

Carlos Giménez, *España Una, Grande y Libre* (1976–1977), and Comics of the Transition: Representing the Politics of Memory, State Violence, and Popular Dissent

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Abstract: I reexamine the Spanish Transition in terms of the interventions that cartoonists in the 1970s used to lay bare the machinations of the old regime still in power. Specifically, I analyze Carlos Giménez's *España Una, Grande y Libre* series, an exemplary counter-narrative against the dominant discourse produced by post-Franco government officials and economic power brokers. This collection—which denounces state-sanctioned violence and champions popular mobilizations in the name of a more just society—is also a pioneering work that makes visible the victims of the long-silenced crimes of Francoism.

Keywords: visual print media, state-sanctioned violence, comic art, the Transition, historical memory

I'm a man of my time and social class, who tries not to forget history, a man who can discern what's just from what's not, and who thinks that it's cowardice to remain silent when we have this megaphone in our hands (courtesy of our profession), and when we see so much pain, inequality and injustice all around us.

Cartoonist Carlos Giménez (2016)

Cuentan que el cambio fue modélico. Pacífico. Pero impusieron un olvido forzoso. El pasado había dejado de existir. Pero las cosas no pasan porque sí. No pasan porque sí. El futuro es una empresa colectiva.

Cartoonist Ana Penyas, *En Transición* (2017)

En mayo [1981], mi padre compra en la Feria del Libro una recopilación de historietas del *Papus* y me dice que no son para mí, que son tebeos para adultos... Yo leo y releo a

escondidas las crudas historias compuestas por Ivà y Carlos Giménez... y algo empieza a conectarse dentro de mí. Algo que se queda para siempre y es ahí... justo ahí... donde comenzó esta otra historia que tienes en tus manos.

Cartoonist Rubén Uceda, *Atado y bien atado*:

la Transición golpe a golpe. 1969–1981 (2018)

Introduction: 1975, «año de la Transición ¿A qué?»

During the waning days of December 1975, just weeks after the death of the Generalísimo Francisco Franco, the satirical Spanish weekly *Por Favor* (1974–1977)—published under the editorial leadership of the intrepid iconoclasts Manuel Vázquez Montalbán and Jaume Perich—printed a comic signed by one of its most assiduous contributors, Máximo San Juan Arranz. The sketch speaks volumes in its sheer simplicity; a flag that flutters above the clouds gathered below is emblazoned with a somewhat tremulous message: «Año de la Transición ¿A qué?». Countless other cartoons by Máximo that appear in subsequent issues of *Por Favor* offer insight into the hopes and fears of divergent sectors of Spanish society who would contemplate the uncharted and barely discernible path ahead in the earliest post-Franco years. A 1976 comic depicts members of the far-right—supporters of the most stalwart, firmly entrenched Franco-era officials who swore not to give an inch in any future negotiations with the opposition, the diehards of the *bunker*—who would resort to deadly violence before accepting democratic reforms. Máximo's drawing shows five ominous figures dressed in black, arms raised in the fascist salute, as they wait for their just-lit bomb at the base of the monolith in front of them to blow to smithereens. The antepenultimate verse of the accompanying acrostic poem, «Numancia», printed beneath the comic reads like a parodic call to arms to fellow old guard *falangistas* and *inmovilistas*, especially the fat cats among them: «Capitalistas, franquistas, ex jerarcas, consejeros vitalicios: el “bunker” os llama. Aportad a la hoguera cuantos objetos de oro o plata no hayáis depositado en Suiza» (Claret 2000, 101). In 1977,

Máximo's comic presents an opposing—and, for the 21st century observer, naively optimistic—view of the power of the June 15 general elections to supposedly put the nail in the coffin of the long-lived Francoist body politic. A lone tombstone, beneath the cross looming over it, is engraved with the words «Murió definitivamente el 15-J-1977» and signed by «el equipo médico habitual» (Claret 2000, 134). In light of these ongoing, abbreviated expressions of competing desires among wide swaths of the Spanish populace, the cartoonist's pithy plea to know the outcome—«la Transición ¿A qué?»—will foretell the difficulty that citizens of the day, as well as future students and scholars of cultural history, will have in satisfactorily answering the question.

Twenty-five years after Máximo drew the nation's flag under the sign of a question mark, his longtime colleague at *Por Favor*, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, wrote the prolog for a commemorative volume of the well-regarded magazine, considered by many critics and historians of Spanish visual print media to be one of the most significant weeklies published during the Transition. In his short piece «La medida del tiempo perdido» for the 2000 publication, *'Por Favor'. Una historia de la Transición*, the former editor broached the same topic that scores of commentators both before and long after him would address: what was the Transition really like? How are we to interpret its role in forging a Spanish democratic state? The author clarifies the mainstream media response to these defining questions, with which he most definitively does not agree: «Cuando se ha tratado de historiar con urgencia la Transición se la ha reducido a un breve periodo de sobremesas en el que un rey bueno y cuatro políticos honrados llegaron a la reconciliación nacional, a cambio de que nadie perdiera un duro, ni se tirara la memoria histórica por la cabeza» (Vázquez Montalbán 2000, 16). In order to reconfigure a more accurate account of the history of the Transition, Vázquez Montalbán (2000, 10–16) reminds his readers they must keep in mind the primary objective that fueled graphic humorists's efforts in the mid-seventies, which was to forge a fundamental «cuestionamiento de la verdad oficial y del saber político de los españoles»: «La revista se dedicó a un humor político y moral de vanguardia, satirizando la no verdad del oficialismo franquista en todas sus dimensiones, en lo individual y en lo colectivo, en lo público y en lo

privado». Ultimately, this award-winning writer and anti-Francoist activist, whose militancy in the 1960s landed him in one of Franco's jails, insists that any history of the Transition that does not include the contributions of the members of the 1970s alternative press, countercultural agents who spoke truth to power through cartoons, parodical texts, and comic strips, can only be woefully incomplete:

No está a nuestro alcance historiar la acción de las internacionales de la política y del dinero o del Departamento de Estado para que no se les escapara la Transición española, como en un primer momento se les había escapado la portuguesa. Pero sí estamos en condiciones de construir y exigir el conocimiento del papel representado por todos los sujetos históricos de presión y ruptura que imposibilitaron que el franquismo se sucediera a sí mismo en unas condiciones del todo insoportables. (Vázquez Montalbán 2000, 16)

The primary purpose of my essay, following Vázquez Montalbán, is indeed to reexamine the Spanish Transition in terms of the interventions that cartoonists in the 1970s used to lay bare the machinations of the old regime still in power on November 21, 1975. Through their fiercely combative caricatures, the now legendary artists like Máximo, Forges, El Perich, El Roto, and Chumy Chúmez crafted substantive counter-narratives against the dominant discourse produced at the time by post-Franco government officials and economic power brokers. Bringing to light the political labor of cartoonists who published in the newly minted media outlets of satirical magazines—like *Por Favor*, *El Papus*, *El Hermano Lobo*, and *El Jueves*—not only documents some of the most valuable sources of cultural expression widely disseminated at the time by the left-wing opposition. This record of counter-hegemonic speech also provides crucial insights into the highly contested reality of the nature of the Spanish Transition from its very inception. Especially in the last decade, historians and cultural commentators have interrogated the veracity of the official story of the Transition—supposedly a coherent model of political consensus equitably crafted among divergent political groups leading to the peaceful passage from dictatorship to democracy—as if such a narrative had never been virulently contested during the period

by contemporaneous proponents for genuinely democratic change. Some of these players, in fact, as Josep Fontana had already recalled in his epilogue to the 2000 *Por Favor* retrospective, are the graphic humorists who launched the most spirited strikes against the political status quo of the 1970s; satirical weeklies like *Por Favor* «testigo fiel y comprometido» during turbulent times, revealed another side of the story to question the «ficción endulcorada, que se nos ofrece hoy como “historia de la Transición”», which «ha llegado al extremo de codificarse como un modelo que se propone a otros países como remedio» (Fontana 2000, 171). In fact, states Fontana (2000, 177–182), what a closer look at illustrations and cartoons from publications like *Por Favor* can do for today’s readers is to remind them that the «fábula de la Transición» was already recognized as such forty-five years ago: «Estas páginas infundirán en el lector un sano escepticismo acerca de la leyenda rosada de la Transición. Y ello tal vez le ayude a entender que buena parte de las deficiencias de hoy arrancan de la mala solución dada a algunos problemas del pasado». What the comics from the past confirm in the present is «la escasa credibilidad» (Fontana 2000, 181) that the power elites’ discourses of reconciliation and consensus held among average Spaniards at the time. This fact is nowhere more evident than in the pages filled by 1970s artists whom Julio Valdeón and Rebeca Argudo (2021) have called «francotiradores con tinta china, pistoleros de los tebeos», whose lethal weapon, «el estoque del humor», facilitated their full-frontal attack: «Apedrearón las cocheras del tradofranquismo con el aguarrás del sarcasmo».

