de la Abadía, Madrid, Dir. Andrés Lima (Premio Nacional de Teatro 2005; Premio Max al Mejor Espectáculo 2006); 2) 20 Sept. 2006, Teatro Broadway, Buenos Aires, Dir. Andrés Lima; 3) 30 May 2007, Teatro San Ginés, Santiago de Chile, Dir. Jesús Codina; 4) 29 Sept. 2007, Teatro Variedades, San José, Costa Rica, Dir. Fernando Rodríguez Araya; 5) 10 Feb. 2008, Círculo Teatral Alberto Estrella, México, Dir. Emmanuel Morales; 6) 16 Oct. 2009, Teatro Cuyás, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Dir. Nacho Cabrera; 7) 15 Aug. 2010,

George Ignatieff Theatre, Toronto, Canadá, Dir. Francisco Orta; 8) 18 June 2011, El árbol de Galeano, San Miguel de Tucumán, Argentina, Dir. Leonardo Goloboff; 9) 6 July 2011, Teatro de Variedades, Quito, Ecuador, Dirs. María Elena López y María Elena Mexía.

- *Hamelin* has been translated and/or had onstage productions in Korean, French, Greek, English, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, and Turkish.

---. ***Primera noticia de la catástrofe* (A partir de "Historia de las Indias", de Bartolomé de las Casas).** *Responsabilidad histórica. Preguntas del nuevo al viejo mundo.*" Eds. Gutiérrez, G. *et al.* Barcelona: Anthropos, 2007. 377-393.

- Dramatic Readings: 1) 25 Sept. 2006, Iglesia del Real Monasterio de Santo Tomás, Ávila, Dir. Guillermo Heras; 2) 7 Apr. 2008, Convento de San Juan de Letrán, Havana, Cuba, Dir. Julio Plácido González; 3) 21 Dec. 2011, Casa de América, Madrid, Dir. Guillermo Heras.

---**. *El chico de la última fila.*** Ciudad Real: Ñaque, 2006.

- Awards: Premio Max al mejor autor 2008; Premio Telón Chivas 2007.
- Onstage Productions: 1) 14 Oct 2006, Teatro Tomás y Valiente, Fuenlabrada, Dir. Helena Pimenta; 2) 23 June 2007, Círculo de la Prensa, Tucumán, Dir. Leonardo Goloboff; 3) 22 May 2010, Teatro del Centro Cultural PUCP, Lima, Dir. Sergio Llusera; 4) 18 Feb. 2011, La Tabacalera, Madrid, Dir. Víctor Velasco (Premio al mejor espectáculo en la Feria de Huesca 2012); 5) 19 July 2012, Teatro 1887 de San José de Costa Rica, Dir. Fernando Rodríguez.
- *El chico de la última fila* has been translated into and/or had onstage productions in Italian, French, Portuguese, and Romanian. It was also adapted and produced as a feature film in French in 2012 under the title *Dans la maison,* directed by François Ozon. The move received the Concha de Oro for best picture and the Jury's Selection for best script at the Festival de San Sebastián 2012; the Premio Fipresci de la crítica internacional at the Toronto Film Festival in 2012; and the Premio Sant Jordi de la crítica de Barcelona for best foreign film in 2012.

---. ***Fedra*.** Oviedo: KRK, 2010.

- Onstage Productions: 12 July 2007, Teatro Romano de Mérida, Dir. José Carlos Plaza.
- Translation: Trans. Jatsiemanuíl, María. In *Diez obras, once autores del teatro español contemporáneo*. Lagardera 2009. 169-207.

---. ***La tortuga de Darwin.*** Ciudad Real: Ñaque, Ciudad Real 2008.

- Awards: Premio Max al mejor autor 2009; Premio Teatro de Rojas al mejor autor 2008.
- Onstage Productions: 6 Feb. 2008, Teatro de la Abadía, Madrid, Dir. Ernesto Caballero.

- *La tortuga de Darwin* has been translated into and/or had onstage productions in Korean, French, Greek, Italian, and Portuguese.

---. ***La paz perpetua.*** *Primer Acto*. 320 (2007): 51-82; CDN, Madrid, 2008; KRK, Oviedo, 2009.

