

## Multiple Exposures: Moving Bodies and Choreographies of Protest in Contemporary Catalonia

Helena Buffery

### Introduction: Multiple Exposures

The human is always the event of its multiple exposures—both within its relatedness to others and within its exposure to normative forces that arrange the social, political, and cultural matrices of humanness. (Athanasίου, in Butler and Athanasίου 2013, 32).

This is a story of multiple exposures that emerged initially from my witnessing in 2015 of a series of different performance acts and practices in a particular place: Barcelona. The performances in question—Àlex Rigola's adaptation of Joan Sales's novel *Incerta Glòria* (Uncertain Glory) at the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya, Carme Portaceli's staging of the testimonies of women victims of Francoist violence in *Només són dones/Solo son mujeres* (They're Only Women) at the Josep Maria de Sagarra theatre in Santa Coloma de Gramenet, and Sol Picó's *WW—We Women* at the Mercat de les Flors—are all characterized by the intermingling of dancing bodies with more or less narrative forms, in which the body of the dancer is primarily used to signal and disrupt intersubjective, intercultural and intersemiotic limits. The coincidence of such a performance trend with the emergence and increasing visibility of other disruptive bodily practices in the public sphere, in response to situations of marginalization, exclusion, oppression, and precarity, calls for wider and deeper attention to the diverse genealogies and repercussions of these multiple corporeal exposures. I understand these exposures as simultaneously marked by the different social, political, and cultural discourses that traverse the Catalan capital and shaped by the ways in which bodies intermingle and interact with the multi-layered materiality of that space. In this article, I have attempted to tease out the relationship between the different layers of bodily inscription and incorporation and the choreographies to which these give rise, focusing in particular on the dancing body as an interstitial nexus for negotiation of a sociocultural space often defined by language, above all by its commitment to protecting and transmitting a minoritized language: Catalan.

Turning my attention first to the genealogies of protest in the Catalan space, I will trace indicators of their transversality and multidirectionality, thus questioning the tendency to read their most recent manifestation, in the pro-Independence movement since 2012, purely as a product of top-down social choreography.<sup>1</sup> In this, I am both indebted to Judith Butler's *Notes towards a Performative Theory of Assembly* (2015)—now so ubiquitous in analysis of contemporary urban social protest as performance—and recognize the need for careful contextualization of each of these performative processes in order to disentangle the operation, interpellation and reproduction of the normative from the more resistant, transgressive and transformative potential of bodily exposure to rehearse more inclusive and ethical ways of being together in place.<sup>2</sup> Going on to juxtapose the rich and complex map of social protest with a brief genealogy of twentieth-century dance in Catalonia, it

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becomes possible to link the more visible presence of contemporary dance in cross-disciplinary performances on the stage to an increasing concern culturally with the conditions for the transmission of intangible cultural heritage, and to theoretical and choreographic exploration of dance's potential in embodying protest. The expressive potential of dance in marking the limits of mimetic representation through vernacular and visual languages has made the dancer's body particularly prevalent in works dedicated to on-stage exploration of experiences and effects of violence and conflict such as the three examples presented here. It will thus be argued that closer attention to what and how the dancer's body is made to remember provides valuable insights into the transmission, dissemination, reception and reenactment of experiences and narratives of individual, social and cultural vulnerability, precarity and trauma in the contemporary Catalan space.

### **Interminglings: October 1, 2017**

On October 1, 2017, the eyes of the world were on Catalonia as they waited to see whether the region would be able to hold its disputed referendum on political secession from the Spanish state. Most of the discourse generated around the events was political and legal, relating to the unconstitutional nature of the vote, the threat to the rule of law, and the political irresponsibility of the Catalan government. It is not my intention here to enter into any of these questions, except to observe that the dehumanizing metaphors and metonymy used in the process, along with the Spanish government's continuing refusal to accept any form of dialogue over the Catalan claims, means that the conflict is unlikely to be resolved in the near future.<sup>3</sup> The rule of law was, paradoxically, to be protected by police intervention in democratically constituted Catalan institutions. The deployment of thousands of additional armed police together with armoured vehicles (at a reported cost of 87 million euro) was presented as a form of deterrence (Jones 2017).<sup>4</sup> Images circulated on the Internet of community encouragement of civil guards leaving their hometowns in other parts of Spain to join the amassed forces in Catalonia with cries of "¡A por ellos!" (Go get them!).<sup>5</sup> In the Catalan capital, Barcelona, where most international observers and correspondents were stationed, the sense of emergency and exceptionality was heightened by the continuous rhythm of the helicopters circling the city—normally only audible for short periods, during marches, say—which slowly infiltrated the bodies and consciousness of local residents, and would continue to do so until the end of October. Plans went ahead to organize the vote anyway, with widespread support from local communities, who came together to share logistical details, arranged to occupy schools selected as polling stations over the entire weekend to ensure that they would open on Sunday morning, and later surrounded the same buildings from the early hours to prevent the ballot boxes from being seized. What characterized these tactics of collective civil disobedience was a sense of communities sharing and caring for each other in common everyday spaces, in which hope, apprehension and defiance intermingled in a primarily ludic atmosphere. Indeed, it was this very atmosphere that made the physical violence all the more shocking when it began.



Photographs of residents at two voting centres in Barcelona. Copyright Guillem Colom.

I watched the events of the entire day live-streamed on TV3, the Catalan news channel, while monitoring other representations on international and, above all, social media—an indicator of the key role of digital media throughout the day both in maintaining the vote and sharing information, and in manipulating, re-presenting and re-framing events from different ideological viewpoints. If my vision of what happened that day was mediated by different channels, it was also no doubt inflected by my particular mode of looking at bodies in motion: the training undergone over decades of attending to Catalan theatre and performance cultures in what Susan Leigh Foster (2008; 2011) has termed kinaesthetic spectatorship, referring to the particular ways in which audiences, as embodied spectators, respond to and identify with movement. Marvelling at the stoicism and commitment of bodies that remained up all weekend to protect the polling stations, that queued patiently for hours from before the centres opened, waiting for the voting systems to be functional, and that linked arms in positions of passive resistance when rumours of police intervention came, I witnessed the turning of these communities into flesh as the riot-police charges began and the images of violence proliferated: school doors smashed with sledge-hammers; civilians dragged away from their lines and attacked with batons; rubber bullets and tear gas deployed, even in small villages.<sup>6</sup> And yet the commitment to resist remained, with voters continuing to turn out and wait at their own polling stations or moving on to the nearest functioning centre.<sup>7</sup> Here were bodies that supported each other in presenting passive resistance; bodies that interlinked, pulled or swayed together to ensure there were no cracks; bodies that allowed themselves to be dragged and thrown; bodies that challenged the power of the riot police by standing together and advancing in defiance; bodies that raised their arms and held four fingers of each hand aloft as a symbol of affiliation to the Catalan flag and called for the freedom to vote (*Votarem—We will vote*). Here was the kind of “perceptive and responsive physicality” described by Susan Leigh Foster (2003, 412) as characteristic of choreographies of protest, “that, everywhere along the way, deciphers the social and then choreographs an imagined alternative. As they fathom injustice, organize to protest, craft a tactics, and engage in action, these bodies read what is happening and articulate their imaginative rebuttal.”



