

**(RE)ANIMATING HISTORY: ANIMATED DOCUMENTARIES IN CONTEMPORARY
HISPANIC CINEMA**

by

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Abstract

Animation for adult audiences is a booming sector in Hispanic cinema in both fiction and non-fiction films alike. This is particularly true of the documentary genre, in which Spanish and Latin American filmmakers are employing various animation techniques to essentially (re)animate predominantly traumatic periods of history. That is to say, they do the work of *reconstructing* or *re-creating* history through the cinematic practice of animation. Jairo Carrillo and Oscar Andrade's *Pequeñas voces* (Colombia, 2010), María Seaone's *Eva de la Argentina* (Argentina, 2011), and Manuel H. Martín's *30 años de oscuridad* (Spain, 2012) do this work of reconstructing periods of political unrest through a blending of animation and archival materials.

The recent turn to animation in recounting historical narratives leads us to contemplate the purpose and effect of veering away from conventional live-action portrayals. Accordingly, our first research question asks why and how animation is effective as a representational strategy in the re-telling of the historical moments and subjects that the films in our corpus depict. To answer this first research question, we consider the three functions of animation proposed by leading animated documentary scholar Annabelle Honess Roe (2013): non-mimetic substitution, mimetic substitution, and evocation.

Beyond being linked by their exemplification of Roe's three functions of animation, the films in our corpus all have a relationship to the uncanny that arises directly from the juxtaposition of animation and the archival. Animated film scholarship has begun to draw connections between Sigmund Freud's (1919) notion of the 'uncanny' and films that combine animation and the archival. Accordingly, our second research question asks: in what ways does the 'uncanny' animated aesthetic in these three films manifest itself, and to what end?

Preface

This thesis is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, J. Nagtegaal.

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Chapter 4. Figures 4.1 – 4.7 are used with permission from Olmo Figueredo González-Quevedo, Producer, La Claqueta.

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Dedication

To Joel and Noelle, who have walked and crawled beside me throughout this journey. And to our soon-to-arrive baby, who has also accompanied me along the way.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Animated Documentary

Over the last two decades, a case has been made, and arguably won, for the animated documentary to be accepted as a film genre in its own right. Central to the debate surrounding the animated documentary, a term that gained traction in scholarship beginning in the late 1990s, has been the question of animated documentary's ability to represent truth and depict reality as accurately as live-action filmmaking (DelGaudio 1997; Wells 1998, 2006; Skoller 2011; Ward 2012; Kriger 2012; Roe 2013, 2016; Formenti 2014; Wells and Moore 2016). At first glance, the genre of animation outright opposes that of documentary for their contradictory ways of seeing the world. In fact, the two genres were once viewed as "aesthetic antinomies" of film history (Skoller 2011). The conflation of the two genres results in what leading animated documentary scholar Annabelle Honess Roe calls a "marriage of opposites" (2013:1). For, the live-action documentary, as Paul Ward notes, is commonly associated with what is real, the portrayal of a truth, naturalism and mimesis, whereas animated cinema is considered to be comprised of hand-made imaginings, fanciful depictions, expressionism and the tendency of abstraction (2008:37). Yet, scholarship, as noted above, has converged on the understanding that "animation is a mode perfectly suited to documentary production" (Ward 2012:85).

Over the last two decades, previously held notions that the documentary is "dependent on the specificity of its images for its authenticity," as Bill Nichols once claimed, have been replaced with a more comprehensive vision of documentary's capabilities (1994:29). Nichols himself would later define documentary as a portrayal of "*the* world in which we live rather than *a* world imagined by the filmmaker" (2001:xi, emphasis in the original). Roe, who adopts this definition in forming her definition of animated documentary, indicates that the distinction

between *a* and *the* world helps us to accept animation as a valid means of creatively treating actuality, just as re-enactment has been accepted with much less flack than its illustrated counterpart (2013:3-4). The notion of ‘creatively’ treating actuality is a nod towards a second, and longstanding, definition of documentary that Roe adopts into her own; that of pioneering Scottish documentary maker John Grierson (1933:8).

Although some have noted that skepticism that still exists toward animated documentaries (Strøm 2015: 94), Christina Formenti (2014) appears to be one of the only dissident voice in print, as Roe’s notably brief article *Against animated documentary?* (2016) makes clear. Formenti’s main contention is that animated documentary lacks credibility as an objective record of events depicted, and she suggests that rather than existing in the realm of documentary (and, by extension, even standing as a genre in their own right) these films should be regarded as ‘docufiction.’ However, Formenti’s issue is one of categorization, and, as Roe’s article further makes clear, scholarship has yet to publish anything that critiques the “inherent form, aesthetics and structure of animated documentary” (23).

Rather, recent scholarship has argued that animation is certainly capable of containing a truth-value and a didactic purpose. Ward (2008), for example, argues that it is not only possible, but also effective, to represent a ‘fact’, an actual occurrence or experience, in animated form just as it is in live-action form. He goes further to say that in some instructional films, using animation is arguably clearer than those that employ live action. Roe’s *Animated Documentary* (2013), the first book-length study of this topic, further elucidates the notion that animation can go beyond live action. Her central claim is that animated documentary “has the capacity to represent temporally, geographically, and psychologically distal aspects of life beyond the reach of live action” (22).

What Roe and Ward suggest is not only thought provoking, but also relevant to the current state of Hispanic cinema, which has seen an increased production of award-winning short and feature-length animated documentaries in recent years. The title of this thesis refers to this trend of animated historical re-creations in Spain and Latin America in which filmmakers have employed various animation techniques to essentially (re)animate particularly traumatic periods of history. That is to say, they do the work of *reconstructing* or *re-creating* history through the cinematic practice of animation.

For example, Victor Orozco's *Reality 2.0* (Mexico, Germany, 2012) provides a distinct look at the reality of the ongoing drug-related violence and trafficking in Mexico and a rising voyeurism fed by the highly exposed publicity stunts these gangs pull through the veil of Rotoscoped live-action footage. Claudio Diaz Valdes' *Chile Imaginario* (Chile, 2012) employs a combination of Rotoscope and abstract hand-drawings to visualize nine testimonies of the turbulent period between Pinochet's military coup and the 2010 Bicentenary. Matt Richard's *To Say Goodbye* (UK, Spain, 2012) retrospectively narrates the story of the 4000 Basque children evacuated to the United Kingdom in 1937, 75 years after the fact through 14 personal testimonies brought to life through full color 2D and 3D animation. Nicolás Iacouzzis and Pablo Chehebar combined live-action interviews with a comic style animation to narrate the story of Guillermo 'Bill' Gaede, an Argentine engineer who became a Cold War spy in *El Crazy Che* (Argentina, 2015).

This inconclusive list is indicative of a boom in which animation is employed to portray serious subject matter, and as a result, finds a new audience in a more mature demographic. In fact, the movement in Hispanic cinema to create animated films for adult audiences is not limited

to the non-fiction genre, as it is also gaining momentum in fiction films.¹ The purpose of this investigation is to examine three feature-length productions from Spain and Latin America that share in this trend of (re)animating history. Further, they do so in a way that has been called one of “the most widespread and compelling forms of animated documentary” for using an animated aesthetic to interpret the testimony or reminiscence of a real person (Ward 2012:87).

Jairo Carrillo and Oscar Andrade’s *Pequeñas voces* (Colombia, 2010), María Seaone’s *Eva de la Argentina* (Argentina, 2011), and Manuel H. Martín’s *30 años de oscuridad* (Spain, 2012) offer an innovative take on periods of political unrest in their respective countries through a blending of animation and archival materials. The purpose of these narratives is far from entertainment and an escape from reality, notions conventionally associated with animated films (Kriger 2012:61). Rather, they recount the loss of childhood at the hands of an armed conflict, a national body fractured by disappearances and decades of political turmoil, and a society haunted by the aftermath of a civil war and an ensuing dictatorship as efforts to recuperate memory are now finally underway.

Pequeñas voces, *Eva de la Argentina*, and *30 años de oscuridad* were selected according to the following criteria: i) they represent three Spanish-language film industries whose animation sector is currently ‘booming’ ii) they have been recognized nationally and internationally in the film circuit iii) they share *una mirada atrás*, a look backward, at a historical

¹ The film industries of Colombia, Argentina and Spain, the three countries addressed in this thesis, have also recently produced notable animated fictional films. Ignacio Ferrera’s *Arrugas* (Spain, 2011), Goya award winner for Best Animated Film, is a cinematic adaptation of Paco Roca’s 2007 comic by the same name. *Arrugas* poignantly addresses the theme of aging and Alzheimer’s and loss by centering on a group of senior citizens in an assisted-living facility. Carlos Osuna’s *Gordo, Calvo y Bajito* (Colombia, 2012), winner of multiple awards in national and international film festival circuits, deals with themes of solitariness and self-perception through protagonist Antonio, who, as the film’s title suggests, struggles with how his physical appearance shapes his reality. Ayar Blasco’s Flash animated *El Sól* (Argentina, 2010) depicts post-apocalyptic Buenos Aires from the point of view of two surviving children, though the dark humor, vulgar language and mature subject matter make this film a suitable choice for anyone but children.

moment characterized by political conflict iv) they display varying techniques of animation, from the use of children's testimonial drawings and computer generation (*Pequeñas voces*), to Flash cut-out animation (*Eva de la Argentina*), to a graphic novel animation style (*30 años de oscuridad*) v) as a corpus they are exemplary of all three of Roe's different functions of animation vi) and all three films engender a psychoanalytical reading which unite them. It is the last two criteria specifically that have shaped the two research questions in this thesis.

1.2 Representational Strategies in Animated Documentary

The recent turn to animation in recounting historical narratives leads us to contemplate the purpose and effect of veering away from conventional live-action methods. In other words, it makes us consider the particular way in which these films contribute to maintaining the historical record(s). Documentary film, as defined by Bill Nichols (2010) in the second edition of his *Introduction to Documentary*,

speaks about situations and events involving real people (social actors) who present themselves to us as themselves in stories that convey a plausible proposal about, or perspective on, their lives, situations and events portrayed. The distinct point of view of the filmmaker shapes this story into a way of seeing the historical world directly rather than into a fictional allegory. (14)

Nichol's indication that each filmmaker brings their own distinct point of view in the *direct* portrayal of the historical world is a starting point for helping us to understand the directorial decisions of Andrade and Carrillo, Seoane and Martín. This leads us to our first research question, which asks why and how animation is effective as a representational strategy in the re-telling of the historical moments and subjects that the films in our corpus depict.

To answer this first research question, we consider the theoretical framework that Roe proposes for considering three main ways that animation acts in documentary that the conventional (live-action) alternative could not: non-mimetic substitution, mimetic substitution, and evocation. Each of these three representational strategies generally entails different animation aesthetics, styles, and techniques (2011:225; 2013:22). Our investigation will use Roe's three representational strategies as a framework to examine how animation functions in *Pequeñas voces*, *Eva de la Argentina* and *30 años de oscuridad*. In order to do so, it is important to first define them here.

Although the first two representational strategies, non-mimetic and mimetic substitution, share the role of creatively solving the problem of a lack of live-action footage, they differ in their function. A non-mimetic substitution does not strive for a close depiction of reality (both in regards to the body of the subject as well as their environment), but rather functions to “express meaning through its aesthetic realization” (2013:24). Roe cites Hanna Holborn and David Aronowitsch's *Hidden* (Sweden, 2002) as an example of this function of animation in film. *Hidden* depicts protagonist Giancarlo, a child immigrant, with a childlike simplicity in order to evoke sympathy for his situation. Ironically, *Pequeñas voces*, which will be the focus of Chapter 2, addresses a similar theme with a similar style, depicting displaced child-narrators as overly simplistic, childlike drawings. The animated aesthetic in *Pequeñas voces* is comprised of the children's testimonial artwork and a computer generated animation style that mimics this artwork. Further, in its aim to express meaning, non-mimetic substitution has the potential to make animation allegorical by using a certain figure, symbol or style to allude to a sociopolitical situation.

Mimetic substitution, on the other hand, strives to “create a visual link with reality” by closely resembling it, or even go one step further to “create an illusion of a filmed image” (2013:24). The aim is to realistically visualize events being documented orally or in writing that either could not be captured with the camera, or simply were not captured with the camera for a variety of reasons. Roe calls to mind Brett Morgan’s *Chicago 10* (USA, 2007) and Tim Haines and Jasper James’ *Walking with Dinosaurs* (UK, 1999) as examples of this function of animation in film. This animation strategy offers us knowledge of something we could have all seen, had we been there (2013:26). The notion of ‘had we been there’ is an interesting one given that this style characterizes *Eva de la Argentina*, whose director and protagonist, a fictionalized Rodolfo Walsh, are both investigative journalists working to uncover and reconstruct the facts surrounding events and prominent figures that were hidden or made to disappear under Argentina’s military dictatorship. Like Morgan’s *Chicago 10*, the animation style in *Eva de la Argentina* strives to resemble the real figures being depicted and works to fill in the gaps in the archival footage, which is used intermittently within each of these two narratives.

In direct opposition to a close depiction of reality, evocative animation aims to reveal or explore things that *cannot be seen*, such subjective, conscious experiences like feelings and states of mind. As Roe indicates, this in particular is a significant limitation of live-action film (2013:26). Roe references Jonathan Hodgson’s *Feeling My Way* (United Kingdom, 1997) in which the evocative animation, often an abstract or symbolic style, “allows us to imagine the world from someone else’s perspective” (2013:25).

However, in paying attention to the way animation functions in *Pequeñas voces*, *Eva de la Argentina*, and *30 años de oscuridad*, we will also ask the important sub-question of how the archival is functioning in relation to the animation, as animated documentaries frequently

juxtapose the animated with the archival, though each of the three films in this corpus possess its own distinct audiovisual equation of these two elements. The archival in *Pequeñas voces*, for example, only arises in testimonial voice-overs, while both *Eva de la Argentina* and *30 años de oscuridad* insert archival footage and photographs, among other visual archival documents, intermittently within the film. For this reason, the sub-question of the role of the archival will be especially relevant in a discussion of the later two films. For, as this thesis will argue, its truth-value cannot always be taken for granted, just as the fictional nature of animation cannot always be assumed.

1.3 Animated Documentary and Freud’s Uncanny

The fact that the three films in our corpus converge in their juxtaposition of the animated and the archival leads to a second important point of consideration for the animated documentary. Sigmund Freud’s (1919) notion of the ‘uncanny,’ developed in his essay, “The Uncanny,” has been previously linked to the juxtaposition of animation and the archival in animated documentaries (Roe 2012), as well as to the whole art of animation itself (Ward 2013). Beyond being linked by their exemplification of Roe’s three functions of animation, the films in our corpus all have a relationship to the uncanny that arises directly from these animated representational strategies when combined with audiovisual archival elements. Accordingly, our second research question asks: in what ways does the ‘uncanny’ animated aesthetic in these three films manifest itself, and to what end?

The uncanny by Freud’s own definition is “that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar” (220). The psychoanalyst provides numerous examples in his essay of situations involving the *strangely familiar* that may evoke this uncanny emotion. The fact that Freud focuses his examples on literature understandably speaks to the

early 20th-century era in which he was writing, but these same examples can also be seen in the corpus of 21st-century films being examined here. An idea central to the discussion of the testimonial artwork in Chapter 2 is the doubts about whether an apparently animate being is really alive; or conversely, whether a lifeless object (a picture or a doll, for example) might not be in fact animate (226). Subsequent examples Freud offers, and thus possible areas of analysis in these films, include “the phenomenon of the ‘double’ [...] and the factor of repetition of the same thing” (235-236), which emerges in the proliferation of Eva Perón’s figure in *Eva de la Argentina* due to the multiple archival and animated depictions of Argentina’s former first lady present on screen. Likewise, Freud offers the example of “the return of the dead, and to spirits and ghosts” (241), which will be explored in Chapter 4’s analysis of *30 años de oscuridad*.

The two aforementioned scholars have addressed a possible relationship between Freud’s uncanny and animated film. Roe (2012) has deemed the tool of Rotoshop as uncanny particularly in animated interviews used for documentaries and non-fiction film. Rotoshop, which uses an animation technique called interpolated rotoscoping, traces on top of frames of video footage to give the animated representation a likeness that appears at once hand-drawn and photorealistic. Yet, the crux is that techniques like rotoscoping result in the animation becoming more than an iconic sign: it becomes an indexical one. The photorealistic image points to the subject in the photographic image or live-action footage used to create the drawing. Harry Benshoff notes that an indexical sign “can only be produced when the thing that it signifies was there to produce it” (47). In other words, indexical signs are based upon the mechanical reproduction of events actually staged before some type of camera. The result is an animated portrait with identifiable human characteristics that is at once familiar and unfamiliar (see, for example, aforementioned productions Victor Orozco’s *Reality 2.0* and Carlos Osuna’s *Gordo, Calvo y Bajito*).

Conversely, Paul Wells (2013) argues that the notion of the uncanny is central to the whole art of animation. This genre, according to the animation scholar, has the ready capacity to facilitate the uncanny by “effacing the imagined and the real in creating an environment where inanimate lines, objects and materials have the illusion of life, impossible relations can take place, and representational modes of expression become fully accepted aspects of the ‘real’ world” (48-49). While we would judge Wells’ correlation of the uncanny to the *whole* art of animation as extreme, as we do not believe that the intention of animators is always – or often – to evoke such a feeling in their spectator, we do believe that Roe hits on a particular, and we would say accurate, technique of animation that evokes the uncanny. One need only see Orozco’s *Reality 2.0*, traces over real YouTube footage of torture and assassinations by the different gangs, employing animation as a necessary “veil” so that the viewer can feel the violence but not directly see it. Thus, such a technique where the lines between live action and animation are (only slightly) blurred is uncanny for depicting, on the one hand, what is “familiar and agreeable”, but on the other what is “concealed and kept out of sight” (Freud 224-5).

The notion of indexicality is a principal linking factor of how the uncanny emerges in each of these films, despite the different examples of the uncanny they display, and the differing representational strategies of animation they employ. Each of the following three chapter will carry on a discussion of how traces of the real impose themselves on the animated characters as a direct result of the archival voice-offs; indexical signs pointing to the absence of the real body that is presented on screen as an animated figure

Scholars have only begun to touch on this legitimate psychoanalytical understanding of animation, and case studies are scarce to say the least. Roe’s *Uncanny indexes: Rotoshopped interviews as documentary* (2012) is the sole publication, focusing on animated interviews made

by American filmmaker Bob Sabiston between 1997 and 2007. In the case of animated documentaries in the Hispanic world, critical insight in this area has yet to begin, making my study the first to do so in this field. In this vein, these films also have yet to receive the critical attention they deserve, as existing scholarship consists of a single analysis of *Pequeñas voces* and *30 años de oscuridad* (Schöb 2015 and Alarcón and Zembrana 2013 respectively), though these are not sustained analyses, but rather a consideration of these productions in conjunction with other national productions.

1.4 The Present Study

The present study aims to begin critical discussion of these deserving films at a moment in which the genre to which they belong is on the rise. We will address these two research questions by analyzing the three films in three distinct chapters, ordered first by their date of production, but second due to the way and extent to which they juxtapose the animated with the real: a progression from a fully animated film (narrated by testimonial interviews), to a mostly animated film that intersperses archival materials (narrated by in part by archival voice-offs and accompanied by mostly still images), to a half-and-half juxtaposition animation and live-action interviews. Further, the discussion of these films has been ordered for the way in which they dialogue with Roe's three representational strategies. Non-mimetic substitution will be addressed in both Chapters 2 and 3 which discuss *Pequeñas voces* and *Eva de la Argentina* respectively, while Chapter 3 also explores a second function of animation with the same filmic narrative: mimetic substitution. The understanding of the mimetic function of animation presented in Chapter 3 will facilitate a discussion of the evocative (and deceptively mimetic) animation style in Chapter 4's focus of interest, *30 años de oscuridad*. Lastly, the chapters progress through a close-reading of Freud's essay "The Uncanny," the result being that my thesis from start to finish

will dialogue with Freud in the order in which the different examples of the uncanny are presented in his article.

