

Fleeing in “Forgotten Wars”. The Carlist Wars in Basque Cinematography

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Este artículo analiza tres películas de cine vasco ambientadas en la tercera guerra carlista – Crónica de la Guerra Carlista (1872-1876) (Tuduri, 1988), Santa Cruz, el cura guerrillero (Tuduri, 1990) y Vacas (Medem, 1992)– desde la perspectiva crítica de la representación de la huida como uno de los posibles caminos elegidos por los perdedores de una guerra.

Palabras Clave: Guerras Carlistas. Cine Vasco. José María Tuduri. Julio Medem.

Artikulu honek hirugarren gerra karlistan girotutako hiru euskal pelikula aztertzen ditu –Crónica de la Guerra Carlista (1872-1876) (Tuduri, 1988), Santa Cruz, el cura guerrillero (Tuduri, 1990) eta Vacas (Medem, 1992)–, ihes egitearen ordezkariaren ikuspegi kritikotik, gerra baten gal-tzaileek aukeratutako balizko bideetako bat dela kontuan izanik.

Giltza-Hitzak: Gerra Karlistak. Euskal zinea. Jose Maria Tuduri. Julio Medem.

Cet article analyse trois productions de cinéma basque se déroulant dans le cadre de la troisième guerre carliste – Crónica de la Guerra Carlista (1872-1876) (Tuduri, 1988), Santa Cruz, el cura guerrillero (Tuduri, 1990) y Vacas (Medem, 1992) – depuis le point de vue critique de la représentation de la fuite comme l'une des options possibles pour les perdants d'une guerre.

Mots-Clés : Guerre Carlisle. Cinéma Basque. José María Tuduri. Julio Medem.

In October 2000, La Orden de la Legitimidad Proscrita/The knights of the Order of Proscribed Legitimacy, a group of adherents to the Carlist faction who had fought during the Spanish Civil War (1936-39), travelled to Trieste (Italy) to receive the Cross of Merit from the hands of an *infante* who could never rule in Spain, Carlos Hugo of Bourbon-Parma¹. Four years after, the Museum of the City of Madrid opened an exhibition about the Carlist Wars. If we compare these tributes, with the numerous events which took place during the whole of 2006 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Spanish Civil War, we can understand the scarce importance that the three armed Carlist conflicts have in the memory of present generations, which between 1833 and 1876 plunged most of Spanish territory into a constant state of civil war.

Neither their duration nor the number of human lives lost in these wars –the casualties in the Liberal army during the First Carlist War (1833-40) outnumbered the casualties on both sides of the Spanish Civil War (1936-39)– overcome, as Antonio Manuel Moral indicated, the “evident historical law according to which people only retain in their collective memory the impact of their last civil confrontation”². The “more recent” bloodshed of the Spanish Civil War has erased for present generations any trace of previous conflicts, something that cinema has not attempted to rectify either. Spanish cinema has reflected on rare occasions these historical facts, most of the time in an anecdotal form and, if we focus on the “cinema made by Basques”³, the main object of this research, we find three films which fit this pattern: *Crónica de la Guerra Carlista (1872-1876)/Chronicle of the Carlist War (1872-1876)* (Tuduri, 1988), *Santa Cruz, el cura guerrillero/Santa Cruz, the Guerrilla Priest* (Tuduri, 1990) and *Vacas/Cows* (Medem, 1992).

1. THE CARLIST WARS IN THE VASCONGADAS AND NAVARRE

The dynastic conflict resulting from the succession to the royal throne after the death of Fernando VII is pointed out by most historians as the background of a greater confrontation. Two different conceptions of society were involved, at least: on one hand the supporters of the previous *statu quo* –delegitimized during the Spanish War of Independence against the French (1808-14)– and, on the other hand, the Liberal reformers, whose

1. Sixth pretender to the royal throne in the illegitimate line of succession which Carlos María de Isidro began in 1833, after the death of his brother, Fernando VII. This conflict was the origin of the Carlist Wars.

2. MORAL, Antonio Manuel. *Las guerras carlistas*. Madrid: Sílex, 2006; p. 13.

3. The controversy regarding what is “Basque cinema” (cinema in the Basque language, cinema produced in the Vascongadas, cinema directed by Basques, etc.) has not altered in any study carried out on the subject. The position defended in this article is that Basque cinema is that which is directed by Basque people, whether they work or not in the Vascongadas (See TORRADO, Susana. *El cine vasco en la bibliografía cinematográfica (1968-2006)*. Donostia-San Sebastián: Deusto, 2008).

foundations were the outbreak and expansion of the French Revolution in 1789 and who had found a niche in some reforms carried out during the Spanish Liberal Triennium (1820-23)⁴. If the Cortes of Cadiz in 1812 introduced some reforms (abolition of the Inquisition, separation of powers and elimination of guilds, among others) which separated Liberal from Royalist deputies at the end of the war, in 1814, with the departure of the French army and its supporters in Spain (*afrancesados*, frenchifiers), Fernando VII abolished the Parliament and suppressed Liberals who, disenchanted, joined the revolutionaries and the officers of the army who were waiting for payment which was never arriving.

The military uprising of Lieutenant Colonel Riego in 1820 initiated the Liberal Triennium when, once again, the king restored the Constitution and various reforms were carried out, which this time resulted in a radicalization of liberalism and an increase in counterrevolutionary ideology. Royalists instigated an insurrection to restore some discarded values and institutions, such as the censors' office⁵ and the reform of university⁶, in 1823. Fernando VII, after requesting support from the Holy Alliance, succeeded in restoring absolutism, beginning the Absolutist Decade (1823-33). During these years, political intrigues divided the court into two factions, depending on who they supported for the succession of Fernando VII in the hypothetical case of his death. On one side the ultraroyalist-carlists, in favour of the brother of Fernando VII, Carlos María Isidro, known as Don Carlos, and on the other side the *afrancesados* and the moderate royalists in favour of dispossessing Don Carlos of all his dynastic rights and making Maria Christina of Bourbon, wife of Fernando VII, regent queen until princess Isabel II reached the age of majority.