Voters at the Escola Industrial in Barcelona after hearing rumours that the police were about to arrive. Copyright Guillem Colom.

These often fragile and vulnerable bodies—including families with children, women, old people with zimmer frames, many of them openly crying when casting their votes—presented an ethical challenge to which the media and the largely political commentators called upon as “expert witnesses” struggled to respond.<sup>8</sup> This was either because they were bodies that did not fit with the narrative that had been assembled over previous months—so that in the case of the mainstream Spanish media the focus was on the success of the police in quashing the vote and on scattered images of civilian violence<sup>9</sup>—or because, following society of the spectacle rules, visual primacy was reserved for the most shocking and impactful images: bloodied faces, ripped shirts, disproportionate police aggression, and even the more performative incident of the woman who “faked” having broken fingers.<sup>10</sup> What was more astounding was that people who were seeing these events on their mobiles or via social media remained firm in their determination to turn out and vote. What was behind this behaviour? Was this a brainwashed population turned into a mass by populist politicians? Or an example of the kind of “multitude” proposed by Hardt and Negri (2004)? Were we seeing the kind of reflexive crafting of common tactics associated with choreographies of protest by Foster (2003), Juris (2014), Butler (2015), Pérez Royo and Aguiló (2016), among others? Or was it some form of restored behaviour, as Schechner (1985) first taught us? What were we seeing? How were we to respond? Many subsequent accounts of the day have been framed either in an epic, heroic vein, with titles such as *Dies que duraran anys* (Days that will last for years), *On eres el 1-O?* (Where were you on 1st October?) and *Operació Urnes* (Operation Ballot boxes) or in terms of critical evaluation of political (ir)responsibilities.<sup>11</sup> But my own thinking on what and how these bodies mean takes me back to other histories of bodies—the different bodies of protest that have occupied many of the same public spaces over the past decade, their relation to forms of bodily performance, and their disposition towards and mediation of other bodies: precarious bodies, vulnerable bodies, and the bodies of the dead.

## Genealogies of Protest

Where did October 1, 2017, come from? Re-tellings outside Catalonia have often associated it with the kind of nostalgic, ethnocentric and exclusivist nationalist movement witnessed in other parts of Europe (like Brexit, say), the product of what Félix Guattari (1989) diagnosed as the triple ecological

crisis of neoliberal capitalism in reference to the collapse of social, psychic, and environmental security for individuals and communities. However, the only way of sustaining such a reading so far has been to associate it with the top-down political leadership and interpellation of centre-right politicians such as Artur Mas or Carles Puigdemont,<sup>12</sup> formerly of *Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya* (Democratic Convergence of Catalonia) and now of *PDeCat* (Catalan European Democratic Party), when even the most critical historians of the so-called “Independence process” have traced a far more complex genealogy (see, for instance, Dowling 2018).

The demographic mix of people involved in the independence movement reflects both the territorial, social, cultural, generational and gender diversity of Catalonia and a long history of urban social movements in particular (see Molinero and Ysàs 2010; Nel-lo 2015; Andreu 2015; Garcés 2018; Padullés and Uribe 2017).<sup>13</sup> Record of the same kind of broader, transversal social protest we have seen in 2017 goes back at least as far as the Barcelona tram strike of 1951 and was most persistently a feature of the final years of the Franco dictatorship and its aftermath, culminating in multitudinous marches on key dates such as September 11, 1976 (in Sant Boi) and 1977 (in Barcelona).<sup>14</sup> Such major—million-plus—turnouts had not been repeated in Catalonia until 2010, with the march in favour of the “*dret a decidir*” (right to decide) in response to Spain’s Constitutional Court’s extensive curtailment of a new statute of autonomy ratified by legal referendum in 2006, and then annual September 11 mobilizations from 2012 onward (Dowling 2017). Indeed, the rise in pro-independence sentiment in the region not only pre-dates the international financial crisis which is often touted as its most immediate cause, as analyzed by Dowling (2017; 2018), but is linked closely both to the failure of Spanish institutions to sponsor democratic means of constitutional reform and to the increasing frequency of urban social protest in relation to other social, cultural and environmental issues.<sup>15</sup>

The same period has seen the development of civic republican alternatives to the traditional left (Cramer 2014; Barberà 2017)—many of which have restructured the face of Catalan local government with participative assemblies to ensure citizen participation in politics—as well as the centrality of cultural and neighbourhood associations, which have translated the performative modalities used in local street festivals to the more transversal demonstrations organized by major civic associations.<sup>16</sup> The transversality of urban social protest has also been inflected by memory activism in the region, whether relating to questions of how to remember the victims of the Spanish Civil War and Francoist repression, as mediated institutionally by the *Memorial Democràtic* ([memoria.gencat.cat](http://memoria.gencat.cat)) and Barcelona’s *Memory Programmes* ([ajuntament.barcelona.cat/programesmemoria](http://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/programesmemoria)), to the commemorative events planned for the tricentenary of the 1714 siege of Barcelona,<sup>17</sup> or to criticism of the perceived basis of Spain’s transition to democracy in a pact of forgetting (see also Resina 2000; Delgado 2015).

The multidirectionality of social, cultural, environmental and memory activism in this period was arguably at its height in 2015, the year after the aforementioned tricentenary commemorations, when municipal elections in many areas tipped the balance towards left-wing communitarian politics and the regional elections forced a coalition between the centre-right Catalanist and left republican platform *Junts pel Sí* (Together for Yes) and civic republican supporters of greater self-determination in the region. The move toward a more participative version of democracy that this appeared to signal was also reflected in the multiple activism of many of the leading political figures of that moment. The new President of the Parliament of Catalonia, Carme Forcadell, had never previously stood for political office but was a long-term civic cultural activist associated with key platforms on the Catalan language, Civil War reparation, democratic rights, and, most immediately,

the Assemblea Nacional Catalana (Catalan National Assembly), an organization created to channel increasing popular support for political independence in 2012.



Carme Forcadell (centre) campaigning for the Catalan language—*#jo em planto per la llengua* (I plant myself for the language)—, an example of overlapping cultural, environmental, and memory activism. Copyright Carme Forcadell 2013.