Chapter 2, “The Uncanny Façade of Childhood in Jairo Carrillo and Oscar Andrade’s *Pequeñas voces*,” examines how non-mimetic substitution is employed in Jairo Carrillo and Oscar Andrade’s *Pequeñas voces* (2011). *Pequeñas voces*, which depicts the Colombian armed conflict that originated in the later part of the 20th century and continues to linger, presents real testimonies of children displaced by the violent conflict from their villages in the interior of Colombia to Bogota. *Pequeñas voces* uses these children’s interviews and testimonial drawings in the narration of their lived experiences. The children’s drawings not only work practically to solve the problem of a lack of archival footage of their experiences in the Colombian conflict, but they also act expressively in a way that a live depiction of the children could not. We will consider how the non-mimetic animation style, unwaveringly reminiscent of childhood, communicates a loss of childhood to the adult spectator. We will also explore how this loss is further reiterated through the motif of child’s play within the film.

Of specific interest to the filmic analysis in this chapter is Freud’s discussion of the uncanny nature of dolls or pictures when they become animate. We propose that there is a close connection between Freud’s example of animated dolls and Carrillo’s infantile aesthetic, as the simplistic drawings become too real, taking on lifelike traits of the child-narrators through their *little voices*, as well as their embodied childlike behaviors, emotions and motives that are projected onto them due to their experiences of trauma.

Chapter 3, “(Re)animating and (Re)imagining History: María Seoane’s *Eva de la Argentina*,” considers a second of Roe’s functions of animation: mimetic substitution in a Flash animated biopic of Argentina’s famed former first lady. We will analyze how the mimetic

animation intentionally doubles-up Eva Perón's onscreen figure as a validation of what one critic calls her "capacity for multiplicity" (Savigliano 347). In this sense, we will engage with a discussion of Freud's notion of the uncanny 'double,' as the mimetic double becomes an uncanny doppelgänger for Eva Perón's onscreen archival figure, particularly through their shared archival voice. The single indexical link shared by two distinct figures seemingly creates an uncanny telepathic mind-body connection between the strange yet familiar animated doppelgänger and the archival Eva. In consideration of Seoane's *double-Eva tactic*, as we refer to it, we will ask how the uncanny doubling of Eva Perón fits into the larger filmic recuperation of what was made to disappear under Argentina's last military dictatorship, and ultimately what is being re-imagined and reanimated in Seoane's film.

In this vein, Chapter 3 will address the sub-question of the role of the archival, proposing that in the case of Seoane's film, it skirts the traditional role of validating history to instead validate a personal myth of Peronsim, what Historian Juan José Sebreli (1992) refers to as a *peronismo imaginario*. Accordingly, this chapter continues the discussion of the function non-mimetic substitution initiated in Chapter 2. Despite its surface-level pretense as a biopic of a single historical figure, we suggest that the film offers a second biographical narrative, that of a national Peronist body. Accordingly, we will consider how Eva's animated figure in the film also exists as a symbolic body: a sociopolitical allegory onto which Seoane's personal myth of Peronism can be written.

Chapter 4, "(Re)animating Spectres of the Past in Manuel H. Martín's *30 años de oscuridad*," turns to a discussion of Roe's third function of animation in documentary film: evocation. Martín's Goya nominated animated documentary largely portrays post-war Spain through a graphic novel style of animation. As will be argued here, it is through the animation

style that the concept of a haunting is evoked; one in which Franco-era ghosts still linger in the dwelling of 21st-century Spain. Accordingly, Chapter 4 will dialogue with French philosopher Jacques Derrida's notion of "hauntology," which suggests a *coming back* of traces of the past – be they concepts, memories, trauma or the dead – in the form of specters (1994:10). Derrida's notion of spectres directly relates to what Freud calls "the most striking" example of something uncanny: the return of the dead, and spirits and ghosts (241).

Specifically, we will highlight three ways in which the motif of haunting emerges in the film's animated aesthetic, beginning with the trope of a body possessed. In this way, Chapter 4 will continue the discussion of how the uncanny arises in the juxtaposition of the animated and the archival as Martín's protagonist contains a *double-indexicality* that complicates the conventional voice-body relationship in documentary film, as the vocal and visual cues point not to the historical figure whose testimony is being related, but rather to contemporary Sevillian actor Juan Diego. With this understanding, we will examine how the actor becomes the *portavoz* for the testimony being given; the contemporary body possessed by the spectre of the past. The discussion will continue with two further elements in the trope of haunting: the film's premise as an *unheimliche haus* (haunted house) narrative, and finally through a consideration of how the film presents a moment of catharsis in its conclusion through the motif of exhumation as an indication of the ongoing sociopolitical work in contemporary Spanish society of *cleaning house* of these spectres through commemorating a previously silenced past.

In sum, the aim of this thesis is to carry on the work recently initiated by scholars of animated documentary in showing how animation both questions and innovates the rewriting of history. To achieve this, we have adopted Roe's recently proposed theoretical framework of how animation functions in documentary film as non-mimetic substitution, mimetic substitution, and

evocation. Subsequently, we will carry on another dialogue recently initiated in animated documentary scholarship, in which there is much work to be done. In the pages that follow we will provide a psychoanalytic reading of these films in light of the fact that animated film scholarship has begun to draw connections between Freud's notion of the 'uncanny' and the makeup of the animated documentary. The extent to which an insightful link has been applied to actual film analyses is extremely limited, and in the case of Spanish-language film scholarship it is non-existent. The recent boom of animated documentaries in Hispanic cinema, in both short and feature-length award-winning productions makes this a fertile area for study. The use of animation in historical narratives is now common place in global cinema, indicating that this is more than a fad. As Roe affirms in her seminal work, *Animated Documentary* (2013), "animation as a representational strategy in and for documentary seems here to stay" (171).

Chapter 2: The Uncanny Façade of Childhood in Jairo Carrillo and Oscar Andrade's *Pequeñas voces*

2.1 Introduction

Following the success of Ari Folman's autobiographical animated film *Waltz with Bashir* (Israel, 2008), the frequency with which animation is being used as a representational strategy in documentary film is increasing globally. In Colombia, the first feature-length production to mimic this trend is Jairo Eduardo Carrillo and Oscar Andrade's animated documentary *Pequeñas voces* (Colombia, 2010). The perception of using animation to depict the reality of events such as the 1982 Lebanon war or the Colombian armed conflict may seem unusual to audiences, for as Judith Kriger reminds us, in general audiences more readily associate animation with entertainment and escape from harsh realities of life despite the fact that animated characters have long occupied the screen of both fiction and non-fiction film alike (61). Contrary to this, animation as a narrative tool in *Pequeñas voces* does not offer an escape from the brutality of the Colombian armed conflict which it portrays. Rather, the simplicity of the childlike drawings beckons the intended older audience to notice the big impact the conflict has on its smallest victims.

Children's drawings, especially their representations of people, are cognitively linked to the inanimate, two-dimensional world and the imaginary. *Pequeñas voces* challenges this supposition by having the figures represent reality and possess qualities akin to those of a real body, namely their authentic *little voices*. Sigmund Freud, in his essay "The Uncanny," observes that an uncanny emotional response occurs when a picture or a doll comes to life (233). While to

a child's imagination there would be no uncanny association of a doll or a drawing coming to life - in fact, it may even be desired - to the adult audience targeted by this film the result of the talking infantile sketches describing mature subject matter has the potential to evoke an uncanny response.

The uncanny would not necessarily arise were it a work of fiction or a true fairy-tale, as animated bodies and even household furniture and toys, as Freud illustrates with the stories of Hans Christian Anderson, would be common-place and to be expected. Yet, Carrillo and Andrade's film is classified as a documentary, which by definition addresses *the* world in which we live rather than *a* world in which we live (Nichols 2010:xi, emphasis in the original). And, as an *animated* documentary, the tool of animation is simply one way of "creatively treating actuality" of *the* world inhabited by their narrators (Roe 2013:3). Thus, intellectual uncertainty about what is living or inanimate as a result of the animation of the children's pictures does have the potential to evoke the uncanny emotion in the viewer of this non-fiction film.

Accordingly, Carrillo and Andrade's documentary belongs to a recent trend referred to by some as "unfairy tales:" testimonial animated films protagonized by children of war that are created for an older audience.² Carrillo himself has commented that, despite being animated and protagonized by children, the film's *crudeza* leaves it geared towards a more mature audience.³ Yet, the children's testimonial drawings which comprise the visual aesthetic of the film set *Pequeñas voces* apart from other so called 'unfairy tales' which use a more traditional animation style solely influenced by the animators. The testimonial artwork in *Pequeñas voces* functions as

² See, for example, UNICEF's *Unfairy Tales* that spotlights the youngest victims of the Syrian refugee crisis.

³ See, for example, Morales, 2011, np. Though the film is unrated, the film does come with a printed warning that it is not suitable for children younger than seven years of age.

what animated documentary scholar Annabelle Honess Roe calls non-mimetic substitution: a creative rendering of historical events in a case where only audio archival materials are available.

Roe identifies a leeriness voiced by animated documentary's critics who regard animation as a "layer" that inhibits direct engagement between the audience and the (factual) participants of an animated documentary (2016:23). Yet, as this chapter will argue, the children's drawings not only work practically to solve the problem of a lack of archival footage of their experiences in the Colombian conflict, but they also act expressively in a way that a live depiction of the children could not. On the surface, the aesthetic of the film mimics one of the most universal forms of child's play: drawing. Accordingly, the animated aesthetic is unwaveringly reminiscent of childhood, which results in a growing tension as the narrators' testimonies reveal how their childhood has become increasingly vulnerable as it is interrupted, violated and even destroyed in the midst of a conflict. Further, the motif of child's play in the film, its prevalence in the children's memories of their homes and its subsequent absence in the events surrounding their exile, is one of the key indicators of the loss of innocence and childhood as a result of forced displacement.

Consequently, this chapter considers the way in which the non-mimetic animation communicates a loss of childhood, and explores how this loss is further reiterated through the motif of child's play within the film. Lastly, this chapter suggests that the non-mimetic style results in an uncanny viewing experience as the drawings of the characters become too real, taking on lifelike traits of the narrators through their words and actions, and in embodying the experiences of trauma that are projected onto them.

2.2 Animation as Non-mimetic Substitution in *Pequeñas voces*

The narrative potential of children's drawings as testimony to their war time experiences has been recognized and exhibited in various forms, notably in relation to conflicts arising in the Spanish-speaking world. Anthony Geist and Peter Carroll's *They Still Draw Pictures: Children's Art in Wartime from the Spanish Civil War to Kosovo* (2002) was published in conjunction with a travelling exhibition of the same title. Geist and Carroll's exhibition showcased children's drawings as historical documents that speak to the children's experiences of air raids, brutality, destruction and homelessness with a particular focus on the Spanish Civil War. The testimonial artwork, considered to be "deceptively transparent" (book jacket), were created in the *colonias infantiles*; refugee camps designated for displaced children during and following the Spanish Civil War.

Pequeñas voces addresses similar themes as Geist and Carroll's project and through the same medium of children's testimonial drawings. The conflict has persisted within Colombia for over five decades, and the resulting impact on human rights and security conditions has left over ten percent of the population internally displaced. At the time of the release of *Pequeñas voces*, this figure was 5.2 million citizens (CODHES 2011); a number that has grown to 6.5 million (UNHCR 2015). At present, Colombia is the only Latin-American country with an armed conflict, although current negotiations between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces signify that the country is at last poised to enter a post-conflict era (Pfeiffer 2015; Muñoz 2015; and Aguilar et al. 2015). The main players in this armed conflict have included guerrillas, paramilitaries, army, and State, yet the singular protagonist of *Pequeñas voces* is the collective group of displaced children that accounts for over one million persons in the above statistics.

Accordingly, Colombia's displaced children take centre stage in the feature-length animated documentary. The Cinecolor Films production is the result of a project 10 years in the making and a 56 minute extension of the 2003 award-winning short film of the same title.⁴ Carrillo interviewed children between 8 and 13 years of age who were displaced by the violent conflict from their villages in the interior of Colombia to Bogota, asking them one simple question: *Why are you here?* Their collective responses were two-fold: hand-drawn testimonies and recorded interviews which were incorporated in the production of *Pequeñas voces*.⁵ The children's testimonies are diverse, recounting threats and armed attacks against their families, bombings of their villages and farms, forced disappearances of authority figures, and their own recruitment by guerrilla forces as child soldiers.

As Roe reasons, non-mimetic animation adds something, and suggests things through its style and tone (2011:229). In this way, *Pequeñas voces* makes a point about the fragility of childhood through the paradoxical representation of the displaced children as 2D childlike drawings. By depicting the real narrators of these testimonies as infantile characters in the film, Carrillo and Andrade at first appear to suggest childhood's incorruptibility despite the conflict. Yet as the narrative plays out, tension builds as it becomes clear that war has had an inalterable effect on childhood. As a result, the infantile visual no longer aligns with the truths of the testimonial voice-offs. Instead, the children's drawings become an uncomfortable reminder – ever present on screen – of what has been lost at the hands of war.

The disparity in question between form and function is foreshadowed right from the opening credits. The credits appear in the foreground of the shot, cast over a cheerful, scribbled

⁴ The 2003 short film premiered at the Venice Festival and was winner of 8 international awards.

⁵ In total, Carrillo and his team interviewed more than 180 children totaling over 400 hours of recorded interviews at the Red Cross (Durán 44).

blue sky. The midground features alternating images of children at play while an audio track reemphasizes this visual with a multiplicity of children's chattering voices and shrieks of delight; a sound evocative of what can be heard on a playground. Yet, as the credits continue to roll, the images of play fade away, and the little voices are overtaken by the ominous sound of a war plane growing nearer. In the opening credits, the cheerful voices and sudden playful images are *displaced* by the noise reminiscent of war, emphasizing the notion the theme of the film to come. The notion of displacement is reiterated on screen with the declaration that "En Colombia, hay más de un millón de niños desplazados por la violencia...esta película fue narrada y dibujada por ellos."

Although this statement suggests that the film was predominantly narrated and drawn by children, the original testimonial illustrations are in fact only one component of the animation style. Carrillo and Andrade wanted to conserve the naïve aesthetic of the infantile drawings, yet they were aware that such an ambitious project would also require differing animation techniques.⁶ The solution was to use three distinct types of animation, all of which are unified by showing some semblance to children's handiwork. Some 500 original drawings were made by the children during the interview process. Based on these drawings, the co-directors created the main characters with hard and focused outlines using vector-based animation and then rendered them into 3D.⁷ As can be seen in Figure 2.1, the main characters and their families, though undeniably the work of the animators, remain faithful to a young child's drawing capabilities. This is notable in their disproportionate head to body ratio, their simple facial features, joint-less

⁶ As reported by Andrade in an interview for the animation festival LOOP (See Zúñiga).

⁷ Ibid.

limbs, an incorrect number of digits on their hands and feet, and the look of having been colored by hand.



Figure 2.1 Main characters created using vector animation. Reprinted with permission of Jairo Carrillo, director.

However, the oversized heads visible in the main characters are notable for more than being a mere characteristic of children's drawing capabilities. Various studies on the human figure as drawn by young victims of war and conflict converge in their conclusion that the exaggeration of the head region or face most clearly expresses and represents the psychological effect that conflict has had on its young victims (Andrade 2013; León and Castañeda 2012; Andrade Salazar et.al 2015). In this seemingly subtle detail, we can begin to understand the expressive potential of animation that Roe emphasizes: the exaggerated head size of the main characters in Carrillo and Andrade's animation style aligns itself with the idea that the conflict

has had a lasting psychological effect on these children. The same could be argued for the opaque coloring of the head region, as the solid fill makes this body part stand out from the rest and emphasizes its prominence.

A number of secondary characters more closely maintain the aesthetic similar to the children's original drawn figures, as Figure 2.2 shows, for their noticeably undefined features and softer lines compared to the main characters.⁸



Figure 2.2 The undefined features and softer lines of the secondary characters. Reprinted with permission of Jairo Carrillo, director.

The majority of these characters are the military, paramilitary and guerilla forces; victimizers who are notably portrayed with a more proportionate head size, tacitly reemphasizing the psychological effect experienced by the young victims who are depicted with much larger heads. Further, as can be seen in Figure 2.2 above, the animation style of the armed forces

⁸ A number of these original drawings are featured during the closing credits of the film.

features less distinguished lines, just as the distinguishing lines between the separate forces for the children are blurred in the film. To them, the armed players are all viewed as one common enemy, or conversely, as one common armed ‘Other,’ as one analysis of the film notes (Schöb 2015). Accordingly, the film does not clearly distinguish between military, paramilitary and guerrilla action, but rather suggests that it is the conflict itself - not the individual players - that have had the greatest impact on these children. As they reveal through their testimonies within the film, “todas las fuerzas que tengan un arma siembran terror.” Andrade, the film’s director of animation, affirmed in an online interview for LOOP animation festival that the children “no distinguen un guerrillero de un paramilitar y solo ven que el dolor y muerte que ellos causan no tiene color alguno” (Zúñiga np). Thus, the unclear lines in the animation of these characters speak to the lack of distinction between these players within the war.

Just as the film stresses one common antagonist, so too does it feature one protagonist. It is childhood that is at stake in the film, and childhood – not any specific child - that is the film’s protagonist. The bodies of the four child-narrators, though they are distinguished by their height, hair color and clothing, still portray an ambiguity that would allow them to be any number of children. By not giving a recognizable face to the four children whose testimonies are featured, the four figures become representative of any one of the millions of displaced children.⁹

Children’s drawings by nature are characterized by an ambiguity due to their simplicity. When an adult ponders their artwork it is often a guessing game of whom or what is being depicted. Just in the way that a drawing may be distinguished as an animal for its four legs, an oblong body and a tail, its species may be indistinguishable to anyone other than the child artist.

⁹ Further than the ambiguous bodies, this indistinctness is reiterated by the fact that these characters’ names are not salient within the film, nor are they mentioned in the closing credits.

Likewise, an adult observer may be able to distinguish the human figure by means of general physical features (i.e., head, extremities, hair and clothing), though details that make their likeness specific to an individual child often fall outside of the artistic capabilities of young children. The childlike drawings here, whether original or imitations, maintain this sense of ambiguity suggesting that this is not an experience exclusive to these individual children, but rather a collective one.

Figure 2.3 shows that on a third level there are what appear to be 2D untouched cut-outs of the children's drawings; their limbs and faces often remain inanimate and their movements are limited to the movement of the entire cut-out laterally across the scene. These drawings mainly comprise the "extras," along with numerous background images and scenery within the film.



Figure 2.3 The “extras” generated from 2D untouched cut-outs of the children’s drawings. Reprinted with permission of Jairo Carrillo, director.

2.3 The Motif of Child's Play

Pequeñas voces childlike aesthetic examined in the previous section gives the initial impression that childhood prevails for the narrators, despite the fact that their testimonies dictate how their childhood was interrupted and violated as a direct result of the conflict. Yet, upon closer examination of the animation's style and tone it becomes clear that the childlike depiction actually begins to point to the loss of childhood. This discrepancy is further reiterated through the motif of child's play within the film. Beyond the film presenting itself *as* play through the aesthetic of children's drawings, *Pequeñas voces* also sets up play as an integral part of childhood – as a harbinger of childhood itself – doing so from the opening credits, as mentioned, as well as the opening scenes.

In the same way that many documentaries begin, the film begins with a series of interview segments responding to unpronounced questions. However, in lieu of trademark talking head interviews typical of adult subjects, the opening scenes are constructed to show the entire body of the child-subject. Wide-angle shots emphasize the small frame of the child and allow the viewer to unequivocally get a sense of childhood as protagonist. The wide-angle shot also allows for the children to be seen at play, or notably *not* at play. To this end, the absence of play in the opening interview scenes, chronologically the most recent point in the plot, suggests that these children have become cut off from a major portion of childhood.

Children living through an armed conflict see their relationships and family structures affected and permanently altered, resulting in what José Alonso Andrade Salazar calls “un desajuste importante” in their development (2013:6). This *desajuste* manifests itself in two forms for the narrators: a regression into infancy, or, conversely, an early progression into adulthood. The victim of a bombing incident explains that at 10 years old “gatear fue lo único que podía

hacer.” A double amputee, he is cast backwards into a stage physically resembling infancy, where he is forced to learn to re-navigate his world. Bedridden and once again fully dependent on his mother, he eventually crawls his way back into the world of play. Meanwhile, his infant brother serves as his on-screen antithesis, given his agility and mobility at a much younger age.