In order to present a representative text-based analysis of this corpus within the parameters of this special issue, I will focus my remarks on a single comic artist, Carlos Giménez (b. 1941) and a particular work, his *España Una, Grande y Libre*, originally published in 1976–1977 installments in the satirical weekly *El Papus*, and subsequently reprinted by Ediciones de la Torre in 1978 in three volumes. I argue that, in addition to the cultural value of Giménez’s illustrated social commentary documenting fundamental issues of the day—the opposition’s call for amnesty for political prisoners; the double-speak of the government politicians who proposed to facilitate democratic processes even as they simultaneously obfuscated meaningful change at every level; the pervasive state-sanctioned

violence that continued to terrorize citizens who demanded civil rights and social justice—*España Una, Grande y Libre* is an especially pioneering work for making visible the victims of the long-silenced crimes of Francoism. It is in Giménez's earliest post-20-N pieces that Spanish readers can first witness the faces and figures of anonymous anti-fascist fighters whose battered bodies—tortured, beaten, shot—were indeed largely hidden from public view, still disappeared in mass graves that even today cover the map of Spain. Giménez's comics, often illustrating Ivà's scripts, will stubbornly insist on the unacknowledged reality of state terror against Spanish civilians, at a time when very few other media—even among the countercultural cartoonists produced by Giménez's colleagues—brought into the public sphere those haunting images of the nation's traumatic past. Vázquez Montalbán (2000, 16) had sardonically deemed the Transition's brokered pact as one that demanded that «[no] se tirara la memoria histórica por la cabeza». Carlos Giménez, in this respect, perhaps more than any of his comic artist colleagues, refused to play by the rules of the game.

Pen and ink smears against the *inmaculada Transición*

I inscribe my study of this comic series within current scholarship on the political implications of the cartoons that populated the dense visual print media landscape during the early post-Franco years. To properly contextualize my work within this critical framework, in the first part of this essay I review key publications of the past decade that form part of the revisionist exegesis that question—as José Vidal-Beneyto had done in 1995—the canonical status of this historical period as «la inmaculada Transición». I include commentary of selected studies that most directly inform my own analysis of Giménez's legacy, considered in terms of his comics as productive hermeneutic devices for reframing the Transition. The scholarly emplotment of the comic strip onto this history foregrounds its efficacy as an optimal narrative vehicle for re-viewing the long-championed beliefs about an idyllic Transition, «perfecta, fruto del consenso, un ejemplo *for export*», according to Juan Carlos Monedero's scathing rebuke of this perspective (Monedero 2011, 23). The author's own argument for

a reevaluation of the «Transición de mentira» (Monedero 2011, 214) is predicated in part on the advent of the 21st century memory movement led by the founder of the Asociación por la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (ARMH) in 2000, Emilio Silva, prologuist, in fact, for Monedero's *La Transición contada a nuestros padres*. In his preface, Silva (2011, 15) critiques «el relato mítico de la Transición» for its thunderous silence regarding the fate of so many 1930s supporters of Spanish democracy, contributing to the appalling ignorance among today's citizenry about the truth of state violence and repression: «Ha tenido consecuencias sociales evidentes: que la mayoría de los hombres y mujeres desconozca los crímenes de la dictadura». On the other hand, Monedero (2011, 220–221) credits Silva's leadership among descendants calling for exhumations of mass graves of murdered family members as part of a larger project of the recovery of Spain's most authentic democratic history: «Su tarea en la ARMH [...] ha devuelto al país la huella genética de aquellas y aquellos luchadores por la libertad y la democracia». Recovering the broken roots of the genealogical tree of Spanish democracy, anchored in the frustrated aspirations of the Second Republic, is a way to reimagine the road to a more just society; Monedero (2011, 207), like the 1970s cartoonists before him, celebrates

todas y todos los que no solo pelearon contra el franquismo, sino a todas y todos los que han mantenido viva la memoria de aquella lucha. Si se sabe comprender que la fuente de donde emana la democracia española es el 14 de abril de 1931 (y no el 22 de noviembre de 1975, fecha de la coronación del monarca elegido por Franco), podrá España aproximarse a la pauta democrática europea.

What is particularly intriguing about Monedero's treatise on the foibles of the Spanish Transition, which in no way purports to study the role of visual print media as an alternative space for social critique, is that throughout its pages the author does include a couple of dozen 1970s comics by Ramón, Quino, Chumy Chúmez, Forges, El Perich, and El Roto, among others, albeit with no reference whatsoever within the body of the chapters to the cartoons' content or messaging. The author does recognize in his book's concluding acknowledgements that these vignettes serve as

a visual barometer of «el pulso de la época»: «Sin su ironía—casi siempre cargada de dramatismo—resulta más difícil entender aquella época, la oscuridad del franquismo y la Transición, ya entonces decepcionante, a la restaurada monarquía borbónica» (Monedero 2011, 222). The most relevant among these interpolated illustrations in terms of Monedero's argument—that «los que lucharon por la democracia antes que nosotros» would never have bought into the Transition's «mentiras» about «la posibilidad de ser demócrata sin ser antifranquista» (Monedero 2011, 214)—is the two-page spread that closes the book's final chapter, a cartoon coda from the 1977 *España Una, Grande y Libre* series titled «Pasado imperfecto de indicativo», with script by Ivà and drawings by Giménez (Monedero 2011, 208–209). (Fig. 1; pie de imagen “Pasado imperfect de indicativo”) A Republican veteran of the Spanish Civil War stands in line to cast his ballot in the June 15, 1977, general elections; while he waits, he recalls the hard-fought battle to get to this point: his post-war exile into France; his years as a resistance fighter first against the Nazis and later as a guerrillero fighting Franco in Spain; a decade in prison; his clandestine work as a labor organizer; another decade in prison and his release just the year before (fig. 1). Lost in thought, he fails to advance in line quickly enough; a self-righteous bystander shouts, «¡Jolín...! es que no tienen consideración con los que esperamos». With his last panel, showing the back of the old militant who retreats from sight, Giménez decries the public oblivion in 1970s Spain of the stories of those who spent the last forty years fighting on the right side of history.

A key strategy throughout the series is Giménez's decision to literally put a face to just such nameless citizens whose figure serves to make clear connections between anti-fascist struggles in the traumatic past and pro-democratic activism in the uncertain present, enacted in the 1970s by the Spaniards who came of age under Franco. The (re)appearance of these anonymous members of society, firmly positioned as political actors in the public sphere via new outlets for visual print media, is one of the hallmarks of the burgeoning production of comic art during this time period. In his 2011 reinterpretation of the insufficiently studied ideological expressions of the opposition during these years, Jordi Mir (2011, 84) proposes to reexamine «ideas y propuestas olvidadas de la Transición», countercultural

thought that was widespread in left-wing political magazines, like the ones that the author reviews: *Star*, *Ajoblanco*, *El Viejo Topo*, and *Mientras Tanto*. Such publications are useful as a kind of «termómetro» (Mir 2011, 103) for registering the degree of social mobilization among citizen groups demanding change. Although Mir does not consider the realm of comics and cartoons, his stubborn insistence on the benefit of paying close attention to the press that represents subaltern points of view is particularly pertinent for any study that values the historical significance of what Mir (2011, 91) calls «las diversas posibilidades que se planteaban en aquel momento de abandono del régimen franquista»: «Otra cosa será discutir si eso se concretó en proyectos viables, pero el fundamento de las ideas estaba ahí. Estas ideas circulaban». Mir (2011, 89), committed to studying the Transition «desde abajo y desde los márgenes», takes issue with the historian Santo Juliá, who argues that ultimately the most historically useful data are the specific outcomes, and not the individual or collective aspirations that may have galvanized citizens. According to Mir (2011, 88), Juliá invokes the dictionary definition of the word ‘proyecto’ to clarify that such endeavors did not constitute a viable «proyecto de actuación» that «tiene que ver con la ejecución de algo. Se necesita un plan, acopio de recursos, actuar con el objetivo en mente [...] Juliá plantea una distinción de gran utilidad para no confundir entre el decir y el hacer». But Mir (2011, 88–89), following a Benjaminian line of thought, is not persuaded by Juliá’s linear logic:

Pero no podemos olvidar que los valores, los programas, las declaraciones, el discurso público de los diferentes agentes implicados, en este caso en la Transición, tienen su papel. Convendría no olvidar las ideas y los valores para intentar entender algo de lo que una parte de la sociedad española tenía en la cabeza durante los años en los que se vivió el final de la dictadura y la construcción de una nueva sociedad. Conviene pensar también qué separa a una idea de un proyecto.

Mir (2011, 106) concludes by strongly affirming: «La contracultura, el *underground*, las culturas libertarias y las radicales ofrecieron a la Transición más de lo que se les ha reconocido. Puede que no hubiera un

proyecto triunfante surgido de estos ámbitos, pero es necesario pensar en su capacidad de influencia, de incidencia».¹

Mir's words echo for this reader the thought of Spanish philosopher and Benjaminian scholar Reyes Mate. Mate (2008, 152), in the first place, also takes Juliá to task for his defense of a «modelo de Transición política» that eschews the visibilization of the Spanish Civil War losers' democratic memory in the passage from dictatorship to a free state: «No está Juliá contra la memoria [...] sino contra su uso político». The single-minded focus on the «presente fáctico» (Mate 2009, 69), which ultimately produces the blind spots of history, Mate (2009, 22) argues, masks the future viability of the aspirations of history's losers that seemed to be obliterated in their day:

Los proyectos frustrados de los que quedaron aplastados por la historia están vivos en su fracaso como posibilidad o como exigencia de justicia [...] Tomemos el tiempo del franquismo. La realidad de España no era solo lo que ocurría con los protagonistas que la habitaban, sino también la sombra de la República que acompañaba a todo ese periodo como el proyecto que pudo ser y que al ser frustrado se hacía presente como posibilidad alternativa a la dictadura del momento [...] Porque el pasado pudo ser de otra manera, lo que ahora existe no debe ser visto como una fatalidad que no se pueda cambiar. Y si el presente tiene una posibilidad latente, que viene de un pasado que no pudo ser, entonces podemos imaginar un futuro que no sea proyección del presente dado, sino del presente posible.