In 1833, after the death of Fernando VII, the Pragmatic Sanction was imposed⁷, the Government of Madrid recognizing Isabel II as successor to the royal throne, while Don Carlos was proclaiming himself legitimate successor. Spanish regions such Catalonia, Aragon, Levante (Maestrazgo), Castile, Navarre and the Vascongadas rose in favour of Don Carlos, starting the First Carlist War in Spain. No members of the regular army rose in his favour mainly due to the purge carried out on anyone suspected of Carlism, after the events at

4. RUBIO, Coro. "¿Qué fue del <<oasis foral>>? (Sobre el estallido de la Segunda Guerra Carlista en el País Vasco)". In: *Ayer*, nº 38. Madrid: Asociación de Historia Contemporánea, 2000; pp. 66-67.

5. ALEJANDRE, Juan Antonio. "Un paréntesis en la censura inquisitorial de libros y folletos: lecturas en la España del Trienio Liberal". In: *Cuadernos de Historia del Derecho*, nº 10, Madrid: Univ. Complutense, 2000; pp. 9-47.

6. REAL, Carmelo. "La configuración del sistema educativo español en el siglo XIX: legislación educativa y pensamiento político". In: *Campo abierto*, vol. 31, nº 1, Badajoz: Univ. de Extremadura, 2012; pp. 69-94.

7. The Salic Law was abolished. According to this law, women only inherited the throne if there were no males in the main line - sons - or in the lateral line - brothers or nephews.

La Granja⁸. Under the motto "God, Homeland and King" they considered their great deed as their personal anti-liberal and anti-revolutionary crusade⁹.

It was precisely in the Basque territory where, after six hard years, war seemed to come to an end with the famous "Embrace of Maroto and Espartero", known as the Convention of Vergara, on the 31 August 1839, after which the Carlist army fled to France¹⁰. This "peace" treaty was perceived as treason mainly by the guerrillas formed by some combatants who had also participated in the Liberal Triennium fighting against Liberals: authentic "catholic soldiers in a war of religion"¹¹.

In 1846 Carlist troops emerged in Catalonia after various attempts at an uprising in previous years. A year before, Don Carlos, who had self-proclaimed himself as King Carlos V, had abdicated in favour of his son, Carlos Luis of Bourbon Braganza. It was the commencement, in 1846, of the Second Carlist War: three years of conflict and fighting which occurred mostly in Catalanian territory¹² (The Matiners War). The villages of Navarre and the Vascongadas were exhausted, without arms and confronted not only with the troops of Isabel II which outnumbered them, but also their own troops due to differences among their command.

Everything seemed to predict the end of Carlism. Progressive Liberals consolidated in power, especially during the so called Progressive Biennium (1854-56). Meanwhile, on the Carlist side everything was a problem. After his stay in England, Don Carlos's son reconsidered¹³ and married María Carolina of Naples. After an attempt at making a dynastic agreement on his part with the king consort Francisco de Asís (married to Isabel II), Carlists presented their candidate, under the name of Carlos VI, as a solution to the unruliness

8. In September 1832, Fernando VII became severely sick while he was with his court resting at his royal residence in La Granja (Segovia). The king abolished the Pragmatic Sanction after the visit of his ministers who had consulted the *Infante* Don Carlos about his acceptance that in the case of the death of the king, his niece would rule. Due to his refusal, after his health improved, he dismissed the whole Government and proceeded to form another which was more moderate, defendant of female succession and which began purging the army of any member suspected of Carlism.

9. RUBIO, C. "¿Qué fue del <<oasis...>>"; p. 67. For "anti-liberal" see below; p. 8.

10. The claimant Carlos María Isidro did not accept the Convention, therefore war continued on other territories, such as Catalonia and the Maestrazgo.

11. RUBIO, Coro. "Guerra y memoria (La "destrucción" del acta del Convenio de Vergara en 1873)". In: *Sancho el Sabio*, nº 19, Vitoria-Gasteiz: Fundación Sancho el Sabio, 2003; p. 205.

12. In the Vascongadas, historians usually only talk about two conflicts. The Matiner's War has been considered a minor chapter of Carlism's history. The term "Second Carlist War" has been traditionally reserved for the events taking place from 1872 to 1876. However, in this text, I have decided to maintain the name of Third Carlist War for these events (represented in the analyzed films) to be coherent with the common practice in film history, for example in MORAL, A. M. "La imagen del Carlismo en el cine español". In: *Imágenes. El Carlismo en las artes. III Jornadas de Estudio del Carlismo*. Actas. Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 2010; p. 211.

13. First, he abdicated in favor of his brother, the *Infante* Don Juan, who did not accept his abdication and waited until Don Carlos returned from Great Britain.

in which Spain was plunged during these years. In 1861 Carlos VI, his wife and his son, the *Infante* Fernando died within a short space of time. These events precipitated the public recognition of the liberal government by Carlos VI’s brother, the *Infante* Don Juan, a political manoeuvre which resulted in the writing of a letter addressed to all Spaniards by the Princess of Beira –widower of Carlos V– recognizing the rights of his grandson, the future Carlos VII. On the 19 September 1868 the troops in the Bay of Cadiz rebelled. The rebellion spread like wildfire throughout many Spanish cities and the Government with Isabel II at its head departed to France on the 29 September 1868¹⁴. The Carlists were regaining their strength¹⁵.

The year 1872, on the 21st of April, the third general Carlist uprising took place in Spain. The poor organization (lack of arms and resources) as well as the lack of support and the various battle fronts open, first against Amadeo I of Savoy, second against the I Republic (1873-1874) and finally against Alfonso XII¹⁶, provoked a war which once more would be centred in just a few regions: the Vascongadas, Navarre, Catalonia, Castile and Levante. This last Carlist war was considered in the Vascongadas and Navarre as the *last crusade*, the last opportunity of saving Catholicism and the *fueros*, the two main supporting pillars of the oasis in which their citizens lived, a paradise threatened by liberals. The voluntary Carlist parties commanded by leaders, very familiar with the territory on which they moved, kept alive the conflict using a system of marches and counter-marches, until the Carlist army reorganized to face the Liberal army. They ended up losing the war in 1876, beginning a period of internal crisis in the legitimist movement as a result of the abolition of the *fueros* and the homologation of the *diputaciones forales* (the provincial representative body in provinces with *fueros*) with the provincial *diputaciones*.