Raul Romeva headed the secessionist Junts pel Sí (Together for Yes) list in the 2015 regional elections, but had formerly served as an MEP for Catalonia’s Green Socialist Party, *Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds*, with a long history of commitment to action on international Human Rights, conflict resolution and peace activism that included lobbying for European recognition of mass graves from the Franco period in Spain.



Exhibition on the excavation of mass graves in Spain for display in the European Parliament. Copyright Raül Romeva 2013.

Before being elected the first female mayor of Barcelona, Ada Colau was a social activist, and the tactics of passive resistance and bodily protest she developed as leader of the *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (Platform for People Affected by Mortgage Arrears) were visible in her corporeal movements and disposition at her investiture on June 15, 2015, when she took the decision to cross the crowded *Plaça Sant Jaume* from City Hall to the *Generalitat* without the bodyguards that usually protect public officers from the throngs.



Ada Colau crossing the crowded public square after her investiture as mayor of Barcelona in 2015. Reproduced by permission of Barcelona City Council. Compare with the widely disseminated image of her activism at a PAH protest in 2013, which received over twenty million reproductions on social media. See [https://verne.elpais.com/verne/2015/05/25/articulo/1432531589\\_803393.html](https://verne.elpais.com/verne/2015/05/25/articulo/1432531589_803393.html).

Moving to consider how such multidirectionality and transversality of social, political and cultural activism has been reflected in the development of contemporary dance cultures in Barcelona, I will explore how more recent intermingling of dance and theatre, in particular, draws attention to the continuities and discontinuities between different modalities of performance of protest, as well as calling for more context-sensitive modes of intra- and inter-cultural spectatorship.

### Genealogies of Dance in Catalonia

As Langdon Davies's 1929 book *Dancing Catalans* already recognized, a particular dance form in Catalonia—the *sardana*—has enjoyed special symbolic importance since the end of the nineteenth century, with its proscription under the 1923–1930 Primo de Rivera dictatorship leading it to be enshrined as a tactic of transversal socio-cultural resistance.<sup>18</sup> Yet traditional dance culture in the Catalan-speaking territories has been marked by a wider range of often hybridized forms and is most commonly linked to the raucous, and often fiery, street festivals that populate the festive calendar: the *Patum de Berga*,<sup>19</sup> *Dansa de la Mort* (Dance of Death) at Verges, and swirling giants at each carnival-like *fiesta major* (annual local festival). The continuing vigour of these popular traditions and dance forms owes itself in part to another dictatorship, the near forty years of *caudillo* Francisco Franco's regime, when the public suppression of the Catalan language led communities to embrace non-linguistic forms of resistance and performance in order to maintain the social fabric.<sup>20</sup> As Esther Vendrell (2012) explores in an essay on the history of dance education in Catalonia, the postwar decades also saw a growing commitment to transmit a variety of traditions and forms of movement that meant that the same dancing bodies that incorporated the classical ballet training of their time might also be involved in the maintenance and revival of Catalan traditions via their local *esbarts* (dance troupes), learning to regard and value other dance traditions through their travels to national and international festivals.

Furthermore, the memory of Catalonia's early twentieth-century history as a cradle for innovation in dance performance was maintained in local archives and the creation of local dance schools, as well as through the international trajectories of a new generation of dancers.<sup>21</sup> The story of twentieth-century Catalan dance reconstructed for an exhibition at the art centre on Barcelona's Rambla Santa Mònica in 2012 (Arts Santa Mònica-liquidmaps 2012; in particular, Raubert 2012) is one in which 1966 marks the turning point to its contemporary vitality, with a growing confidence and

hybridization of forms, an openness to civic society and social protest movements, and the increasing interpermeability of dance and theatre (Massip 2012), influenced above all by Pina Bausch. The list of dance and movement performers, choreographers and groups that have emerged from or based themselves in Catalonia since then—from Gelabert Azzopardi to Àngels Margarit-Mudances to La Veronal; Mal Pelo to Sol Picó, Simona Levi and La Caldera; Comediants to La Fura dels Baus—go a long way to convince of the unusual prominence of contemporary dance in Catalonia, as compared, at the very least, with the rest of Spain.<sup>22</sup>

If the challenging nature of contemporary dance has meant it can be seen as a niche and elite form, its history and intermingling with other social forms is a strong indicator of its relationship to social protest movements as well as a more Gramscian, counter-hegemonic reading of the heightened importance of bodily over linguistic or text-based performance during a dictatorship that sought to silence the Catalan language. Dance constitutes a form of resistance and protest as well as of transmission and incorporation in the Catalan context that has a crucial, if not always visible, link to the importance of language for identity. It is as if bodily performance stands in for the silencing of language. What is more, the same transversality and multidirectionality of activism we have seen exemplified at the end of the previous section, can be traced here too, via Mal Pelo's collaborations with John Berger and commitment to environmental justice, Simona Levi and La Caldera's strong record of socially engaged work, Sol Picó's explorations of social and gender precarity, and Àngels Margarit's ongoing interest in choreographing contemporary urban flow. More recently, in collaboration with theatre directors in the Catalan space, dancers and choreographers have used the intermingling of dance with language and voice, bodily performance and textual theatre, to enact different modes of resistance and reflect on the problematics of cultural transmission. For instance, as well as the performances to be analyzed here, Àlex Rigola has a long history of engaging with dance practitioners in his work, above all since his tenure as director of Catalonia's Teatre Lliure from 2003 to 2011. Carme Portaceli's company La Factoria Escènica (The Stage Factory) was set up specifically to encourage inter-and cross-disciplinary collaboration between different creative practices. The internationally renowned Sol Picó has participated as a dancer in acclaimed textual theatre productions such as Sergi Belbel's adaptation of Irène Némirovsky's *El ball* (2009). Laia Duran's involvement in Marco Morau's dance company La Veronal since 2012 means she is imbued with a style—a co-created corporal language or code named Kova—that overtly places in often conflictual dialogue the semiosis of theatre with the emotional alienation of the choreographer's inexorably abstract forms. Catalan performers' embrace of a responsibility to social, territorial, and planetary ecologies often reveals questions of linguistic and cultural survival to be a significant concern.

The three manifestations of this intermingling of language and dance I want to explore in greater depth here, all of them first witnessed in 2015, are of interest because all three frame the body of the dancer within a wider text-based or narrative theatre and so are ultimately forms that draw overt attention to the presence of bodies in relation to the representational codes and limits of language, underlining their fleshy corporeality as explicit bodies. However, each also stands out because of the way in which the movements of the dancers engage with and bring to the fore particular modalities of bodily performance associated with the wider Catalan socio-cultural context, often assembling the different layers of performance of protest that have been touched on previously. Furthermore, they each draw attention to the multivalent subjectivation of bodies in context, thus encouraging further reflection on the conditions and effects of the transmission of corporeal practices between bodies, generations, and cultures.