Other testimonies reveal that some children are either propelled forward out of an innocent childhood, or remain in a state of limbo between their formative years and adulthood. The opening segments feature the youngest interviewees carrying out very childlike activities as they speak. Although play is present, the children drawing, playing with toys and situated on the playground appear distracted from their play. Instead of being drawn into a world of imagination, they are burdened by an adult sense of reality.

This state of limbo is most visible in the image of a small girl on a dilapidated swing. A long shot reveals a busy urban traffic zone. In the foreground a young girl can be seen sitting on a broken swing set beside the busy street, while buses and other numerous vehicles in the background reinforce the notion that this is a rather precarious place for a park. The second part of the film would reveal that this young girl, a coffee farmer's daughter, was always at play outdoors, though this dark, urban location is a far cry from the tranquil farm that she left. Arguably, the image of a swing set evokes the notion of childhood, yet the setting of a high-traffic street corner, above all after nightfall, calls to mind the notion of adulthood. What is more, her lackluster effort to swing, the broken swing beside her, and the absence of other playmates also suggest that she is on the precipice of adulthood.

In opposition, the two adolescent interviewees are pictured solitary and listless in their opening interview segments. The absence of play altogether becomes telling in light of later flashbacks that depict each young lad with a playful attitude, interacting with friends,

roughhousing, and taking part in sports. In the aftermath of his participation in the conflict as a child soldier, one boy explains in a disinterested voice that “no tengo ni amigos ya, porque no debe estar ni uno vivo ya, porque los que éramos buenos amigos siempre lo mandaban solamente a batallar.”

The film’s cyclical plot gives the viewer insight into how these children arrived at this dark place not only geographically, but emotionally. Following the opening interview segments, the film progresses inland geographically and backwards in time towards a more peaceful past in their rural homes. Concurrently, the children’s testimonies narrate a period permeated with child’s play. Despite warning signs of tension, such as the military presence seen in Figure 2.2, the conflict remains outside of their world and they are not hindered from enjoying their day to day to the fullest. Carrillo and Andrade highlight this period of innocence by using brighter elements from the children’s drawings to create a backdrop of rural scenery.

A big yellow sun, brightly colored flowers, fruit trees, green mountain ranges, and various winged and legged creatures fill each scene. Though these are common characteristics to children’s art across nations and cultures (Geist 34), and bearing in mind that Colombia is without a doubt a very fertile country, the cheery backdrop appears to depict a deeper meaning, especially in contrast with the dark opening scenes. The Garden of Eden-esque way the children have drawn their home makes it appear as a utopia. The idealistic vision of their life before displacement occurred is echoed in their testimonies. As the boy explains of life before the bombing incident, “sí, mis padres tenían la finca, y no hacía falta de pronto que para la cena ni para desayuno ni almuerzo, pues teníamos la fortuna; nunca nos faltó nada.”

What is more, the drawings and accompanying testimonies in the cheerful second part of the film depict a sense of the quotidian. There is a routine and a dependable simplicity to the

child-narrators' past in comparison to the fragmented and precarious situation that defines their present. Child's play can be seen to permeate every aspect of their daily lives from mealtime to chores to bathing and bedtime, as well as every facet and institution of their society: church, school, the market place and the home. The children narrate their memories of hide and seek, playing "cosquillas," riding horses, and participating in football matches. Carrillo and Andrade emphasize play further by filling in the testimonial narrative silences with scenes of the children playing tag, roughhousing, playing fetch with their pets, and school room antics.

A scene that bridges this playful past and the somber present features a group of young recruits playing football en-route to the base camp. Their carefree attitude despite their destination suggests that they are naïve to the horrors of war for which they have signed up. This especially in light of reported statistics that 43% of deceased guerrilla members and 41% of captured guerilla members were minors (USCR 2001, as quoted in Ibáñez and Vélez 662). Further, as they clamber into the back of the recruitment pick-up truck, their demeanor reveals that they view the experience as a joyride. This scene suggests that even the conflict itself for some of these children was conceptualized as a game.¹⁰

A sobering moment and turning point in the film occurs when play is physically replaced by violence. The young recruits' soccer ball is sequestered and deflated by a soldier upon their arrival at camp, and in the following scene the same boys are handed guns as a stark replacement

¹⁰ María Fernanda Luna suggests a similar notion in her article. One particular excerpt from this same character's testimony from the 2003 version of the film, though not included in this extended version, reveals that the child-narrator perceives the war, specifically his escape from the armed forces, merely as a dangerous game. Luna purports that this is reinforced by the way the original drawings in this version are given a video-game like aesthetic. Yet, this game has very real consequences as he narrates: "Eso salimos corriendo para el pueblito pequeño, y como eso es loma por allá, en el Meta ¡peor! Y eso sonaba rummm tatata. Y el helicóptero tiraba humo (...) Llegaron los aviones esos de Estados Unidos y se veía como chispitas, como si fuera pólvora, todo chévere ahí, pero ¡Uy, pero con un miedo!" (56).

to their former toy as they are instructed on how to shoot. Although the aim of both games is to shoot, the ball and the bullet have markedly different impacts on their target, as well as on the marksman. The deflated ball at the hands of the recruiter is symbolic of a transition from boy to man. Play becomes victim of war, and war has irrevocable effects on these young boys' childhood. The testimony of the child soldier reveals the shift towards a disenchantment with the reality of warfare when base-camp drills turn deadly and "a los que estaban bien lastimados mataban, si no sálvese quien pueda."

The sites of play also experience a change as they are violated by war. The coffee farmer's daughter witnesses her father being taken away at gunpoint in the same orchards they used to play in. She gives him an embrace as he symbolically places his hat on her head. Her youth is emphasized as she screws up her face in a defiant childlike pout. Her father's oversized hat appears too large on her small frame, as Figure 2.4 shows. Further, it seems out of place on top of her pigtails; an exceptionally childlike hairstyle. The hat becomes symbolic that it is time to don her grownup clothes, albeit too soon.



Figure 2.4 Donning adulthood. Reprinted with permission of Jairo Carrillo, director.

This is the same tension that can be seen in her opening segment. Her adult preoccupations seem too “big” for her small frame, and the way she does not interact with the swing set is evidence that she is no longer characterized by a playful nature. Her new “backyard” is now the streets of the barrio to which her mother and sisters have been relocated. Thus, her testimony, like the other narrators’, comes full circle chronologically as well as geographically. From Bogota to their rural homes in the interior, and each narrative thread ends with their exile and initial adjustment into the city.

Yet, the conclusion of the film depicts the same dark and rainy city featured in the opening segments with a brighter color palette. The children, despite their trauma, are seemingly able to find hope. Geist and Carroll noted the same phenomenon in drawings depicting a hopeful future within their project, noting that “these drawings are testimony to the human spirit in the face of adversity” (50). A communal football match suggests a reclaiming of childhood. What is

recuperated, however, is a changed childhood: one without a father, with artificial limbs, without the comforts of home, with carrying the heavy burden of what was seen and done in the guerrilla forces.

However, upon closer attention, the happy ending appears to be chronologically earlier than the more despair-infused testimonies of the opening scenes where hope is fleeting and play is waning, and a darker depiction of these children's reality is present. It would be inaccurate to say that these children's narrative and testimonies end with the hopeful conclusion of the film. These are not the child-narrators' final thoughts on their current welfare. The testimonies that the children give at the beginning suggest a disillusionment of life in the city now that they have settled in. As one scholar has noted, the impact on the city is two-fold: on the one hand it allows them to recuperate their childhood, while on the other hand they have moved from one violent reality to another. They experience re-victimization within the city; this one being more dark and crowded than their rural home (Schöb 40).

Pequeñas voces appears to be one of the few portrayals of the conflict that emphasizes the enduring and devastating effect on childhood, especially in comparison to live-action portrayals. Carlos César Arbeláez' *Los colores de la montaña* (Colombia, 2010) also provides a children's perspective on the conflict though the ending remains hopeful.¹¹ Play is rescued at the end of the film in the form of a football gone astray into a minefield, and is safely displaced along with the protagonist, tucked under his arm. *Pequeñas voces* is highly reminiscent of Arbeláez' film, told from the child's perspective with scenes taking place on the *fincas*, in the local markets, family home and school house that are one and the same, save for their differing

¹¹ Other Colombian directors, in turn, have provided their takes on forced displacement in Colombia from the adult perspective. For example, Luis Alberto Restrepo (*La primera noche*, 2003 and *La pasión de Gabriel*, 2008), and Carlos Gaviria (*Retratos en un mar de mentiras*, 2009).

stylistics of live action and animation. In fact, drawing and coloring play an important role for *Los colores*' young protagonist Manuel as the film's title suggests. Other forms of play, namely football, also play a prominent role. However, in Arbeláez' take on the conflict, while violence is perceived by the children it ultimately does not hinder them from being children. The adult figures, namely the guerrilla forces, teachers and parental figures are directly affected by violence and displacement, while the children are bystanders. Carrillo's film, though more childlike in form, does not hesitate to show the high stakes of childhood in times of conflict.

This can be further understood also in light of the planned sequel to *Pequeñas voces*. The opening interviews serve to set the scene for a follow-up that Carrillo has in the works. The Colombian director once again gained the support of el Fondo de Desarrollo Cinematográfico, this time granted 650 million pesos with which he plans to develop a sequel to this film.

Although Colombia is transitioning towards a post-conflict era, the conflict will have had lasting effects on the victims, especially those who were displaced. As a continuation of this feature length film, the purpose will be to show how the displaced children view the cruelty of their new home in the city of Bogota.

This second part of the story will be told using puppets and marionettes instead of children's drawings. As the Introduction to this thesis stated, scholars are animated film (Wells 2013) and animated documentary (Roe 2011, 2012; Ward 2004, 2011) have argued that the art of animated can lead to an uncanny viewing experience. Puppet animation has been linked to Freud's uncanny concept of the doubling, or the return, as Roe indicates, given that repetition and doubling are said to be representative of our own death and remind us of our own potential, eventual, inanimateness (2013:83). Interestingly, using children's drawings as non-mimetic

substitution for the real bodies in *Pequeñas voces* also has the ability to evoke an uncanny emotion in the spectator, as will be explored in the next section.

2.4 When Children's Drawings become Uncanny

The children's artwork in *Pequeñas voces* possesses the 'deceptive transparency' that Geist and Carroll noted of their drawings. Deceptive transparency is elemental to the notion of the uncanny: something that at first appears to be "known of old and long familiar" yet becomes frightening because it is "*not* known and familiar" (Freud 220, emphasis in the original). Central to Freud's notion of the uncanny is the idea that this eerie feeling arises when what should have remained hidden is revealed. In other words, the uncanny is "something which is secretly familiar, which has undergone repression and then returned from it" (245). The *returning* of what should remain hidden is revealed in *Pequeñas voces* as cracks begin to appear in the façade of childhood that the drawings maintain. These cracks form as the 2D drawings adopt life-like qualities of the narrators.

Specifically, the pictures end up embodying genuine emotions and motive, they give utterances in real voices - complete with improper syntax and the childlike uhms and aws as they chatter away above the ambient noise of the recording files - and they demonstrate life-like body and eye movements. The result is that the illustrated bodies of the main characters gain what Roe (2012) calls "uncanny indexes" to the bodies of the narrators.

Documentary theory has long assumed that both image and sound bear an indexical relationship to its source: an indisputable relationship between body and voice. Given the pairing of an animated aesthetic and a soundtrack comprised of testimonial voice-offs, this film belongs to what Roe deems a recent "wave" of animated documentaries in which a soundtrack of documentary interviews and a visual style of animated subjects coalesce (2011:27). *Pequeñas*

voices complicates the assumption of truth value with voice-offs of real testimonies that are unequivocally indexical and animated bodies onscreen that are unmistakably not.

It is precisely this contrast of live-action material and animated aesthetic noted by Roe that results in what she calls a “strange viewing experience” (2011:35). Scholars of animated documentary have previously agreed that this “strange viewing experience” causes uncanny feelings to arise, specifically in cases of animated interviews developed with the techniques of Rotoshop and Rotoscoping (Roe 2011 and Ward 2004 respectively). What particularly interests Roe is the concept of the ‘epistemological contract’ between the body of the interviewee and the documentary viewer in Rotoshopped films. Moments of disbelief can occur when the visual representation of the interviewee’s body is either too real or not real enough in its given context (28). Paul Ward later clarified this as an ‘indexical connection’ between the events/people and their filmed depiction that becomes problematized in animation (2011:294). In other words, animated documentaries of a testimonial nature challenge predispositions the viewer may have to equate notions of realism with resemblance.

In fact, the body of the interview subject is often the culprit through which the uncanny emotional response typically manifests itself. Bill Nichols noted the importance of the interviewee’s body in documentary film, though his work revolves around live-action productions. For the American documentary theorist, “it is not simply the knowledge possessed by witnesses and experts that needs to be conveyed through their speech, but also the unspoken knowledge that needs to be conveyed by the body itself” (175). Uncanny emotions surface as a result of the sense of reality haunting the animated image, whether that is through the slight *absence* of the body as Roe argues is the case in Rotoshop, or through a haunting *presence* of the interviewees’ bodies as I argue is the case of Carrillo and Andrade’s drawings.

The way in which the 2D drawings embody their narrator's trauma is evident in both the spoken and body language in the film's opening interviews segments. In the dark streets of Bogota, the rain and the color palette of cool blues and grays matches the tone that is being set the chilling confessions of the young narrators. The young protagonists avoid excessive eye contact much like children who have experienced trauma do (James 28). Each narrator only glances momentarily at the screen, as if they are confiding in spectator. For the young girl on the swing, as described in section 2.3, her timid gaze remains on the ground at her feet as she explains, "en las casas estamos contentos, pero en el barrio no." Her eyes briefly meet that of the spectator as she reveals, "porque por allá van los señores y matan muchachos." She glances back down at the ground as if searching for seeds of wisdom as she continues, "mi mamá está buscando a veces si se puede ir... pero la casita, ¿Cómo se hace?"

Her confession reveals that she now faces a double dose of violence: that which led to her displacement in the city, and the new dangers the city life brings. As one study notes, Colombia's urban areas have suffered from violence in the form of homicides, whereas the rural populations have suffered from violence in the form of armed confrontations, massacres and displacement (Ibáñez and Vélez 661). Caught in a cycle of violence, displaced children become re-victimized in their post-conflict environment not only for discrimination, poverty and exclusion that can accompany displacement but also new forms of violence characteristic of their new surroundings.

A subsequent long shot with a high-angle view again establishes the urban setting that the interviewees occupy, as the camera pans slowly down from a black sky to reveal a dark sea of houses that extends to the horizon. In the midground is an equally dark and deserted street, save for a young child swinging round a lamppost, notably too young to be out unaccompanied at

such an hour. A second boy sits on the street corner in the foreground, and as the camera continues to pan downward, bringing the spectator to eye level with the boy, it creates the impression that they are seated next to the character, as a witness and confidant. As the boy reveals how his family had to all but give away their *finca*, his gaze shifts momentarily from the dark street to stare directly into the screen, fixating on the viewer as he reveals that “pero quedamos casi en la calle”. The setting of his confession on the curb of this dark street on which he is sitting further emphasizes the loss of their cherished farmland.

Yet, beyond the human-like eye movements and behaviors, the loss of innocence also trickles through the childlike façade in the way that the opening segments show an entire body kinesthetic where the interviewees are playing, or notably not playing, while they give their testimonies. One small boy narrates his conflict experience while coloring on the floor, as Figure 2.5 shows. The high-angle shot gives the impression of an adult observer, looking down on the child. The way the camera sways from side to side and slowly pans closer to the subject pictured in the centre of the screen mimics the actions of an older, taller observer leaning in to listen. The camera becomes a witness in this young boy’s home where adults are again notably absent just as they were in the street, which is confirmed by his confession that his father is gone working long hours “porque si él llega a las nueve entonces gana mas plata, y si llega más temprano gana menos plata. Entonces con esto estamos haciendo la compra para comer”. The bobbing and slightly unsteady camera of the high-angle view does more than suggest an older, taller witness. The shaky cam also gives the impression that something is slightly off-balance in this young boy’s life, which is confirmed by his confession.

The significance of this adult knowledge of financial hardship is one indication that childhood has been violated at the hands of conflict, yet the confession seems strangely out of

place as he is in the midst of what should be carefree and imaginative play. But the fact that this character can be seen coloring does more than draw our attention to the tension between childish behavior and an adult sense of reality. This particular scene also becomes uncanny for what Freud notes to be the uncanny effect of a “double”, and likewise “repetition of the same”. Essentially, as Figure 2.5 reveals, a drawing is drawing and appears to be occupying a scene that is also a drawing, as the scribbled floor tiles suggest.



Figure 2.5 Drawings drawing: uncanny doubling and repetition. Reprinted with permission of Jairo Carrillo, director.

The uncanny repetition of *drawings drawing* also occurs in another opening interview scene, in which a young boy playing with his toy horse is pictured in front of what we presume to be his self portrait, evoking also the theme of the “double”. The repetition goes further as we are to understand that these characters are pictorial representations of the narrators; the images are doubles for the concealed bodies of the children whose testimonies are given. The result is a

layering of bodies: the hidden indexical body belonging to the voice, the animated slightly-indexical body in its stead, and the inanimate self-portrait created by the animated body. Each layer removes the interviewee's body one more step from reality. Or rather, each layer builds upon the film's childlike façade.

In this case, as Figure 2.6 suggests, the animated double is once again doubled by the presence of his self portrait. Each level of drawing points to the body that is not pictured, also evoking a sense of uncanny when “the distinction between imagination and reality is effaced, as when something that we have hitherto regarded as imaginary appears before us in reality, or when a symbol takes over the full functions of the thing it symbolizes, and so on” (Freud 244).



Figure 2.6 Drawings drawing: repetition and the uncanny. Reprinted with permission of Jairo Carrillo, director.

Further than taking on *little voices* and displaying childlike patterns of eye and body movement, the drawings gain indexicality as they display motive and express emotions. More

importantly, they display *changing* emotions that cannot be portrayed by an inanimate drawing. Though drawing their war-time experiences may be a conscious act by the child-narrators, the projection of emotions on to their drawings may have escaped their consciousness. The psychological concept of Projection, as originally conceptualized by Freud, is a defense mechanism – often unconsciously done – in which subjects attribute their own feelings and motives onto another person. It is a force that attempts to keep painful memories out of the conscious mind. Thus, painful memories are banished to the unconscious. The changing emotions of the animated characters reveal that the child artists of this documentary have projected their trauma onto the drawings and away from their own bodies.

The drawings of the main characters gain an uncanny indexicality as they embody the feelings and motives of the children that are projected onto them. One poignant scene involves one of the eldest narrators explaining the horrors of war experienced as a child soldier. While his tone is remarkably detached, his on-screen double shows intense emotion as he witnesses these violent acts, as can be seen in Figure 2.7 below.



Figure 2.7 The projection of feelings and motives onto the drawings. Reprinted with permission of Jairo Carrillo, director.

Carrillo's two-pronged interview technique of verbal and visual testimony acts in a therapeutic way similar to the nightmare-mastery technique *Draw Your Bad Dream* developed by Nancy Boyd Webb. Webb purports that the act of drawing the nightmare helps children reduce their fears. Once the picture transfers from mind to paper it becomes an external object that can be controlled, mastered and ultimately destroyed in a way of the child's choosing.¹² Following this line of thought, the self-portraits become external bodies on to which the trauma can be projected, conscious or not. Further, graphic depiction and play based dramatization allows displaced children of an armed conflict to process much of the anguish associated with episodes of war (Andrade 2010, 2013). In this way animated documentaries have the ability to show observable events, what Roe calls the 'world out there', in non conventional ways, while

¹² See, for example, Kaduson & Schaefer, pp. 159–162.

also superseding the abilities of the conventional documentary by being able to simultaneously show a more subjective, conscious experience, what Roe deems ‘world in here’(2013:2). In other words, the animation style in *Pequeñas voces* also begins to function evocatively, a concept which will be further developed in Chapter 4.

2.5 Conclusion

Jairo Eduardo Carrillo and Oscar Andrade’s animated documentary *Pequeñas voces* (Colombia, 2010) opposes the more conventional live-action aesthetic for narrating children’s very real and nonfictional experiences in the Colombian armed conflict. The distinctive blend of children’s testimonial drawings, CG animation and live testimonial material in this film not only make this take on the Colombian armed conflict stand out from previous live-action portrayals, but further this animation style expressively speaks to the effect that conflict has on its youngest victims.