- Award: Premio Valle Inclán 2009.
- Onstage Productions: 1) 24 April 2008, Teatro María Guerrero, Madrid, Dir. José Luis Gómez; 2) 4 June 2010, Teatro Óscar Fessler, San José de Costa Rica, Dir. Fernando Rodríguez Araya; 3) 14 Oct 2011, Compañía Nacional de Teatro, Teatro Benito Juárez, México D.F., Dir. Mariana Giménez; Dramatic Reading: 13 August 2011, Centro Cultural del Bosque, México DF, Dir. Mariana Giménez.
- *La paz perpetua* has been translated into and/or had onstage productions in Bulgarian, Korean, French, Galician, Greek, English, Italian, Polish, and Romanian.

---. ***El elefante ha ocupado la catedral.*** Illustrated by Daniel Montero Galán. Songs by Pedro Sarmiento. Madrid: Veintisiete Letras, 2012.

Onstage Production: 27 August 2008, Teatro Juan Chorot, Ciudad Ducal, with songs by Pedro Sarmiento and Directors Ana y Laura Sarmiento.

---. ***El crítico (Si supiera cantar, me salvaría).*** *Revista de Occidente*. 378: 210-249.

- Onstage Productions: 21 Sept. 2012, Teatro Guimerá de Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Dir. Juan José Afonso; 10 March 2013, Teatro Marquina, Madrid; 23 January 2014, Teatre Borràs, Barcelona, Dir. Juan José Afonso.
- *El crítico* has been translated into and had onstage productions in French and Italian.

---. ***La lengua en pedazos***. *Religión y laicismo hoy. En torno a Teresa de Ávila*. Ed. Díaz-Salazar, R. *et al.* Barcelona: Anthropos, 2010. 113-139; *Primer Acto*. 342 (I/2012): 67-82.

- Onstage productions: 24 Feb. 2012, Teatro de Los Canapés, Avilés, Dir. Juan Mayorga; Dramatic Readings: 18 de mayo de 2009, Iglesia del Real Monasterio de Santo Tomás, Ávila, Dir. Guillermo Heras; 2) 26 Mar 2011, Ateneo, Madrid, Dir. Juan Mayorga.
- *La lengua en pedazos* has been translated into Italian by Antonella Caron--*La lingua a pezzi*—for a dramatic reading that took place on 26 Oct 2011 at the Teatro India in Rome, directed by Piero Maccarinelli.

---. ***El cartógrafo (Varsovia 1:400.000)***.*Memoria – política – justicia. En diálogo con Reyes Mate*. Eds. A. Sucasas y J. A. Zamora. Madrid: Trotta, 2010.

- *El cartógrafo* has been translated into French by Yves Lebeau as *Le cartographe.* Les Solitaries Intempestifs, Besançon 2010. Dramatic Reading 29 June 2012, Théâtre du Vieux Colombier (Comedie Française), Dir. Nâzim Boudjenah.

---. ***Los yugoslavos.*** (2013)

- Onstage Production: 16 Dec. 2013. Teatro Bitef, Belgrade. Dir. Stevan Bodroza.

---. ***El arte de la entrevista.*** *Abril* 45 (April 2013): 7-47. Print.

- Onstage Productions: 20 December 2013. Teatro Palacio Valdés, Avilés, Dir. Juan José Afonso; 21 Feb. 2014, Teatro María Guerrero, CDN, Dir. Juan José Afonso.

---. ***Reikiavik.*** Unpublished. (2014).

Mayorga, Juan and Juan Cavestany. ***Alejandro y Ana. Lo que España no pudo ver del banquete de la boda de la hija del presidente.*** *Animalario*. Plaza y Janés, 2005, 277-301.

- Onstage Productions: 1)18 Feb. 2003, Salones Lady Ana, Madrid, Dir. Andrés Lima, with DVD production: 2003. It received the Premio Max 2004 al Mejor Espectáculo de Teatro; 2) 13 de enero de 2012, Teatro Circular –Montevideo-, con dirección de Eduardo Cervieri).

---. ***Penumbra.***

- Onstage Production: 27 de enero de 2011, Matadero Naves del Español, Madrid, Dir. Andrés Lima).

III. **Teatro Breve.** Mayorga's *teatro breve* has been collected and edited under the title *Teatro para minutos*. Ciudad Real: Ñaque, 2009. In the collection are the following twenty-eight works, all of which had been previously published and most of which had been produced onstage. The publication information for each play is for its initial publication, prior to the 2009 collection.

Mayorga, Juan. "***Concierto fatal de la viuda Kolakowski.***" *Monólogos I*. Madrid: Asociación de Autores de Teatro, 1994: 99-113.

---. ***"El hombre de oro.***" *Gestos*. 24 (1997): 153-163; *Ventolera – Rotos*. Madrid: Teatro del Astillero, 1998: 61-72.

