IGNORANCE IS NOT BLISS: EVIDENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS FROM CIVIL WAR SPAIN

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Between 2005 and 2007 archaeologists and anthropologists excavated the burial site of more than four hundred bodies, people who died or were killed during and soon after the Spanish Civil War and Post-War Repression. This article presents an analysis of eight mass graves. Evidence from these graves strongly suggests that the bodies are those of victims of extrajudicial killings during a purge from a transition period between the end of the war and the beginning of a more controlled, though brutal, postwar repression (1940–42). Although our work was not part of a formal medicolegal investigation, we argue that the context warranted such and the approach used in this and similar situations should be forensic. We also suggest that forensic practitioners go further in their interpretation than we have seen in past exhumations to include the incorporation of multiple lines of evidence, reflecting holistic archaeological and anthropological practice and expertise. [forensic archaeology, forensic anthropology, Spanish Civil War, exhumation, social justice]

The guilty leaders of the town, who deserted their men, were court-martialed. The guilty government of Largo Caballero, who left Malaga to her fate, was forced to resign. The guilty governments of the Western Democracies, which left the Spanish Republic to her fate, could neither be court-martialed nor forced to resign; they will be tried by History. But that will not make the dead arise. [Koestler 1952:40]

In July 1936, a military coup was staged in Spain against the five-month-old, democratically elected Republican government. The coup leaders, representing the traditional interests of the military hierarchy, wealthy landowners, and the Catholic Church, claimed to be saving Spain from the “revolutionary” liberal reforms that were being undertaken by the Republicans (Graham 2005; Hughes 1981; Jensen 2002). The coup failed as such and a civil war ensued. From the end of this civil war in 1939 through to 1975, General Francisco Franco ruled Spain as a military dictator. Repression during and after the war was ubiquitous and included incarceration, physical beatings, and well over 100,000 executions of those who were accused or perceived political, civilian,
and military opponents of the ruling dictatorship (Espinosa 2009; Garzón 2008). The formalization of the rebel Nationalist repression in the spring of 1937 transitioned from less controlled, undocumented summary executions to mass incarceration, courts martial, and, in many cases, execution by firing squad. The victory of the Nationalists, the institution of the Franco dictatorship, and the fear instilled by the repression all worked to ensure that no forensic investigations would be conducted of Nationalist victims.

When Franco died in 1975, a transition to democratic governance began and, in 1977, Spain held democratic elections for the first time since 1936. From the time of Franco’s death until 1980, limited exhumations of the victims of the Nationalist repression were conducted quietly by family members of the victims. Despite significant continuing fear of the former regime, many families of Republican victims went out to look for the graves, exhume the remains, and rebury them in family plots and proper cemeteries (Baviano 1980; Herrero Balsa and Hernández Díaz 1982; Ferrándiz 2013). In 1981, a failed coup d’état by members of the Civil Guard effectively stopped all exhumations due to a fear of further disturbing the fragile political and social state in Spain (Encarnación 2008). However, almost 20 years later in the year 2000, a journalist named Emilio Silva went looking for the grave of his grandfather and 12 others who were murdered by fascist paramilitaries in 1936 and buried in an unmarked roadside grave. Archaeologists and anthropologists volunteered to assist Silva in finding the grave, and they did. Silva subsequently paid for DNA analysis, his grandfather was positively identified, and the remains of the 13 victims were repatriated to surviving family members for dignified reburial (Silva and Macías 2003).

In this article we discuss the killing of civilians and prisoners of war during the Spanish Civil War and postwar repression (1936–42), as well as efforts to investigate the killings. We discuss details of several excavated mass graves in the small town of Uclés to illustrate various sociopsychological and symbolic aspects of the victim burials as reflected by their peri- and postmortem treatment. We advocate going beyond descriptive and documentary methods by employing broader analytical and interpretative aspects of practice in forensic investigation. Forensic science has direct legal mandates and consequences. Ultimately, however, what receives the concerted attention of legal authorities can be motivated and driven by politics.