2. SPANISH CINEMA AND THE CARLIST WARS

Spanish cinematography does not include many titles which reflect Carlist Wars. Similarly to what happens with these wars in History, the approach to the “great forgotten wars” in cinematography has not helped to remember them. According to filmmaker Jose María Tuduri, there were almost no Carlist films before the Spanish Civil War. He explained this by, on the first hand, the preference of cinema writers to adapt stage plays instead of novels, where the Carlists appeared frequently (such as in Galdós’ *Episodios Nacionales*). On the

14. With the departure of Isabel II to exile, the provisional government proclaimed the constitution of 1869 which established the constitutional monarchy as the form of government. Amadeo I of Savoy, son of the king of Italy, had the ideal characteristics: catholic, progressive and coming from a dynasty related to the Spanish crown. He was the first king of Spain elected in parliament.

15. MORAL, A. M. *Las guerras...*; pp. 189-190.

16. Son of Isabel II and Francisco de Asís, King of Spain between 1874 and 1885.

other hand, he stressed the high budgeted a historical film needed as a second factor to take into account¹⁷.

All the titles about these wars, either indirectly or as a main part of the story, are historical dramas, where love intrigues and conflicts of honour predominate over any of the three military conflicts¹⁸. Before briefly going through the films whose plot is situated during these armed conflicts, we have to mention the French film *Pour Don Carlos/For Don Carlos* (Musidora, Jacques Lasseyné, 1920), an adaptation of Pierre Benoit's novel with the same title. The action of this extensive silent film (almost three hours long in its first version) occurs during the Third Carlist War and narrates the story of a young French legitimist who, after been sent to Spain, tries to save the Carlist battalions in Navarre. Meanwhile, he meets a young French-Basque woman who saves him from being executed by the Liberals in the Navarre village of Estella. Love stories such as this one, with the backdrop of the Carlist Wars, constitute most of Spanish cinematography which presents these conflicts, especially those films made during Franco's regime. Despite Carlists being part of the winning side in the Spanish Civil War, they were never honoured in the films produced during Franco's dictatorship¹⁹.

Released ten years after the end of the Spanish Civil War, *La duquesa de Benamejí/The Duchess of Benamejí* (Lucia, 1949), lacking any historical rigour even in the title²⁰, presents a love story in which two men, a *bandolero* (a bandit) and a soldier from the Carlist army, try to conquer the heart of the leading actress, who tragically dies. The action develops during the Fernando VII period. Based on a play by the Machado brothers, its adaptation created some problems for the producers due to the manner in which the world of the *bandoleros* was reflected. This led to some members of the Superior

17. In TUDURI, José María. "Las Guerras Carlistas en el cine". In: BULLÓN DE MENDOZA, Alfonso. *Las Guerras Carlistas*. Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 2004; p. 115. Antonio Manuel Moral adds a third reason: the bad relation between traditionalists and cinema: they thought that cinema was a bad influence for society. Nevertheless, Moral points out four Carlist films from the interwar period: *El cuervo del campamento* (Gelabert y De Togorés, 1915), *La alegría del batallón* (Thous, 1924), the first adaption of *Zalacaín, el aventurero* (Camacho, 1929) and *Miguelón o el último contrabandista* (Aznar, 1933). Cfr. MORAL, A. M. "La imagen del..."; pp. 211-216.

18. Beside these films, Santiago de Pablo mentions the francoist documentary entitled *Reconquista de España* (1937), produced by the Press and Propaganda Delegation of the *Junta Carlista de Guerra* (Carlist War Board). The Press and Propaganda Delegation controlled (and censor) the foreign media in the Front of Guipuzcoa. With the footages shot by the cameraman of *Actualités Movietone Fox* (Fox's french branch), Miguel Pereyra edited the film. De Pablo researched on unpublished documentation archived in Pamplona to rescue some news on this forgotten film (DE PABLO, Santiago. *Tierra sin paz. Guerra civil, cine y propaganda en el País Vasco*. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2006; pp. 51-53). An approach to Carlism in the Spanish Civil War in UGARTE, Javier. "El carlismo en la guerra del 36: la formación de un cuasi-estado nacional-corporativo y foral en la zona vasco-navarra". In: *Historia Contemporánea*, nº 38, Leioa: Univ. del País Vasco, 2009; pp. 49-87.

19. MORAL, A. M. *Op. cit.*; p. 342 and MORAL, A. M. "La imagen del..."; pp. 212-214.

20. Historical facts show that the marchioness, and not a duchess, of Benamejí was in prison for being part of the preparation of an alleged uprising in favour of Don Carlos in Andalusia.

Board of Censorship making a complaint about the manner in which some representatives of the army were presented, opposed to the positive feelings awakened among the public by the *bandoleros*, which provoked some changes in the definitive version²¹. The film did very well at the box office and presented a portrait of *bandoleros* not without folklore, with Lucia achieving an Iberic version of American westerns²².

This literary adaptation is included in a group of very personal versions made in the forties and fifties of writers who did not count on the esteem of Franco's regime, such as Unamuno, Pérez Galdós or Baroja. Juan de Orduña made his own version, the second one in Spanish film history, of the novel *Zalacaín, el aventurero/Zalacaín, the Adventurer* in 1954. The protagonist of the story is Martín Zalacaín Urbía, from Guipuzcoa, who does everything in his power to see the woman he loves, despite being the sister of his Carlist and eternal rival, Carlos Ohando. The literary work takes place during the Third Carlist War, but in the film Zalacaín dies, assassinated by Carlos in 1857, a fact which puzzles the spectator as the action in the film is not developed in any of the three wars. This film presents Estella (Carlist's capital) as an awful place, full of "gambling halls, something inconceivable among those who protect the purity of habits. One of these halls was run by a woman, called Linda, from whom one of the characters says: «she is the most influential person in Carlos VII's court». The character alluded this way to the Pretender's love affairs – he was married with Margarita from Parma, by this time–, something that is historically true"²³.