Mate's words are doubly meaningful, both for the recovery of the legacy of pre-Spanish Civil War democratic thought during the early post-Franco period, as well as the 21st century recovery of the alternative political

¹ In the exhibition catalogue for the fascinating 2007 retrospective, *En Transición*, a similar Santos Juliá argument appears in his essay. Curiously, as if to provide an ironic counterpoint, the catalog's editors illustrate Juliá's brief remarks with a dozen comics by well-known cartoonists from the Transition: El Perich (pp. 166, 171), El Roto (pp. 169, 172), Chumy Chúmez (p. 170), Cesc (pp. 172, 175, 177), Summers (p. 170), and Máximo (pp. 172, 173). In his introduction to the catalogue, Josep Ramoneda (2007, 11) disregards the official version of the Transition as «un pacto entre los sectores más reciclables del régimen anterior y los dirigentes políticos democráticos, con el rey como principal hacedor» for its exclusion of the role of the Spanish populace: «Ha costado mucho que se reconociera plenamente el protagonismo de la ciudadanía en la Transición».

aspirations that fueled noteworthy social movements during the 1970s—attitudes recorded by Carlos Giménez and other comic artists—but may not have resulted in official political pacts that ruled the day. Finally, in terms of the role of popular culture, and specifically for this study, the role of comics, Mate (2009, 204) reminds his reader of the subaltern's resources for fanning the flames of memory and history: «Los vencidos transmiten de generación en generación, a través de sus leyendas y cuentos, sus experiencias dolorosas, hasta el momento en que el canto y el relato se traducen en acción política».²

When journalist Guillem Martínez published his edited volume in 2012—a book Sebastiaan Faber (2021, 73) calls «the first comprehensive cultural critique of the Regime of 1978»—many of his readers took the author to task for insufficiently crediting previous studies that had also shared the *CT* o *la Cultura de la Transición* contributors' thesis that the history of the model Transition was based on a myth. Álvaro Fernández (2014, 217–224) declares that «el libro echa en el olvido el abundante corpus de producción crítica y académica que analizó la cultura española desde un punto de vista alternativo a la dominante», and urges fellow researchers to follow the pioneering trail of «otras voces que trabajaron intensamente a contrapelo». There is, states Fernández (2014, 228), a vast cultural corpus of works including non-prestigious texts, «la producción artística y crítica que [...] ha sido relegada al olvido», ready and waiting for the investigator's keen eye: «La mirada al frente, la esperanza en el futuro, solo tiene sentido si es posible explicar el pasado —dar cuenta de sus producciones y sus silencios, antes que negarlo como si fuera ajeno, ya que es parte de nuestra historia». Similarly, Carmen Peña Ardid (2019, 25) critiques Guillem Martínez's use of the “CT” designator—referencing «una entidad *estática*, *uniforme* y relativamente *perdurable*» (emphasis in the original)—because «ignora casi por completo el quehacer cultural del periodo comprendido entre 1975 y 1982, precisamente la etapa —ampliable, sin duda, en sus antecedentes y derivaciones— que acoge las

2 It is interesting to note that, in a 2016 interview, Carlos Giménez likened himself to a traditional itinerant teller of tales, like those who long ago traveled from one village to another, keeping alive the flames of popular memory by spreading stories of shared experiences (Dueben 2016).

grandes transformaciones políticas y legislativas, a la vez que la más viva circulación de ideas en el tránsito de la sociedad española de la dictadura a la democracia». Peña Ardid (2019, 12–13) applauds the increasing critical attention given to diverse forms of popular and mass media culture of the time (the late 70s and early 80s), «en el que, pese al prestigio que todavía conservaban los intelectuales de viejo cuño [...] se estaba iniciando ya el desplazamiento de los discursos mediáticos [...] desde la posición periférica que antes ocupaban al centro del sistema cultural». It is within this critical framework that the recent boom of academic scholarship has emerged, a substantive research dossier focusing on the historical significance and political labor performed by the cultural practitioners of comics, cartoons, and illustrations produced during the Transition.

As the Transition revisionists were publishing their calls for a closer examination of the forms of popular culture that most effectively expressed political contestation during the early post-Franco years, some of the most compelling of these artifacts—cartoons and comic strips—were made available to the general public. In fact, in the year 2013 alone, for example—thirty-five years after the consolidation of the Regime of 78—there were two public exhibitions of comics in Spain. «La Transición en tinta china» exhibit was housed in the heart of Madrid, within the auspices of the Biblioteca Nacional Española, quite literally repositioning these subversive images, in Peña Ardid's words, «desde la posición periférica que antes ocupaban al centro del sistema cultural» (Peña Ardid 2019, 13). The renowned cartoonists Forges and Peridis served as advisors for the selection of representative samples that ultimately displayed some one hundred seventy works from eighty-eight artists and twenty-five different Transition-era magazine and newspaper publications. José María Lasalle, Secretary of Culture, gave an official stamp of approval to artists and their publishers that would have been unimaginable for those whom, decades before, had often been the target of government censorship, federal fines, death threats, and bombing attacks: «Con sutil ironía, descarada malicia o brutal sarcasmo, estos dibujantes impulsaron el proceso político, incluso contraponiéndose al mismo. Eran los divertidos heraldos de la libertad» (Bobillo de la Peña 2013, 7). Curator Francisco Javier Bobillo de la Peña (2013, 49–50) states unequivocally that the primary purpose behind the

institution's decision to showcase the work of scores of graphic artists was to serve as a historical corrective: «[La Transición] tanto por su singular carácter como por su relativo éxito integrador, ha sido convertida en un modelo de tránsito pacífico de una dictadura a una democracia. A menudo mitificada [...] Pues bien, a su modo risueño y burlesco, también los dibujantes gráficos han reflejado dicha época. El suyo es otro tipo de relato [...] Sin él, la Transición política no podría ser comprendida en toda su esencia».³

In the same year in Barcelona, at the Col·legi Oficial de Periodistes de Catalunya, another exhibit, «*El Papis: cuando el humor podía ser delito*», was organized around the cultural production of a single satirical magazine, *El Papis*, the venue where Carlos Giménez first published his *España Una...* strips. The curator, the well-known comic artist, cartoon historian, and critic Pepe Gálvez (2013), summarized the significance of one of the most revolutionary collections of 1970s-era political graphic humor:

Las páginas de *El Papis* forman una galería permanente de retratos de la Transición que, como decíamos, elaboran un relato bastante distinto del que se había conformado oficialmente, más incómodo, más real. En primer lugar, porque en la revista, la protagonista de esta época fue la ciudadanía, con sus preocupaciones, obsesiones, frustraciones, ilusiones, reivindicaciones, necesidades, sufrimientos, sus miedos y su valentía. En segundo lugar, porque su existencia y resistencia es una prueba continua del hecho que la libertad no se concedió graciosamente, sino que se ganó, y con muchas dificultades. En tercer lugar, porque dibujó el rostro menos brillante, y muchas veces siniestro, de ese proceso. Y, finalmente, porque se mofaban de todo; bueno, siendo realistas, de casi todo.⁴

3 As part of the other story, the non-official version that the comics will tell, the catalog includes two of Ivà and Giménez's comics, both from the *España Una, Grande y Libre*: «Queda Carmona»—one of numerous Giménez visual depictions of the plight of scores of political prisoners hidden behind impenetrable walls and calls for amnesty—as well as the previously cited «Pasado imperfecto de indicativo» (Bobillo de la Peña 2013, 132–133, 154–155).

4 This exhibition is accessible through the online archives of *Humoristán, museo digital del humor gráfico*. See also the 2017 online commemorative collection, «40 años del atentado al Papis. Los dibujos que cabrearón...», that feature three of Giménez's most virulently anti-fascist vignettes: «Diccionario

Among the three Giménez comics included in the exhibition from *España Una...* is «Recuerda», once again a foundational early post-Franco portrait of the ties that bind the sacrifices of anti-fascist fighters of the past with the pro-democracy protesters of the present. (Fig. 2, pie de imagen “Recuerda”) «Recuerda» displays street posters of contemporary politicians—Adolfo Suárez among them—under the banner «Los hombres que hacen posible la democracia». The next four rows of four panels highlight the politicians’ predecessors, individuals whose defense of democratic ideals had been invisible for far too long: the blindfolded man who falls dead before a firing squad; the tortured prisoner who screams in pain, refusing to give up names to the Franco regime’s tormentors; two labor activists who languish in jail cells; a modern-day graffiti artist who, as he attempts to scrawl the word “Libertad”, is shot dead by police. The final panel, twice as big as the preceding ones, repeats the same text («Los hombres que hacen posible la democracia»), but the previous visages of Suárez and company have been replaced by the duplicated portraits of the brutally repressed men whose stories and faces Giménez had just revealed (fig. 2). Given museum curators’ objectives in 2013 to provide 21st century viewers with access to the cartoon stories of the Transition’s history—«Dado que la mitad de la población española actual no había nacido o tenía pocos años cuando estos dibujos vieron la luz, esta muestra aspira ofrecerles una selección [...] de aquella edad de oro del humor político español» (Bobillo de la Peña 2013, 8)—it is no surprise that in this same year Debolsillo brought out a reprint of Giménez’s *España Una...* collection. Prologuist Felipe Hernández Cava, famously part of the caricaturist El Cubri team during the 1970s, recalls what he and fellow caricaturists like Giménez tried to provide: «Una respuesta apremiante a una realidad inmediata, que se modificaba a cada momento sin perder su condición de tupida y oscura tela que el Poder trataba de depositar sobre nosotros y que nos afanábamos en desgarrar para hacer algo de luz» (Hernández Cava 2013, 7).