This article presents an instance where typical forensic archaeological and anthropological methods were employed to the benefit of a humanitarian, not legal, context. What we think makes the work at Uclés different from many other forensic investigations is the analysis of feature and object characteristics, along with a logical interpretation of what the spatial juxtaposition of objects, bodies, and graves means as they were found, at that particular location and relative to the sociopolitical context of the time. Questions of culture and human behavior are inherent to conventional archaeological and anthropological study, but they are seldom employed in forensic investigation. Haglund et al. (2001) have even warned against the study of, or comment on, human behavior in forensic investigations. The reason there is little attention given to this subject in a forensic context is due mostly to the unquantifiable or highly variable nature of human behavior.
of certain types of data and undeveloped theory. In the era of the Daubert standard, rules of evidence for forensic investigations, which operate within a legal framework, demand testable and repeatable methods for admissibility in court; humanitarian investigations differ, as their primary focus is not on individual criminality. Nevertheless, there are valid interpretations about an actor's beliefs and intentions that can be made—with differing degrees of confidence—by examining evidence of buried victims, as will be seen in this article and as is demonstrated routinely in conventional archaeology and anthropology.

THE ROLE OF FORENSIC SCIENCE IN THE INVESTIGATION OF DISAPPEARED PERSONS

Despite the lack of formal criminal investigations of disappeared persons in Spain, the task faced by investigators shares many characteristics with medicolegal casework. The clandestine graves being sought are generally those of civilians and other noncombatants who were forcibly removed from their homes or prisons before being executed, mostly by informal paramilitaries and without any semblance of a trial. The families of these victims have lived for decades in fear and distress, perhaps not knowing the fate of their loved ones or not knowing the burial place if the person had been killed.

Investigations of victims of forced disappearance from the Spanish Civil War and postwar repression have largely been conducted by the civil sector and there have been no criminal legal ramifications to the exhumations. Limited interest by, and funding from, the state has severely limited the investigative capability of those searching for the missing. DNA analysis is also severely limited as some of the human remains recovered are quite degraded and there is some uncertainty about the probable identification of many victims because tests depend on the willingness and ability of the families of potential victims to pay for it (Ríos et al. 2010).

The auspices under which forensic investigators should work—in this case archaeologists and anthropologists—and the role these specialists should play is a challenging one. Hunter and Cox (2005) and Cox et al. (2008) have suggested that forensic scientists should only work at the behest of formal investigative agencies. Others (e.g., Blau and Skinner 2005; Congram and Steadman 2008) have suggested that forensic scientists make themselves available for private contracting, civil society organizations, or even initiate investigations on their own. There is certainly a risk of “rogue” forensic practice, not only of potentially isolating oneself professionally but perhaps risking government sanction or even risking one’s own safety by threatening those with a vested interest in avoiding investigations. In Latin American countries such as Argentina, Colombia, Guatemala, and Peru, forensic scientists in civil society organizations have often taken the lead role of investigating cases of crimes of disappeared persons, many of whom disappeared at the hands of state agents or state-sanctioned paramilitary. Their work has been recognized and used at trials of former or current political and military leaders.
At the time of the coup in 1936, in the small town of Uclés, reactionaries “defending” the government sacked a 16th-century monastery located in the town and killed 11 people including Augustine monks. During the war, the Spanish government and British medical volunteers used the monastery as a field hospital. Although records from the hospital are missing, it is known from locals that some of those who died at the hospital were buried in anonymous graves, in a field at the base of the hill upon which the monastery stands.

In 1939, the Republican government surrendered to the rebels and abandoned the remaining territory they had held since the beginning of the war, including Uclés. Widespread and systematic repression followed the war, with tens of thousands being imprisoned and executed after summary trials by military tribunals or traveling judges (Juliá 1999; Nuñez 2009). In January 1940, the monastery at Uclés was turned into a Nationalist prison. Over the subsequent two years, according to the testimony of prison survivors, locals, and family members of former prisoners, inmates were tortured and beaten, some starved or died of disease and 160 were executed after summary trials in front of military judges (Iniesta López 2006; Molina pers. comm. 2006). Although no map or record of the burial places of the deceased has been found, the prisoners who died or were killed were alleged to have been buried in unmarked, often mass graves in the same area as those who had died previously at the wartime hospital.

In 2005, at the request of the families and neighbors of those who died, the regional branch of the nongovernmental Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory (Asociación para la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica or ARMH) was granted limited permission by the Church to conduct archaeological prospection with the goal of locating and exhuming the dead. The purpose of the exhumations was to identify, repatriate, and memorialize those who died—many or most of whom were political prisoners—allowing their families to give them a proper and dignified burial. Excavation began in the summer of 2005 and continued through the following two summers. By November 2007, all of the graves from the site had been located and all bodies exhumed.