Pequeñas voces is by all means an ‘unfairly tale.’ Childhood has become an *unheimliche* place for the displaced children of Colombia. Just as the landscape of their once peaceful homeland in the interior of Colombia becomes strange and unfamiliar by the marks of the armed conflict and all its players, so too does childhood become an uncanny place as these young victims find themselves launched into adulthood, grown up too fast by the experiences of war. Though they still physically resemble children, this classification no longer seems to ‘fit’ as the innocence of childhood is no longer familiar.

The film speaks to this reality with a façade that is visually indicative of childhood. The unflinching use of this aesthetic throughout the film, despite the shift in the narrator’s testimonies revealing the loss of innocence at the hands of war, creates a sense of unease for the viewer who understands that childhood has not prevailed. Further, the motif of child’s play within the filmic

narrative is an additional way of underscoring the loss of childhood and innocence, particularly as play begins to disappear from their daily lives – and especially in the cases in which it becomes altogether absent as objects of play are replaced by objects of violence.

The uncanny aesthetic of the narrators' bodies as children's drawings promotes the notion that childhood prevails despite the conflict, as drawing pictures is a common form of child's play. This aesthetic causes a viewing tension as the testimonies reveal how their childhood is in fact interrupted or ruined by the conflict. Signs of this tension fracture the film's façade as the drawings come to life, so to speak, through animated childlike behaviors and bodily movements, the embodiment of emotions and the adoption of their authentic *little voices*. The result is a slightly-indexical connection the viewer makes to the body of the interviewee, i.e. a haunting presence of their person, yet one that is uncanny as it is still concealed and kept out of sight. In this way, they actually begin to gain verisimilitude to the real bodies not depicted, and take a step (albeit a small one) towards a mimetic substitution.

Striving for verisimilitude in animation is the focus of the next chapter, which, on the one hand examines the mimetic function of animation in María Seoane's *Eva de la Argentina* (Argentina, 2011). In this way, Chapter 3 will continue the discussion of Freud's uncanny doubling and repetition introduced in this chapter, as the animation style that aims to closely depict reality results in an uncanny onscreen doubling of the title character. On the other hand, the way in which non-mimetic animation acts expressively through style and tone will be further discussed as the onscreen figure of Eva Perón is examined as a sociopolitical allegory for the project of Peronism.

Chapter 3: (Re)animating and (Re)imagining History: María Seoane's *Eva de la Argentina*

Peronism is a hodgepodge that allows all sorts of interpretations.

Indeed, it favors them.

- Alicia Dujovne Ortiz, *Eva Perón*, (46).

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 explored one way in which animation functions in documentary; in what leading animated documentary scholar Annabelle Honess Roe deems non-mimetic substitution. For documentarists, turning to an animated aesthetic that does not closely depict reality has been a means for expressing meaning through the visual style and tone, as is the case of Jairo Carrillo and Oscar Andrade's *Pequeñas voces* (Colombia, 2010). Chapter 2 looked at how the on-screen representation of the child-narrators as childlike drawings in *Pequeñas voces* makes a point about the devastating effect that the Colombian armed conflict has had on childhood.

In telling the story through a blend of children's drawings and computer generated animation that mimics them, the film initially appears to create a palatable façade that sutures Colombia's fragmented past. However, the filmmakers' choice of children's testimonial artwork to narrate their war-time experiences becomes an *uncanny* façade that does not in fact aim to suture, but rather points to the fragmentation, or breakdown, of childhood – the film's protagonist. This occurs as the drawings become too real, taking on life-like traits of their human narrators, and most of all embodying the trauma that is projected onto them. As the previous chapter mentioned, the testimonial soundtrack reveals that childhood itself becomes an uncanny place for the young victims of war, one that no longer feels *heimliche*, and the childlike

animation style that becomes increasingly dark as the plot progresses serves to emphasize this point for the intended older audience.

While Carrillo and Andrade's film contrasted a fully animated visual style with an entirely archival soundtrack, the next film we turn to, María Seoane's *Eva de la Argentina* (Argentina, 2011), features both fictional and archival audiovisual elements in a narration of a likewise fragmented past: the rise of Peronism through the two-term Presidency of Juan Perón, the military coup that deposed and exiled him in 1955 first to Paraguay and then Spain, a string of civilian military governments that struggled to control Argentina's state of economic turmoil for nearly two decades, the brief return of Perón and Peronism in 1973, and the dawn of the "Dirty War" in 1976 where the film's narrative begins. In the case of Seoane's film, however, we argue that turning to animation is in fact an attempt to suture a fragmented past, to re-imagine and reanimate, and above all remember, this historical period. Accordingly, this chapter explores the effectiveness of the film's animated and archival collage aesthetic to "glue together" a period of Argentina's history that is in fact marked by voids, silences and disappearances.

3.2 (Un)veiling History: Seoane's *peronismo imaginario*

Eva de la Argentina, produced by Illusion Studios, is a Flash animated biographical film that employs a cut out animation style featuring drawings inspired by the late Argentine comic artist Francisco Solano López, and incorporates archival materials in the form of photographs, newsreels and reconstructed newspapers, radio and interview recordings. *Eva's*¹³ protagonist and narrator is Rodolfo Walsh, a fictionalized version of the prominent investigative journalist who was disappeared in Buenos Aires in 1977. Walsh's account pieces together the story of Eva's

¹³ From this point forward the film shall be referred to simply as *Eva*.

life, from her childhood in Los Toldos to her later years in Buenos Aires where she would meet and marry Juan Perón, and in doing so become one of Peronism's central players. Likewise, a parallel thread chronicles in reverse the events surrounding the death and the mysterious odyssey of Eva's symbolic corpse, beginning with its second kidnapping at the dawn of Argentina's "Dirty War," and subsequently recounting the journey of the cadaver embalmed by Dr. Pedro Ara from its first kidnapping in 1955 from Buenos Aires' CGT at the hands of the self-proclaimed "Revolucion Libertadora," to its time spent under the watchful eye of colonel Carlos Eugenio Moorí Koenig, to the Italian cemetery where the cadaver remained for over a decade buried under the name María Maggis, and finally to her final resting place in La Recoleta Cemetery in Buenos Aires.

Biographer Alicia Dujovne Ortiz' statement in the epigraph of this chapter of Peronism's "hodgepodge" quality, however tongue-in-cheek, contains an element of truth. Sociologist Juan José Sebreli in the prologue to *Los deseos imaginarios del Peronismo* (1992) comments on the many transmutations that Peronism has tolerated from its origin in the 1940s up until its traces in the democratic and reformist faction of Peronism in the presidency of Carlos Menem (1989-1999) during which time his book was published. Each transmutation occurred according to "la de la sociedad a la que representaba" (11). As Hispanist Jon Beasley-Murray writes:

As to whether Peronism was a movement of the left or of the right: it was both. (And it was neither.) Peronism's ambiguity was further accentuated by the fact that the figure of Evita was always available as a second pole for identification: from the guerrilla version of Evita as rebellious incarnation of the Peronist left, as in the chant "If Evita lived, she would be a Montonero!" to her right-wing portrayal as the image of fidelity and subservience to patriarchy. (35)

Beasley-Murray's assertion that Peronism becomes increasingly ambiguous by a tendency to classify the movement through a figure that is also ambiguous is pertinent to understanding Seoane's personal interpretation of Peronism – not to mention her construction of the title character – in the film. For, beyond a collective social transmutation of Peronism, Sebreli also notes the way in which the political movement can change in the mind of its individual adherents; where the invented and the real are conflated in one's imaginary resulting in what he calls a *peronismo imaginario*. Sebreli's own personal myth of Peronism was largely influenced by literature, and Evita served as the "ingrediente decisivo" (19-20).

Sebreli's term, *peronismo imaginario*, is a useful one for interpreting the political view of Seoane's film, and as such will be adopted here. Like Sebreli, Seoane's *peronismo imaginario* also appears to be influenced by literature, namely that of a generation of intellectuals that precedes her own. This literary influence appears through the many intertextual references in the fictional Walsh's narrative, such as Rodolfo Walsh's *Esa Mujer* and *Operacion masacre*, Eva Perón's *La razon de mi vida*, Raúl Scalabrini Ortiz' "El subsuelo de la patria sublevado," and José Pablo Feinmann's essay *La sangre derramada*. Seoane's version of Peronism is influenced by the literature of a generation of Argentine intellectuals in which the Nueva Izquierda emerged. Accordingly, her myth of Peronism is anachronistic as it portrays the origins of Peronism in the 40s and 50s while imposing upon it ideologies that were not yet distinguishing characteristics of what Sebreli calls this "peronismo clásico."

The task Sebreli sets out for himself in recognition of his own *peronismo imaginario* is to unveil (*develar*) the enigma "para saber lo que somos" (11). John Kraniauskas later clarified this task of unveiling as an attempt to "quitarle al peronismo el "velo" de su *imaginario seductivo* para así iluminar su formación político-económica y su estructura estatal excepcional (su

realidad)” (105-106, emphasis in the original). On the surface, the film appears to be concerned with the task of unveiling the mystery of Eva through the figure of the fictional narrator Walsh. Walsh recounts the story from a place of political ambivalence; a tone established early on in the film when he remarks “yo no lo voté,” repeating this phrase as if to assure his audience of his objectivity. His supposed neutrality is earlier emphasized in one introductory sequence through a reference to Walsh’s short story, *Esa Mujer*:¹⁴ “ella no había significado nada para mí. Sin embargo, fui tras los secretos de su vida y su muerte.”¹⁵ The *nevertheless* is an important utterance as it speaks of duty, or of a calling. Walsh’s narrative tone in the film resembles the work of someone preoccupied with non-fiction investigative journalism, a genre he helped shape in Argentine literature. Further, while Walsh’s motive in *Esa Mujer* is strictly to understand the mystery of Eva’s death, namely the whereabouts of her cadaver, Seoane gives the fictional Walsh a second motive: unveiling the secrets of her life.

The relationship between *Esa Mujer* and *Eva* is an important one: Rodolfo Walsh’s short story appears frequently in the plot through verbal and through visual cues. Multiple shots of Walsh’s office depict his desk with a folder containing a manuscript of *Esa Mujer*, the loose pages indicative that the story is not yet complete. However, the appearance of the manuscript also gives Seoane’s *peronismo imaginario* an anachronistic character: Walsh is narrating the film from 1976 and *Esa Mujer* was published in 1965. The purpose for this anachronism could be to again point to Walsh’s “ambivalent” voice that combats Seoane’s decisive political standpoint

¹⁴ See, for example, Rodolfo Walsh, “Esa mujer” in *Los oficios terrestres* (1965), Ediciones de la Flor, Buenos Aires, 1986, pp. 9-19

¹⁵ The sentence in the short story goes, “Ella no significa nada para mí, y sin embargo iré tras el misterio de su muerte, detrás de sus restos que se pudren lentamente en algún remoto cementerio.”

for the fact that Walsh around the time of the publication of *Esa Mujer* did not yet identify himself with left-wing Peronism.¹⁶

Walsh's attempt to *deconstruct* the myth of Eva appears to mask the filmmaker's own effort to *construct* the myth of her *peronismo imaginario*.¹⁷ Namely, the narrator's search for the "truth" manifests itself in his fidelity to the archive in the film, as well as a highly didactic animation style that often accompanies his narration. It is through his investigation that the majority of the archival materials appear, largely with photographs and reconstructed newspaper articles which are featured in the recurring image of his investigative journal. Kraniauskas notes that Walsh's body of work from journalism to crime writing, "muestra que es también organizada *como conjunto* por un *deseo de saber*, dramatizando la búsqueda de cierto conocimiento y/o el desciframiento de un *enigma* por parte de un narrador" (108, emphasis in the original).

Taking a page from Walsh's book then, Seoane uses Walsh as a fictional narrator to *dramatize* the search for the truth and the demystification of an enigma. Further, she plays with the final words of Walsh's own short story in which he claims, "[m]ientras sé que ya no me interesa, y que justamente no moveré un dedo, ni siquiera en el mapa." Seoane mobilizes Walsh, makes him *interested*, even if from a place of ambivalence, and more than *moving a finger* he pursues the action surrounding Eva in the film, often pictured on screen clandestinely observing the action that surrounds her.

¹⁶ Walsh never identified himself as a supporter of Peronism, though for a time in the 70s he would show sympathies towards one faction of this movement in his role as an informant to the guerilla group the militant group, the Montoneros

¹⁷ Here, Seoane also appears to take inspiration from another cultural product surrounding the figure of Eva Perón: Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's movie/musical *Evita* (1976 and 1996 respectively) which also has a radical but ambivalent male guide for its depiction of Evita: Che Guevara.

However, while through the framework of investigative journalism the fictional Walsh appears to be unveiling truth, Seoane throws the veil back up, so to speak, not only through the ideological tool of animation, but also by using the archival materials (and ultimately Walsh) to advance her imaginary narrative. The juxtaposition of the animated and the archival within a film that aims to document history links *Eva* to the other films under examination in this thesis, however unlike *Pequeñas voces* and *30 años de oscuridad* Seoane's film was not marketed as an animated documentary, but rather a biopic.

Eva stands out from traditional live-action biopics and seems to be on the forefront of a new way of dramatizing the life of historical figures through animation.¹⁸ Yet, *Eva* diverges from both traditional live-action and fully animated biopics for its incorporation of archival materials. Straddling the genres of documentary and biographical film then, *Eva* could be classified as what Cristina Formenti calls “the sincerest form of docudrama,” given that it contains a large portion of archival audio and visual content, yet is a dramatized version of a non-fiction and historically based character. In other words, the film features particular aesthetics and codes conventionally accepted as markers of documentary, yet it employs the “grammar of fiction film-making” and features “a cinematic technique, such as animation, that is considered the fictive technique par excellence” (105-108).

Yet, if we consider Roe's definition of animated documentary as that which creatively represents *the* world in which we live, rather than *a* world imagined by the filmmaker, a case for

¹⁸ For example, Dorota Kobiela's *Loving Vincent*, set to be released in 2017, will portray the life and mysterious death of Vincent Van Gogh in the world's first fully painted feature film. In a similar vein, French director Bibi Bergeren's *Charlotte* is set to be a World War II animated feature portraying the life of German-Jewish artist Charlotte Salomo by animating and interpreting the artist's own paintings. Likewise, *Bubbles*, a stop-motion film about the life of Michael Jackson as told by his chimp Bubble's perspective is currently in production by executive producers Isaac Adamson and Lee Stobby.

Eva as an animated documentary can be made. Further, Roe's definition of animated documentary does not rely on a set quantity of archival materials as a yardstick for classification, but rather the understanding that animation and live-action elements are integrated to the extent that the meaning of the film would become incoherent were the animation to be removed (2013:4; 2016:44). This is arguably the case for *Eva*, whose archival elements are consistent throughout the film, but are also inextricably linked to the animated elements, and vice versa. This is perhaps most notable in the case of the animated figure of Eva Perón, whose voice is comprised solely of archival voice-offs. In fact, *Eva* aesthetically resembles Ari Folman's Flash animated, cut-out style biographical war film *Waltz with Bashir* (Israel, 2008) which only features 50 seconds of archival footage at the film's conclusion, and is often cited as a benchmark for the animated documentary genre.

In placing emphasis on *Eva*'s documentary quality, this chapter will once again turn to a discussion of Roe's functions of animation in documentary film.¹⁹ The purpose of this chapter is to explore how the animated and the archival operate in the filmic narrative, both separately and in conjunction with each other to illustrate Seoane's *peronismo imaginario*. To do so, it will consider two of Roe's functions of animation in documentary: non-mimetic substitution, as was

¹⁹ *Eva* is the most recent Argentine film to follow the hybridization trend to tell the former First Lady's story, yet displays qualities that link it to notable predecessors in the documentary genre. The use of drawings to give further meaning to the archival images on screen is a shared characteristic with Leonardo Favio's nearly six hour documentary that covers six decades of Argentine history, *Perón, sinfonía del sentimiento* (1999). To make up for a lack of newsreel clips with which to build the plot, Seoane's film features a prevalence of photographs as an alternative resource, which is also a technique employed in María Mazzorotol's *Evita, otra mirada* (2010). Likewise, *Eva* turns to re-enactment to fill in the gaps, much like Tristán Bauer's *Evita. La tumba sin paz* (1997) which recreates a mise-en-scène reminiscent of the mid 1950s using live actors and period-appropriate scenery. Although animation is an altogether different form of re-enactment from live action, the animation style inspired by the drawings of Solano López is equally reminiscent of this mid-century era.

discussed in the previous chapter, as well as mimetic substitution. When animation is functioning as mimetic substitution, the mimesis works to validate history (Roe 2013:72).

Having established that Eva Perón plays a key role Seoane's version of Peronism, Section 3.3 will explore the version of Eva that Seoane puts forth. It will consider how the mimetic animation intentionally doubles-up Eva Perón's onscreen figure as a validation of what one critic calls her "capacity for multiplicity" (Savigliano 347). Likewise, Section 3.3 examines how the mimetic double becomes an uncanny doppelgänger for Eva Perón's onscreen archival figure. In consideration of Seoane's *double-Eva tactic*, as it will be called here, the first section asks how the uncanny doubling of Eva Perón fits into the larger filmic recuperation of what was made to disappear.

Section 3.4 will examine the role of the archival, and how it skirts the traditional role of validating history to instead validate the myth: Seoane's *peronismo imaginario*. Section 3.4 will explore how the archival fragments in fact testify to the animated (mythic) narrative that will be discussed in the final section. Accordingly, section 3.5 will consider a second, disparate, function of animation that the film employs simultaneously in regards to Eva's character: non-mimetic substitution. It will investigate how Eva's animated figure in the film also exists as a symbolic body: a sociopolitical allegory onto which Seoane's myth of Peronism can be written.

3.3 Animation as a Tool to Validate History

Although the mimetic animation style employed in *Eva* is not in its most extreme form of photorealism, as can be the case, the drawings still aim to create a visual link with the bodies of the historical figures they are depicting. The animated characters in Seoane's film display two important characteristics that make them mimetic: they look human, and they closely resemble their human counterparts in a way that is distinctly recognizable (Roe 2013:57).

Seoane's film was released just shy of 60 years marking Eva's death. Or, more appropriately, nearly six decades marking her passing *a la inmortalidad* as it was broadcasted by Argentine radio stations across the nation. Eva Perón took every measure in her short life to assure that her name – and more importantly her image - would not be erased from the pages of history. Accordingly, Seoane's double-Eva tactic validates a preoccupation that the former First Lady would confess time and time again: "I want to have a place in history" (Ortiz 174). Sigmund Freud's notion of the 'double,' developed in his essay "The Uncanny" (1919) posits that repetition and the double create an uncanny sense of immortality, which makes the object being repeated both familiar and unfamiliar. Seoane visually depicts her protagonist in a way that reflects her preoccupation with immortality through doubling up her image on screen.

The assemblage of Eva's archival and animated faces within the film can be understood as a filmic manifestation of the desire she named to have a place in history: an assurance of immortality through doubling, dividing and replicating her image. Hugh Lloyd Davies hints at this when he claims that her proliferating image defied every attempt "to pin her down" (417). Each additional image is another footprint left by Eva, and through the replication of these same images in film and broader media alike they become infinite traces of her existence.

As Roland Barthes argues, photography renders it impossible to "deny that the thing has been there. There is a superimposition here: of reality and the past" (77). Further, André Bazin in "The Ontology of the Photographic Image" adds that a photograph's viewer is "forced to accept as real the existence of the object reproduced, actually re-presented" as a result of a "transference of reality from the thing to its reproduction" (13). The tool of photographic image, which is the most salient archival tool in the film, provides another *transference* of the real Eva despite her passing over sixty years ago. Each new image of Eva that spilled out into the Argentine media

and popular culture made it harder to wipe away the stain that she was perceived to be by the military dictatorship in one fell swoop during the ban on Peronism from 1955 until 1971 under decree 4161.