### The Dancer as Effigy—*Uncertain Glory* (2015)

Àlex Rigola's theatrical adaptation of the notoriously long, complex and challenging Civil War novel *Incerta glòria* (*Uncertain Glory*, 2014) by Joan Sales was first performed in the smaller and more flexible second auditorium of the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya between May 20 and June 16, 2015.<sup>23</sup> If the novel's translation into English by Peter Bush in 2014 was met with excitement by many literary reviewers, due to their encounter with what they saw as an entirely original, far more grotesque and far less heroic depiction of the Spanish Civil War, then in Catalonia and Spain the text continued to provide grounds for discomfort and dissent, due at least in part to the way in which it appears to pit Catalan interests against those of the rest of Spain (whether Republican or Nationalist). Indeed, its setting on the Aragonese front, as framed in video footage of the arid, depopulated Monegros within the adaptation, evokes a geography that, as Francesc Serès (2012) reminds us in the printed programme, articulates the natural, cultural and spatial frontier between Catalonia and the rest of Spain. The adaptation, directed by Rigola himself, involved an extensive team of actors, researchers and technicians, who helped to cut the long novel down to just over three hours, while nevertheless maintaining its tripartite structure and offering a variety of perspectives on the same landscape, events, and conflicts.

Elsewhere I discuss the plot and structure of *Uncertain Glory* before going on to explore its archaeological focus on excavating the space of the dead, in particular the haunting landscape of the Aragonese front, scene of the most intense battles of the Spanish Civil War (Buffery 2017). Here I am interested in exploring Rigola's use of dancing bodies in the play, primarily extradiegetically, in the first act's focus on Lluís's deeply alienated and, at times, hallucinatory experience of life at the front, although there are also instances where dance is employed diegetically. The principal extradiegetic dancers are Toni Mira and Laia Duran who are mainly used to choreograph the horror of the battle scenes, with Mira performing a slow-motion sequence involving a rifle that is very clearly indebted to war photography from the period, and Duran alternately mimicking Mira and performing the flayed remains of dead soldiers, slowly weaving in between the other bodies and objects on stage to suggest their inescapable ubiquity.



Toni Mira and Laia Duran perform the Aragonese front in *Incerta Glòria*, 2015. Copyright David Ruano. Reproduced by permission of Àlex Rigola.

Aina Calpe dances, too, in her portrayal of the praying mantis-like seductress, the *Carlana*, her impossibly erect and elegant glide across the raised platform at the centre of the stage redolent of both the dancing giants at Catalan street festivals and traditional cinematographic choreographies of an undead Dracula.

In Buffery (2017), there is cursory discussion of Laia Duran’s role as an effigy, in the sense explored by Roach (1996; 1998), as a form of surrogation, containment and reincorporation of the dead via live performance, in her doubling both as the body of the dead (soldiers) and as the Miller’s wife (la Molinera) in act 1. Her portrayal of the latter “involves an almost offensively stereotyped rendering of Aragonese peasant dialect and intensely distorted and spasmodic body work” whose grotesqueness could be read as a “monstrous effigy,” standing in “for that which lies beyond the limits of the desired nation” (Buffery 2017, 869). Interestingly, this very overtly expressionist portrayal was hardly mentioned in any of the reviews, in part due to the lack of critical consensus about the success of any of the dance elements, in part to a lack of familiarity with the original novel. The fact that the Miller’s wife’s speeches in dialogue with Lluís in the novel are excessively, if not cruelly, caricatured for comic effect is hardly mentioned in any extant criticism, as if such (mis)representations are either acceptable or need to be silenced. That Rigola decides to foreground the grotesqueness of the portrayal within his version of the text is, then, highly significant, indicating the function of the body of the dancer here to be to say the unsayable: that which lies beyond language, beyond polite society, beyond tolerable expression.



Laia Duran as dancing flesh in *Incerta Gloria*, 2015. With Toni Mira and Nao Albet (as Lluís). Copyright David Ruano. Reproduced by permission of Àlex Rigola.

Looking at Rigola’s career in retrospect, it is possible to trace a line of dancing bodies whose presence often indicates that we are soon to be in the presence of the dead. In his earlier works, such as his adaptations of Shakespeare—*Titus Andronic* (2000), *Ricard 3er* (2005), *Juli Cèsar* (2003), *MCBTH* (2012), *European House (Prologue to a Hamlet without words)* (2005)—it was generally the bodies of non-professional dancers who were choreographed on stage to the tunes of a 1970s and 1980s rock soundtrack that generally signalled the unstoppable pull of Tarantinoesque violence, bloodshed and a melancholic desire for adolescent exuberance. In his acclaimed adaptation of Roberto Bolaño’s *2666* (2007), Alba Pujol is choreographed writhing in agony in representation of the multiple victims of feminicide in Ciudad Juárez, with Beethoven playing in the background of this choral requiem for the countless dead (Finnegan 2018). Toward the end of his period as director of

the Teatre Lliure (2003–11), he began to work more closely with professional dancers and choreographers, culminating in the intricately choreographed trance-like chorus of ritualized bodies that constituted *Tragèdia* of 2011, based on readings of Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*. Rigola's use of dance since then balances his engagement with inclusive curatorial work in repertoire with an almost obsessive quest to find ways of representing intense emotion and violence on stage without risking retraumatization and therefore doing violence to the audience. Indeed, the dancers in both *Incerta glòria* and *El públic* are used very overtly to engage with what Paco Ferrándiz (2014) has called dealing with a buried past, drawing on the images of mass grave exhumations that have become so much a part of contemporary memorialization of the Spanish Civil War (see also Renshaw 2011).

The forensic, archaeological tenor of the stage version of *Uncertain Glory* could, then, be read in terms of memory activism alongside the many recent plays dedicated to Catalan national memory, and its staging in the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya might confirm such a reading. Furthermore, the dancers are clearly employed to represent and contain the limits of violence, of the body, of life, of language and, in the case of Laia Duran, the limits of the national. The reduction of the female dancer's body to an effigy, alongside the fact that she is the only semi-naked body on display, might seem to reduce her agency, as in the case of Alba Pujol in *2666*. She stands out from the other characters also because hers is the only overtly non-realist performance in character, and significantly she is the only one whose relationship with language is problematized: she is inarticulate, her voice is distorted, as if to underline her abjection. However, the particular performance style she employs, as discussed previously, leaves some room for indeterminacy and even resistance. A member of La Veronal since 2012, Duran's abstract and frenetic shapings on stage within this play at times come across as if her body is mimicking the contortions of her stylized pronunciation, at other times suggesting a palsied form to reflect Lluís's and Sales's grotesque vision of Aragonese primitiveness. The forms she traces in fits and jerks do not suggest emotion; their impossibly precise and perverse placing in space in many ways mimics more effectively the monstrous skeletons of the defiled monastery and the contorted shapings and interminglings of remains in excavated graves than the haunted pacing of Mira's choreographies of the battlefield.