If the first decade or so of the 21st century witnessed a boom in media outlets devoted to publicizing cartoonists’ art from the 70s and 80s, in

básico elemental», «Por la boca muere el pez», and «El último servicio». <http://humoristan.org/es/exposiciones/40-anys-de-l-attemptat-a-el-papus-els-dibuixos-que-van-emprenyar-els-fatxes/>.

more recent years there have been a plethora of studies devoted to the scholarly analysis of this cultural production during the Transition.⁵ The editors and contributors for the 2020 special issue of *Bulletin of Spanish Visual Studies* make an especially convincing case for the extent to which the graphic humor of satirical magazines constituted a genuinely destabilizing «dissensual media», robust «vehicles for cultural resistance», that «pushed the boundaries of political dissidence before, during and after the Transition». The collective goals of the authors of the 2020 issue—to attend «to the unflattening of static historical narratives regarding Spanish democracy and the frames in which they have been previously cast» (Cameron 2020, 172–184)—guide my analysis of the radical originality of Carlos Giménez’s subversive comic art. As previously stated, I use as my case study his 1976–1977 illustrated vignettes that he wields like a weapon, firing some of his most savage shots against the Francoist structures, loyalists, and ideals still firmly in place, discursively taking aim at perhaps the single most hypocritical catchphrase of the old regime: «¡España, Una! ¡España, Grande! ¡España, Libre!».

Giménez’s comic strips, speaking truth to power: «¡Señor, señor...! ¡Cuánto hijoputa hay suelto por el mundo...!»

In an interview published in 2019, the legendary political cartoonist Giménez concisely provided the context for his most openly politicized set of comics:

Al final de la dictadura hubo un periodo de tiempo, al que luego se llamó la Transición, en el que parecía que todo el mundo quería ser demócrata. La política estaba presente en todos los medios y hasta parecía que todos éramos de izquierda. Todos, menos los residuales franquistas, que campaban a sus anchas. Era el momento de decir las cosas que durante tanto tiempo no

⁵ Research about the satirical weekly *El Pápus*, the original publication venue for Giménez’s *España Una...*, has been especially prolific; see, for example, Iranzo Cabrera (2015, 2020) and Lopata (2012). Vilches’s 2019 thesis, published as a monograph in 2021, studies *El Pápus* along with other graphic humor magazines like *El Jueves*, *Por Favor*, and *El hermano Lobo*. See also additional studies about the comics of the Transition in McGlade (2016), Gómez Mompart (2017), and Salgado (2019).

habíamos podido decir. Y opinar políticamente. Yo colaboraba en *El Papus*, que era una revista muy valiente y muy libre. En esta revista cada semana yo publicaba dos páginas comentando lo que pasaba en la calle. Sin proponérmelo realmente, a fuerza de reflejar cada semana los temas que eran actualidad, resultó que al cabo de un tiempo había hecho un montón de páginas en los que contaba cómo había sido la Transición. Estas páginas se publicaron luego en tres álbumes que se llamaron *España, Una; España, Grande*, y *España, Libre!*; que era un eslogan del franquismo que nos hacían, de niños, repetir a coro en los colegios. (Arriba 2019, 159)

It is little surprise that Giménez's most provocative compendium of comics would have first appeared in the pages of the extraordinarily combative, often raunchy, take-no-prisoners style of socio-political critique that supposedly spawned a much-cited quotation from a Francoist minister: «[*El Papus*] molestaba más que una avispa en los cojones» (Lopata 2012). Even if the words are apocryphal, the sentiment does ring true, given the record of radical reactions the magazine's messages produced: suspensions, lawsuits, and, finally, a deadly bomb attack.

It is noteworthy that the genesis for the subsequent 1978 publication of Giménez's original comics in the format of three separate albums—*España, Una* (July–December 1976); *España, Grande* (December 1976–May 1977); *España, Libre!* (May–October 1977)—was the result of an editorial decision that recognized the genre of the comic book as the ideal mechanism for educating and raising political awareness among a potentially wide readership. The cartoonist explained in this regard in a 2013 interview:

José María Gutiérrez [founding editor of Ediciones de la Torre, est. 1976] se acercó a mí [...] Él editaba libros políticos y me decía: «Mira, Carlos, me he dado cuenta de que enseña más un álbum tuyo como *España Una* [...] por ejemplo, que un tratado sobre sociología». Bueno no estoy muy de acuerdo con esto, pero, sin embargo, hay que reconocer que un tebeo tiene un atractivo y es fácil de leer. Por ejemplo, tú dejas en una peluquería un libro sobre marxismo y no se lo lee nadie; dejas un tebeo y la gente lo lee. Y luego puedes contar lo mismo y además es fácil de leer. Y, además, son capaces de vehicular ideologías, vayan

o no en contra de la política aceptada o del mundo aceptado, igual que otro medio. (De Bois 2020, 224)

The didactic possibilities offered by the comics of the 1970s have been especially touted by scholars of the Spanish Transition, precisely for the ultimately educational role of counter-hegemonic points of view and non-official media representations in the construction of a new democratic society. Gómez Mompart (2017, 194) explains that the satirical magazines of the times «se convirtieron —de puertas adentro y de proyección hacia fuera— en escuela crítica de demócratas, progresistas e izquierdosos». Reig Cruaños (2017, 175) points to the ongoing relevance of popular cultural representations of a fraught political past, particularly when official pedagogical platforms have, remarkably, yet to be put in place:

En un país que renunció, por razones operativas y pragmáticas, pero discutibles, a realizar la pedagogía pública sobre lo que había significado el franquismo y que tampoco se atrevió hasta el siglo siguiente a afrontar los deberes de memoria histórica y revisión del pasado que toda democracia madura debe cumplir, casi lo único que teníamos a mano para elevarnos sobre la inmoralidad del franquismo era el recuerdo de cómo habíamos luchado y cómo nos habíamos reído de él.

Nowhere has the effectiveness of the comic book as a pedagogical tool been more convincingly argued than in David F. de Arriba's 2019 primer for instructors interested in engaging students through the use of comics to teach the history of the Spanish Civil War and the post-war. Garriga Elies (2019, 7), the author of the preface for the collection, whose pages include a chapter focused on materials for use in the classroom instruction of both Giménez's autobiographical *Paracuellos* as well as *España Una...*, identifies education and memory as the twin pillars of any free society. *España Una...*, by Carlos Giménez, «indudablemente uno de los autores más relevantes del cómic español» (Arriba 2019, 51), constitutes an exemplary sourcebook of a people's history, shaped by the popular memory of resistance and struggle for social change.

Pierre-Alain de Bois (2020, 67) has succinctly summarized the three key moments that correspond to each of the three installments of *España Una...*: «El primer álbum se refiere a los primeros meses del gobierno Suárez; el segundo recoge historietas publicadas inmediatamente después del referéndum para la Reforma política de noviembre [sic] de 1976; el tercero nos ofrece un panorama hasta las primeras elecciones democráticas celebradas el 15 de junio de 1977». In my analysis of selected comics from the series, whose protagonists populated the panels against the backdrop of these political events, I am especially interested in the strategies Giménez uses to counter what Sánchez-Biosca (2007, 47) has called the discursive «desaparición» of the Franco regime's opponents: «Evitar la representación del opositor, silenciar sus pasos, omitir su voz en lugar de responder o atacar». The author goes on to recognize that of course, during the Transition «las imágenes de los opositores empezaron a horadar la compacta coraza de un régimen que se desplomaba». Giménez indeed returns the average citizen to the public square—long controlled by repressive authorities as if private property—placing him and her either arm in arm with fellow activists, or in open conflict with those who continue to wield power, often in the form of deadly force. My reading of Giménez's corpus is deeply informed by scholar Sophie Baby's 2012 study of the practices of violence during the years of the Transition between 1975–1982; many of the most unforgettable images of *España Una...* are precisely those that depict brutal scenes of assault, injury, and assassination, part of the staggering statistics that Baby (2018, 87) cites from the period: more than seven hundred casualties and three thousand incidents directly related to violence and bloodshed. In a similar vein, as previously mentioned, I highlight Giménez's commitment to referencing the atrocities of the dictatorship in a medium that in the 1970s rarely alluded to this long taboo topic: «El otro imposible gráfico es la memoria de los crímenes del franquismo. Aún hoy el tema despierta los demonios virulentos de la profunda división» (Reig Cruaños 2017, 174).

Antonio Martín, the pioneering Spanish comics historian and editor, penned the 1978 preface for each of the three volumes, explaining in the inaugural issue the thematic motif that unifies the wide-ranging collection: «la condena de la violencia institucional y la llamada a la

resistencia popular frente a la misma» (Martín 1982a, 2). He concludes his remarks with a nod to the thousands of murdered bodies whose tragic legacy fuels the production of the profoundly critical comic book series, «crítica que, por otra parte y dado que se transmite a través de una revista satírica, se presenta generalmente bajo el prisma del humor, un humor negro y con más frecuencia aún agrio y dramático, que chorrea la sangre de las víctimas que se han acumulado en la cuneta de este camino de Transición que los españoles recorreremos desde el 20 de noviembre de 1975» (Martín 1982a, 3). In his prolog for the third installment, *España, Libre!*, Martín (1982b, 2) presents Giménez's most damning portraits of state violence, originally published either one month prior or within four months after the post-Franco general elections of June 15, 1977: «Por su parte, ante la misma realidad política, Giménez contesta el pesimismo de unos y el triunfalismo de otros al proponer como modelo al luchador antifascista bajo el franquismo, el hombre, los hombres que han hecho posible el camino hacia la democracia». Martín (1982b, 2) goes on to remind his reader that in 1977 the people's struggles against the phantasms of the Franco regime were only just beginning: «Como crónica apasionada, dividida entre el escepticismo y la esperanza, de la frustración popular, allí donde comprendemos que, tras padecer cuarenta años siniestros, la lucha debe aún continuar, ahora contra los herederos del franquismo».