The immortality she sought through creating a very public image of herself, and *varied* public images of herself, can be understood as a defense mechanism against her physical body's destruction. Eva herself reiterates the duplicity of her own figure in her memoir, *La razón de mi vida*:

Unos pocos días al año represento el papel de Eva Perón; y en ese papel creo que me desempeño cada vez mejor, pues no me parece difícil ni desagradable. La inmensa mayoría de los días soy en cambio Evita, puente tendido entre las esperanzas del pueblo y las manos realizadoras de Perón, primer peronista argentina, y éste sí que me resulta papel difícil, y el en que nunca estoy totalmente contenta de mí [sic]. (66)

This personal account reveals that a double identity was a character trait to which the ex-first Lady of Argentina openly ascribed to herself and embraced. The doubling she created through her Eva/Evita roles evokes what Sigmund Freud notes to be “the *manifest* motivation of the figure of the ‘double’” (236, emphasis in the original). The creating of a name for herself through various self-made images, and the pursuit of wealth and fame all challenge an upbringing that would have otherwise seen her fading into oblivion had she remained the illegitimate and impoverished girl from Los Toldos instead of becoming “Argentina’s most triumphant woman” as she perceived herself to be (Ortiz 136).

Freud’s notion of the double incorporates “all the unfulfilled but possible futures to which we still like to cling in phantasy” (236). Eva Perón was undoubtedly a dreamer with big

aspirations, as is revealed in her move from Los Toldos to Buenos Aires, her attempted career as an actress, and likewise her pursuit of fame on the arm of prominent political figure Juan Perón. As Sarah Misemer notes, “Evita’s was a Cinderella story come true” (98).

The doubling up of Eva Perón’s figure both plays with and plays up the notion of duplicity in her character. The excess of Evas points to a subtext within the film of Freud’s notion of the uncanny double as “an insurance against the destruction of the ego, an ‘energetic denial of the power of death’” (235). Through a mimetic body double, Seoane’s Eva becomes quite literally two-faced; the animated image emerges as a *doppelgänger* of the archival body within the film. It is cast as look-alike, though it remains physically distinct. Yet, there is something that makes this separate body eerily familiar to the archival body: they share one voice, leading to what Freud describes as “the extraordinarily strong feeling of something uncanny that pervades [the double]” (236).

The unification of the two bodies by means of one voice results in the strange impression that, although separate beings, they appear to be of one mind. In other words, it appears as if Seoane’s animated and archival Evas are the result of the uncanny process of “doubling, dividing and interchanging of the self” (Freud 234). The relationship between the individual Evas is “accentuated by mental processes leaping from one of these characters to another—what we should call telepathy—so that the one possesses knowledge, feelings and experience in common with the other” (Freud 234).

One scene in which the uncanny telepathy visibly and audibly plays out features an audio montage of the First Lady’s most notable public addresses. Initially the body accompanying the voice-off is also archival, as depicted in a highlights reel of footage dated from 1947 to 1951. As the recording plays a speech from 1951 in which Eva can be seen dressed in her trademark

chignon, a dark suit and understated earrings, the archival body raises its hands in an open-armed gesture as she begins to recite, “Quiero decirle a todos los desheredados a todos los que necesitan justicia...” Meanwhile, as the voice-off continues seamlessly, at the end of the audio segment it is the animated Eva, notably dressed in a similar fashion, that raises a single hand, forming it into a triumphant fist while promising that “la justicia social se cumplirá, cueste lo que cueste y caiga quien caiga.” This interchange between animated and archival figures to the tune of the same archival voice gives the impression that the two Evas, though separate entities, are connected in mind. Here, they literally finish each other’s sentences. Their similar appearance and hand gestures in this scene also indicate a double mind-body connection.

The continuity of Eva’s archival voice complicates what Roe calls the “epistemological contract” between interviewee and viewer. As Roe points out, animated documentaries already complicate the epistemological contract by pairing animated bodies with authentic voice-offs, as in the case of *Pequeñas voces*, as discussed in the previous chapter. According to Roe, the “epistemology of testimony,” which entails both spoken language as well as body language, is complicated in the case of an absent archival visual index which is replaced with an animated figure, yet paired with an authentic audio index (2012:28). In *Eva*, however, the viewer becomes even more entangled in the epistemological contract as a result of the double-Eva tactic in which two bodies share one archival voice. The viewer must first try and reconcile the voice-body relationship between Eva Perón’s archival voice and her animated form, and then when there is a repetition of bodies, they must further reconcile this relationship when there is only one voice to which they both belong.

In doubling up Eva’s character, Seoane gives her the motive of what Freud describes to be the double’s function as a “preservation against extinction” (235). Indeed, Freud’s function of

the double aligns with Eva's own confession that she wanted a place in history. This motive is especially important for the former First Lady who barely made it to her thirties before succumbing to cervical cancer, and saw the purging of her image not only at the hands of her husband in his attempts to erase much of the traces of modeling and acting career following their marriage, but also through the sixteen-year military ban on Peronism prohibiting the possession of her image and the mention of her very name.

The double's function as a "preservation against extinction" is notable in one scene at the mid-point of the film which superimposes an animated image of a visibly ailing Eva over top of an archival montage of clips depicting a younger, healthier Eva. An alarm clock ringing and a melancholic tune suggest that her time is almost up; death for the former First Lady is near. The evident unravelling of her health is symbolically paralleled by the unravelling of her chignon as her hair cascades down over her fatigued shoulders as she reclines in an armchair. As the animated Eva closes her eyes, the montage of archival fragments on screen symbolize a remembering of her life in the spotlight: newsreels depict her return to Buenos Aires after her tour of Europe as well as a medley of her public appearances on the arm of Perón. The many images act as a reassurance that dying Eva has indeed left her mark, and created a name for herself. She can rest easy for, as the final words of Ortiz' biography, *Eva Perón*, states: "She belongs to History" (383).

As the memories continue to flood the screen, the shot shifts from an archival remembering to one final animated "memory" depicting Juan and Eva mid-embrace, as he lets her hair down. As her long blonde hair is swept up by the wind they share a passionate kiss. In this remembering, however, the unraveling of her hair is not symbolic of her unraveling health and imminent death; rather it is suggestive of her lasting image. A new image would emerge of

Eva following her death, noted above by Beasley-Murray as one of the poles for identification: the free-flowing hair links her to the conception of *Eva Montonera*, and thus late, left-wing Peronism of the '60s and '70s. Eva will live on, we are to understand through this animated segment. As her own tomb states: “volveré y seré millones.”

In this sense, the mimetic animated image also corroborates history in the way that it speaks to the multiple images of Eva that would emerge after her death (beyond those she created of herself during her short life). In this case it points to the image of Eva Montonera, as mentioned, which plays the starring role in Seoane's *peronismo imaginario*. As Ortiz notes, “in order to observe Peronism, it was enough to look at Eva. In the period starting in 1948 and ending shortly before her death in 1952, authoritarianism would go hand in hand with her severe hairstyle” (207-208). However, the animated image that Seoane inserts into the dying Eva's “memory” is one of the “*Pasionaria* with hair flowing over her shoulders” that the leftist Peronist youth would adopt in the 70s (208, emphasis in the original). This is the image of Evita that Seoane adopts for the animated figure, often anachronistically depicted with free-flowing hair, most notably in key scenes that correspond to a time when a more authoritarian, chignon-sporting Eva would have been present.

Ultimately, the mimetic animation, in presenting multiple versions of Eva, validates the lasting images Eva created of herself, and those that were attributed to her following her death. But moreover, and as the next section will touch on, in using Eva's figure as symbolic of the larger Peronist body, the multiple animated versions of Eva point towards the ambiguous character of Peronism that critics have noted. The next two sections explore the implication of employing an immortalized Eva Montonera as the protagonist of Seoane's *peronismo imaginario*.

3.4 The Archival as a Tool to Validate Myth

On the one hand, the mimetic animation when paired with Eva's archival figure mimics her duplicity and validates her *energetic denial of the power of death*, as mentioned above. On the other hand, *Eva* also features the juxtaposition of the animated and archival for another purpose; one that does not have to do with the validation of history but rather the promulgation of Seoane's personal myth of Peronism. In this regard, Seoane reverses the functions of the animated and the archival as proposed by Roe: it is the archival components that serve to validate the animated (mythic) narrative instead of vice versa. Curiously, Seoane uses archival components to fill 'animated gaps' in her narrative, which, due to the unlimited creative power in animation, need not exist.

Just as animation is an ideological tool, the archival fragments take on an ideological function as well as they are woven out of historical context into the fictional context of the film's tapestry. One key scene in which the re-signification of the archival plays out depicts the action leading up to the revolution in the Plaza de Mayo on the 17th of October, 1945, depicting what has been called "Peronism's primal scene" (Beasley-Murray 243). An *El Diario* newsclipping fills the screen, as its headline announces the action that is about to take place: HUELGA GENERAL DE LOS TRABAJADORES POR LA LIBERTAD DE PERON. The image of the reconstructed newspaper, archival in nature, posits that what is about to be witnessed is no doubt history. However, the scene that follows makes clear that it is a specific version of history that is being depicted.

Pictured at home, a determined Eva gazes into a three-way mirror at the multiple reflections of herself (another hint by the filmmaker of her duplicity?). The camera is poised behind her figure, and her image is shown as a reflection in the mirror, or as multiple reflections,

tying a white scarf over her loose blonde hair. The significance of this image is two-fold: the loose hair, as mentioned in the previous section, links her to the conception of Eva Montonera, and thus late, left-wing Peronism of the '60s and '70s (decades after this general strike would take place), while the white head-scarf links her to another later movement that also began a ritualistic congregation in the Plaza de Mayo facing the *Casa Rosada*: the *Madres de la Plaza de Mayo*.

In this scene, the distinctive white headscarf serves as a symbol of public struggle for Eva, just as it would symbolize the public struggle decades later for the mothers who sought justice for their disappeared children. The implication is then that the liberation of Juan Perón on what would later become the *Día de la lealtad* becomes Eva's own public struggle. In other words, wrapped in the white symbolic fabric, the inaugural moment of Peronism becomes *her* moment. In presenting Eva in this way, Seoane adopts the Peronist regime's own tactic, noted by Beasley-Murray to be the rewriting of Peronism's narrative through the ritual re-enactment of the scene in the Plaza in 1945 "by constructing Evita as its central organizing principle" (66).

It is in this scene that Seoane's *peronismo imaginario*, and a revolutionary Evita's role as a principal player, is most clearly articulated. Clad in her white scarf, Eva sets out about the town knocking on doors to rally support for the liberation of Juan Perón. En route back to the Plaza, she witnesses the success of her purported individual efforts as she gazes out the car window upon the mobilizing masses. However, instead of depicting the rallying workers through animation to match the aesthetic of the rest of the scene, Seoane employs archival images of the mobilizing masses which are projected onto the car window. The re-signified archival images validate Eva's role in this event; a "fact" that is further emphasized by the testimonial narration accompanying the archival footage. Echoing the words of Raúl Scalabrini Ortiz' "El subsuelo de

la patria sublevado,” Walsh recounts that the *trabajadores* “venían hermandos en el mismo grito y en la misma fe,” as newsreels show the hordes descending upon the plaza. The archival images are made to visually reflect (both literally and symbolically here) the fictionalized version of a revolution that Eva purportedly instigated. The *El Diario* clipping, the archival footage, and the testimonial words of Argentine writer and journalist Scalabrini Ortiz all serve as a verification of what Seoane makes Eva’s achievement.

Despite the archival assurance, this scene is, quite literally, the stuff that myths are made of. Seoane’s take on the events leading up to “Peronism’s primal scene” goes against that of her contemporaries, as journalists and historians alike have come to the conclusion that, although the official story grants Evita a decisive role on the 17th of October, 1945, she was not only *not* an integral part of the movement, but she was likely not even present in the streets or in the Plaza.²⁰

Historian José María Rosa, who also speculates Eva’s likely absence from the scene, wrote of that day:

La tradición ha dado a Eva Duarte una actividad legendaria en el 17 de octubre. Sin mengua de la extraordinaria figure que fue Eva Perón como esposa y colaboradora del general no corresponde atribuirle una función decisiva en el levantamiento popular. Que no fue solamente levantamiento de obreros organizados, sino de todo un pueblo. Es cierto que *Eva Duarte* conocía a los

²⁰ Journalists Héctor Daniel Vargas, and Alberto Amato after him, places Eva in Junín, likely in her mother’s house, by proof of her signature on an official document, though the document was never published. They hypothesize a return from Junín to Buenos Aires by mid-day, but affirm that she never went out into the streets or entered the Plaza; her interaction with Perón that day, if any, was limited to a telephone call from the house of her actress friend Pierina Dealessi, and hearing his infamous speech on the radio en la Casa de Gobierno. (Vargas, Héctor Daniel (octubre de 1997). “¿Qué hizo Evita el 17 de octubre: Un documento refuta el mito.” *Zona*. Buenos Aires. Amato, Alberto (26 de julio de 2002). “El misterio del 17 de octubre del 45: ¿cuál fue el papel de Evita en ese día histórico?.” *Clarín*. Buenos Aires.)

dirigentes obreros que visitaban a Perón en la calle Posadas, pero no tenía la difusión ni el poder en los medios obreros que alcanzo más tarde cuando fue *Eva Perón*... Nadie preparó el 17 de octubre, nadie lo ordenó, nadie lo “planificó” (para usar una palabra grata a los que no creen en las conmociones sociales, sin planes cuidadosamente estudiados). Fue espontáneo. (52-53)

Rosa not only signals Eva’s lack of direct involvement that day, and disassociates the origin of *Peronism* from her figure, but the historian also denies Eva the very name after which the movement began, *Perón*. In purposefully referring to her as *Duarte*, Rosa points to her illegitimate role that history has come to give her in this story, and likewise signals her role of illegitimacy to the future President at this moment in history as his mere mistress. Yet Seoane grants Eva a very official role, transforming her into the *Pasionaria* of the revolution.²¹

Kraniauskas in his article, "Rodolfo Walsh y Eva Perón: "Esa Mujer," notes that Eva Perón in *Esa Mujer* is transformed into a “fetiche político” (Kraniauskas 108). Taking another page from Walsh’s book then, Seoane also fetishizes Eva Perón as a political-cultural object. Specifically, she transforms her into a fetishized substitute for the project of Peronism itself, as the next section explores.

3.5 Non-mimetic Substitution as Allegory

The action of this integral scene continues as the masses of *descamisados* arrive at the Plaza de Mayo, Eva along with them. The maternal, justice-seeking image she bears clad in her

²¹ Ortiz affirms that it was actually Isabel Ernst, who would later become an assistant to Eva, that was the “Pasionaria of the revolution of October 17” (121). Further, she points out a jealousy on Evita’s behalf of the natural blonde, and that it was Ernst’s style of “gray suits, linen-colored hair, and discreet makeup” that would inspire the image of Evita (121). Evita would then in a sense become an uncanny double to the natural blonde, who as her assistant and advisor often stood “one behind the other, identical in everything: same suit and sometimes same hat (the only difference was that the German woman was four inches taller than Eva)” (Ortiz 151).

white headscarf is taken to another level, literally, as the scarf is swept up in a gust of wind, passing by a rallying railway worker perched atop a streetlamp as he gazes up at the statue of La Madre Patria. The statue of La Madre Patria suddenly transforms in a likeness of Eva before the spectator's eyes, her long hair unraveling to blow in the wind, and as the marble figure becomes mobile it extends one arm towards the picketer in the streetlamp who reciprocates the gesture. An extreme close-up of their two limbs results in a shot that mimics Michaelangelo's "The Creation of Adam." Eva, we are to understand, is not only the mobilizing force behind the masses, but she is the very creator of the *pueblo*.

Yet, Michaelangelo's famous painting depicts the fingers of God and man in a perpetual state of reach; they are not touching as they are not ontologically on the "same level". Seoane takes the parody one step further as the finger of Evita-God makes contact with the demonstrator, suggesting that in some way they are on the same level. As the two fingers connect, the scene cuts abruptly in a flash of light to an archival recording of Juan Perón's infamous freedom speech from the balcony of the *Casa Rosada*, suggesting to the spectator that it was in fact Eva who achieved the freedom of her husband by her "almighty" hand. Eva is creator of the pueblo, and she is also the pueblo itself.

Accordingly, the Plaza de Mayo scene constructs the myth of Peronism completely around the figure of Eva Perón. Thus, the animation's second function emerges in the film: non-mimetic. In identifying the project of Peronism with the figure of a loose-haired Eva Perón, her animated body becomes a sociopolitical allegory, representing something larger than herself. In this way, the filmic narrative is bigger than the professed biography of Eva Perón. It is also, simultaneously, the biography of a national project. However, the film presents a specific political view of this national project, as already noted. It is one of left-wing mythology. Ortiz

refers to this political view as the “red myth:” a left-wing Peronist army of some forty thousand men looking to radicalize Peronism, who referred to themselves as Mononteros, using Evita as their flag (Ortiz 297-298).²² The notion of using Evita as their flag is illustrated quite clearly in the Plaza scene, again reiterating Seoane’s own leftist view. As the statue of La Madre Patria transforms into a loose-haired Eva, the dull marble becomes bright with the blue and white of Argentina’s flag, notably sporting none other than a red cap tying her to the notion of the “red myth.”

Further, this scene establishes the Eva-Peronism parallel by placing her in the middle of the action in the Plaza. The animated scene mimics what Beasley-Murray calls Populism’s “balcony effect:” a cinematic device of shot and reverse shot to capture the public spectacle. The alternating shots guarantee that the Peróns and multitude are not represented together, but rather maintain a division between the expansive multitude in the Plaza and the Peróns addressing them from the balcony (243-244). The balcony effect, according to Beasley-Murray, “insinuates a limit between multitude and state, substituting a social contract for the social *contact* that the multitude desires and threatens, and thus recomposes the multitude as the people” (243, emphasis in the original).

Seoane, given the unlimited potential of animation, could have placed Eva on the balcony beside Juan. However, by locating Eva in the midst of the multitude, and by explicitly depicting her as making this desired “social *contact*” in the parody of Michaelangelo’s “The Creation of Adam,” Seoane reiterates the allegorical status of Eva’s figure as Peronism itself.

²² Ortiz proposes the “red myth” as a third myth that goes along with the traditional “white myth” and “black myth.” The white myth depicted Evita as “a virgin in the flesh, as maternal tenderness, the very meaning of sacrifice,” while the black myth rendered her a “prostitute, a social climber thirsting for power” (Ortiz 296-297).

Eva's status as allegorical is further accentuated in the scene that immediately follows the re-enactment of the *Día de Lealtad*. Immediately following Perón's speech from the balcony at nightfall, the scene cuts to another shot on what we are led to believe is the same evening. Walsh is pictured in the foreground of the shot, gazing at an intimate moment between Juan and Eva as the liberated leader slips a ring onto Eva's finger. Walsh's commentary that what he is seeing is "un final feliz en la conmoción de la noche...ese 17 de octubre de 1945 cuando en verdad comenzó todo," erroneously portrays the date on which Juan and Eva were married, as well as the place.²³ However, in consideration of Eva's animated figure functioning non-mimetically, or allegorically, this scene becomes indicative of a different kind of marriage: one between Perón and the pueblo – a love story between a leader and the people who rallied to show him their support on that historic day.

The film's dual biographical focus is hinted at from the opening credits which succinctly recaps Peronism through a series of on-screen images: historical texts such as *La Constitución de la Nación de Argentina* and *Derechos del Trabajador*, the figure of La Madre Patria, the rallying working class, bombs marked with the 'Cristo vence' symbol falling on the Plaza de Mayo, and the *escudo peronista*. The final image in the credits, featuring the trademark shot of the animated silhouettes of Juan and Eva in their embrace as he once again lets her hair loose, suggests from the start the specific version of Peronism which is about to be recounted.

Further, a second image of Eva is incorporated into the opening credits – a close-up of her blood stained hands; the same image is featured in a later scene as she becomes aware of her cancer, or what Walsh describes as "una enfermedad innombrable." This brief close-up of her

²³ Historians agree that they were married five days following the strike, on October 22, 1945 though details surrounding the exact location remain foggy. However, as Ortiz notes, the official version of story places the civil marriage ceremony in Junín (133).

hands in the midst of the images symbolic of Peronism sets the tone of the film in linking Eva with Peronism, also “una enfermedad innombrable” in 1976 when the film’s narrative begins, a time in which Argentina’s military government took particularly cruel repressive measures against its own people, attempting to dismantle any oppositional political activity from those who questioned its principles.

Thus, from the opening credits of the film, Eva’s fate becomes inextricably linked to that of the movement she would come to embody. Ortiz, after Sebrelí, notes that Evita by birth was divided into two different people, possessing a dual membership of landownership (through her father), and of homelessness (through her mother). Yet, unsatisfied with this dual membership, Evita was torn by the desire to be someone else. Argentina, characterized by the same dual membership, was also torn by the same desire (20-21).