Laia Duran as La Molinera. *Incerta Gloria*, 2015. With Nao Albet and Aina Calpe (as La Carlana). Reproduced by permission of Àlex Rigola.

They are movements that evoke both the resistant movements we see in social protest—a jagged elbow here, a twisted shoulder there, to evade police clutches or ensure a path through a dense

crowd—and the uncomfortable and uncanny assemblages of intermingled bodies in Civil War and postwar mass graves.

### **The Dancer as Heteropathic Witness—*Només són dones/Solo son mujeres (They are only women)*, 2015**

The second mode of dance performance I want to look at is that of *Només són dones/Solo son mujeres*, which I first saw when it premiered on June 19, 2015, in the Teatre Josep Maria de Sagarra in Santa Coloma de Gramenet (Greater Barcelona), days after the investiture of the first woman mayor of Barcelona, Ada Colau, and in the presence of an audience largely made up of women. The play had begun life as a series of five short monologues written by the Barcelona-based writer Carmen Domingo, based on the testimonies of Spanish Republican women victims of political violence during the Civil War and Franco dictatorship.<sup>24</sup> Adapted and directed by Carme Portaceli, with scenography by Paco Azorín, choreography by Sol Picó and original music by Maika Makovski, it was later programmed for the autumn Temporada Alta festival in Girona, the 2015–16 season at the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya, and has toured to other theatres, including a run at the Teatro María Guerrero in Madrid in 2016. The three women performers of the piece were actress Míriam Iscla, musician and composer Maika Makovski, and dancer and choreographer Sol Picó, who together devised the final show from April to June 2015.

If the primary framing of the dancer's body in Rigola, whether intentional or not, is as an effigy, removing their agency, then in Carme Portaceli's *Només són dones* we are presented with a very different frame, in which processes of bodily relationality, contamination and intermingling are made visible on stage for the audience to engage with. In the programme notes for the initial showing Portaceli describes her intentions as having been to complement the work of emblematic actress Iscla in mediating the voices of the women in the play with the body of the dancer to stand in for the embodied experiences of all women and of the singer and composer to represent a disembodied, external observer, although later the dancer takes on a more universal role, as an Ariel-like "spirit" roaming across the stage, and it is the musician's role that is cited as providing emotional depth. Both framings suggest a vision of bodily performance as more universal than language, capable of transcending sociohistorical context; however, the intermingling of narrative, music and dance evokes and enacts a more porous relationship between archive and repertoire, with the dancer's body weaving in between documentary traces and material remains. The dancer in this case is Sol Picó, who had previously worked on a similar project related to the incorporation and transmission of violence and war, *El ball* (2009) with the great Catalan actress Anna Lizaran. Of Valencian origin, but a long term resident in Barcelona, Picó founded her own company in 1993 and has developed a recognizable style via acclaimed productions such as *Bésame el cactus* (Kiss my cactus), *El llac de les mosques* (Fly Lake) and *Memòria d'una puça* (Memoirs of a flea), and was awarded the Premi Nacional de Dansa de la Generalitat de Catalunya in 2004 and Spain's Premio Nacional de Danza in 2016. In *Només són dones* we witness the ephemeral presence of the dancer in the archive and are reminded of the performative quality of all engagement with archival remains.



Sol Picó in *Només són dones*, 2015. With Míriam Iscla and Maika Makovski. Copyright La Factoria Escènica. Reproduced by permission of Carme Portaceli.

As discussed in Buffery (2017) the main emphasis of the adaptation was on “the culturally invisible experiences of Republican women, seeking to overcome the silencing of what Neus Català (2013) has called the ‘oblidades entre els oblidats,’” the “doubly-forgotten” women among the forgotten dead. However, unlike the use of the dancers’ bodies in *Incerta glòria*, as surrogates to stand in for the dead, in *Només són dones*, the emphasis moves to the process of witnessing through listening and responding to the layering of narrative testimonies, objects, images, texts and music assembled archaeologically on stage. There are different modes by which this takes place. In sections of the play, perhaps in line with Portaceli’s intention for the dancer to stand in for “universal woman,” Picó is, like Iscla, simply a surrogate, standing in for the dead, fleshing out their words. Elsewhere, as in the opening section about a discovered mass grave, she listens to the different layers of the story: the narrative of a grand-daughter who endeavours to make sense of the story and to empathize with her mother who is moved to tears; the narrative of a daughter who barely remembers the mother who is taken from her; and that of an imprisoned, pregnant wife and mother (based on Amparo Barayón), taken out and shot with others from her village and buried in a grave marked by local children with bottles. The dancer translates these stories into her own choreography of the different layers, picking gingerly with the glass bottles on stage, before violently weaving between them, in order to represent in turn the experiences of the different corpses intermingled in the earth. The most effective of her responses to these documentary traces relates to the section re-presenting the experiences of the doctor Matilde Landa, who is psychologically tortured by her captors to force her to accept baptism, until she throws herself from the balcony, only to be baptized in articulo mortis. Sol Picó quietly observes Iscla recounting her experiences and anguish from her own corner of the stage, at first at least resisting identification.



Sol Picó in *Només són dones*, 2015. Copyright La Factoria Escènica. Reproduced by permission of Carme Portaceli.

In a process of kinaesthetic empathy, we watch her slowly incorporating the gestures of her fellow performer and gradually mimicking and repeating them, until finally she channels the violence of these movements, thrashing out her final death throes in a transparent elongated water bath on stage.



Sol Picó in *Només són dones*, 2015. With Míriam Iscla. Copyright La Factoria Escènica. Reproduced by permission of Carme Portaceli.

In line with Silverman (1996) and LaCapra (2001), we are exposed to a process of heteropathic witnessing and empathic unsettlement that does not simply mirror or reenact by identification but instead appears to incorporate an experience that is radically other. Picó, the dancer as eyewitness on stage, experiences and physically performs the erosion of the other's mental and bodily integrity, almost as a form of possession. Bound together through watching each other, yet separated by the disruptive techniques of Picó's explosive and expressionist choreography, and accompanied by the piercing and repetitive keening of Makovski, the performers together ensure the transfixion of the embodied spectators in the auditorium. Unable to look away, the audience is effectively unsettled by this excess, and thus cannot escape a sense of their own limitations in feeling, addressing and responding to individual, social, and cultural vulnerability, precarity, and trauma.