This tripartite representation of the subaltern confronting the figure of power in a threatening context imbued by the deadly violence of the old regime is perfectly captured in the three covers that Giménez designed for the series. The cover of *España, Una* depicts a hapless figure—clad in the anarchist *campesino's* beret, red neckerchief, and *alpargatas*—holding onto a carrot from the farm as if it were a pistol. He stands back-to-back in a duel-like stance with a monstrously oversized soldier armed to the teeth and whose uniform displays the Nazi swastika and the Falangist yoke and arrows symbol (Fig. 3, pie de imagen “*España, Una*”). The second cover for the *España, Grande* installment shows only the gargantuan aggressor taking aim against his defenseless target, now out of the frame. The third cover for *España, Libre!* features the victim now alone, lifted off his feet by the impact of the volley of bullets that quite literally blow his brains out. (Fig. 4, pie de image “*España, Libre!*”)

The myth of *España, Una*: Back-to-back, political bodies in opposition

A central critique that will connect the three albums is the confirmation that in the 1970s the power players who will oversee the Transition are identical to those who once filled the administrative ranks of the old regime. The very first comic, «La citación» (Giménez 1982a, 4–5), ushers in the collection with the author's customary recourse to onomatopoeia in order to continuously introduce the explosive sounds of violence that threaten the Spanish citizen. The out-sized fist that ominously pounds on a family's front door in the very first frame («POM! POM! POM!») is revealed in the second panel as belonging to the same kind of intimidating police protagonist featured on the cover, a terrifying presence that not only visually initiates this comic scrapbook of 1976–1977 but will also serve throughout as a sometimes unseen specter of unrelenting aggression against sectors of the Spanish populace, past and present. The larger-than-life authority figure orders the cowering resident, Don Manuel de la Mata-Callando, to report to government offices («¡IN-ME-DIA-TA-MEN-TE!», a deafening order that evokes in the popular imaginary the space of Francoist police headquarters, the site for decades of brutal police interrogations and the torture of civilians accused of being on the wrong side of the powers that be. Following the policeman's abrupt, door-slamming departure («¡BLAM!»), the panic-stricken exchange between Don Manuel, clearly a regime oligarch—the ensuing panels reference his extensive real estate and corporate holdings («El chalet de Cercedilla y la casa de Torremolinos [...] el Mercedes [...] el apartamento de Sitges [...] la finca») — and his wife ironically invoke, now comically inverted, the all-too-familiar practices that thousands of the Spanish Civil War's losers and anti-Francoists engaged upon facing arrest. The protagonist hysterically screams the urgency of eliminating evidence of incriminating ideological affiliation —his *mechero*— lit holocaust includes a *Playboy* issue («¡El *Playboy* también, nunca se sabe por dónde pueden venir los tiros!»). As he dresses, he opts for donning a gray tie, neither red, nor blue («¡Nada de provocaciones!»); he dismisses his private chauffeur («Hoy cogeré un taxi»). His wife's fretful attempts to prepare him for the journey alludes to the well-known realities of governmental jail cells: lack of food, no relief

from the cold, and complete lack of essentials («¡Pon también un rollo de papel higiénico, en estos sitios no suele haber de nada!»). But neither the well-to-do hanger-on from the Franco era nor his missus need have worried about losing privilege, status, or comfort due to a so-called new administration. To the contrary, Giménez confirms the actual state of affairs with the comic's punchline displayed in the final panel; Don Manuel, chomping a celebratory cigar and holding aloft a glass of *cava*, phones home to share the stupendous news: «¡María, ME HAN NOMBRADO MINISTRO!». Surrounded by similarly attired businessmen, government officials, and military officers—each with the characteristic Franco-like mustache and self-satisfied smile of the assured confidence of those who run the show—the big-mouthed executive effectively broadcasts this comic book's inaugural message about the early Transition: the more things change, the more they stay the same.

The comical features of a Don Manuel-type character, an economically well-endowed persona chain-smoking a fine cigar—his outrageous sense of entitlement illustrated by verbal or visual enumerations of wealth; his alarm that the change in political times means literally change in fortune; his absolute hysterics, drawn with a bug-eyed visage and open-mouthed screeches, at the prospect that the long-disenfranchised Other may make socio-political advances—will be deployed again and again, especially in this first volume of the series. In the second comic, «Del capitalista ¡líbranos señor!» (Giménez 1982a, 6–7), the author duplicates almost exactly the countenance of the Don Manuel figure among a coterie of fellow international capitalists in cahoots—from England, the USA, and Italy, among others—whose discussions demonize representatives of the global communist community. These big money partners gathered in «el chiringuito de las organizaciones internacionales» grudgingly acknowledge that in Russia, China, and Cuba widespread hunger may be less of a problem than in their own territories; this admission is quickly met with a reminder of the group's prevailing worldview: «La pobreza de unos es proporcional a la riqueza de otros, o séase: la nuestra [...] ¡Siempre ha habido ricos y pobres!». The majority of the remaining comics that most directly address the discrepancy in Spain between the haves and the have-nots will overtly problematize this reality, suggesting solutions

to these longstanding inequalities by stating the need for unity among workers, issuing collective demands for more just labor practices, and, if necessary, to take even more drastic revolutionary action.

In the third strip, «La ruta del tomate» (Giménez 1982a, 8–9), the cartoonist presents the economic exploitation of farm workers on the Spain plains in the parodic guise of an adventure story about the deeds of «nuestro héroe», a kind of great safari hunter cum weapon-wielding cacique, «temerario aventurero» who bravely interacts with the exotic «feroces e incultas tribus hortelanas». «Hula, Hula Pulula», greets the leader of the indigenous tomato farmers dressed exactly like the beret-wearing peasant on the cover of the album. Between cigar puffs, their counterpart, wearing a double-belted bullet bandolier and towering above them, responds, «Hula Pulula, Macacafú». At the dead center of the two-page strip, the «perversos, obcedados y desenfrenados nativos» join together to protest the interloper's exploitative economic practices. Giménez's single panel of men and women with fists raised and shouting in protest, while holding banners not unlike those that were filling Spanish streets in 1976—«¡Luchemos por precios justos!»; «Cooperativas»; «Sindicatos nuestros»; «Si es que queremos cambiar tenemos que espabilar»—is but a fleeting view of the possibilities of real change. The second page illustrates the comic's denouement ushered in by brute police force—«Muy a su pesar, las fuerzas coloniales se ven obligadas a intervenir»—not surprisingly in the very same form as the menacing man on the cover. Scores of identical helmeted, open-mouthed warriors, sharp teeth exposed, weapons in hand, and pistols in waistbands, gleefully descend on the peasants; three full panels recreate the victims in the foreground in terms of helpless, flailing body parts crushed under the weight of boots and batons. Giménez's speech bubbles that just earlier were filled with the workers' cogent plans for achieving social justice—«¡Lo que tenemos que hacer es formar nuestra propia cooperativa, comprar camiones y prescindir de estos "listos" de mierda que nos explotan!»—now only express the non-verbal sounds of the body in pain: «¡AAAAAGGGG...!». The «intrépido intermediario» seems to have won the war; subsequent panels show him reasserting his authority with threats to the bandaged, injured workers, in between sips of champagne and puffs on a stogie. But the battered workers will not

keep quiet. In the same single frame in which the tomato farmworkers' tormentor stupidly guffaws in their faces («¡JA, JA, JA!»), Giménez accords a separate speech bubble to four of the unrepentant laborers, visually crowding out the asinine laughter with subversive words of popular wisdom: «A todo cerdo le llega su San Martín*»; «Ríe, ríe, que “quien ríe el último, ríe mejor”*»; «Tiempo al tiempo...*»; «Arrieros somos...*». In a very rare use of a footnoted caption, Giménez clarifies at the bottom of the frame just what the concerted use of these four asterisk-marked phrases means, so important is their message: «*Refranes con que los salvajes mesetarios quieren decir que las cosas no siempre van a ser así y que ni siquiera la fuerza del garrote puede frenar el curso lógico de la historia». The final panel focuses only on the same four peasants whose prescient words had just been recorded; bandaged and scarred from the earlier beatings, the four stand strong under a caption that presages social revolution: «Pero la historia no termina aquí. La historia continua...».

The ill-gotten wealth of Spanish magnates whose millions were often made off the backs of laborers like the beret-wearing «salvajes meseteros» (Giménez 1982a, 8) takes center stage in «Morituri», a collaboration between author Ivà and illustrator Giménez that uses the anaphoric phrasing of the obscenely prosperous Don Mariano—«Estas» «Estos»—in order to lay out his unimaginable wealth and extensive properties. Each successive panel introduces more and more of his material magnificence. He shows off to the reader his cavernous mansion, massive land holdings, factories, banks, his own harem of women, racehorses, yachts, fleets of luxury cars. But the braggadocio of the preening magnate dressed in ridiculous sartorial costumes that change according to the context of each scenario he boasts about completely disappears in the final row of panels. Bursting into tears of frustration, he confesses his inability to be happy despite his enormous riches, due to his fears that a supposed criminal mastermind like El Rubio will hold him up and leave him empty-handed, or worse.⁶ His long-suffering assistant, trying to console him

6 In his delightful *Crónica sentimental de la Transición*, Vázquez Montalbán (1985, 100–101) devotes a paragraph to the infamous El Rubio: «Se busca a El Rubio, supuesto autor del secuestro y asesinato de Eufemiano Fuentes, uno de los reyes del tabaco canario. La aparición de supuestos restos del señor Fuentes en un pozo da origen a diferentes leyendas opuestas por el vértice. Que si se

with pats on the back, mischievously gets the last word: «Hale, hale, don Mariano... Resignación... ¿No pretenderá ser usted el único con derecho a robar impunemente...? (Giménez 1982a, 23).