The years of the First Carlist War are reproduced in the film *Diez fusiles esperan/Ten rifles waiting* (Sáenz de Heredia, 1958) by José Luis Sáenz de Heredia, considered by most historians as one of the three official directors of Franco's regime together with Rafael Gil and Juan de Orduña. This "arguable attempt at action cinema"²⁴ narrates the story of a Carlist officer who after being court-martialled for espionage, requests that his captors allow him visit his newborn baby giving his word of honour to the liberal colonel that he would return for his execution. A friend of his, also a Carlist soldier, decides to give himself up instead of his friend, but when he arrives at the village, he discovers that the protagonist keeping his word of honour, had returned

21. GORDILLO, Inmaculada. "La duquesa de Benamejí (1949) de Luis Lucia". In: UTRERA, Rafael (ed.). *8 calas cinematográficas en la literatura de la generación del 98*. Sevilla: Padilla Libros, 1999; p. 58.

22. CASTRO DE PAZ, José Luis. "Conflictos y continuidades. Los turbios años cuarenta (1939-1950)". In: CASTRO DE PAZ, José Luis, PÉREZ PERUCHA, Julio; ZUNZUNEGUI, Santos (ed.). *La nueva memoria: historia (s) del cine español (1939-2000)*. A Coruña: Vía Láctea, 2005; p. 41.

23. MORAL, A. M. "Cine y docencia universitaria de Historia Contemporánea. Un caso concreto: el carlismo". In: FORCADELL, Carlos; FRÍAS, Carmen; PEIRÓ, Ignacio; RÚJULA, Pedro (coords.). *Usos públicos de la Historia. VI Congreso de la Asociación de Historia Contemporánea*, Vol. 2. Zaragoza: Inst. Fernando el Católico, 2002; p. 727.

24. MARTÍNEZ-TORRES, Augusto. *Diccionario Espasa. Cine Español*. Madrid: Espasa, 1996; p. 415.

and had been executed. Based on real facts which occurred during the first *carlistada* (First Carlist War), public and critics responded enthusiastically, as shown in the words appearing in the newspaper *ABC* on the 16 June 1959: "it is an exaltation of friendship, honour and duty. And this idea is expressed in a sober and moving manner at the end of the story [...] a denouement full of drama and nobility"²⁵. According to Antonio Moral, Carlist officers "appears as gentlemanly, men of their words, loyal, devoted to friendship, respectful with his friend's women, and, even if they can doubt, honour and loyalty always prevail, and heroism triumphs at the end"²⁶.

That same year, Luis César Amadori directed one of the most important Spanish melodramas of 1950s, *¿Dónde vas Alfonso XII? / Where Are You Going Alfonso XII?* (Amadori, 1958). In this film, besides commenting on the movements of Alfonso XII at the head of the troops (the only connection with the Carlist Wars), the love story between Isabel II's son and his cousin Mercedes is told. The subject of the Carlist Wars is superficially referred to in *Sonatas/Sonatas* (Bardem, 1959), based on the Valle-Inclán novel²⁷ and in *Ella y los veteranos/The veterans and her* (Torrado, 1961)²⁸.

Among the attempts at silencing unpleasant matters in the historical cinema of Franco's regime, we can find two other films, from 1960 and 1966 respectively, in which Carlist Wars are treated with extreme caution. The first one, *Alma aragonesa/Aragon's Soul* (Ochoa, 1960), by José Ochoa, presents a family conflict where the protagonist's husband and his brother (Juan) belong to each of the two confronted sides. Juan, wounded in the front, is given refuge by Dolores, his sister-in-law. Other woman from the village accused Dolores of having a lover hidden in house, but she died during the labours, and her daughter inherited the shameful stigma from her mother, being rejected by her own father. Some years later, her uncle Juan come back from exile, and being informed of the consequences of his stay at Dolores's house, he decides to tell the truth to his brother. It is quite obvious that the dramatic conflict among the brothers, and Dolores' tragic fate, were the main storyline of this film, and the liberal-carlist dialectic

25. See VERDERA, Leoncio. *Lo militar en el cine español*. Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa, 1995; p. 295.

26. MORAL, A. M. "Cine y..."; p. 724.

27. The protagonist, after helping a Carlist party has to flee Spain for having a love affair with the wife of a marquis. The film passed unnoticed making Truffaut declare the death of Bardem in an article published in *Cahiers du Cinéma* "without understanding the comparison that could be made with the society of that moment regarding the fight of liberals and conservatives which it included" (AROCENA, Carmen. "Luces y sombras. Los largos años cincuenta (1951-1962)". In: CASTRO DE PAZ, J. L. et al. *La nueva memoria: historia (s) del cine español (1939-2000)*. A Coruña: Vía Láctea, 2005; p. 99).

28. It mentions the conflict when treating the story of four war veterans, two from each side, who live together and recall the past. Their lives are changed when the niece of one of them arrives and they try to help her as a means of healing wounds. There are plenty of historical anachronisms in the film. For example, if the leading roles had fought in the Third Carlist War (1875), they would have had more than one hundred year in 1960, in MORAL, A. M. "La imagen del..."; pp. 230-231.

only the background for their drama²⁹. The second film also taking place during the First Carlist War, *El primer cuartel/The First Guardia Civil Barracks* (Iquino, 1966), directed by Ignacio F. Iquino, begins at the end of the war, when its protagonist, Captain Fernando del Castillo, returns to his homeland, Andalusia, to find his house and lands expropriated by the Liberals and his girlfriend married to his brother, commander of the *bandoleros*. After various months immersed in delinquency, he is invited by one of the Liberal officers against whom he has fought most valiantly, the Duke of Ahumada, to be part of a new institution: the *Guardia Civil*. After accepting the offer, he fights to eradicate *bandoleros* from the Andalusian region. At the end of the film, he fatally confronts his brother. In short, a tribute to the *Guardia Civil* by the cinema of Franco's regime and another frustration for Carlists:

[...] we can appreciate the economic and family consequences that those carlists that openly supported the Pretender –and whose properties were out of the territories controlled by the legitimist army–, had to bear. Nevertheless, what we can appreciate clearly is the view that Francoism would like to offer to the spectators about some facts of the first *carlistada*, such as soldier's merit, those men that, even in the opposed liberal and carlist sides, recognized each other as gentlemen and Spaniards, working together in the great project of *Guardia Civil*³⁰.