This shared desire is communicated mimetically as well as non-mimetically (allegorically) through Eva’s frantic pursuit of the train in the recurring nightmare scene that both precedes and follows Walsh’s recounting of the death and life of Eva Perón. Seoane constructs this scene as Eva’s (and Argentina’s by extension) defining moment: the symbolic train indicates her desire to be someone else, and the new image(s) she would create for herself.

This is most notable as the young Eva Duarte spots an animated Evita figure on the platform of the caboose, her reassuring hand reaching out to the frightened young girl as she struggles to catch up and grab a hold of the hand. The scene cuts abruptly in flash of light the moment that the two Evas’ hands meet, just as occurred in the Plaza scene between Eva and the worker. The desired contact has been made.

Here, it is important to note another symbol in the nightmare scene: the horde of crows that relentlessly pursues the young girl down the railway tracks. In this sense, her defining

moment becomes just as much about what she is running from as it is what she is running towards. The crows appear throughout the film, trailing not only Eva but Walsh as well. Harbingers of death, their symbolic status can be understood as the threat of institutions such as the oligarchy, the military government, and the church. However, the crows disappear in the flash of light once Eva and Evita's hands meet, and the triumphant gesture of six-year old Eva grabbing a hold of the hand of the Evita figure is the visual symbolization of her own immortalization. Quite simply, by her own hand Evita *evita* obscurity. She has achieved her desire to be someone else, to create a lasting image, one that goes beyond her own self and extends to the body of the nation. Just prior to this moment is when Walsh utters his last words of the film: "la historia no se olvida. No se olvida. Nunca más se olvida."

3.6 Conclusion

But, as Walsh urges, what is not to be forgotten? Or more accurately, what is being remembered in this film? Leading up to the creation of *Eva de la Argentina*, Seoane's work as a writer and filmmaker has reflected a consistent preoccupation with the years surrounding the seven-year period of state terrorism from 1976-1983 denominated Argentina's "Dirty War." Yet, in turning to animation, Seoane strays from her previous approaches to objectively document history in works of investigative journalism and live-action documentary film.²⁴

On the surface, however, *Eva* purports to narrate a specific period of Argentina's history from a rather objective standpoint, despite using animation as the main visual aesthetic. Seoane

²⁴ In 2002, Seoane was awarded the prestigious *Premio Rodolfo Walsh* for her continued career as an investigative journalist which culminated, in that year, in the publication of her biography *El dictador: La historia secreta y pública de Jorge Rafael Videla*. Despite a long career in journalism and radio, the journalist and writer is no stranger to blending her investigative work in the field of visual arts. Her first book, *La noche de los lápices* (1986) was translated to the big screen under the direction of Héctor Olivera in the same year. Additionally, prior to directing *Eva* in 2011, with Carlos Castro she co-directed the documentary *Gelbard, historia secreta del último burgués nacional* (2006) about Argentina's ex-Minister of Economy, José Ber Gelbard.

fictionalizes prominent investigate journalist Rodolfo Walsh as the film's narrator. Walsh's attempt to *deconstruct* the myth of the life and death of Eva Perón emerges in his use of archival resources to recount history: visual matter such as newsreels and photographs, audio interviews and speeches from Juan and Eva Perón, and on another level, and moments of third-person narration through intertextual references to pieces of writing from prominent journalists and writers from Walsh's own contemporaries.

Yet, upon close inspection, *Eva* ultimately *constructs* a myth as filmmaker Seoane (re)animates and also (re)imagines a specific period of Argentina's history. The film emerges as her personal version of Peronism, a *peronismo imaginario*, to use Juan José Sebreli's term. Like Sebreli, Seoane's personal myth of Peronism places the figure of Evita at its centre, and shows signs of being shaped by literature, as can be seen in her choice to fictionalize Walsh and mimic elements of his short story, *Esa Mujer*.

In fact, in turning to animation Seoane displays the most notable link to *Esa Mujer*: substitution. In Walsh's short story, proper names are substituted by social functions (*el escritor*, *el coronel*), and in the case of Eva Perón the substitution occurs by a phonetic replacement: *Beba*. Kraniauskas notes that the erasing of names in Walsh's short story reflects upon the political context that banned the very mention of Eva's revolutionary name after the coup of 1955 (2001:48).

In turning to animation *Eva de la Argentina* features a corporal substitution, likewise pointing to the same political context but indicating a different form of repression: the disappearance of bodies. Eva's absent body becomes a metaphor for the absent Peronist body after the coup of 1955, and again in the late 70s with the National Reorganization Process. In this regard, in opting to begin the narrative by having the fictional Walsh recount the kidnapping and

mysterious odyssey of Eva's cadaver and the military government's preoccupation with making it permanently disappear, as the opening scene in the CGT reiterates, Seoane chronicles from the start the disappearance of a larger body – that of Peronism.

Accordingly, through substitution Seoane's film fetishizes Eva, giving her a central role in Peronism – and going so far as to give her figure allegorical status that symbolizes Peronism. Freud, in his essay "Fetischism," posits that substitution is the process through which the fetish is produced.²⁵ Kraniauskas in his article, "Rodolfo Walsh y Eva Perón: "Esa Mujer," notes that Walsh does the same through the erasing and substitution of her name. Freud also reasons that the substitute at once acknowledges and disavows what is at threat. Kraniauskas, after Laura Mulvey, notes that the fetish is at once a screen against the traumatic memory as well as a reminder of loss and the substitution (1993:114).

Following Freud's logic then, in reconstructing the story through animation, Eva's animated figure on the one hand recognizes the threat of disappearances, acting as a visual reminder of the loss. Yet, on the other hand the substitution of her figure in animated form denies the threat by creating a replacement image of Eva Perón.

On the same token, in supplementing the animated narrative with archival materials, the film in fact presents an excess of images of Eva Perón, doubling up her figure on screen. The double-Eva tactic becomes an energetic denial not only of the power of death, but also of disappearance. The fact that both animated and archival Eva share one (archival) voice points to a subtext in the film of Sigmund Freud's notion of the double, and the phenomenon of telepathy that can occur in the uncanny process of "doubling, dividing and interchanging of the self" (234).

²⁵ See, for example, Freud, Sigmund. "Fetishism (1927)" In *The complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud*. Translation James Strachey. London: Hogarth and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1961. 147-157.

Through the double-Eva tactic, Seoane's construction of Eva Perón in her biopic points to Eva's preoccupation with immortality, with creating a place for herself in history.

Further, Seoane's animated and archival double-Eva tactic goes one step further as the filmmaker doubles up her animated portrayal of Eva Perón, at times depicting her as the likeness of *Eva Oficial* that the official story would ascribe to figure during her lifetime and up until her death in 1952, but simultaneously employing the image of Eva Montonera within in the narration of this same time period, though this perception of Eva as revolutionary would not become salient until two decades following her death with the rise of the Montoneros.

The fetish can be understood as a form of suturing, a recreation of what has been lost. So then, does Seoane succeed in suturing the past through her *hodgepodge* story-telling method of animation and the archival? In short, no. A key reason for this being the anachronistic, or untimely, character of Eva Perón, and by extension, her anachronistic *peronismo imaginario*. In *The Biopic in Contemporary Film Culture*, contributor Rebecca A. Seehan points out that “anachronistic characters, mentally detached from the political times they physically inhabit, are also figurative of the ambit of ideas taken for truths (or simulacra) and in this way contribute to the fatalism of their narrative” (49). The simulacra of Eva is an unsatisfactory substitute: her character functions as a double in responding to the events of one time period through mechanisms of another time period. Seehan further emphasizes that biopics that feature anachronism “enact the dislocation of the present moment from itself in the very tone of historicity they assume, which testifying to this dislocation in the tragic temporalities of the stories they depict” (49).

The discussion of suturing a fragmented past in a narrative that blends the animated and the archival to create a cohesive account of history will continue in the next chapter, as we turn

to Manuel H. Martín's *30 años de oscuridad* (Spain, 2012). Further, the next chapter will elaborate upon the present discussion of how animation can function as mimetic substitution. Ironically, the evocative function of animation in *30 años* emerges through a style that is highly mimetic. In fact, it displays verisimilitude and photorealism to an even greater extent than the mimetically functioning Flash animation in *Eva de la Argentina*. Chapter 4 will discuss the implications of creating an indexical link to the face and voice of an actor rather than the historical figure being depicted in the documentary's first-person, testimonial narrative.

Chapter 4: (Re)animating Spectres of the Past in Manuel H. Martín's *30 años de oscuridad*

4.1 Introduction

Up until this point we have looked at two films that document history through animation, in essence *reanimating* the past. Chapters 2 and 3 have discussed the specific role that animation plays in Jairo Carrillo and Oscar Andrade's *Pequeñas voces* (Colombia, 2010) and María Seoane's *Eva de la Argentina* (Argentina, 2011) through what Annabelle Honess Roe (2013) calls non-mimetic and mimetic substitution. These two representational strategies in documentary are linked by their practical aim of visually filling archival gaps, yet differ in their primary functions. Non-mimetic substitution works in both *Pequeñas voces* and *Eva de la Argentina* to convey a deeper meaning through symbolic figures and imagery. The depiction of the child-narrators in *Pequeñas voces* as simplistic childlike drawings, as well as the film's overall infantile aesthetic, makes a statement about the impact of war on Colombia's youngest population, and the breakdown of childhood that has occurred as a result of the armed conflict. As the narrative recounts this loss, the film's infantile façade becomes an uncanny one, as childhood has become an *unheimliche* place. Likewise, the allegorical potential of non-mimetic animation was outlined in a discussion of how the animated figure of Eva Perón in *Eva de la Argentina* becomes an allegory for a larger body: Argentina's Peronist body in the mid-late 20th century.

Yet Chapter 3 also explored how animation simultaneously functions as mimetic substitution in *Eva de la Argentina*. In depicting the title character through two different visual styles – archival images and an animated figure that strives to faithfully depict Eva Perón's

likeness – Seoane creates a proliferating image of Eva that points to a subtext in the film of Freud’s uncanny ‘double.’ Seoane’s uncanny *double-Eva tactic* constructs her protagonist as someone who is immensely preoccupied with her immortality, with energetically denying the power of death and creating a lasting image of herself in history. In this way, the mimetic animation also fulfils its primary function of verifying history, as biographers and historians, and even Perón herself, have noted the famed first lady’s desire to be remembered long after her premature death.

The present chapter turns to a discussion of Roe’s third function of animation in documentary film: evocation. Unlike non-mimetic and mimetic substitution, evocative animation does not have the practical function of filling in archival gaps. Rather, the representational limitation evocative animation responds to is the portrayal of certain concepts, feelings, emotions and states of mind that live-action imagery has difficulty representing – regardless of whether or not live-action footage exists (2013: 25). Manuel H. Martín’s Goya nominated animated documentary *30 años de oscuridad* (Spain, 2012), produced by La Claqueta, largely portrays post-war Spain through a graphic novel style of animation. As will be argued here, it is through the animation style that the concept of a haunting is evoked; one in which Franco-era ghosts still linger in the dwelling of 21st-century Spain.

French philosopher Jacques Derrida’s notion of “hauntology” suggests a *coming back* of traces of the past – be they concepts, memories, trauma or the dead – in the form of specters (1994:10). Derrida is speaking of the lingering influence of the past on the present; thus, history is at once dead and returned to life. Two classes of these traces of the past that Derrida mentions are particularly relevant in the case of contemporary Spain: memories and the dead. Spectral memories of the past have been resurging in the last decade of the 20th-century and into the new

millennium through voices that are willing to give testimony, after decades of silence, to the events that occurred during Francoist Spain. Likewise, spectres of Francoism have been surfacing throughout Spain through the excavation of mass graves containing remains that have been in a state of unrest for decades, with the first scientific exhumation taking place in the year 2000.²⁶

For both of these reasons, scholars of Spanish literature and culture have frequently cited, to borrow the Derridean term, the *coming back* of the past in contemporary Spain. In *Casa Encantada: lugares de la memoria en la España constitucional (1978-2004)*, co-editor Ulrich Winter speaks to the *irrupción* of the lost past, which rematerializes in the present (19). Jo Labanyi, in her article "Memory and Modernity in Democratic Spain: The Difficulty of Coming to Terms with the Spanish Civil War," speaks in slightly different terms than *rupture* and *lost* narratives, proposing instead that testimonies that were habitually silenced during decades of repression re-emerge in what she calls an "aesthetics of haunting" (2007:109). In a similar fashion, José Colmeiro in his article, "A Nation of Ghosts?: Haunting, Historical Memory and Forgetting in Post-Franco Spain," speaks to the "spectral nature" of Spain's past, which contains stories that have been "silenced and erased, leaving only their ghostly traces" (31). Likewise, social anthropologist Francisco Ferrándiz speaks of the "recent rapid emergence of the ghosts of the Spanish Civil War" in his article, "The return of Civil War ghosts: The ethnography of exhumations in contemporary Spain," which documents the exhumation process of mass graves in the first decade of 21st-century Spain (10).

²⁶ The effort, led by journalist Emilio Silva, founder of the Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory, initiated as an attempt to identify the remains of his grandfather who was executed during the war. Guided by historical records, a team of biologists, anthropologists and researchers located and excavated a mass grave finding 13 skeletons. The following year, a DNA match was established between Silva and some of the remains, the first DNA-aided identification of Spanish Civil War remains.

The purpose of this final chapter is to explore how *30 años*²⁷ evokes a sense haunting of the lingering spectres of the nation's repressed past. Specifically, it will highlight three ways in which the motif of haunting emerges in the film's animated aesthetic: the depiction of a ghostly possession of the present Spanish body, the film's premise as a haunted house narrative, and finally through the motif of exhumation. In order to do so, it is important to look at the cause of these spectral reappearances by briefly examining the clashing of Spain's past and present that has emerged through the social and political movements leading up to the production of this film. Likewise, it is also necessary to recognize how Martín's film belongs to an ongoing cultural movement that has reflected Spain's social and political environment since the Transition, one which at present aims testify to this past.

4.2 An Overview of Post-Franco Spain: the Political, Social and Cultural

30 años testifies to the experience of post-war Republicans who endured years, some even decades, in hiding for fear of repression during the dictatorship of General Francisco Franco (1939–75) following the end of the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). It does so through centering on one particular testimony, that of the former mayor of Málaga, Manuel Cortés Quero (1906-1991) who spent 30 years in hiding. The film's title refers to the three decades between the alleged end of the war and the official pardon from Franco's regime issued in 1969 for the so-called *rojos* in hiding. However, Cortés' narrative makes clear that even then the gesture of amnesty was met with fear and mistrust. Accordingly, *30 años* questions the very term "post-war" for the Republican *topos* as they have come to be called.²⁸ In Cortés' case, this meant enduring a handful of years in a small hollow behind the wall of his father's home, and,

²⁷ From this point forward the film shall be referred to simply as *30 años*.

²⁸ The use of the term "topo" is largely attributed to the novel, *Los topos* (1977) by journalists Manuel Leguineche and Jesús Torbado, which provides the testimony of 24 of these men who spent the majority of their lives in hiding.

subsequently more than two decades burrowed deep within his own home behind a brick stairwell, and as a silent dweller haunting the attic. Freedom for Cortés, like many other *topos*, was not found for thirty years until the official pardon was issued.

However, in many senses, freedom was short lived as this group experienced a second bout of repression through a burial of their testimonies, ironically by means of a second offer of amnesty. Spain's 1977 Amnesty Law pardoned all political crimes and human rights violations, including those of Nationalist forces in the war and those of the ensuing dictatorship. The Amnesty Law had the aim of forgetting the civil war and moving forward with a clean slate in the new democratic Spain. Enshrined in this law was an unofficial dictum, the "pacto del olvido" (Pact of Silence, or Pact of Forgetting); a "social contract" that considered necessary a burial of the past (Colmeiro 24).

Consequently, the testimonies of the *topos* and those of their families were burrowed away for another 30 years, until the enactment of a subsequent law that directly opposed the Amnesty Law's narrative of resisting. The Historical Memory Law, enacted under José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero's socialist government in 2007, did not seek to point the finger of guilt at either side, but rather encourage open dialogue at long last about historical memory.

Accordingly, *30 años*, produced in the years immediately following this law, also challenges the notion of "post-war" for *present-day* Spain as the nation is perhaps now more than ever coming to terms with the aftermath of its 20th-century history. This changing political atmosphere together with a growing social movement aimed at recuperating historical memory, meant both an unearthing of testimony as well as the excavation of mass graves containing thousands of

unidentified war victims.²⁹ Likewise then, the film also calls into question the notion of “Post-Franco” Spain, as Franco-era spectres are surfacing through recovery efforts.

A cultural movement has been occurring alongside the political and social strides towards the recuperation of memory. Spanish media and cinema are working to document the efforts to exhume the bodies of the mass graves.³⁰ Martín’s animated documentary belongs to the collective effort by filmmakers and journalists alike to symbolically dig up the past alongside the literal unearthing taking place. It parallels and even mimics the efforts of the social “recovery movement” which, according to social anthropologists Francisco Ferrándiz and Alejandro Baer, has two main aims: locating graves to exhume the unidentified corpses, and recording oral testimony from victims and relatives, mostly in digital video format (2008:np).

However, *30 años* is a documentary that features an exhumation of a *different* kind; a symbolic exhumation. This is due to the nature of the ghost which it is trying to leave go of. The *topos* reality differed from those who were summarily executed (although many of those discovered in hiding did in fact suffer this fate), yet they are linked by their experience of being buried for years, unnamed and in unnamed places –unbeknownst to many of their closest family and friends. Further, in only recently voicing their stories to a public willing to remember, the

²⁹ For more on this subject, see, for example, Armengou and Belis 2001 which provides documentation and a debate surrounding the excavation of the mass graves, Ferrándiz 2006 on the ethnography of exhumations in contemporary Spain, Ferrándiz & Baer 2008 on how the use of visual media to capture social action in the surroundings of the exhumations both records and triggers social memory, and Gabilondo 2012 on the role of Forensic medicine in contemporary exhumations carried out in Spain .

³⁰ Montse Armengou and Ricard Belis published their investigative work, *Las Fosas Del Silencio: Hay Un Holocausto español?* (2004), which arose from Armengou’s documentary broadcast in the previous year on Catalan television channel TV3, *Las fosas del silencio*. Jesús Zamora, along with his brother Raul, produced the documentary *Olvidados* (2005) surrounding the exhumation of a mass grave in Villamayor. More recently, and in a different media form, the work of Spanish photojournalist Eloy Alonso’s portrayal of the careful process of exhumation of civil war graves was featured in *El País* in July, 2016.

topos like the victims in the mass graves have been covered by what Ferrándiz calls a "shroud of silence" from the end of the war until the turn of the 21st century (10).

30 años, along with the recent media portrayals of exhumations, are only the latest additions to the recovery movement's expression in cultural production. A "memory boom" in literature and cinema initiated in late in the 1990s and escalated after 2001 (Labanyi 2007:95). Colmeiro refers to this phenomenon as a social, judicial and political "reawakening" (28). Prior to this time, cultural production largely reflected the hegemonic narrative of forgetting. In the rare cases that cultural productions did in fact aim to represent the civil war and its aftermath, it did so allusively. Labanyi notes a tendency for films and novels beginning already in the final years of the dictatorship, in 1973 with Victor Erice's *The Spirit of the Beehive*, and persisting into the mid-1980s to represent this era through the trope of haunting. However, since 1990 the predominant mode of cinematic and fictional re-creations of the civil war and its aftermath have tended towards more traditional realistic depictions, a documentary style and a *costumbrista* naturalistic style (Labanyi 2007:103; Colmeiro 28). In providing a realistic depiction, these films make the past more accessible and understandable to audiences who are generationally removed from these events, though as Colmeiro notes, many of these works are "perhaps too palatable and too comfortable, thus neutralizing their potential as instruments for social intervention" (28). As a consequence, they reinforce the "pastness of the past" which creates a disconnect between the narrative and the present-day audience.