## Bodies of Protest —*WW–We Women* (2015–17)

Around the same time that she was beginning to rehearse *Només són dones*, Sol Picó began the process of research for her *We Women* project,<sup>25</sup> advertising via theatre and performance institutes and forums for women collaborators from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and working in different creative disciplines. Picó held two months of workshops with dancers and singers from different performance traditions, including the French-Senegalese dancer/choreographer Julie Dossavi, the Japanese fusion performer Minako Seki, experimental violinist Adele Madau, flamenco musicians Marta Robles and Lina León, and the Kuchipudi dancer Shantala Shivalingappa (later replaced by Shreyashee Nag). The results of this intense process of sharing stories, experiences and aesthetic practices were first shown in Barcelona’s Mercat de les Flors on July 6–8, 2015, during the annual summer GREC festival, directed by Picó with help from Roberto Fratini as dramaturg and Verónica Cendoya as assistant director. Presented as an investigation into the heterogeneous experience and realities of women in the contemporary world, even though the piece bears Sol Picó’s name as director, there is an emphasis on its status as a site of intimate intercultural encounter between different worldviews, musical and performance cultures, and ways of choreographing the social. At times performing the same processes of subjectification but in different keys, at times coming together as a collective to respond to the space in which they find themselves, the spectacle in many ways felt like a rich and complex follow-on from the Portaceli-Domingo project in its dependence on kinaesthetic spectatorship and heteropathic witnessing between the performers. Furthermore, it was clearly influenced by the intermingling between theatre and dance characteristic of La Factoria Escènica, punctuated by the same processes of translation of narratives into movement, of dialogue between different forms, and above all of empathic attention to the stories and gestures of the others.



Image of creative process for *We Women*. Copyright David Ruano. Reproduced by permission of Sol Picó Cia de Danza.

Set on a sand-covered stage, occupied by an improvised encampment that evoked the nomadic, the refugee and also the ephemeral community spaces constructed in public squares by the 15-M protest movement (known in Catalonia as the *Indignats*) against government corruption and elite mishandling of the financial crisis,<sup>26</sup> the performers first entered the stage as individual women—their bodies exposed, semi-naked and vulnerable in heels—and posed under a sand shower, defiant and proud, before performing their individual performance styles. This vulnerability was reprised as

a collective moments later, with them re-entering the arena slug-like, rolled in sleeping bags, before slowly emerging to their new community as if from chrysalises, all of them wearing shiny shell-suits. Together in this new encampment on stage, the women tried out different ways of being together, whether through social processes of more or less violent subjectification such as the performance of a lapidation, a hyper-competitive aerobics class, and fighting over an apple, or through sharing individual stories of childhood (often moving between different languages) and social narratives of the treatment of women in their respective societies. Some of these stories were then translated into song or dance, before being mimicked by the others, either copying the style of the original or translating it to different performance languages: trance-like tribal African, Japanese butoh, Asian kuchipudi, flamenco, including Picó's own brand of impossible en-pointe *zapateado* (the often breathlessly rapid, percussive footwork characteristic of flamenco dancing).



The performers mimic Shantala's performance style. Copyright David Ruano. Reproduced by permission of Sol Picó Cia de Danza.

The most powerful of these translation processes was, perhaps, the triangulation of witnessing set up between Dossavi, Seki, and Picó, where the former's physical power was deliberately juxtaposed with Seki's vulnerability in order to enact extremes of violent dispossession that recalled the police violence against the *Indignats* in 2011 and foreshadowed that of October 1, 2017. Dangled like a puppet by her hair from one of the encampment's washing lines, the Japanese dancer's spasmodic and grotesque butoh-inspired movements called to mind the post-traumatic theatre of Grotowski and Kantor (see Romanska 2012). Picó's response to her witnessing of this vulnerable and precarious bodily exposure was to "translate" the movements into a frenetic and tortured version of her trademark *zapateado*, wearing her usual red pointe shoes, before draping herself in exhaustion over the washing line at the other side of the camp. In contrast, Dossavi replaces her previous violence with an attitude of loving attention, carefully cradling the body of the other.





Julie Dossavi and Seki Sano in *We Women*, 2015. Copyright David Ruano. Reproduced by permission of Sol Picó Cia de Danza.

If the performance was very much in keeping with Sol Picó's trajectory of blending dance with social protest, most memorably in her *Memoirs of a flea*, audience and critical responses were at first characterized by disappointment at the dilution of her brand, signalling that they had come to see her as a dancer and choreographer, whereas the others were at best surplus to requirement and at worst criticized as reproducing clichés familiar from other intercultural experiments. My sense upon watching it was that the project was in many ways very much of its moment, characterized by the endeavour to create a commons we find in Dardot and Laval (2014) or Pérez Royo and Agulló (2016), and by the kind of transversality of resistance and protest—across the psychic, the social and the environmental—propounded by Guattari (1989). This was, of course, a time when Barcelona had elected its first woman mayor, Ada Colau, whose “Barcelona en comú” (Barcelona in common) project represented a citizen platform in favour of an open, diverse, and just urban society, presenting a very prescient message to a globalized world. The processes of entanglement and intermingling reproduced on stage had clearly emerged out of a workshop experience of sharing languages, stories, music and dance practices between women of radically different cultural origins, yet whose own aesthetic journeys were characterized by openness, hybridity and transculturation. Staged in a nomadic space, with women sharing experiences, memories, everyday practices, customs and performance styles, sometimes watching each other, sometimes mimicking, responding or competing, sometimes dancing together, encouraging or comforting each other, sheltering one another, the show ultimately explored the place of women in a public space envisaged as multicultural, plurilingual and international, trying out different ways of interacting, resisting and confronting the matrices of dispossession.

#### **Coda: October 28, 2017**

The intertwined bodily and territorial forces of dispossession play out in the exposure of bodies-in-place, which can become the occasion of subjugation, surveillance, and interpellation. It [the intertwined bodily quality of not-giving-up as not-giving-in] can also become the occasion of situated acts of resistance, resilience, and confrontation with the matrices of dispossession, through appropriating the ownership of one's body from these oppressive matrices. Acted upon, and yet acting, bodies-in-place and bodies-out-of-place at once embody and displace the conditions of intelligible embodiment and agency. (Athanasίου, in Butler and Athanasίου 2013, 22)