This article discusses the recovery of human remains from Uclés and an examination of the spatial, osteological, and material evidence recovered during 2007, when all three authors worked at the site. Eight graves will be discussed in detail due to their unique characteristics of forensic interest. The spacing, dimensions, orientation, organization of the graves and bodies, as well as the antemortem and perimortem trauma observed on the exhumed remains all strongly support the theory that these were the victims of mass executions from the end of the war in 1939, or from the first days of the prison in 1940.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A critical precursor to exhumations and anthropological analyses is a preliminary investigation (Bernardi and Fondebrider 2007). In the case of Uclés, the presidents of ARMH Cuenca spent many hours searching municipal archives for prison records and
interviewed hundreds of people, including former prisoners, local residents, and families of those alleged to be buried there. Many of these interviews were video-recorded.

Due to the limited resources available for conducting investigations of disappeared persons in Spain, as well as time pressures caused by the tenuous permission to excavate granted by the Church, the fieldwork at Uclés was operated as a field school by the Autonomous University of Madrid for students of biology, medicine, history, and archaeology. The site coordinator was Professor of Archaeology Angel Fuentes and the onsite excavation director during 2007 was one of the authors of this article (D. Congram). Professional archaeologists with training and experience in forensic investigations in various countries (including authors A. Flavel and K. Maeyama) volunteered their time and skills in the time-sensitive task of locating and recovering all of the remains from the site, documenting the context, and analyzing a sample of the skeletonized remains exhumed (40 individuals). These volunteers also made an important contribution to the training and instruction of the students, many of whom had never previously participated in an archaeological excavation but who would continue with similar exhumations and skeletal analyses in Spain.

After clearing surface vegetation and the uppermost soil, archaeologists worked to identify variations in the color, compaction, and components of soil that revealed features. Graves were outlined, assigned a feature number, and the location in relation to other graves and features was mapped on a site plan. The excavation of each grave was then assigned to one of several small teams, consisting of two to four students, one or two of whom had previous excavation experience. Complex, multiple-person graves with commingled bodies were excavated by teams consisting entirely of, or directed by, experienced professional archaeologists.

Maintaining the limits of features, excavators removed soil from the grave with trowels. During excavation, feature context sheets were completed to record details such as the following: grave dimensions, body position, number of individuals in the grave, soil descriptions, and the location of the grave relative to surrounding features. Excavators recorded elevations above and beneath the head, pelvis, and feet of each individual in the grave, in addition to material objects found, taphonomic condition of the remains, and the presence or absence of a coffin. Early in the excavations, colleagues from the United Kingdom brought a total station and data logger, to create an electronic map of the features (including two of the eight graves to be discussed in this article) relative to the surrounding area, as well as graves that had been excavated during the two previous field seasons. Preliminary, though general, comments were sometimes included about possible trauma when clear evidence of such was observed during excavation.

In situ photographs were taken of the grave outline prior to excavation, at the first sign of human remains, prior to the exhumation of each body, and of the empty grave following the removal of all bodies, artifacts, and grave fill. Special attention was also given to the presence and position of rocks, which were often found in the graves, especially if they could have been the cause of skeletal trauma. Scale drawings (1:10) of each body in the grave were made once the remains had been fully exposed, and the location of graves was drawn on a site plan (1:100). All recovered remains were placed in paper bags.
according to anatomical areas (e.g., left hand, right ribs, cranium, and mandible). All bags were labeled and placed into a cardboard box, which was also labeled on at least two sides with the site code, grave number, and date of exhumation.

Limited anthropological analyses of 40 sets of remains were performed at a field laboratory (a former blacksmith workshop) with an aim of establishing a basic biological profile (sex, age range, stature) and for the documentation of ante-, peri-, and postmortem trauma as well as any individualizing features that could be useful for identification. Anthropological analysis followed standards established in the United States (Bass 1995; Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Loth and Iscan 1989) as well as those developed from European samples (Cerny 1983). Remains were dry-brushed to remove soil before being inventoried and analyzed. Forms were completed with notes on the criteria used to assess the biological profile. Trauma was described as well as illustrated on a skeletal diagram documenting injury timing in different colors (e.g., yellow for antemortem trauma, red for perimortem trauma). Photographs were taken of the complete skeleton, of features used to assess age, of potential identifying characteristics, and to document perimortem trauma that might relate to cause of death.