However, as Labanyi notes, some notable films such as Guillermo del Toro's *The Devil's Backbone* (2001) continue to employ the trope of haunting despite the trend towards realism. In light of all of this, the fact that Martín's film draws on of the trope of haunting is notable for two reasons: first, for the fact that this motif was prevalent 3 decades ago, and as such, *30 años* goes

against the grain of other contemporary Spanish literary and cinematic depictions of post-war Spain, but further, for the fact that this film is a *documentary* employing the trope of haunting. Of all recent cultural productions, *30 años* is most predisposed to following the realistic portrayal of the past by its genre, yet it chooses a more inventive approach. In turning to a non-realistic mode of representation – here a graphic novel animation style – Martín is able to *evoke* the notion of the coming back of spectres of the past, as the next section will argue.

4.3 A Spectral Possession of Spain's Present Body

Despite the recent global trend of incorporating fictional resources such as animation into documentary film, the visual index remains a key conventional marker of its authenticity and evidence (Roe 2012:33). Yet the irony of recounting the story of the *topos* in the documentary genre is that they attempted to live for decades without a trace. As the film informs, Cortés' own wife even destroyed most of his photographs in the hopes that it would help him avoid recognition. Thus, any archival materials to communicate this particular story in the non-fiction genre are scarce to say the least.

Yet, this does not detract from the authenticity of Martín's film. One study of recent Spanish historical documentaries that feature fictional or subjective narratives reports that a perversion of history *could* be called into question in such productions, especially in cases where individual memory is fueled by imagination. The authors of this study argue that this is not the case of *30 años* which features a parallel narrative of expert testimonies from specialists including historians Ronald Fraser and Encarnación Barranquero (Alarcón and Zembrana 307). The evidence provided by the expert testimonies, interspersed with clips of available archival footage that sets the broader context for Cortés' story, fills the void of the lacking photographic evidence as the expert testimonies weave together a verbal snapshot of history. Inmaculada

Sánchez Alarcón and Alejandro Jerez Zambrana's analysis of *30 años* – the only critical attention that Martín's film has received to date – signals a shift in the attitude that holds the visual index as the mark of authenticity. Further, their analysis of over a dozen recent Spanish historical documentaries of a fictional or subjective nature also confirms that this is in fact a trend that is on the rise.

Roe further notes that the boom that has occurred in the last three decades features films that pair archival voice-offs with an animated aesthetic, as is the case of the first two films under analysis (Roe 2012:27). Martín's film emerges as *atypical* for pairing animated visuals with an invented narrative (in so far as his protagonist's storyline goes) and yet also stands out as the most conventional documentary of the three films for interspersing this pseudo-testimony with live-action, talking-head interviews from historians and field experts and archival footage. The relationship between the animated and the archival in this film then is similar to that of *Eva de la Argentina* explored in the previous chapter. An inversion of the conventional role of archival materials occurs: the archival fragments and live interviews then are interspersed between the animated segments to feed and corroborate the animated narrative.

On the surface, Cortés' testimony appears as imaginative as it is recounted through an animation style that lacks any indexical sign that points to the real Manuel Cortés. Moreover, it displays a *double*-indexicality that points to an altogether different person, from an altogether different era: contemporary Spain in the voice and face of popular Sevillian actor Juan Diego. Cortés both sounds like and looks like someone other than himself, save for one brief archival clip at the film's conclusion, the implication of which will be introduced briefly in section 4.3 and elaborated upon in section 4.4.

Arguably, a haunting is not evoked in any and every graphic novel documentary, but the additional element of the vocal and visual inspiration behind Cortés' character in actor Juan Diego (and that of fellow Sevillian actress Ana Fernández for his wife Juliana) results in this narrative effect. The word *behind* is not coincidentally used here, as their likeness appears to exist just behind, or beneath, the layer of animation, as illustrated in Figure 4.1. Diego and Fernández' emotions were captured over 400 times in photographic form to assure that the final drawing of their characters was conceivably life-like.



Figure 4.1 The evocative function of animation through a highly mimetic style. Reprinted with permission of Olmo Figueredo González-Quevedo, Producer, *La Claqueta*.

Diego, being a very recognizable face in Spanish cinema, gives Cortés' character an uncanny aspect of reality and familiarity. He is at once graphic and photographic, present and absent, himself and yet Other. Likewise, it depicts Cortés as virtually absent, invisible in his own narrative, tacitly reemphasizing the reality he faced during his decades in hiding. Martín's

process in creating his characters is similar to Rotoshop for their appearance of being at once hand-drawn and photorealistic. Yet, the resulting effect of Martín's graphic novel technique is that the animated figure becomes more than an iconic sign: it becomes an indexical one. The photorealistic image points to the subject in the photographic image or live-action footage that was used to create the drawing.

As we have explored in previous chapters, films such as *Pequeñas voces* and *Eva de la Argentina* also complicate the notion of indexicality in animated images, as there are traces of reality behind the animated images due to a juxtaposition of the archival and the animated in the production of the characters. For both the child-narrators in *Pequeñas voces* and *Eva Perón* the indexical connection was strictly through an archival voice-off. The result, as Roe has argued, is an “uncanny sense of reality haunting the animated image” (Roe 2012:31). The photorealism of Cortés' character also stirs up an uncanny response in the viewer for its familiarity to Juan Diego. The portrayal of Cortés is not real enough, or not archival enough, and yet too real, or too indicative of the present.

Martín's photorealistic animation style is the perfect medium to evoke the “spectral quality of ghosts” which are “nor here nor there” (Colmeiro 25). In depicting Cortés' narrative through Diego's persona, the film challenges the dichotomies of past/present, presence/absence, and history/story. The animated aesthetic of Cortés' narrative acts as a border, but one that is permeable, between Cortés and Diego (and by extension between past and present day Spain). The double-indexical link to Juan Diego in sight and sound creates the impression that a ghost of the past has inhabited a body of present-day Spain in order to be seen and heard. Derrida's notion of spectres directly relates to what Freud calls “the most striking” example of something uncanny: the return of the dead, and spirits and ghosts (241).

Juan Diego becomes the *portavoz* for Cortés' testimony, and Cortés' uncanny double in the Freudian sense. Sigmund Freud's theme of the 'double' that was addressed in the previous chapter focused on the doubling and dividing of the self in the figure of Eva Perón, but the psychoanalyst also mentions the *interchanging* of the self that gives rise to the double. This occurs when "the subject identifies himself with someone else, so that he is in doubt as to which his self is, or substitutes the extraneous self for his own" (Freud 234). Diego identifies himself as Cortés, his figure becomes a substitute for the *topo of Mijas*. He is, as mentioned, himself and yet Other. In lending his figure to Cortés, Juan Diego appears to possess his knowledge, feelings and experiences related through his testimony. In consideration of the possession of his body by a ghost of the past, telepathy occurs as "mental processes [are] leaping from one of these characters to another" (Freud 234).

Ironically, then, the evocative function of animation in *30 años* emerges through a style that is highly mimetic. In fact, it displays verisimilitude and photorealism to an even greater extent than the mimetically functioning Flash animation in *Eva de la Argentina*. Likewise, it veers from the more common abstract or symbolic style that usually characterizes evocative animation (Roe 2011:227, 2013:25). In considering how the animation style evokes the haunting, it does not seem coincidence that Martín sought Juan Diego to bring this testimony to life. Diego has both symbolically and directly embodied Franco, through his role as señorito Iván in Mario Camus' filmic adaptation of *Los Santos Inocentes* (1984), and his portrayal of *El Caudillo* in Jaime Camillo's *Dragon Rapide* (1986); a career-defining performance that led to the first of his

nine Goya award nominations.³¹ For viewers of contemporary Spanish cinema then, the face of Juan Diego has the power to call to mind a very specific ghost of the past through the outlet of cinema: that of Franco.

Thus, the question arises as to the nature of the spectre that is being (re)animated in this film. While on the one hand media and scholarship alike suggest that spectres in contemporary Spanish society belong to the bodies being exhumed from mass graves, on the other hand there persists a second understanding that there is but one ghost, and it belongs to Franco. So then, in the case of *30 años* is it simply the ghost of Cortés that haunts present-day Spain as personified by Juan Diego? In other words, is this a personal narrative seeking to exhume an individual ghost? Arguably not. Cortés' story is used a focal point in the narrative, making him *El Topo*, symbolic of the hundreds of *topos*, yet it is not even the collective spectral body of all the *topos* that bring about a real sense of haunting. Rather, it is the fact that collectively they are spectres of the Franco-era, a *coming back* that points to the ultimate spectre that still lingers: the ghost of Franco.

The nature of the *topos* post-war experience lends itself to this trope of haunting. As Jesús Torbado, author of *Los Topos* (1977), states in an opening interview segment, "aunque físicamente Manuel Cortés estaba vivo, moralmente estaba ya muerto." The *topos* were ghost-like figures, living as shadows of their former selves, though their quality of being physically

³¹ Throughout his career the Sevillian actor has participated in other Spanish productions that allude in various ways to Francoist Spain, such as José Luis García Sánchez' *La Corte del Faraón* (1985), and more recently a small-scale production in filmmaker Azucena Rodríguez's nameless short documentary in which 15 renowned actors, writers and musicians embodied victims of the civil war and the ensuing dictatorship who were executed. The film released on Youtube in 2010 also includes personalities such as Pedro Almodovar, Maribel Verdú, Javier Bardem, Almudena Grandes, Juan Diego Botto, María Galiana, Carmen Machi, Juan José Millás, Aitana Sánchez-Gijón, Paco León, Pilar Bardem, José Manuel Seda, Hugo Silva, and Miguel Ríos. See, for example, http://elpais.com/elpais/2010/06/14/videos/1276503418_870215.html.

alive yet morally dead suggests they were a inversion of the typical ghost. Torbado's revelation is soon after reiterated by Cortés' granddaughter, María de la Peña, who reveals, "lo que percibo ahora es que era una fantasma dentro de su casa."

In consideration of what was suggested above, the trope of a ghostly possession of the present Spanish body, we will now turn to a closer look at the way in which the spectre surfaces within the animated narrative. Derrida reasons that the apparition of the ghost cannot be controlled. "Each time is the event itself, a first time is the last time. Altogether other. Staging for the end of history. Let us call it *hauntology*" (10, emphasis in the original). Each apparition of the ghost in the film is of a unique nature. The first apparition being purely auditory, through the act of speaking: "recuerdo como si fuera ayer, la boda de mi hija." In speaking, the ghost begins to reveal itself, though in this instance it is only as a voiceover on a black screen; appearing as "an echo without a communicating body" (Ribas-Casasayas and Petersen 2).

Derrida implores us to "to speak to the specter, to speak with it, therefore, especially to make or to let a spirit speak" (11, emphasis in the original). The spectre carries on speaking, recounting how at his daughter's wedding, for the first time in a long time, the house was filled with music, dancing and laughter, save for his wife and daughter on high alert for the danger that he might be discovered. Not ironically then, the ghost's first apparition as a purely auditory event mimics Cortés very experience as a mere haunting presence at his own daughter's wedding, his memory limited to the sounds of the festivities.

As Cortés' ghost is given the opportunity to narrate this memory, to *speak*, his presence becomes more tangible. The second apparition provides a partial view of the ghost; his image consists of an eye as seen through a key hole, observed by a young girl who has snuck away from the party. The eye momentarily wavers within the key hole before disappearing, though not

in a shrinking manner as if retreating backwards in a human-like behaviour, but rather it disappears in a flash, as if the ghost has vanished in an instant, leaving a void of darkness where the eye once was. The soundtrack of chilling string instruments and pluckish piano notes adds to the feeling of the ghost story. The jovial celebratory music of the wedding is replaced by the creaking of a door, footsteps echoing up a dark staircase, and an eerie tune playing a warning as the young guest draws nearer and nearer to a door behind which Cortés hides. The music suggests the magnitude of the discovery that is about to take place, at least until Juliana Cortés shatters the eerie silence with her sharp command: "no entrés ahí".

In this way, the film's opening scenes contain Freud's uncanny trio of "silence, darkness and solitude" and a nightmarish characteristic where a young girl is a key player. She appears to be in a haunted house, which is a metaphor that the film will continue to employ from these opening moments on wards.



Figure 4.2 The haunted house motif visible from the opening scenes. Reprinted with permission of Olmo Figueredo González-Quevedo, Producer, *La Claqueta*.

Following this near sighting, the ghost continues to speak, naming himself: "Mi nombre es Manuel Cortés Quero, y fui uno de esos hombres que pasaron toda una vida entre las sombras." Thus, the spectator finds out the identity of the eye in the keyhole. The second apparition of the ghost as an eye is symbolic of the way in which the *topos* identity was reduced during their confinement. In many of the scenes depicted from the Cortés' point of view the camera becomes the eye, peering out through a small hole or crack in the foundation of his hiding spot, attributing to these men the quality of silent observer. The eye becomes a

synecdoche *pars par toto* for the figure of the *topo*. The synecdoche of the *topo* as an eye accurately renders them nothing more than a watchful observer.³²

This is reflective of how their other human senses diminished, sometimes purposefully, as the role of sight increased. Cortés recounts how he tried not to move, became accustomed to not speaking, and how he had to will himself not to fall ill, limiting his corporal function to that of a haunting observer of the players in their former lives on a daily basis. The fragmentation of their bodies, as depicted by the frequent the shots of the eye, or the use of a subjective camera angle where the lens becomes the observing eye, juxtaposes that of the full-figured people they observe. They are whole, while the *topos* are only a fraction of their former selves.



Figure 4.3 The synecdoche of the *topo* as eye. Reprinted with permission of Olmo Figueredo González-Quevedo, Producer, La Claqueta.

³² In fact, the 2010 version of Torbado and Leguiniche's *Los Topos*, published by Capitan Swing Libros, adopts a similar image on their cover. An eye and the surrounding facial region, painted in the colors of the flag of the Second Spanish Republic, is peering through a hole in the wall.

The third apparition of the ghost, as depicted in Figure 4.1, is a full-bodied one in which his ghost takes the form of Juan Diego. From the third apparition onwards, the spectre appears in Diego's form. In doing so, the film perpetuates the notion of a haunting of the present (social) body by a spectral past. The notion of Cortés' spectral *coming back* in the form of Juan Diego is especially notable compared to other characters such as his daughter pictured in Figure 4.3, who looks about as real as the doll she is holding.

Returning to the idea that it is ultimately the ghost of Franco that is doing the haunting, the synecdoche of the *topo* as eye can also be understood in another light. The subjective camera shots such as the one in Figure 4.4 evoke the notion of constant surveillance, highlighting the fear of being found that led men such as Cortés to opt for an isolated, covert lifestyle. Surveillance is a control tactic seen in many regimes, and Franco's was no exception. The magnitude of *El Caudillo*'s omnipresence through his regime's surveillance tactic is poignantly described in another of Spain's post-war works. Louise Ciallella, in her analysis of Carmen Martín Gaité's *El Cuarto de atrás* (1978) reveals that the novel's protagonist, C., perceived Franco's omnipresence in her home as well as others' homes: "Franco es el primer gobernante que yo he sentido en mi vida como tal, porque desde el principio se notó que era unigénito, indiscutible y omnipresente, que había conseguido infiltrarse en todas las casas"

The notion of a haunting presence infiltrating even the private sphere of the home is salient in the film, as the film employs a second trope of haunting by positing itself as a haunted house narrative as will be explored in the next section.

4.4 The Haunted House Motif

The suggestion that Cortés home is depicted as a haunted house has two implications within the film: on one level, it speaks to the ghost-like nature of the *topos* buried alive for fear

of repression during post-Franco Spain, but on a second level the haunted house emerges as a microcosm of contemporary Spain, just as Diego is symbolic of a society possessed by the spectres of the past. In other words, the trope of the haunted house is a metaphor in the film that extends itself both forwards and backwards in temporally. Just as Cortés lingered as a ghost within the four walls of his own home, so too Franco-era ghosts linger within the borders of 21st-century Spain.

Cortés' own home becomes what Freud calls an *unheimliche haus* (a haunted house). The feeling of security and safety that a house brings, its *heimliche* (homely) quality, is replaced by an *unheimliche* feeling: haunting terror, solitude and darkness that permeate the four walls of the structure. His home transforms into a frightening, *uncanny*, place as his experience of inhabiting it becomes one of the unknown and unfamiliarity (Freud 219). The way in which Cortés' relationship with his own home transforms is evident in one notable scene. The still image depicted in Figure 4.4 appears on screen as Cortés recounts that “para sobrevivir en un par de metros cuadrados, debía seguir una estricta disciplina. Sólo así conseguiría no ser descubierto. Debía aprender de no hacer ruido. No podía toser o moverme. Sobre todo cuando había visitas. No podía enfermar, porque no podía ir al médico.”



Figure 4.4 An *unheimliche* house. Reprinted with permission of Olmo Figueredo González-Quevedo, Producer, La Claqueta.

The frequent scenes featuring the house favor shots that confine the spectator's view to close-ups of the houses' partitions; the walls, the windows and doors constitute the focal point of each scene, as notable in Figure 4.4 above. Further, in the moments that the camera takes on the subjective angle, the scene is often portrayed through these apertures: a window or an opening door. The resulting effect is that the many apertures, by function meant to be traversed, are mocking the ghost that is confined within the four walls.

Figure 4.4 is also notable for understanding how the graphic novel style contributes to the motif of the haunted house. The graphic novel aesthetic mimics the conventional documentary resource of photography by providing still snapshots, yet allows the director creative control over the color palette. The gloomy color palette of the film creates an ambiance that parallels

experience of the figures lurking in the darkness and shadows of their homes. It sets the scene of the haunted house, and heightens the experience of the haunted house narrative.

Further, the graphic novel documentary style means that the action is largely depicted through still images, like that of Figure 4.4, or scenes with very minimal movement.

Accordingly, Cortés' story appears not as fluid, but as fragments of images, those that represent "a fragmentary, discontinuous, spectral past" (Labanyi 2016:69). The inanimate representation of his figure also speaks to the limits of his experience within his own home under the regime's surveillance and censorship. It is often the camera that creates the movement in the still images, further suggesting a lurking presence and constant surveillance of the scene at hand; an omniscient gaze. At times, however, haunting movements are created within the animation as a portion of the scene will become animated in the other sense, with brusque, alarming movements such as the turn of a head or the change of a facial expression, or suggesting this tone through the animating the scene's natural elements such as the billowing of smoke, swirling fog and heavy rain falling around the paralyzed figures.

Calling to mind the inanimate characteristic in the animation brings about another important aspect how the archival works to support the animated narrative. Cortés' inanimate figure (not to mention his essential invisibility, as noted in section 4.3) is juxtaposed against the archival figure of Franco depicted in a newsreel of his victory parade; a scene in which the dictator is very much animate and very highly visible through the depiction of his real self, as well as his place on the podium above the masses as he surveys the parade. His very present image in this scene, especially one in which he is elevated above the crowds, surveying the victory festivities, also heightens the sense of surveillance in the narrative.

In considering how the live-action elements of the film contribute to the sense of a haunted house, it is important to note a second key space in the film that also plays into the haunted house motif. This second space is likewise marked by a gloomy color palette and a haunting sense of surveillance. The film studio in which the live interviews were filmed consists of a solid black backdrop accented by smaller panels on to which a dull beam of soft light is cast. This space emerges as an extension of the haunted house that is depicted by the graphic novel animation components of the film. Shadows often cover half of the interviewees' faces and bodies, creating an image reminiscent of the age-old scary flashlight face tactic part and parcel to telling ghost stories around a hearth. The camera, never still during the segments, creeps around the expert witnesses in an eerie way that is evocative of a haunting presence circling the inhabitants of a dwelling. The way in which the camera creates the movement in the scene is an element that links the live interview segments and graphic novel sequences. As the camera bobs, draws near to, and sways around the subjects, it rarely provides a direct, head-on shot, as if the interviewees are unaware of this looming presence, and are in fact addressing an unseen audience.



Figure 4.5 The film studio as an extension of the haunted house motif. Reprinted with permission of Olmo Figueredo González-Quevedo, Producer, *La Claqueta*.

Aside from these two key *physical* spaces, there are also important *temporal* spaces in the narrative. The setting of the film studio seen in Figure 4.5 is evidently a space of the present notable in onscreen cues such as language, clothing and furnishings, as well as off-screen cues such as the production clarity and techniques. Likewise, the film's few archival scenes clearly indicate a space of the past: grainy shots depict agrarian culture in the western region of Andalusia, scenes of the battlefield of the Civil War, Franco's troops occupying Málaga, and 1939's *Desfile de la Victoria* in Madrid.