- Onstage Productions: 1) 2 June 1996, Sala Cuarta Pared, Madrid, part of the show, *Rotos*, which featured texts by the group *El Astillero*, Dir. Carlos Rodríguez; 2) 6 January 2013, hACERIA arteak de Bilbao, Dir. Richard Sahagún.

---. ***"La mala imagen."*** *Estreno*. XXVI/2 (2000) 15-18; *Teatro para minutos.* Ciudad Real: Ñaque, Ciudad Real 2001, pp. 11-27.

Dramatic Reading: 25 April 2001, Diputación de Ciudad Real, Dir. Fernando Bercebal; Onstage Production: 23 October 1997, Sala Cuarta Pared, Madrid, part of the show, *Fotos*, featuring texts by the group *El Astillero*, Dir. Carlos Rodríguez.

---. ***"Legión."*** *Ventolera – Rotos.* Teatro del Astillero, Madrid, 1998: 41-49; 2) *Teatro para minutos*. Madrid: Ñaque, 2001, 47-57.

Dramatic readings: 1) 9 March 1998, Sala Manuel de Falla de la S.G.A.E. -Madrid, Dir. Guillermo Heras; 2) 26 May 2001, Portas Ártabras, Coruña, Dir. Fernando Bercebal.

"Legión" was translated into Galician by Xosé Manuel Pazos Varela as *Lexión*, "Revista Galega de Teatro" 16, Separata X-XI: 5-12.

---. ***"La piel."*** *Arte teatral*. 17: 53-58.

Onstage productions: 1) 21 April 1998, Teatro García Lorca, Madrid, Dir. Salomé Aguiar; 2) 28 May 2002, Teatro Triángulo, Madrid, Dir. Francisco Torrente, part of a larger show titled, "El ojo en el bosque"; Dramatic readings: 3 June 2001, Salón de Columnas del Círculo de Bellas Artes, Madrid, Dir. Francisco Torrente.

---. ***"Amarillo."*** *Estreno*. XXVI/2 (2000): 20; 2) *Oscuridad*. Madrid: Teatro del Astillero, 2001. 89-93; 3) *Teatro para minutos*. Madrid: Ñaque, 2001. 29-31.

Onstage Productions: 28 May 2002, Teatro Triángulo, Madrid, Dir. Francisco Torrente, dentro del espectáculo "El ojo en el bosque"; Dramatic readings: 26 May 2001, Portas Ártabras, Coruña, Dir. Fernando Bercebal; 2) 19 Oct. 2001, Casa de América, Madrid, Dir. Guillermo Heras.

"Amarillo" has been translated into Catalan by César Martínez and produced onstage in Catalan on 8 Sept 2005, Espai Ara Lleida –Fira de Tárrega-, con dirección de Jorge Raedó, dentro del espectáculo *Teatre per a minuts.* The English translation of *"Amarillo"* by the Royal Court has not been published but was produced onstage on 6 August 1998, Royal Court Upstairs, Londres, Dir. Cristian Popescu.

---. ***"El Crack."*** *Al borde del área.* Alicante: Muestra de Teatro Español de Autores Contemporáneos, 1998. 81-88.

Onstage Productions: 13 October 2002, Teatro Cardenal Gonzaga, La Cabrera, Dir. Pablo Calvo, part of the show, "Miedo escénico."

---. ***"La mujer de mi vida."*** *Escena*. 64 (1999), *Sopa de radio*, p. XV.

Onstage Productions: 3 Dec 1999, Casa de la Cultura, Barcelona, Dir. Oriol Grau, part of the show, part of the show, *Sopa de radio*.

"La mujer de mi vida" was translated into Catalan by César Martínez as *La dona de la meva vida* and produced onstage on 8 Sept. 2005, Espai Ara Lleida, Fira de Tárrega, Dir. Jorge Raedó, part of the show, *Teatre per a minuts.*

---. ***"BRGS."*** *Estreno*. Vol XXVI, 2 (2000): 19; *Cuadernos escénicos*. 2 (2000): 96; *Teatro para minutos.* Madrid: Ñaque, 2001. 33-37.

Dramatic Readings: 1) 2 Dec. 2001, Casa de América, Madrid, Dir. Aitana Galán; 2) 26 May 2001, Portas Ártabras, Coruña, Dir. Fernando Bercebal; Onstage Productions: 15 Dec. 1999, Casa de América, Madrid, Dir. Alberto San Juan, part of the show, *Cabaré Borges*.