We finish this section by mentioning two films, one from the end of the 1970s and the other one from the 1980s, which take place during the Third Carlist War. The first, filmed in 1979, was entitled *Inés de Villalonga, 1870* (Balcázar, 1979) and told the story of Inés, the daughter of a rich Catalan family that joins a convent, fall in love with a captain of the liberal army, other nun's brother, that is wounded by the Carlists while visiting her. In *La punyalada/The Stabbing* (Grau, 1989), directed by Jordi Grau, the love conflict involving two neighbours in love with the same woman and belonging to the two different sides is the main theme. Both films took place this time in another of the areas where the conflict developed, the Catalanian Pyrenees³¹.

After this brief summary³², we can affirm that the Carlist Wars have not found their place in Spanish cinematography. During Franco's regime, the conflict between Liberals and Carlists was only presented as an historical setting to situate love stories such as *La duquesa de Benamejí, Zalacaín, el aventurero* or *¿Dónde vas Alfonso XII?*; conflicts of honour, such as *Alma aragonesa* and *Diez fusiles esperan*, and patriotic tributes such as that made to the *Guardia Civil* in *El primer cuartel*. Among the protagonists of these films we can find *bandoleros*

29. MORAL, A. M. "Cine y...; p. 724.

30. MORAL, A. M. *Op. cit.*; pp. 725-726.

31. See MORAL, A. M. "La imagen del...; pp. 232-233.

32. We can add other films in which the Carlism played a role, such as the carlist role played by Gabino Diego in Fernando Trueba's *Belle Époque* (Trueba, 1992), or even the sequences on location in the North Front in *Raza* (Sáenz de Heredia, 1941), but I think these are the most relevant pictures to the date, beside the three I will analyze in deep in the next section.

and Carlist soldiers, anti-heroes who end up by going into exile or being killed by their rivals in love, not on the battlefield. The reason for this omission by Franco's regime was, most probably, that Carlism proposed a model of the nation state which, though conservative, was opposed to Franco's model.

3. BASQUE CINEMA AND THE CARLIST WARS

1980s were a very prolific period for the production of Basque cinema. Favoured by new legislation regulating the subsidies to which films could gain access, both from the Basque Government and the Spanish Ministry of Culture, an outburst of short films and the return of veteran film-makers from what they themselves called the Madrid 'exile' took place. That decade, the Basque Government also implemented an aid policy which included a plan of non-refundable grants. This resulted in an increase in the number of films produced, though not always an increase in quality. The aim was clearly to create a stable infrastructure and obtain financial support.

With the Film Law developed by the Basque Government in 1983, up to 25 per cent of a film budget was funded, providing that it complied with the following conditions: exteriors had to be filmed in the Vascongadas; 75 per cent of the participating actors, actresses and technicians had to be resident in the Basque autonomous region; and a copy of the film had to be in the Basque language. The highest number of subsidized films in that decade was produced between 1987 and 1989, a total of ten. Among them, two are films studied in this research, *Crónica de la Guerra Carlista (1872-1876)/Chronicle of the Carlist War (1872-1876)* (Tuduri, 1988), in 1988, and *Santa Cruz, el cura guerrillero/Santa Cruz, the Guerrilla Priest* (Tuduri, 1990), filmed in 1989 but released in 1990. Two years later, Julio Medem made his debut as a director with *Vacas/Cows* (Medem, 1992) whose beginning takes place in the same period, the Third Carlist War.

3.1. *Crónica de la Guerra Carlista/Chronicle of the Carlist War* (Tuduri, 1988)

It was not easy for José María Tuduri to film *Crónica de la Guerra Carlista/Chronicle of the Carlist War* (Tuduri, 1988). In 1979 information about a project to make a film which had this conflict as its background appeared in the press. It was just a publicity strategy to obtain funds, which did not succeed. Tuduri's obsession came from long before, going back to his dissertation about photography in the Vascongadas between 1839 and 1876. Financial problems prolonged the project to almost a decade. Tuduri started in 1984 making a series of five hundred slides, which were to be part of an audio-visual diaporama, to recreate the wardrobe and equipment of the Third Carlist War. In addition to the pictures, he started tailoring uniforms and searching for arms from the period. That 45 minutes diaporama would be the origin of the script for his film. In February 1985 filming commenced and was completed in

July 1987, but many mishaps occurred during the shooting, among them the explosion of a sack of gunpowder in Tuduri's hands which kept him in hospital for a fortnight³³.

The story is the narration of the memories of two men who lived during the last Carlist conflict: Policarpo Amilibia, a journalist from the Bilbao newspaper *Irurac Bat*, sent as a correspondent to the Liberal front, and Inaxio Zatarain, a Carlist volunteer who fought in the guerrilla band of the Santa Cruz Priest until he enlisted in the regular army. The film turns into an educational lesson in which the spectator gets a rough idea, more or less organized, of the events of those years. To achieve this, the narration relies on a fictionalized part made up of a series of consecutive flashbacks where the two characters can be seen travelling through Basque territories. A voice-over narration, pictures, caricatures and engravings, presented in documentary style, support the memories of the two protagonists with precise details on dates, people and places.