However, a third temporal space, the graphic depiction of Cortés' narrative, is not so easily defined which plays into the trope of haunting. On the surface, mid-20th century Spain as reconstructed by the graphic novel animation style also appears to be a space of the past, yet closer attention to this space, especially when juxtaposed with the indisputable spaces of past and

present depicted through live-action and archival footage, reveals that it is actually a space in which both the past and the present are in flux. By narrating the past in a language of the present – that of the graphic novel – the film *houses* the testimony of the past in a visual aesthetic that reflects the present. The boundaries between the past and present become permeable through the medium of the graphic novel documentary in Martín’s film. The aesthetic reveals a spatiotemporal nonsynchronism: the image of the past has been reconstructed using modern tools and has a modern façade, and while the narrative recounts the traumatic happenings of mid-20th century Spain, the voice and face of the story point to the present. As Bliss Cua Lim states of the ghost film,

The haunting recounted by ghost narratives are not merely instances of the past reasserting itself in a stable present, as is usually assumed; on the contrary, the ghostly return of traumatic events precisely troubles the boundaries of past, present, and future, and cannot be written back to the complacency of a homogeneous, empty time. (287)

In other words, Martín’s chosen aesthetic does the opposite of reinforce the “pastness of the past,” which, as Colmeiro suggests, is the effect of realistic and costumbrista depictions. In other words, while it is easy enough to locate the place of Málaga through the broader landscape scenes in the animation, the specificity of time cannot be as readily pinpointed. The color palette of the graphic novel scenes, largely constituted by gray tones, also speaks to this spatiotemporal in-betweenness. It does not firmly signal the past as depicted by the grainy black-and-white footage of mid-20th century Spain, nor is it the present as depicted in the live-action, full color, crisp images. Instead, this time and place lies somewhere in between, or rather depicts both past and present simultaneously, becoming the visual gray area seen on screen.

The choice of an animated aesthetic is appropriate, even necessary, as live action (and even re-enactment) could not convey this experience of haunting as effectively. It is the medium through which the spectre of the past is (re)animated. In this regard, there is an important juxtaposition between the two haunted physical spaces within in the film, one that has to do with the notion of letting the ghost speak. The film studio is a place in which the ghost is *spoken of*, while the animated narrative is a place in which the ghost *speaks*. The testimonial interviews are largely given by intellectuals and scholars, while Cortés' testimony is given by a voice of popular culture; from the masses to the masses. Derrida theorizes that when it comes to letting the ghost speak, a scholar "believes that looking is sufficient," and therefore this figure is "not always in the most competent position to do what is necessary: speak to the spectre" (11).

Derrida suggests that we talk to ghosts out of a need "to exorcize not in order to chase away the ghosts, but this time to grant them the right...to a hospitable memory...out of a concern for justice" (175). The notion of a hospitable memory juxtaposes the film's setting of a haunted house. The ghosts of the past feel anything but hospitable memory, as Cortés remarks at the beginning of the film: "a veces lo único que nos queda en la vida son los recuerdos, aunque para nosotros estos no son más que pesadillas."

So then, in order to reconcile the memory of the past so that the haunting occurs no longer, and in order to make the remembering of the *topos* hospitable in present-day Spain, the ghost of Cortés must speak. Once he has done so, the nightmare that lasted 30 years prior to the Transition, and then an additional 30 years following in the habitual silence, can come to an end. Through recounting its testimony, Cortés' ghost becomes *exorcized*, as will be explored in the next section. Martín's film becomes what Ferrándiz calls the "resonating chambers" that Cortés' voice lacked for over 60 years (10).

4.5 Exhuming the Ghost(s) of Franco(ism)

As Ferrándiz and Baer note, the locations of exhumations “*become* memory sites while the process of exhumation takes place, and sometimes after it” (np). *30 años* also becomes a memory site in the exhumation of the ghosts of the post-war *topos*. The space of the film is inscribed with the collective memories of both past Spain and present Spain through the dual narrative threads described in the previous section.

Specifically, the location of the exhumation is within the animated realm of the narrative. The tool of animation creates a space for exhuming the ghosts of Franco's post-war Spain. The graphic novel style *animates* the ghosts of the past in both senses of the word. On the one hand it illustrates them, and on the other it gives them new life that allows for their return. The exhumation occurs at the film's conclusion, in a scene in which there is a perceptible separation of Cortés' ghost and the figure of Juan Diego, as briefly mentioned in section 4.2. This scene contains the first appearance of Cortés' archival body, and likewise the last apparition of his ghost. The tone of the accompanying music changes from the eerie tune dominant throughout the film to a peaceful piano melody that parallels the calm that Cortés feels as he experiences his first few steps as a free man in his own home. A brighter turn in the color palette, at times iridescent white, also suggests that his home has returned to a *heimliche* place once again.

As Cortés makes his way slowly through his home and towards the front door, the camera adopts his view. This time, however, the subjective lens is not restricted to a hole-in-the-wall perspective, but rather offers a full view of his surroundings. Likewise, the feeling is no longer one of surveillance, but rather the bright color palette and wide angle shot suggest both freedom to see and be seen. Through the subjective camera angle, the spectator experiences the walk towards freedom from Cortés' perspective: the open door of the bedroom through which he

walks, the staircase which he descends, the portraits on his living room wall which he pauses freely to consider, and most importantly the front door through which he is about to traverse. As the door opens, the camera draws backwards and we are left gazing at the back of the animated Diego figure which is the first indication of an exorcism of the ghost. An audible exhale as this takes place emphasizes the moment of release.



Figure 4.6 Exhumation of the ghost(s) occurs. Reprinted with permission of Olmo Figueredo González-Quevedo, Producer, La Claqueta.

In the following scene which takes place in the streets of Málaga outside his home, the camera rests in front of Cortés and his wife. Though there is a moment in which the duo is depicted in their animated forms, the camera again pans outward drawing the spectator away from the animated bodies as they simultaneously morph into the archival bodies of the Manuel and Juliana. The film's singular archival image of Cortés confirms what the scene at the

threshold of the door suggested: this is a moment of catharsis in which there is a separation of the past and the present.



Figure 4.7 Archival footage to reinforce the “pastness of the past”. Reprinted with permission of Olmo Figueredo González-Quevedo, Producer, *La Claqueta*.

The turn to the archival at the film’s conclusion following a completely animated storyline (insofar as Cortés’ storyline goes) is a characteristic that *30 años* shares with a touchstone animated documentary mentioned throughout this thesis: Ari Folman’s *Waltz with Bashir*. Roe has noted of *Waltz with Bashir* that “concluding the film with live-action footage suggests narrative resolution” (2013:167). Roe ponders, however, whether or not the sudden switch from a consistent animation style throughout to live-action material undermines the potential of the animation that came before, especially at this moment of narrative resolution. This is also an appropriate question for Martín’s film, but one to which there is a definitive

answer. The turn to archival in this film that employs the trope of haunting is a reinforcement of the exhumation of the ghost, of the departure of the past from the present, and of the perceived end of the haunting through the long-awaited unearthing of the past. Through the space that the film creates for memory to be mediated between the past and the present, a neutralization occurs in which the activities of the ghost can cease.

This concluding scene is another notable point in the narrative in which the relationship between the animated and the archival can be seen. An earlier scene taking place in what is perceptibly the same street depicts Cortés, disguised as an old woman, as he makes a daring move from his father's house to his new home a few hundred meters away. Accompanied by his wife, his only few moments outside of his home for what would be decades are marked by terror and panic. The threat of surveillance was still very real at this time. The diminishing of this threat is evident in this final, archival scene which depicts smiling, elderly couple as they roam the street in the light of day at a leisurely pace. The juxtaposition of the earlier street scene with the archival version in the film's conclusion reinforces the difference of the past from the present; a dichotomy no longer challenged in the visual aesthetic of the film.

Earlier we introduced Colmeiro's notion that attention to verisimilitude reinforces the "pastness of the past" for contemporary audiences. While this was not considered a desirable quality in a documentary that aimed to make the past accessible through an entirely realistic depiction, in Martín's film which only turns to verisimilitude in the film's final moments, there is a positive connotation to the "pastness of the past." The grainy archival image as seen in Figure 4.7 visually signifies a division of the past/present dichotomy that was in play; it signals a letting go of the spectre(s) of Franco(ism) that have been lingering in the present. The trope of haunting

ceases to exist in the narrative at the moment this archival scene appears, as it is at this point that the exhumation has taken place.

4.6 Conclusion

Eighty years have passed since the start of Spain's civil war, and it has been forty years since the death of Franco and the end of his dictatorship, yet as co-editors Merino Eloy and H. Rosi Song of *Traces of Contamination* (2005) assert, it would be a mistake to think of Franco's death "as a paradigmatic moment of change, a historical narrative of the end of Francoism" (15). As we suggested in section 4.2, the film challenges the notion of "post-war" Spain on two levels, yet it also challenges the notion of "Post-Franco" Spain as spectres of Francoism have been lingering in Spain, and they are materializing today more than ever. Narratives of trauma that were habitually silenced by the *pacto del olvido* are being unearthed, alongside thousands of bodies that are being exhumed from mass graves.

In light of this notion of purposefully asserting the "pastness of the past" in the film's final moments, the implication of adopting the age-old trope of haunting through a new genre and new cinematic techniques can be understood. While films that employed the trope of haunting in the initial years of the Transition did so to *allusively* refer to the (very) recent past as Labanyi noted, Martín's film employs the same trope four decades later when a trend of realistic depictions directly portray the trauma surrounding the Spanish Civil War and Francoist Spain. Given that Manuel H. Martín's Goya nominated *30 años de oscuridad* is a documentary, the shift from realism to animation is particularly notable. However, *30 años* does not employ the trope of haunting to indirectly portray the past. Rather, it is employed to *directly* refer to the actuality of a haunting that is occurring in contemporary Spain, as noted by scholars such as Labanyi, Colmeiro, Winter and Ferrándiz as well as communicated by Spain's mass media.

The trope of haunting is employed to convey the possession of the present national body by the spectres of the past, namely that of Franco, as well as to evoke the notion that Spain is a haunted house. But more so, the trope of haunting is used to depict a symbolic exhumation of the ghosts after creating a (cinematic) space in which their testimony can be heard. Not only that, but the film eradicates the trope of haunting itself in the turn to the archival in the conclusion. This sudden change in aesthetic suggests that the consequences of the civil war and ensuing dictatorship can now be relegated firmly to the past.

In this sense, and in conclusion, *30 años* performs the work of *unsuturing* the past from the present. The notion that animation has been employed as a tactic to suture a fragmented past was discussed in the previous two chapters, though through differing implications. *Pequeñas voces*' blend of children's artwork and computer generated animation that mimics them initially appears to create a palatable façade that seeks to suture Colombia's drawn-out history of armed conflict and the displacement and disappearances that resulted from the turmoil. However, we pointed out that the filmmakers' choice of children's testimonial artwork to narrate their war-time experiences becomes an *uncanny* façade that does not in fact aim to suture, but rather calls to attention the fragmentation, or breakdown, of childhood – the film's protagonist. On the other hand, we argued that *Eva de la Argentina*'s collage aesthetic of animated and archival segments appears as an intent to “patch together” a period of Argentina's history that is in fact marked by voids, silences and disappearances. The result being that the overall patchwork of the film's narrative does not reflect the official story, but rather the filmmaker's own creative version of Argentina's political past.

Martín's film, conversely, situates its narrative in an animated visual aesthetic that intentionally conflates the past and the present by depicting a past historical period through a

contemporary language and aesthetic – that of the graphic novel – and giving it the face and voice of contemporary society through the likeness of actor Juan Diego. By challenging the dichotomy of past/present in the visual style, Martín mimics the *spectral* nature of present-day Spain, haunted by the ghosts of the Franco-era as it continues the work of exhumation through a historical remembering. Accordingly, the turn towards the archival in the film’s final scene – and above all the fading away of the graphic novel aesthetic in the same moment – reinforces on the filmic level the definitive “pastness of the past,” effectively unsuturing the two different Spain’s that were in flux. Although this separation is not yet so definitive on the level of society, the film’s conclusion is indicative of the ongoing work of relegating the spectres through the political, social and cultural recovery movements taking place. *30 años* is only one of the most recent cultural works to parallel the unearthing of the past in Spain’s recovery movement, and stands as an example to other filmmakers of how to go about (re)animating the past through innovative methods.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This year marks 100 years since the tool of animation was first introduced into the documentary genre, in Latin America with pioneer animator Quirino Cristiani's two-and-a-half minute animated political satire *La intervención en la provincia de Buenos Aires* (1916). This endeavor was shortly followed on North American soil in Winsor McCay's silent animated short film, *The Sinking of the Lusitania* (USA, 1918). Although the inclusion of animation in documentary film is not novel, this practice in cinematography has grown at a remarkable pace during the last three decades, beginning in the 1990s when the animated documentary also began to earn a name for itself in film scholarship as a genre in its own right. At present, the frequency with which animated documentaries are appearing in global cinema is indicative of a boom, one whose roots can be found in the success of films such as Marjane Satrapi and Vincent Paronnaud's *Persepolis* (Iran, 2007), Ari Folman's *Waltz with Bashir* (Israel, 2008). McCay's short film is paradigmatic of how animation can be used for didactic purposes, as has long been its role in the media from commercials and instructional videos to the documentary genre. However, *Persepolis* and *Waltz with Bashir*'s stories of a young woman's coming-of-age during the Iranian Revolution and a traumatized soldier's search for lost memories in the 1982 Lebanon War began to demonstrate how animation can adequately address narratives of mature subject matter which were normally relegated to live-action re-enactments or reconstructions with archival footage.

Filmmakers in Hispanic cinema have likewise grappled with the question of how to best go about re-telling equally somber historical narratives. How do you impress upon an adult audience the impact that an armed conflict and displacement has had on children and childhood? How does one go about reconstructing the story of an enigmatic historical figure such as Eva

Perón, and that of the national political project of Peronism that also seems to evade being pinpointed due to ongoing transformations in its character? How do you convey the subjective experience of a haunting, spectral past in the present Spanish imaginary? The answer to questions such as these for directors Jairo Carrillo and Oscar Andrade, María Seoane and Manuel H. Martín has also been to turn to animation in its various forms.

Film scholarship is beginning to note, however, that it is not just the *fact* of animation that makes such films notable, but rather it is the *function* that animation plays within the filmic narrative. Discussion in this area has particularly developed since the emergence of leading animated documentary scholar Annabelle Honess Roe's seminal work, *Animated Documentary* (2013), in which she proposes a three-pronged theoretical framework of how animation functions in documentary: non-mimetic substitution, mimetic substitution and evocation. We have turned to Roe's framework to understand how animation functions in the (re)animating the historical period being depicted in Jairo Carrillo and Oscar Andrade's *Pequeñas voces* (Colombia, 2010), María Seoane's *Eva de la Argentina* (Argentina, 2011), and Manuel H. Martín's *30 años de oscuridad* (Spain, 2012).

Pequeñas voces is one of the few portrayals that address the Colombian armed conflict from the child's point-of-view, and becomes even more notable for straying from the common portrayal of children as innocent bystanders by instead depicting them as direct players in and victims of the conflict. However, the infantile animation style comprised of the children's testimonial drawings and a computer animation that mimics their artwork, aims to recreate the childhood that these children experienced, but only then to show its breakdown. In likening the displaced children to simplistic childlike drawings, *Pequeñas voces*' non-mimetic style and tone advertently call attention to the loss of childhood at the hands of the armed conflict. The

seemingly palatable façade at first appears to be suturing a fragmented past, yet becomes less palatable, uncanny rather, as the drawings become *too real* by embodying the trauma of their child narrators through their authentic voices, behaviors, motives and emotions. Thus, the façade points to the breakdown of the very image it is trying to uphold. Accordingly, animation is a tool for Carrillo and Andrade to re-write this period of Colombian history from the child's perspective, using a childlike aesthetic, but to express meaning to an intended older audience.

Eva de la Argentina employs animation as well as the archival to re-write history from a very specific point of view: that of left-wing Peronism featuring a revolutionary Eva Perón who is set as the movement's central player. Accordingly, Seoane's film both recognizes the commonly noted ambiguous nature of Peronism, yet puts forth one very specific version of this national project. In proliferating the on-screen image of Eva Perón through a blend of archival images and an animated, mimetic double, the film mimics Eva's strategic multiplicity of character, suggestive of Sigmund Freud's notion of the 'double' as an assurance of immortality. At the same time, her animated figure becomes a second double – this time non-mimetic – as an allegorical figure through which the filmmaker's story of Peronism can be written.

Through the double-Eva tactic (which in itself creates another duplicity by showing two versions of the animated Eva figure: Eva Oficial and Eva Montonera) and through the construction of her own myth of Peronism, Seoane perpetuates the enigma of Eva Perón, despite a pretense of unveiling the enigma. As a result, the dual-biography sutures a past fragmented – one marked by disappearances – through a collage technique. But the result is that the text does not reflect the official history, but rather creative interpretation of the filmmaker.

30 años de oscuridad re-writes history through animation by narrating that which cannot be so easily portrayed in other contemporary live-action documentaries that tend towards a realistic portrayal: the subjective experience of a haunting. In situating a narrative of Spain's past in a contemporary visual aesthetic and language – that of the graphic novel with photographic traces of contemporary actor Juan Diego – *30 años* challenges the dichotomy of past/present in flux within the film and evokes the notion of Spain's lingering Franco-era spectres. However, in turning towards the archival in one brief scene in the film's conclusion, Martín's film performs the work of *unsuturing* by effectively reinforcing the distance or “pastness” of the traumatic past. Hence, the animation takes part in the work of suturing of the history, as we have seen in the first two movies, but in a different way: it works to separate and to liberate, or unsuture, the past from the present, imitating the work that contemporary Spain is undertaking in their social, cultural and political movements that aim to at long last commemorating the victims of Francoist Spain.

In providing close-readings of these films, this thesis has aimed to contribute to the broader discussion of the animated documentary that is happening in other global cinemas, as well as give much deserved critical attention to the three productions from Hispanic cinema. Current research on the animated documentary in the field of Hispanic studies is scarce, to say the least, despite the fact that filmmakers in Spain and Latin America have produced award-winning short and feature-length films in recent years. Further, it seems important and innovative work is being done in these regions.

Pequeñas voces, *Eva de la Argentina* and *30 años de oscuridad* demonstrate a new trend emerging within the animated documentary, indicative of an evolution that is occurring in the animated documentary genre in the last decade since the appearance of *Waltz with Bashir* and *Persepolis*. The three films analyzed in this thesis all exemplify a distinct and purposeful

audiovisual juxtaposition of the archival and animated, the latter two films especially so with the juxtaposition occurring on the visual level with that purposeful alternation between live-action footage and animated reconstructions. It is this linking characteristic that has led to a subsequent focus within this thesis that is also beginning to emerge within scholarship: how the juxtaposition between the animated and the archival can lead to what Roe deems an uncanny, or “strange viewing experience” (2012:35).

For this reason, we have chosen to pursue a psychoanalytical reading of these films by asking in what ways these texts display a relationship to Freud’s notion of the ‘uncanny,’ and to what end. We have argued that the way in which the uncanny manifests itself in these films is directly related to the function of animation that they display: an uncanny façade of childhood as the drawings become *too real* and too alike to the veiled bodies of their narrators through indexical traces such as their real voices, and by embodying trauma that is projected onto them; an uncanny doppelgänger suggesting a desire for immortality; and the uncanny return of the dead – of spirits and ghosts – that linger in the body of the present.

However, a psychoanalytical approach is just one way that these films could have been studied. In consideration of areas of future research, these productions would also lend themselves well to analysis under the lens of the emerging field of memory studies, for the unique way in which they visualize historical (and often collective) memory, as has been done with many readings of Folman’s *Waltz with Bashir*. Likewise, they would be good candidates for pondering the spectatorial experience as scholars have begun to do with the animated documentary genre (see, for example, Buchan 2006; Davies and Vladica 2010; and Landesman and Bender 2010), for, as Roe very recently noted, there remains “the need for more research

into animation reception and a more robust theorisation of spectatorship in relation to medium-specificity” (2016:24).

The above suggestions are only a few ways in which the animated documentary can and will continue to be explored in what is an exciting and fertile new area of scholarship. Though documentary and animation were initially perceived as “a marriage of opposites” as the introduction to this thesis noted, the slow and steady rise of these films leading up to and into the 21st century, and the current boom taking place makes clear that theirs is a lasting union that will open up new avenues for study in the intersecting fields of Hispanic studies and film studies.

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