The long-term abusive relationship between the prototypical fat cat and the working-class man who serves him like a slave is featured in the comic «Descolonización» (Giménez 1982a, 36–37). The boss man, Señor Pidal Fox, is seated with his back to his home office door; each of the next four panels show the worn-out figure of his yard man, Juanito, to whom his employer refers to as «el colono», gradually approaches from behind. The impassive figure of Juanito aims a gun at his intended victim, who screams his innocence and wails his shock and dismay at such a turn of events. Giménez utilizes for the first time in this album a dynamic temporal juxtaposition of scenes in the present and the past, using alternating flashbacks that reveal Señor Pidal Fox's abuse of Juanito over a lifetime: his insistence that his employee cut down a rain-soaked branch hovering dangerously close to a power line, a maneuver that results in the loss of the electrocuted worker's arm; the brutal treatment and the insulting harangues that Juanito was forced to endure as a disabled worker; the constant threats of being fired. The last straw for Juanito is being forced to wash off the graffiti on the wall adjacent to the owner's mansion: «Basta de explotación. Justicia para el obrero». In order to mark the return to the present after each retrospective scene in the past, Giménez inserts a close-up of Juanito's face, as he is poised to fire the gun. The repetition of this identical portrait placed in six different panels includes a different speech bubble in each to express the words of the *amo*, who is visually out of the frame as he desperately pleads with the *colono*: «¡Tú no eres un asesino...! ¿Qué te he hecho yo? ¡¿Qué te he hecho yo?!». It is noteworthy

trata de una falsa muerte para darse el piro y cambiar de vida. Que si todo ha sido obra de MPAIAC, el movimiento independentista canario que Cubillo dirige desde Argelia. Que si El Rubio se ha limitado a perpetrar un secuestro fallido y un asesinato consecuente. Lo cierto es que todavía hoy El Rubio permanece en paradero desconocido, pero que su familia fue acosada, encarcelada, juzgada como cómplice del crimen y apareció incluso la historia de una hermana del fugitivo, vejada por uno de los inspectores de policía que fueron a detener al clan». For a comic strip rendering of questions of guilt and innocence, as well as economic victims and *verdugos* that the El Rubio incident raised, see «“Hermano, ¿me das 10 centavos?”» (Giménez 2013, 107–110), which features a millionaire named Don Eufemiano.

that the face of the subaltern here no longer has the *campesino*'s cartoonish features that adorn the book's cover and were replicated in the faces of the farm workers of the «Ruta del tomate» strip. Juanito does wear the markers of class, the beret and overalls, but Giménez's pen accords him quiet dignity even in this desperate moment. Only the penultimate panel slightly changes a single detail in the seventh iteration of Juanito's immutable countenance; a single tear borne of the rage and sorrow of forty years of servitude trickles down his cheek. The final panel simply represents the sound of a determined man's decision, who has simply had enough: «BANG!».

In the penultimate comic of the first album, «Imágenes para antes de una guerra» (Giménez 1982a, 44–45), the cartoonist utilizes a similar strategy of juxtaposing alternating panels in order to decry the radically different economic extremes enjoyed by powerful stakeholders and endured by the most vulnerable, disenfranchised members of post-Franco Spanish society. The two groups of competing visual vignettes go back and forth between 1) the close-up face of an emaciated child immobilized by hunger, accompanied by a variation of the narrative text «Mari Pili Benítez, de cinco años, se está muriendo de hambre», repeated like a macabre mantra in a dozen panels, and 2) flashy advertising billboards hawking luxury leisure experiences and commodities for clientele with very deep pockets: color television sets; magical nights of sex shows and haute cuisine, imported cars, high end jewelry, and international flights. But there's something for everyone, as messaged with the publicity for exploitative banking services—«Banko Merkader (el amigo de los pobres) [...] ¡Guarde sus ahorritos en nuestras arcas! [...] Emisión de acciones (Solo para accionistas)». Wedged between the final close-up of Mari Pili («La madre de Mari Pili, algunas veces, va a Cáritas y le dan un bote de leche») and the final notice of Mari Pili's death in a tiny hovel of a room («María del Pilar Benítez, de cinco años de edad, hija de un obrero parado, ha muerto por desnutrición. R.I.P. Su cadáver apareció una mañana en un mísero y reducido dormitorio de una modesta casa de huéspedes») is a blazing headline about a well-known politician's vast landholdings—«GIRÓN: MÁS DE MIL MILLONES EN TERRENOS». A final row follows, comprised of three panels; the first one contains a call for social justice; the second one, a fascist message,

centered around a swastika, painted on a wall: «El 18 de julio nos dio paz. Estamos bien así. NO NECESITAMOS CAMBIAR». The final panel is the only one of two self-portraits that the cartoonist includes in this multi-volume comic book. The image of the chain-smoking, long-haired Giménez is accompanied by the only words imaginable as a response to this far-right proclamation of fascists and *inmovilista* extremists, whose ideological position would be increasingly accompanied by lethal acts of violence: «¡Señor, señor...! ¡Cuánto hijoputa hay suelto por el mundo...!».

The capacity of these comics for unmasking the economic exploitation, corruption, and political hypocrisy of the ruling class that had long called the shots during the Franco period and continued to do so during the Transition, responds to what Iranzo Cabrera has called an ideological «destape». Playing on the term used in the media craze to uncover the (primarily female) body as a sign of new sexual mores, she explains that exposing the naked truth beneath the power elite's exterior trappings was also another version of *destape*. In one of this critic's in-depth studies of *El Pápus* she explains: «El destape llevado a cabo por *El Pápus* lo era también estatal, gubernamental y político. Era fruto del contexto de insatisfacción por la continuidad del franquismo muerto el dictador» (Iranzo Cabrera 2015, 185). I conclude my analysis of the first *España Una...* album with commentary of one of the clearest—and most frequently cited—exposés of the woeful shape of early post-transitional Spanish society, «Declaración universal de derechos humanos» (Giménez 1982a, 32–33). The cartoonist paints a merciless portrait of glaring economic inequalities, lack of civil rights and liberties, state violence, and illegal government surveillance by juxtaposing in each and every panel a selected excerpt from the 1946 Universal Declaration of Human Rights with a wildly contradictory illustration of the downtrodden, effectively pulling back the curtain of consensus and reconciliation to reveal ugly realities plaguing Spanish society. A full quarter of the vignettes represent the threats and effects of state violence, including firing squads, torture, intimidation, police shootings, police use of force, and far-right assassinations of protesters. Bleeding bodies and blood-soaked surfaces that contradict universal proclamations of the most basic of human rights—«Todo individuo tiene derecho a la vida»; «Toda persona acusada de delito tiene derecho a que

se presume su inocencia mientras no se pruebe su culpabilidad»; «Todo individuo tiene derecho a la libertad de opinión y de expresión [...] Este derecho incluye el de no ser molestado a causa de sus opiniones»—are introduced in this album, and will remain a mainstay of the subsequent depictions of right-wing aggressions that will plague the citizenry during 1976–1977.

The myth of *España, Grande*: Tracking popular interventions to reclaim democracy

I introduce my analysis of the second album, *España, Grande*, by citing the provocative reflections about notions of democracy penned by Germán Labrador. After stating that «detrás del *mito de la Transición española* hay una doble historia que contar: la de una democracia que no hemos conocido y la del trabajo de hacerla imaginándola» (Labrador 2017, 11), he theorizes:

La democracia puede entenderse, de un lado como un conjunto de expectativas históricas y morales, un horizonte político inscrito en los cuerpos de una comunidad, con sus miedos y esperanzas y con las promesas que los mantienen unidos o, de otro lado, la democracia puede pensarse más bien como el resumen de una forma de estado y del periodo que le fue contemporáneo, lo que a veces llamamos *régimen del 78*, es decir, uno de los nombres posibles para nuestra época. Son dos comprensiones distintas —la democracia como un horizonte de expectativas o como resumen de un entero orden político-social— y, en cada una de ellas, se le atribuye un valor diferente a la experiencia humana. Si una nos permite pensar la democracia como algo que aún no tenemos plenamente, la otra nos la presenta como algo ya resuelto, ya obtenido [...] En el caso primero, de pronto, podemos reimaginarnos aquella época desde su propia perspectiva, acompañando el sueño colectivo de desear y hacer *una democracia por venir*, una que quizá no llegó nunca. Si escogemos esta opción, podemos volver a *esperar*, y a tener esperanza. (Labrador 2017, 102)