The image presented of both sides is basically the same, dispelling the myth of the Basque-Spanish confrontation. However, perhaps by introducing Zatarain as a member of the Carlists and showing his hard days, the marches with the Santa Cruz Priest's band, his dead comrades after a battle, etc., the audience becomes more sympathetic with the side which, in the end, was the loser, the side which, as Zatarain says, took to the hills and served the king to maintain the *fueros* while he used them to try to become king. The disillusionment may be observed in the final words of one of the essential scenes in which Zatarain from his farmhouse and Amilibia from his office speak about all the aspects which were part of the conflict, such as religion, the king, the *fueros*, democracy, the two armies, etc. We reproduce below part of the dialogue in which each of them, looking straight at the camera, seem to rebuke the other. This, together with the progressive limiting of the each shot, starting with a medium shot to finish with a close up, provides the scene with a sense of 'confrontation':

P. A. "I will return", But he never did. Don Carlos..., what an adventurer! Austrian by birth, Italian by education and king of the oaks, as it was against one of those trees that he started shooting the first time he crossed over the border as an act of declaring war. And a womanizer? He spent the war chasing women and Carlists were not aware of it, despite that they were the defenders of public morality.

I.Z. The king? That one too... He could have negotiated and kept the liberties of this country safe! 'My rights to the throne are not negotiable', and not leave it to the mercy of the victor after having taken the sacrifice to the extreme of giving him its children and last penny. We tried to use the king to conserve the *fueros*, but Don Carlos sought to use us to become king. May God give him the reward or the punishment that he deserves.

33. See ROLDÁN, Carlos. "El cine del País Vasco: de Ama Lur (1968) a Airbag (1997)". In: *Ikusgaiak*, nº 3, Donostia: Eusko Ikaskuntza, 1999; pp. 284-286.

P.A. The *fueros*? Carlists didn't give a damn about *fueros*! What a wonderful opportunity of autonomy they had with the Federal Republic! The only thing they were going after was to maintain catholic unity and the absolute power of the monarch against liberties and ideological pluralism.

I.Z. The Liberals pro-*fueros*? We saw how they defended the *fueros* after winning the war, ha, ha! We ended up losing them. They didn't give a damn if the *fueros* and the country were lost forever, amen. Providing they had liberty and universal suffrage, and all that for what? That it's the people that pay and don't get paid is well known. No, no, we were not anti-democrats, we were anti-liberals³⁴.

After this virtual encounter, the lives of the protagonists cross for an instant in a scene which reproduces the end of the conflict, when the journalist attends the handover of arms by various battalions from the Carlist army. For an instant, Amilibia and Zatarain look at each other. It is a glance with no hatred, but with sadness for all they have lived. In summary, the end of the conflict signified: resignation on the side of Carlists who had fought to defend a coward king who, as soon as he could, fled from the country he defended, in which he was not even born. He simply fled.

As Bernoville says, that lost war was

[...] disconcerting and picturesque. Hard, precise, delimited as a chess game, it was mainly played out in the four Basque provinces located between the Pyrenees and the sea. Use was made of the hamlets, valleys and mountains with the small guerrilla groups, constantly moving, occupying or abandoning them as if they were squares on a checkers board. However, in that reduced setting passions were strong and characters took on a prodigious importance to the point that, in this restricted horizon, the name of Santa Cruz echoed like a little Napoleon where the Bidasoa River rushes through the narrow ravines³⁵.

34. P. A. "<<Volveré>>. Y no volvió. Don Carlos..., valiente aventurero. Austríaco de nacimiento, italiano de educación y rey de los alcornocques, que con uno de estos árboles se lió a tiros la primera vez que cruzó la frontera como acto de declaración de guerra. ¿Y mujeriego? Que se pasó la guerra siguiendo a faldas y los carlistas sin enterarse a pesar de que eran los defensores de la moralidad pública.

I. Z. ¿El rey? aquel también... ya pudo haber pactado y salvaguardado las libertades de este país. <<Mis derechos al trono son innegociables>> y no dejarlo a merced de vencedor, después de haber llevado el sacrificio hasta el extremo de darle sus hijos y hasta el último real. Nosotros pretendíamos servirnos del rey para conservar los fueros y Don Carlos pretendía servirse de nosotros para ser rey. Que Dios le dé el premio o el castigo que se merece.

P. A. ¿Los fueros? ¡Bastante les importaban los fueros a los carlistas! Qué buena ocasión tuvieron de autonomía con la República Federal. Lo único que perseguían era mantener la unidad católica y el poder absoluto del monarca en contra de las libertades y el pluralismo ideológico.

I. Z. ¿Los liberales fueristas? ya se vio cómo defendieron los fueros después de ganar la guerra, ja, ja. Nos quedamos sin ellos, bastante les importaba que se hundieran los fueros y el país *per in secula seculorum* amén. Ésos con tal de tener libertad y sufragio universal, y total, ¿para qué? Que el pueblo es el que paga y el que no cobra ya se sabe. No, no, nosotros no éramos antidemócratas, nosotros éramos antiliberales (...)

35. BERNOVILLE, Gaëtan. *La cruz sangrienta. Historia del cura Santa Cruz*. Tafalla: Txalaparta, 2000; p. 10.

Technical and artistic information of *Crónica de la Guerra Carlista (1872-1876)*

- Year: 1988
- Title: *Crónica de la Guerra Carlista (1872-1876)*
- 86 min.
- Direction: José María Tuduri.
- Writer: José María Tuduri.
- Producer: José María Tuduri.
- Editing: Angel Díez.
- Executive Producer: Iñaki Epelde.
- Assistant directors: Patxi Barco, Julio Medem and Begoña Zanguitu.
- Production assistants: María Asunción García and Iñaki Martija.
- Editing assistant: José Manuel Tazón.
- Director of Photography: Gonzalo Fernández Berridi.
- Music: Bixente Martínez.
- Sound: Aurelio Martínez.
- Cast: Paco Sagarzazu, Ramón Aguirre, Rafael Enrique, Patxi Barco.