Over time it became clear that the rate of exhumations would have to increase in order to complete them by the end of the season and within the time allowed by the Church to conduct excavation. For this reason, anthropological analyses stopped after 40 cases to dedicate more time to work in the field.

INVESTIGATIVE AND ANALYTICAL RESULTS

The documentary evidence and oral testimony pertaining to events in Uclés are limited; in some cases they are corroborative and at other times were inconsistent with the physical and spatial evidence observed during excavation. Researchers with ARMH in Cuenca managed to obtain some records from the prison, which included the names and certain biographic details of prisoners, dates, and numbers of executions. Physical details recorded included the face (mouth and nose shape, type of eyebrows, eye, hair, and skin color) and height. The details invoke late 19th and early 20th century studies by Lombroso and Bertillon linking criminal behavior with physical characteristics and also studies conducted by the Nazis, who heavily supported Franco’s Nationalists and encouraged studies of prisoners (e.g., Vallejo Nágera 1938). According to the archives, 160 prisoners were executed by firing squad between April 1940 and June 1942. Documents also listed alleged crimes and determinations of the cause of death of those who died in custody but who were not executed. This information provided tentative details for the minimum number of individuals who could be expected in the burial area—those who would and would not show perimortem gunshot trauma from executions (Figures 1 and 2)—and also provided profiles that could be used to help establish victim identification (principally age and stature).

None of the burials were marked at the site and no plan was found in the archives indicating either where victims were buried or in what order (e.g., chronologically, whether Catholics were separated from non-Catholics, if those executed were separated...
FIGURE 1. Number of prisoners executed per quarter from April 1940 through June 1942. A total of 160 prisoners were executed in this two-year period, according to prison archives obtained by ARMH Cuenca.

from those who died of other causes, etc.). It is also important to add that there were two additional potential burial places at Uclés: a small (ca. 15 × 20 meter) burial plot at the side of the monastery, and the Catholic cemetery where residents of Uclés were normally buried. These two places were formal and legal, thereby representing dedicated and consecrated cemeteries, whereas the burial site that was excavated by these authors was simply a plot of land belonging to the monastery.

This ad hoc cemetery was a walled field known among locals as La Tahona, or the bakery, as this was one of its uses in antiquity. The area also has a long history of being used as a night-time corral for livestock. Evidence of centuries of land use was apparent upon excavation of the uppermost layers of soil, although the burials were the only context from which material was removed and investigated. It is worth noting, however, that in several instances individual or multiple pig skeletons were excavated at a level above those of the people who died or were killed during and following the Spanish Civil War. Locals from Uclés reported an outbreak of disease among animals in Spain in the 1970s and suggested that these pigs had probably belonged to the monastery and had been culled and buried at this site—in some instances directly over and into the graves of prisoners. Although the site had been used as an ad hoc cemetery during and after the war, the burial of culled livestock by monastery staff in the same place clearly demonstrates the fact that the site was no longer considered by the Church to be a cemetery or sacred place.

During the summers of 2005, 2006 and through seven months of excavations in 2007, the remains of 439 individuals were exhumed from the site. Of the 439, it is believed that 145 represent soldiers and civilians who died in the Republican hospital during the war (1936–39) and the remaining 294 individuals are believed to be those who died or were killed as prisoners between 1940 and 1942 (ARMH 2007). It is believed—based on oral
FIGURE 2. Plan view of the site following excavation. The Hospital zone (left) contained patients who died when the Monastery was used as a wartime hospital; the Northern zone (right) contained prisoners who died or were executed during their incarceration; the Central zone (center) with unconventional graves probably dates to the transitional period between Hospital and Prison uses of the Monastery. The original entrance was in the southern wall of the corral, called La Tahona.

In addition to formal repression and mass executions, prison conditions during the Civil War were dire. Testimonies and letters written by prisoners to their families during incarceration—that prisoners buried at Uclés, who were not shot, died of “hunger, cold, lack of medical care and beatings” (ARMH 2007; Iniesta López 2006). Official documents, however, recorded nonexecuted prisoners as having died of natural causes such as heart failure. The suggestion that 134 prisoners died of natural causes over a period of 26 months, an average of one “natural” death every six days, raises serious questions about the passive or active mistreatment accorded to prisoners by the authorities during their incarceration. As excavation and exhumations progressed, three sections were identified by archaeologists (Figure 2): the Northern zone (Zona Norte), Central zone (Zona Central), and the Hospital zone (Zona Hospital).