---. ***"La mano izquierda."*** *Ecos y silencios*. Ciudad Real: Ñaque, Ciudad Real, 2001. 80-87.

Onstage productions: 1) 15 Feb. 2001, Casa de América, Madrid, Dir. Jesús Cracio and Roberto Cerdá, part of the show, *Ecos y silencios*; 2) 7 June 2001, Casa de América, Madrid, Dir. Francisco Torrente, part of the show, *Por la boca muere el pez*; 3) 28 May 2002, Teatro Triángulo, Madrid, Dir. Francisco Torrente, as part of the show, "El ojo en el bosque"; Dramatic readings: 1) 25 April 2001, Diputación de Ciudad Real, Dir. Fernando Bercebal; 2) 19 Oct. 2001, Casa de América, Madrid, Dir. Guillermo Heras.

"La mano izquierda" has been translated into Catalán (Trans. César Martínez, *La mà esquerra*) and perfromed on 8 sept 2005, Espai Ara Lleida –Fira de Tárrega-, Dir. Jorge Raedó, as part of the show, *Teatre per a minuts.* It was also translated into Italian by Antonella Caron as *La mano sinistra* and performed onstage on 14 Oct. 2008 at the Teatro Vascello, Roma, as part of the show, "Cattive figure," Dir. Caterina Inesi.

---. ***"Una carta de Sarajevo."*** *Teatro para minutos*. Madrid: Ñaque, 2001. 39-45; 2) Digital: www.atelier-traduction.com.

Onstage Production: 28 May 2002, Teatro Triángulo, Madrid, Dir. Francisco Torrente, part of the show, "El ojo en el bosque"; Dramatic Reading on 26 Mayo 2001, Portas Ártabras, Coruña, Dir. Fernando Bercebal.

---. ***"Encuentro en Salamanca."*** *Vidas y ficciones de la ciudad de Salamanca*. Consorcio Salamanca 2002, Salamanca 2002. 14-26.

Lectura dramatizada: 19 January 2002, Palacio de Congresos y Exposiciones – Salamanca, con dirección de Helena Pimenta.

---. ***"La biblioteca del diablo."*** *La noticia del día.* Madrid. La Avispa, 2001, 127-135.

Translated by César Martínez into Catalan as *La biblioteca del diable* and performed onstage on 8 de septiembre de 2005, Espai Ara Lleida –Fira de Tárrega-, Dir. Jorge Raedó, as part of the show, *Teatre per a minuts.*

---. ***"El buen vecino."*** *Unheimliche. Lo siniestro*. Madrid: Teatro del Astillero, 2002. 75-82; *Exilios*. Buenos Aires, 2003. 89-93, *Teatro breve entre dos siglos*. Ed. Virtudes Serrano, Madrid: Cátedra, 2004. 363-369; *Animalario*, Plaza y Janés, 2005. 259-261.

Onstage Productions: 1) 19 May 2002, Teatro Asura, Madrid, Dir. Andrés Lima y Alberto San Juan, part of the show "Tren de mercancías huyendo hacia el Oeste"; 2) 31 Aug. 2004, Teatro del Pueblo, Buenos Aires, Dir. Luciano Cáceres; 3) 20 March 2009, Teatro Principal, San Sebastián, part of the show, "El club de las mujeres invisibles," Dir. Fernando Bernues.

Dramatic Readings: 1) 27 April 2002, Centre de Cultura Contemporàni, Barcelona, Dir. Carlota Subirós; 2) 19 October 2002, Casa de América, Madrid, Dir. Carlos Marchena.

"El buen vecino" has been translated into English (John London, *The good neighbor*) and produced onstage on 25 Mar. 2002 at the Royal Court Theatre in London, Dir. Hettie Macdonald. It was also translated into French by Claude Demarigny as *Le bon voisin* and produced onstage in 2002 at the Cartoucherie / Théatre de l'Epée de Bois in Paris and a dramatic reading on 28 May 2002, Dir. Claude Demarigny. Yves Lebeau's translation into French was produced onstage as part of larger dance-musical titled, "Nobody," on 5 March 2011, at the Théatre Jean Marais –Dir. Farid Ounchiouene.

---. ***"Tres anillos."*** *Intolerancia*. Madrid: Teatro del Astillero, 2004. 20-24.

Onstage Production: 9 January 2004, Sala Cuarta Pared, Madrid, Dir. Antonio López Dávila, part of the show, "Intolerancia".

---. ***"Mujeres en la cornisa."***

Onstage Productions: 20 Oct 2004, Sala Triángulo, Madrid, Dir. David Lorente, part of the show, "Desveladas."