3.2. *Santa Cruz, el cura guerrillero/Santa Cruz, the Guerrilla Priest (Tuduri, 1990)*

One of the Carlist volunteers who best represented the guerrilla warfare, to mystic limits, in the words of Bernoville, was Manuel Ignacio Santa Cruz, a priest from Guipuzcoa who under the black standard with the motto “Homeland or death. War without mercy”, kept in check, as the leader of the guerrilla group, the Liberal troops on the border between Navarre and Guipuzcoa. The second film studied in this research, *Santa Cruz, el cura guerrillero/Santa Cruz, the Guerrilla Priest (Tuduri, 1990)* was a project to bring his life to the screen. Once again, the work of Tuduri went through various stages before the film was shown on the cinematographic screens. If the first script was based on the life of a young liberal who wishes to avenge the death of his father at the hands of the priest from Guipuzcoa, the film ended up being the story of a priest from a Basque hamlet who is taken by surprise and enlisted by force by the guerrillas, while he was trying to reach the Pasajes pass to get to America to make his fortune. With the background of daily life in the band of the young man, Juan Azurmendi, the film presents the figure of the real protagonist, Don Manuel, a hero in the Basque rural world, who represents morality and religious intransigence (“enemies of the soldier: alcohol and women”), to which he puts first soldier’s discipline: “Since I left my parish I am just a soldier serving God”. The aura of myth which preceded him is presented in this film from his first appearance in the middle of the fog, up to the scene of the battle in which he harangues his soldiers standing up, behind the trenches without protection, to the cry of “Resist, my sons. Did you not take up arms to die for God? Then the time to give your life for him has arrived”.

Despite the licence taken, such as the inclusion of a love story between Azurmendi and the innkeeper, totally forced into the script, the film presents the Santa Cruz form of warfare: defence of honour and loyalty among the members of the group, lack of respect for army orders ("war isn't won with orders from the barracks") and no mercy for enemies or for those who he considered traitors on his own side. His poor relationship with the army is patent, as can be seen in the scene in which the commander sent by General Lizarra (his main enemy in the regular army) appears. Don Manuel asks for the highest chair to be taken out to sit down on and he does not even stand to attention in front of the soldier who stands before him, ignoring his presence while reading the Bible. I reproduce part of the dialogue:

- General Lizarraga is chief commander of our troops. You have a responsibility towards the army hierarchy.
- Military! I know many who have a virgin sword and a bloodstained tongue.
- Perhaps you should show more respect towards your officers.
- And who are you to demand respect from me?
- I am the commander of Don Carlos' army, the legitimate King of Spain, and I was an officer in the pontifical army. I was blessed by Pious IX in Rome.
- So, you are the archangel of the militias from heaven, are you?³⁶

According to Santa Cruz, a soldier must never surrender, and this is demonstrated when his officer asks him to surrender. Santa Cruz orders to have him executed by firing squad, as had happened with other members of the party judged as traitors. He never carries out any execution personally, so that "he is free of sin". The film finishes with the desertion of Azurmendi, after they were abandoned in the last battle by the Carlist army ("our own people abandon us"), and the fleeing across the border by Santa Cruz and the members of his party who are still alive. We must remember that Azurmendi was enlisted by force and he ends up by fleeing, which eliminates any sign of patriotism. In contrast to the motto "Homeland or death" of Santa Cruz, Azurmendi flees, and deserts. Santa Cruz escapes death and leaves his country. Similarly, the main character of the third film included in this research, *Vacas/Cows* (Medem, 1992), escapes death, in his case by submerging into it, as we present in the following paragraph.

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36. - El general Lizarraga es el comandante en jefe de nuestras tropas. Usted se debe a su jerarquía militar.
- ¡Militares! Conozco a muchos que tienen virgen la espada y sangrienta la lengua.
 - Tal vez debería mostrar más respeto por sus oficiales.
 - Y, ¿quién es usted para exigirme respeto?
 - Soy comandante del ejército de Don Carlos, el legítimo rey de España, y fui oficial de los ejércitos pontificios. A mí me bendijo Pío Nono en Roma.
 - ¿Así que es usted un arcángel de las milicias celestiales?"

Technical and artistic information of *Santa Cruz, el cura guerrillero*

- Year: 1990
- Title: Santa Cruz, el cura guerrillero
- 90 min.
- Direction: José María Tuduri.
- Writers: José María Tuduri, Michel Gaztambide, José Antonio Vitoria.
- Producer: Josean Gómez.
- Executive Producer: José María Tuduri.
- Assistant Producer: Ángel Amigo.
- Editing: Iván Aledo.
- Assistant director: Joseba Salegi.
- Second assistant director: Ángel Díez.
- Editing assistant: José Manuel Tazón.
- Director of Photography: Gonzalo Fernández Berridi.
- Music: Pascal Gaigne y Amaya Zubiria.
- Casting coordinator: Ana Díez.
- Cast: Ramón Aguirre, Joseba Aierbe, Agustín Arrazola, Ramón Barea, Mikel Garmendia, Aitzpea Goenaga, Mikel Laskurain, Rafael Martín, Juani Mendiola, Miguel Munárriz, Paco Sagarzazu, Patxi Santa María, César Saratxu, Daniel Trepiana, Alfredo Villa, Carlos Zabala.

3.3. *Vacas/Cows* (Medem 1992)

After been assistant producer in Tuduri’s first film, the young director Julio Medem directed *Vacas/Cows*, a cyclical history of rivalry between two families, the Irigibels and the Mendiluzes. The Carlist Wars are presented collaterally in the first scene of his directing debut, from the trenches of the Carlist front, where the two young men from the two neighbouring farms fight the Liberal army. Manuel Irigibel, terrified, watches how Carmelo Mendiluze dies besides him, and uses blood from his wounds to camouflage himself in order to be given up for dead. This act of cowardice³⁷, which is reflected in the words pronounced by Mendiluze before dying (“I am not dead, Manuel, I am not dead”) would accompany Manuel for the rest of his life, “placing him in a border like situation between life and death, removed from everything”³⁸.