On October 28, 2017, I travelled to Barcelona from Cork (via London Heathrow) on a pre-planned Erasmus mobility trip, not entirely knowing what I would find, given that the then Catalan president, Carles Puigdemont, had made a unilateral declaration of independence the night before after days of agonizing over whether to call elections and no doubt pressured by mass popular demonstrations on the streets in the previous forty-eight hours. The declaration had been followed by an overwhelming vote in the Spanish senate to apply article 155 of the Spanish constitution,<sup>27</sup> allowing the Spanish government to take direct control of Catalan institutions, which was met with rapturous applause for Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy's very hardline speech. Barcelona was a city more subdued than usual, but shops were open, traffic at the usual level for a Saturday, and all airports, stations, and public transport appeared to be functioning normally (unlike at various points over the previous month). There was certainly no sign of the kind of mass demonstrations witnessed to protest against state violence in previous weeks. Theatres and concert halls were still open, if attendance levels were reportedly down, so I was able to get tickets that very evening to see Sol Picó's *We Women* again at the Mercat de les Flors. This both gave me the opportunity to refamiliarize myself with the piece and to confirm that in terms of programming, at least, Barcelona's cultural institutions continued to show a commitment to socio-cultural diversity and inclusivity.<sup>28</sup> If in many ways everything was the same as before, the difference in atmosphere at the performance hit me immediately. The auditorium was quite full, but groups were more guarded than usual, all checking social media before the start. In the seats next to me, two women were clearly discussing the pro-unionist Societat Civil Catalana (Catalan Civil Society) march the next day and the fact that attendees had been instructed to bring only "democratic flags" (i.e., no ultra-right, Francoist or Falangist emblems). As became more and more apparent in encounters of the following days, I had the sense of people living in parallel between what they were being and doing in the space around them in the everyday and their almost constant attention to the networks, tweets, and messages on their phones. Interestingly enough, then, in a show that depended to a great extent on kinaesthetic empathy, within my locale it was only the young child in front of me who was visibly moved by and engrossed in the movements on stage, to the extent that I became quite worried about how she would respond to the Dossavi-Seki interaction towards the end of the show, due to the level of violence they had transmitted in the initial production I had seen.

My sense was of a far colder audience than at the Festival Grec of two summers before, quieter and, perhaps, more circumspect in the moments before the show began. Even the applause was more subdued, although this could also have been a product of changes in the production, such as the removal of some of the more shocking images witnessed in earlier versions. Picó herself was more prominent in this version—but still not central to the piece—and the stand-in for Shantala Shivalingappa, while impeccable, clearly did not have the same close relationship of intimate co-creation and co-presencing with the others. Overall, the sense of an alternative, multilingual and pluricultural community presented in the performance, based on a diverse "we women," no longer appeared to be transmitted with the same force to the embodied spectators who shared the auditorium. Or perhaps it no longer spoke to the more fragile and uncertain socio-cultural space in which it was performed, a space where, according to many accounts, "convivència" (convivial co-existence) was now in crisis. If on the one hand this confirmed for me the multilayered interpermeability of the dancer's and the social body in its reminder of the roots of this particular performative process in the socio-political context in which it emerged in 2015, on the other hand, it brought home the ephemeral power of these women's bodily exposure(s) on stage. Based on a process of interlinguistic and cultural translation that involved the onstage translanguaging of narratives of vulnerability, precarity and trauma, in the sharing of women's stories and anecdotes, their representation of different modes of violence against and subjection of women, and the

heteropathic witnessing and care produced by their attention to each other, their dancing foregrounded their status as bodies of protest, reminding both of the forces and effects of bodily and territorial dispossession and of different means and modalities of resistance, resilience and confrontation.

The multiple exposures witnessed and assembled here range from the precarious and vulnerable bodies-in-place exposed by the world media on October 1, 2017, and their relationship to previous performance processes, social choreographies and genealogies of protest, to the trained, professional dancing bodies that have appeared on recent Catalan stages, and their affordances as bodies-out-of-place that are simultaneously continuous and discontinuous with the social body. Regarding these moving bodies helps to bring into focus the role of the corporeal in the articulation of Catalonia's contemporary political affects and multiple immaterial socio-cultural heritages. Their multiple exposure in this article was intended to stage both the motility, fluidity and porosity of bodies in motion on and off the stage and the ways in which such inter- and transcorporeal being, moving and knowing summons forth sites of ethical response to situations of precarity, vulnerability and violence. One of these moving bodies is, of course, my own: at times positioned at a distance and viewing other bodies as mediated by other frames and worldviews; at times as an embodied spectator sharing the same theatre space; at times intermingling in the social tactics of everyday life; at times incorporated—and moved—through the intensity of kinaesthetic spectatorship.

## Notes

1. Such a reading has been most persistently a feature of external critique of the movement toward secessionism in Catalonia, attributing the latter to the political leadership strategies of figures like the former president of the Generalitat, Artur Mas. However, there has also been important internal critique of the role of the Catalan political classes and intelligentsia in leading the populace towards conflict with the Spanish state. See, for instance, the work of Jordi Amat (2015; 2017). In contrast, Júlia Fernández (2017) investigates the ways in which the apparently unitary top-down choreographies of mass pro-Independence events like those witnessed since September 11, 2012, are actually characterized by a range of more diverse, critical and resistant performance practices; whereas Elvira Prado-Fabregat (2017) provides evidence that the political organizers of these events are themselves never entirely certain either of the level of participation or the ways in which people will perform.
2. Andrew Hewitt's (2015) work on "social choreography" questions the problematic slippage between these two understandings in much contemporary work on the body in performance. With him, I recognize the generative potential of negotiating choreography to better apprehend the limits of what it is possible to be and do in a particular spatiotemporal context. In focusing on a minority or minoritized language context, I am adding an awareness of how this might interact with sociolinguistic hierarchies and linguistic difference, rather than just language.
3. Even after the fall of Mariano Rajoy's Partido Popular government following a vote of no confidence on May 31–June 1, 2018, it remained clear that there could be no dialogue about the terms of debate framing the disputed referendum of October 2017. Thus, notwithstanding some symbolic concessions by hard-line figures in the Spanish socialist party, such as Foreign Minister Josep Borrell, who in a BBC interview accepted the use of the word nation to refer to Catalonia (#Catalonia is a "nation" @BBC Hardtalk), the only kind of democratic consultation that so far appears to be on the table is a vote on the current terms of autonomy.
4. See, for instance, the Reuters report on Spanish Interior Minister Juan Ignacio Zoido's announcement in the *Cortes* on January 18, 2018: <https://es.reuters.com/article/topNews/idESKBN1F71MV-OEST/>. Documentary reconstruction of the impact of Civil Guard intervention in Catalan institutions on September 20, 2017, is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=do5KQV5Qgow>.