I find Labrador's words suggestive for the purposes of my analysis in this section of the *España, Grande* comic strips, which—while still critiquing

the entrenched elements of fascist and Francoist theory and practice as well as pointing to the collusion between institutional officials and ultra-right militants—focus more fully on the representation of citizen agency, the shared efforts to advocate for political and social reforms in order to lay the foundations of a more free and just society. Labrador's positive valuation of aspirational actions enacted in the name of «el sueño colectivo de desear y hacer *una democracia por venir*, una que quizá no llegó nunca» is especially useful for an analysis of Giménez's representations of hopes and dreams of citizen actors, even when ultimately these proposals for change did not materialize into what Reyes Mate would call the «presente fáctico». The earlier comics from *España Una...* had already introduced the motif of keeping the good fight going against entrenched forms of injustice, even against all odds. De Bois (2019, 88) has described the Ivà-Giménez collaborative comic «Diccionario básico elemental» as follows: «Está construida sobre un esquema binario, con una sucesión de tiras antagónicas que ponen de realce situaciones y paradojas tan inaceptables como vergonzosas [...] la crisis, la especulación inmobiliaria, el desempleo, la evasión fiscal, la fuga de capitales, la corrupción, la demagogia política, la inflación excesiva, y siempre esa brutal represión institucional». He concludes: «El final de la historia no puede ser más pesimista, con una última viñeta completamente negra, en la que podemos leer esta declaración lacónica: “Esto, el futuro”». But, in fact, the original, uncensored last panel that never made it into print in either *El Papus* or in the *España, Una* volume, but was reprinted in the 2013 DeBolsillo edition, paints a very different picture. Following the antepenultimate frame that shows a glass running over with a murdered protester's blood—«Esto es un vaso que se colma» (Giménez 2013, 59)—the 2013 reinstated panel concludes with the text «...y esto es una solución», illustrated with a cache of weapons. The now penultimate panel in black labeled «Esto, el futuro» may be re-read as a visual transitional bridge linking the previous panels of repressed communities with the final frame of the people's power reimagined as revolution. Another example from the first album of cartoon fantasies of popular empowerment is the comic «La hora de la verdad», in which Giménez draws an allegorical struggle between the forces of democratic reform and the brute force of fascism. A weary bullfighter—whose lined

face is strikingly similar to the stoic expression of Juanito of the comic «Descolonialización», in the same series—faces his adversary, a gigantic charging bull branded with huge swastikas on his face and left flank. The successive panels display the raging beast goring the *torero* again and again, until the man is left lifeless in a puddle of blood and bull dung. The last two rows, however, introduce the arrival of an identical warrior who picks up the sword from the bloodied sand and prepares to take up the fight; this final image illustrates the closing text: «Y aunque este también caiga... saldrán otros...» (Giménez 1982a, 31). In the year of publication (1976), before the general elections, anything seemed possible.

Some of the most compelling comics of *España, Grande* that showcase the common people gathered in scenes of political activism and shared purpose are those that recreate the ongoing street protests calling for amnesty for political prisoners. The first strip that introduces the topic, «Amnistía», is another Ivà and Giménez production. The only text in the two-page comic, excepting the last two panels, is simply «Amnistía» or «Amnistía total». The words appear in every public space imaginable: on neighborhood walls, on placards littering the streets, on trees, hanging from balcony windows, on construction sites, on windshields, on playgrounds, on protest banners, in politicians' speeches, in news broadcasts. The final panels present the faces of the liberated prisoners, who file out of the prisons and embrace loved ones and supporters in a sketch that echoes *El abrazo*, by Juan Genovés. The prison guard who surveys the former prisoners' papers and printed new stories scattered on the jail cell floor has the last word, laughing with colleagues that before too long, the inmates will be back behind bars: «Ya lo limpiarán ellos mañana cuando les traigamos otra vez» (Giménez 2013, 119). His words hang on the air like a permanent threat that freedom will be elusive. But the ensuing comic strips picturing one street protester after another bring to mind the punchline of «La hora de la verdá»: «Y aunque este también caiga... saldrán otros...» (Giménez 1982a, 31). «Un muerto, dos muertos, tres muertos...» is a continuation of stylistic strategies employed in earlier comics in *España, Una*, mapping discrepancies between «el deseo de un pueblo» and «las fuerzas del orden» (Giménez 2013, 132–133). The alternating use of the demonstrative («este es», «estas son») from «Diccionario básico elemental» now depicts contrasting views of civil rights

performed in street protests —«Este es un ciudadano libre, expresando un deseo legal en un país democrático» (Giménez 2013, 133)—⁷ and repressive violence —«Este es un hombre herido por bala de goma»; «Este es un hijoputa fascista a las órdenes de otro hijoputa fascista» (Giménez 2013, 133). The ironic use of 1946 excerpts in the previous comic «Declaración universal de derechos humanos» is redeployed now to denounce the criminal illegality of the use of deadly force to stop peaceful protesters. Fully a quarter of the panels—portraying the protesters under siege from heavily armed police—have no text at all, focusing the reader’s attention on the terrified faces of the victims and the brute force of the aggressors, both police and the far-right Guerrilleros de Cristo Rey. The penultimate row consists of texts lifted from the headlines about these real life events, a familiar technique that Giménez uses throughout this collection; he adds as well a milquetoast government statement responding to the civilian casualties of violence, that essentially blames the victim: «A propósito de estos lamentables incidentes, el gobierno civil de Madrid quiere llamar la atención sobre la necesidad de impedir las manifestaciones callejeras que ponen en peligro la paz pública, por la acción violenta e irreflexiva de grupos minoritarios...» (Giménez 2013, 135). The final panel that fills the entire row offers the only solution possible for ending street protests: «AMNISTIA TOTAL». Typographically, Giménez reinstates both the will of the people and the steadfast nature of their fight («Y aunque este también caiga... saldrán otros...»).

The increasing references in the comics of *España, Grande* to the violence that plagued 1977, the original year of their publication—Sophie Baby (2018, 81) confirms that this was the year of greatest fatalities during the Transition—is perfectly encapsulated in «Por la boca muere el pez». Again, Giménez utilizes excerpts from a primary text—in this instance, as he explains in the title panel, «Textos extraídos de declaraciones de Sánchez Covisa publicadas en *El País*, *Interviú* y *Play Lady* en noviembre y diciembre de 1976» (Giménez 2013, 148)—to lay bare the remarkably open expressions of fascism that filled the media. The illustrations that accompany each extract document real life occurrences: right-wing attacks on bookstores,

7 Emphasis in the original.

the massacre of the CCOO labor lawyers of Atocha, kidnappings, shootings, and beatings of street protesters. The horror of the atrocities is accentuated discursively by the conviction expressed by the leader of the paramilitary Cristo Rey terrorists: «Sí, soy fascista, estoy orgulloso de ser fascista. Admiro a Franco, a Hitler y a Mussolini»; «Para mí, el que la gente esté reunida en un lugar manifestando una cosa, es peor, mucho peor, que pegar a una anciana»; «Creo que la violencia no es nada malo» (Giménez 2013, 148–150). The last panel, depicting the bleeding body of an assassinated officer, ends with Sánchez Covisa's final reminder for his fellow citizens: «No hay que olvidar que la guerra no ha acabado» (Giménez 2013, 151).

The penultimate comic of the *España, Grande* album, Ivà and Giménez's «Juego de reyes», provides a succinct summary of the Spanish people's march towards achieving a more just society and the official measures taken to block their way forward. Conceived as a fantastical allegory, the narrative of this comic is set up as a chess game between a fat emperor-like figure, surrounded by his lackeys and looming guards, and a poorly dressed, rail-thin figure whose appearance reminds the reader of countless Giménez fighters against the corrupt power elite featured in previous comics. The chess match that ensues provides a metaphorical recap of the plays of a reactionary pre- and post-Franco administration («piezas negras») and the counter moves facilitated by popular resistance («piezas rojas»). The texts and images tell the story: «Carrillo en Madrid»; «Amnistía total»; «Matanza de Atocha»; «¡Justicia! ¡Fascistas asesinos!»; «El gobierno modifica ley laboral y concede a las empresas el derecho al despido libre»; «¡Huelga general!»; «Detención de militantes»; the image of celebratory citizens posed in *El abrazo* (Giménez 2013, 185–186). In what seems to be the final move, following the «elecciones generales» panel, the player of the red pieces declares, «¡Jaque mate!». But his resourceful adversary, only momentarily taken off guard, literally pulls out the big guns: «¡Gano yo!». The last frame shows the losing player, *el vencido*, being led away by the henchmen of the *vencedor*, protesting that the power broker is not playing by the rules of the game. The grinning victor, bolstered by so much material violence («¡Tanques x alfil x caballo x dama x torre y por todo!»), assures that the rules that matter are his, the only game in town: «Del tuyo no, imbécil... pero sí del mío!» (Giménez 2013, 187).

The use of a mythical past in «Juego de reyes» is replaced by the use of a futuristc time and place in the last comic of the album, Ivà and Giménez's «El futuro es vuestro». Giménez's illustrations present a brilliant utopia where machines liberate workers from hard labor, children receive excellent public instruction in idyllic natural settings, and men and women devote themselves to the life of the mind, the pursuit of the arts, and the pleasures of the body. The narrative is focused on the schoolboy whose father admonishes him for his zero in his history class («Me preguntaron quién fue Franco y... no supe responder... Ni puñetera idea de quién fue este señor, oye»). When his father confesses that he has no idea either, the 200-year-old grandfather shouts in disgust from the other room: «¡Me caguen la leche...! Demasiao bien acostumbraos están estos... Claro, como no han tenido que aguantar la democracia orgánica...» (Giménez 2013, 191). The lack of memory that concludes this album will be much more fully addressed in the third and final installment (fig. 4).