Both lineages paradoxically end up by mixing “their blood” due to the relationship between Ignacio (Manuel’s son) and Catalina (Carmelo’s daughter and the sister of Juan who is Ignacio’s eternal rival). Fruit of that union Peru is born who, years after having emigrated with his parents to America, returns to the village where he was born as a photographer to cover the Spanish Civil War. At that moment, the circle closes in a memorable scene in which his uncle Juan saves him from been executed alleging his Carlist descent: “this young

37. AGIRRE, Joxean. “‘Vacas’ o la historia de una cobardía”. In: *Egin*, 7/3/1992; p. 50.

38. ROLDÁN, C. “El cine del...”; p. 323.

man is a Carlist, grandson of two Carlists who fought together at the front". Contrary to the two previous films, in *Vacas/Cows* Medem does not consider it necessary to include details of the Carlist conflict (the positions they defended, their ideas, etc.), he just presents the two characters who were on one of the sides. Juan would continue to be tied to the Carlists when he fights on the side of the *Nacional* army, whose image does not come out very well when the strong repression against peasants is presented after the final battle: "A very hard criticism of Basque traditionalism, whether Carlist or Nationalist"³⁹.

Included, in Richardson's words, in a tradition of rural cinema from the north of Spain:

To this otherwise simple story of the contradictions of rural life Medem adds a political dimension [...] Medem challenges spectators to engage the film in an allegorical reading of Basque identity in terms of a broader Spanish politics. He invites his spectator to see the families' rivalry on a second level as an attempt to define Basque identity, investigating the complicated relations between blood and politics that have defined Basque nationalism movements since their 19th century origins⁴⁰.

Manuel, the grandfather from the Irigibel lineage is not a traitor, but he challenges one of the pillars of any society, of any nation: patriotism. He is a coward, turns his back on his homeland. He flees. The three generations escape: the first one from the Carlist war, the second one to America and the third one, Peru and Cristina, the new generation which now shares the same blood, to France. While Manuel in a cowardly act pretends to be dead by covering himself with his neighbour's blood, his grandson, Peru, conceals his identity by speaking English.

Alberto Iglesias' score contributes to creating the oppressing atmosphere in which the protagonists move, and as Medem mentioned on one occasion, some of the characters become accustomed to such an atmosphere of pain and violence, and those who can not, do not have any option other than to escape, as we have already mentioned, either by taking refuge in madness, as did the grandfather, or in taking deliberate flight, as did the grandchildren⁴¹. In the film, the contrast between the outside aggressions and the sense of pride and dignity of the characters can be observed. At a certain level, the characters seem to become impervious to suffering. Resignation is also present in the film during the scene in which, after the duel of cutting tree trunks with axes between Ignacio Irigibel and Juan Mendiluze, there is a shot of all the trunks cut into pieces and the grass covered by the wood splinters. In this scene the words pronounced by Manuel "And all that destruction, for what? So much

39. MORAL, A. M. *Op. cit.*; pp. 360-361.

40. RICHARDSON, Nathan. "Posthuman Nationalism and the Renewal of Rural Spain: Julio Medem's *Vacas* and Suso del Toro's *Calzados Lola*". In: *Letras Peninsulares*, vol. 15, nº 2, Davidson, North Caroline: Hispanic Studios Department, Davidson College, 2003; p. 236.

41. AGIRRE, J. '*Vacas*' o la historia...; p. 50.

damage!” could refer to the first scene with all the bodies torn up on the battlefield, where the spectator may ask himself what is war good for?

Technical and artistic information of *Vacas*

- Year: 1992.
- Title: *Vacas*
- 92 min.
- Direction: Julio Medem.
- Producers: Fernando Garcillán and José Luis Olaizola.
- Writers: Julio Medem y Michel Gaztambide.
- Director of Photography: Carles Gusi.
- Editing: María Elena Sainz de Rozas.
- Music: Alberto Iglesias.
- Cast: Carmelo Gómez, Emma Suárez, Ana Torrent, Txema Blasco, Kandido Uranga, Clara Badiola, Karra Elejalde, Pilar Bardem, Ramón Barea, Miguel Ángel García, Ane Sánchez.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The Carlist Wars are the framework which opens and closes the conflict existing between the two protagonist families of *Vacas/Cows*. Nevertheless, the conflict does not work only as a framework. Without treating too deeply the historical reality of Carlism, by using that conflict Medem narrates in *Vacas/Cows* one of the possible options chosen by the losers in the war: fleeing. In these three films we find a narration of taking flight, of a pilgrimage: from the Vascongadas to America or France in *Vacas/Cows*, the fleeing of the king once the conflict had finished together with the frustration of the Carlists in *Crónica de las guerras carlistas/Chronicle of the Carlist Wars*, and that of the protagonist of *Santa Cruz, el cura guerrillero/Santa Cruz, the Guerrilla Priest*, Azurmendi, who only fights for his homeland because he is forced to. Meanwhile, the true protagonist of this story, the Guerrilla Priest Santa Cruz, after claiming aloud that he would die for his homeland, flees with his band across the mountains when the Carlist army retreats, before the end of the war, in 1873, after being condemned by Carlist military authorities. The lack of implication in the conflict can also be considered as fleeing. To observe the war from outside: Peru taking pictures of the Civil War, just observes the conflict from a distance.

All these stories about displacement and being out of place exhibit a fragmented and disturbing philosophy of identity through characters who are pathologically deprived of it. By fleeing, the characters deny their own personal and national identity (‘I am American’, cries Peru), eliminate any trace of patriotism (Santa Cruz) or hide, either unconsciously (taking refuge in their madness) or literally by using their comrade’s blood on the battlefield. This taking flight is a timid and disenchanting return to the beginning, assuming that probably none of the sides was totally in the right, as the dialogue between Zatarain and Amilibia demonstrates.

The directors of these three films present three different approaches to the Carlist Wars, three stories which narrate these forgotten conflicts for the present generations. A conflict marked by a great taking of flight, that of "the" King, Don Carlos. A great act of cowardness reflected in the words of Amilibia in Tuduri's film mentioned above: "I will return. But he never did".

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