## Buffery

5. Video footage from different sources is available at [https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/cataluna/2017-09-25/referendum-cataluna-video-guardias-civiles\\_1449434/](https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/cataluna/2017-09-25/referendum-cataluna-video-guardias-civiles_1449434/).
6. For a searchable, interactive map recording the events of the day, including images, see <https://catmemoria.cat/poble-a-poble/>. Record of the use of teargas can be found at <https://catmemoria.cat/lloc/aiguaviva>.
7. This facility was supported by the use of a “universal census,” that is, a single central online register that could be ticked off in real time.
8. See, for instance, Andrew Marr’s interview with Spanish Foreign Minister Alfonso Dastis on the BBC: <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-41712725/spain-fm-many-police-violence-pictures-fake>.
9. Comparison of Spanish newspaper headlines on October 1 and 2, 2017, shows that the main focus was on the political challenge to the Spanish state presented by the referendum, and on the effectiveness of the Spanish national police:  
<https://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20171001/431691782273/portadas-prensa-espanola-1-o.html>;  
<http://www.europapress.es/nacional/noticia-portadas-periodicos-hoy-lunes-octubre-2017-capsulitis20171002012651.html>.
10. One of the most widely disseminated clips from the day was of a woman who claimed she had been groped and had her fingers broken by riot police at an electoral station. She subsequently admitted to TV3 that the injury had later been diagnosed and was being treated as a case of capsulitis; however, her perceived manipulation of the media was widely used to present all coverage of police violence as so-called “fake news.” See, for instance, [https://www.reddit.com/r/catalunya/comments/77d2g6/violence\\_in\\_catalonia\\_needed\\_closer\\_scrutiny\\_in/](https://www.reddit.com/r/catalunya/comments/77d2g6/violence_in_catalonia_needed_closer_scrutiny_in/).
11. See, for instance, the diverse list of titles announced for the 2018 Diada de Sant Jordi (Festival of the Book and the Rose) in Catalonia: <https://www.lavanguardia.com/especial/cultura/20180422/sant-jordi-llibres-proces/index.html>; <https://www.naciodigital.cat/noticia/153083/10/llibres/sant/jordi/entendre/1-o>.
12. Mas, who was president of the Catalan Generalitat from 2010 to 2015, is currently suspended from political activity due to his role in organizing the consultation on the future of Catalonia on November 9, 2014. Puigdemont, president of the Catalan Generalitat from 2015 to the end of October 2017, is in exile in Brussels.
13. In contrast with these more recent sources, for many international scholars Barcelona’s history of social contestation remains linked above all with the early twentieth-century prominence of the anarcho-sindicalist movement, via George Orwell’s *Homage to Catalonia*.
14. September 11 began to be celebrated as a national day in Catalonia from the end of the nineteenth century, in commemoration of the end of the siege of Barcelona in 1714, which itself came to mark Catalonia’s legal, political and cultural absorption into Bourbon Spain. The main slogan at marches after the end of the Franco dictatorship was “Llibertat, amnistia, Estatut d’Autonomia” (Liberty, Amnesty, Statute of Autonomy).
15. From the state-wide protests following the Partido Popular’s handling of the 11-M terrorist bombings in 2004 and the 15-M anti-austerity demonstrations in 2011, to *cassolades* (kitchenware banging sessions, generally at night-time) in protest at local and national infrastructural failures; environmental protest against Spain’s national hydrological plan, urban remodelling and the eviction of squatter communities; marches in favour of greater hospitality for refugees, inclusive public education and women’s rights; and other forms of direct action and activism, such as the Argentine-inspired *esraches* outside banks to raise awareness about families affected by mortgage arrears.
16. The main civic associations involved in organizing pro-independence events have been Òmnium Cultural, which was founded in 1961 to contribute to the preservation of the Catalan language and culture, and the

more recent *Plataforma per la llengua* (Platform for the Language) and *Assemblea Nacional Catalana* (Catalan National Assembly).

17. This siege took place during the Spanish War of Succession, as a result of Catalan rejection of the Bourbon candidate to the Spanish throne. The defeat of Hapsburg resistance in Catalonia, Valencia and the Balearic Islands resulted in repression of Catalan legal, political, and cultural institutions.

18. It is this history which no doubt led to later determination to turn the *sardana* into a national symbol alongside the human towers constructed by *colles* (groups) of *castellers*, culminating in the former being put forward by the Catalan Olympic Committee as an Olympic symbol of communion, conviviality and community in the run-up to the Atlanta games in 1996.

19. Listed as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO, the *Patum* is an annual festivity comprising a series of ritual dances by the townspeople of Berga in the province of Barcelona.

20. Extant historiographical approaches to the period have tended to place far more scholarly focus on the role of poetry and the protest singers associated with *La Nova Cançó* (The New Song).

21. Examples of the former include Tórtola Valencia, Raquel Meller, Joan Tena and Carmen Amaya; the latter include Ramon Solé, Vicente Escudero, Anna Maleras, and later Ramon Oller and Cesc Gelabert.

22. For a fuller list of contemporary dance and performance art practitioners, with images, see <http://liquidmaps.org/categories/view/artes-del-movimiento>.

23. *Incerta glòria* de Joan Sales. Teatre Nacional de Catalunya, Sala Petita, May 20–June 16, 2015. Directed and adapted by Àlex Rigola. Scenographer: Max Glaenzel; Costume designer: Sílvia Delagneau; Lighting: August Viladomat; Soundtrack: Nao Albet; Sound: Albert Mosoll. Video: Francesc Isern and Max Glaenzel. Documentation: Eleonora Herder. Body art: Alejo Levis. Cast: Lluís–Nao Albet; Commander Rosich / Trini’s father–Andre Benito; Cruells–Marcel Borràs; Carlana / Commander’s wife–Aina Calpe; Merceditas / Miller’s wife–Laia Duran; Picó–Toni Mira; Juli Soleràs–Pau Roca; Trini Milmany–Mar Ulldemolins. Three hours and fifteen minutes running time with two breaks of ten minutes each. Images of the play are available at <http://www.tnc.cat/ca/incerta-gloria> and [http://www.alexrigola.com/Alex\\_Rigola/Photos/index.html](http://www.alexrigola.com/Alex_Rigola/Photos/index.html).

24. These included: Amparo Barayón, who was arrested and executed in 1936; Matilde Landa, whose experience of psychological torture in prison drove her to suicide in 1942; and Tomasa Cuevas, whose own experience of imprisonment and torture between 1939 and 1945 led her to work on collecting the stories of other women victims.

25. See <http://www.solpico.com/produccions/we-women/>.

26. See Cameron (2014) for further discussion of the 15-M movement in Spain.

27. An English-language version of the Spanish Constitution can be accessed at <https://www.boe.es/legislacion/documentos/ConstitucionINGLES.pdf>.

28. In the same week, I was able to see Calixto Bieito’s adaptation of Bernardo Atxaga’s *Obabakoak* performed in the Basque language at the Teatre Lliure’s Sala Puigserver; *El metge de Lampedusa* (The Doctor of Lampedusa), based on the experiences of Pietro Bartolo, at the Espai Lliure; Lorca’s *Bodas de Sangre* (*Blood Wedding*) performed in Spanish at the Biblioteca de Catalunya by acclaimed Catalan company La Perla 29; the Spanish Centro Dramático Nacional production of Max Aub’s Spanish civil war classic *El laberinto mágico* (The Magic Labyrinth) at the Teatre Romea.

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