The myth of *España, Libre!*: Re-presenting the oppressed body in pain

The very first comic that ushers in some two dozen others in the third album, *España, Libre!*, is Giménez's adaptation of an excerpt of Ramón J. Sender's *Réquiem por un campesino español*, which had only just been published in Spain in November 1974. Given the earlier stated objectives of this particular trilogy of comics—to honor «la sangre de las víctimas que se han acumulado en la cuneta de este camino de Transición» and «proponer como modelo al luchador antifascista bajo el franquismo» (Martín 1982a, 3)—it is not surprising to find the resurrection of Sender's 1953 narrative written in political exile that sought to commit to popular memory the life and death of those Spaniards who perished at the hands of fascist insurgents. Out of Giménez's thirty-two panels alone that illustrate specifically Sender's execution scene of Paco in the cemetery, more than a third focus on Paco's terrified face and bullet-ridden body (Giménez 1982b, 4–5). Twenty-five years after Sender published his novel of memory and mourning in various editions in the Americas, his narrative finally came home to Spain as the most iconic depiction of Franco-era

civilian massacres that a new generation of Spanish writers and artists now seek to make visible in the early post-Franco period. Giménez uses Sender's text as a thematic point of entry, especially for a selected group of comics that recover the memory of Spanish civilians who fought for social justice and were murdered or brutally repressed by the state for their efforts. The third comic in the series, «Viento en las velas» (Giménez 1982*b*, 10–11), narrates an adventure story about a ship's galley slaves, apparently liberated by a new, visionary leader, Adolfo, who promises to lead them to the promised land. The last frame shows the truth that he and his co-captain—a fierce supporter of the old «Batán» regime—hide from the masses: the ship is stuck, firmly wedged between huge boulders that surround the immobilized vessel on all sides. Of particular interest in terms of the visual memory of the crimes of Franco is the image of the seabed below the surface where the ship's new leader takes power, a bottomless pit of scores of human skulls that would be visible as far as the eye could see if only they were not buried beneath turbulent waters. After the comic's last panel of the skeletal remains of the dictator's victims, Giménez positions the two earlier referenced comics that most directly represent the protagonists of the anti-fascist struggle that began decades before the fight of democratic activists who took to the streets in the 1970s. «Recuerda» (Giménez 1982*b*, 12–13) replaces the posters of election-year politicians with the battered bodies of Franco's repressive violence, in order to more authentically represent the true identity of «los hombres que hacen posible la democracia en España». On the other hand, «Pasado imperfecto de indicativo» (Giménez 1982*b*, 14–15) provides flashback images of a committed militant against Franco beginning in 1936 and continuing up to the 1976 fight for political amnesty.

A more overt play on the twin motifs of the Spanish Civil War losers' hidden stories and Giménez's commitment to bring these stories to light is the comic he illustrates using Alfonso Font's script, «El hombre en el tejado» (Giménez 1982*b*, 28–29). The narrator, a political prisoner who speaks from his rooftop vantage point looking out over the skyline of an anonymous city, recalls with excruciating detail the trials and travails he and fellow jailed companions endured over the years: physical and sexual violence, torture, random and cruel acts of punishment, hunger, and badly

paid prison labor. He commits to memory the most vulnerable among the group: the inmate who went insane («Besaba las paredes, miraba fijamente a las hormigas y al cielo»); the suicides; the ones who died from the guards' beatings. But the final three drawings are not of these victims but of those, like the narrator himself, who live to tell the story: «Todos somos tratados a bofetadas, patadas y gritos. Por todo esto nos hemos subido al tejado, para que nos vean desde la ciudad... ¡Y nos han visto!». In place of the single figure that opened the comic («Desde aquí, desde el tejado, veo la ciudad»), the last drawing reveals legions of political actors who now stand with the narrator, emerging from the shadows of the vast penitentiary network into which hundreds of thousands disappeared from view during the dictatorship. Now they can not only see the city that unfolds below them, but they finally may be seen: «Ya nadie podrá decir que ignora nuestra existencia».

I use key illustrations from «El hombre en el tejado» as an exemplary casebook of one of Carlos Giménez's most characteristic traits in his artwork for the three-volume *España Una, Grande y Libre*: the body in pain. In his insightful essay, Pintor Iranzo (2020, 262) references the murdered and tortured bodies of the dictatorship that 21st century comics have begun to recover, providing «una meditación sobre la fisicidad de la historia que solo desde la distancia actual parece ser posible contar de manera extensa». But, in fact, throughout the pages of all three albums produced forty-five years ago, Giménez never looked away from the broken bodies that fell under the blows, bullets, and multiple forms of physical abuse that the victims' tormenters visited upon them. His comics that depict the bodily anguish of fellow pro-democratic Spaniards, past and present, are legion in number. Fully half of the vignettes of «El hombre en el tejado», for example, represent the prisoners' visceral pain in the form of an inert bleeding body; a figure freezing under an icy shower; a suicide's hanging; a skull crushed under a boot (Giménez 1982b, 28–29). The US academic Elaine Scarry has written one of the most cogent reflections on the hermeneutics of human suffering, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*, in which she states: «Physical pain has no voice, but when it at last finds a voice, it begins to tell a story, and the story that it tells is about the inseparability of these three subjects [the inexpressibility of physical pain; the political consequences of pain's

inexpressibility; the nature of both material and verbal expressibility]» (Scarry 1985, 3). Giménez's comic art is, I would argue, an ideal vehicle for giving creative form and visible substance to a phenomenon difficult to capture and convey in verbal language, following Scarry (1985, 4): «Physical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it, bringing about an immediate reversion to a state anterior to language, to the sounds and cries a human being makes before language is learned». A brilliant example that Giménez's comic corpus offers in this regard is one of his most graphic depictions of an incident taken from the headlines of 1976; «¡País!» documents a far-right gang's torture and execution of the member of a labor union. There is absolutely no speech text whatsoever in this comic, only panel after panel that silently illustrate the most extreme and savage forms of violence; the victim's face is crushed under his aggressor's shoe; he is beaten with chains; he is choked with his own photograph that shows him standing with fellow unionists; he is kicked and beaten, losing his teeth to the blows, and finally set on fire by his tormentors. He dies under a hypocritical right-wing poster campaigning against what would appear to be the most pressing issue related to immorality and indecency: «Campana de moralización por una Sociedad más decente ¡¡NO AL DESNUDO!!» (Giménez 1982*b*, 35). Because, as Scarry (1985, 12–15) explains, pain «resists verbal objectification», two creative strategies that are the most effective instruments for expressing pain rely on the reference to 1) «an external agent of the pain» and 2) «bodily damage that is pictured as accompanying the pain». It is precisely Giménez's expert apprehension of pain through these two visual devices, the weapon and the wound, that allow him to consistently convey such powerful messages about the excruciating degree to which Spaniards' civil rights are critically injured. Scarry (1985, 14) also makes clear that the consequences for the creative capacity for speaking the language of pain, or falling silent instead, are especially significant: «The failure to express pain—whether the failure to objectify its attributes or instead the failure, once those attributes are objectified, to refer them to their original site in the human body—will always work to allow its appropriation and conflation with debased forms of power; conversely, the successful expression of pain will always work to expose and make impossible that appropriation and conflation». In

the comic «¡País!», Giménez gives equal visual space to both the external agents of pain, the weapons—the batons, the chains, the closed fists, the stomping heels of shoes—as well as the marks on the body, the wounds: the swollen eye, the busted teeth, the broken nose, the charred torso. The antepenultimate panel, following the victim's being doused with gasoline and lit on fire, is simply a close-up of his wide-open mouth to register a silent primal scream of pain, recalling Scarry's reference to an «immediate reversion to a state anterior to language» (Scarry 1985, 4). The scholar Robert Bartual (2018, 142) has referred to Giménez as probably «el autor más expresivo de la historia del cómic español. El grito de cualquier niño de *Paracuellos* transmite un horror más profundo que el que haya podido comunicar ningún otro cronista, objetivo o no, de las indignidades de la dictadura». Certainly, the same may be said of the screams and cries that fill the pages of his *España Una, Grande y Libre* series.

The final two pages of this third album, the epilogue for the entire series, include poems by Rafael Alberti, Gabriel Celaya, León Felipe, and Blas de Otero, with an additional series of comics by Giménez. The most fitting visual coda possible to capture Giménez's uncowed attitude in the face of any possible fall-out due to his searing attacks on centers of reactionary power is his self-portrait, the image of a long-haired artist chained to his drawing table with a lit bundle of dynamite under his chair (Fig. 5, pie de imagen "Poemas y dibujos"). A hulking officer, branded with swastikas, yokes and arrows, with a heavy chain in one hand and a massive baton in the other, looms over the Giménez character, who, nevertheless, never puts his pen down (Giménez 1982*b*, 46). In the bottom frame, the cartoonist's pencils and pens are visually transformed into piercing daggers that fatally wound a woeful, ink-stained figure of Franco, still flying the Nazi flag; he is mounted not on a mighty steed but a skeletal dinosaur that steps over the skulls of the dead. On the final page, young people and children join the street marches in protest, with banners that read «Vosotros fascistas sois los terroristas» and with fists in the air in the Republican salute (Fig. 6, pie de imagen "Poemas y dibujos"). But the smiling figure at the very head of the line is an elderly man, witness to war and post-war repression, a survivor who still defiantly raises his fist at the very forefront of all those Spaniards who come after him (Giménez 1982*b*, 47).

Carlos Giménez's artistic tribute to progressive political actors during the Second Republic and the dictatorship honors those players who—like his senior citizen protester leading a 1977 march through the streets of Madrid—serve as an informed conscience for younger generations. Perhaps no single cartoonist during the early post-Franco years documented such consistent representations of the most painful memories of repression during the dictatorship and the violence of the Transition. Giménez himself has gone on record in quite simple terms: «I was also a pioneer in the question of historical memory» (Dueben 2016). His corpus of cartoons featured in *España Una, Grande y Libre* tells the rest of the story.

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