"Mujeres en la cornisa" was translated to Catalan by César Martínez (*Dones a la cornisa*) and produced onstage in 2005 at the Espai Ara Lleida –Fira de Tárrega-, Dir. Jorge Raedó. It was translated into Italian by Manuela Cherubini (*Donne sul cornicione)* with an onstage production on 14 Oct 2008 at the Teatro Vascello in Rome, part of the show titled "Cattive figure," Dir. Caterina Inesi.

---. ***"Método Le Brun para la felicidad."*** *El pateo*. 25: 6-8.

Onstage production: 11 Dec. 2004, Casa de América, Madrid, Dir. Fabio Rubiano, part of the show, "Puntos cardinales"; Radio transmission: 3 Dec 2011, Radio Nacional de España, Dir. Nicolas Jackson.

Translated to Catalan by Cesar Martínez (*Mètode Le Brun per a la felicitat.)* and produced onstage on 8 Sept. 2005 at Espai Ara Lleida –Fira de Tárrega, Dir. by Jorge Raedó.

---. ***"Departamento de Justicia."*** *Culturas*. (Suplemento de "Diagonal") 4 (Abril de 2005): 8.

Translated into Portuguese by Antonio Goncalves: *Departamento de Justica*, en "Conferencia de Imprensa e Outras Aldrabices", Artistas Unidos, Lisboa, 2005, 113-114, and produced onstage on 16 June 2005, Teatro Nacional D. Maria II (Lisbon), Dir. Jorge Silva Melo.

---. ***"JK."*** *Maratón de monólogos 2006.* Madrid: AAT, 2006. 71-73; 2) "(Pausa.)" nº 25: 129-131; 3) *Raíces*. 76: 65-66; 4) *Anthropos*. 225 ("Walter Benjamin"): 30-31; English Translation: *"(Pausa.)"* 25: 199-200.

Onstage Productions: 1 Sept. 2005, Sala Cuarta Pared, Madrid, Dir. Guillermo Heras, part of the show, "Exilios".

---. ***"La mujer de los ojos tristes."*** *Mihura por cuatro*. Teatro Español, 2006. 83-94.

Onstage Productions: 29 Nov. 2005, Teatro Español, Madrid, Dir. Celia León y Andrés Lima, part of the show, "Mihura por cuatro."

Translated into Italian by Manuela Cherubini (*La donna degli occhi triste)* and produced onstage on 14 October 2008, Teatro Vascello, Roma, dentro del espectáculo "Cattive figure," con dirección de Caterina Inesi.

---. ***"Las películas del invierno."*** *"(Pausa.)"* 25: 132-144; 2) *"El pateo"* 25: 1-6; *Abril*, October 2007: 7-13.

Translated into English in *"(Pausa.)"* 25: 200-204.

---. ***"581 mapas."*** *Diagonal.* 117; *Contraluz* 5: 234-244; *Boletín Hispánico Helvético*, 19 (Spring 2012): 89-96.

- Dramatic Reading: 28 April 2011, Fundación March, Madrid, Dir. Juan Mayorga.

- Translated into English by William Gregory (*581 maps*) and produced onstage on 4 July 2009, Royal Court Theatre, London, Dir. Ramin Gray.

---. ***"Sentido de calle."*** *Maratón de monólogos 2004*. Madrid: AAT, 2004 119-121; en *Cuadernos del Ateneo,* 21 (Breve Antología de Teatro Breve): 55-56.

Onstage Production: 18 February 2003, Salones Lady Ana, Madrid, Dir. Andrés Lima; DVD: 2003.

---. ***"Justicia."*** *Maratón de monólogos 2003*. Madrid: AAT, 2003. 111-114.

Onstage Production: 18 February 2003, Salones Lady Ana –Madrid-, Dir. Andrés Lima; DVD: 2003.

Translation into Greek by Maria Jatsiemanuil: Δικαιοσύνη. Edición digital:diastixo.gr.; Translated into Italian by Manuela Cherubini: *Giustizia* and produced onstage on 14 Oct. 2008, Teatro Vascello, Roma, part of the show, "Cattive figure," con dirección de Caterina Inesi.

---. ***"Candidatos."***

Onstage Production: 1) 18 Feb. 2003, Salones Lady Ana, Madrid, Dir. Andrés Lima; DVD: 2003; 2) 16 Mar. 2013, Espíritu 23 –Madrid-, dentro del espectáculo "Ocupa Madrid", con dirección de Jorge Sánchez.

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