The Hospital zone, on the southern portion of the site, was defined by evidence suggesting that those buried in this area died at the Republican hospital during the war. Consequently this was the first area to be utilized as a burial place, and logically was closer to the 1930’s site entrance. Evidence supporting this conclusion included individuals with leg casts and several individuals showing signs of medical treatment (e.g., limbs amputated shortly before death and drainage tubes at sites of healing injury or from surgery). Burials containing only amputated limbs were also found in this zone, a phenomenon that has been seen at hospital burial sites from the recent wars in the former Yugoslavia. Although a few graves revealed bodies buried one on top of another, all bodies appeared to have been laid respectfully and according to tradition (body extended supine, head to the
west). Some burials were in trenches, but these typically included individuals in coffins. It is supposed that these individuals arrived from the front en masse, and so trenches were excavated to bury the large number of dead over a short period of time.

Graves in the Northern zone showed an evolution toward more organized burials: multiple rows of small west–east graves and many single inhumations with coffins. The Northern zone is believed to have held the bodies of prisoners who died or were executed from about the summer of 1940 through June 1942. This would have been the last area of the site to be utilized, farthest away from the original door. The Central zone, which is described in more detail below, is believed to represent those who died or were executed during the first few months of the establishment and use of the prison in 1940.

Across the three zones, many graves represented traditional interments holding a single individual lying on his back (supine) with outstretched legs, arms at the sides, on the pelvis or the chest and with the head at the west end of the grave. In a few cases in the hospital zone, up to four individuals were buried one on top of the other, sometimes with a thin layer of soil between the bodies. Some individuals in both the hospital and the Northern zones were buried in simple wooden coffins, some without lids.

In contrast to these more traditional interments, several graves were excavated in the Central zone containing the randomly positioned and commingled remains of multiple individuals with multiple points of gunshot trauma. These graves, excavated during the summer of 2007, are of particular interest to questions of gross human rights violations. The details of eight of these graves are discussed below.

**EIGHT MULTIPLE-PERSON GRAVES IN THE CENTRAL ZONE**

These graves excavated in the Central zone were rectangular in shape and each contained between three and five bodies (Table 1). The long-axis orientation of these graves was north to south, in contrast to the graves in the other zones that were oriented west–east. There was no direct correlation between size of the grave and number of individuals buried in it. In addition to the skeletal remains, a number of personal effects were recovered; however, there were no coffins. Little-to-no-soil matrix was encountered between the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grave</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Number of Bodies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1040</td>
<td>233 × 95 cm</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1099</td>
<td>242 × 85 cm</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1102</td>
<td>215 × 90 cm</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1121</td>
<td>210 × 85 cm</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1177</td>
<td>180 × 90 cm</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1178</td>
<td>210 × 90 cm</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1179</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1185</td>
<td>155 × 100 cm</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
bodies, although quicklime, in varying concentrations, was observed in all of these
graves. Nothing was found to indicate the graves were left open for bodies to be buried
over several days (e.g., animal or insect scavenging); these graves appeared to be single-
burial events of, presumably, people who died at or about the same time and date (refer
again to Table 1).

Large stones were excavated from some of the Central zone graves. Similar stones were
found in graves in other sections at the site, but in these other cases appear to have been
carefully placed beside or in the fill over the top of bodies (as if marking the grave), and
against the outside walls of coffins. The stones in graves in the Central zone, however,
were often found in the region directly above or around the head and face. Some peri-
and postmortem damage is believed to have been caused by these stones, which complicated
the assessment of possible gunshot or other trauma. Although the presence of large stones
lying directly on top of these bodies may be attributable to chance, they support other
evidence suggesting that the burials given to these individuals were not as respectful as
those in other zones at the site.

THE BODIES AND RELATED MATERIAL EVIDENCE

The bodies exhumed from the eight graves were male, with ages at death ranging from
young adult (20–28 years) to older adult (over 60 years). The bodies were generally aligned
with the north–south line of the graves (Figure 3), although there was no appearance
of the bodies having been carefully laid in any particularly position. The bodies were
randomly prone, supine, or lying on their sides. Many individuals had arms and legs
splayed in various directions, including resting high up on the grave wall.

Several of these individuals showed healed antemortem trauma, including Individual
239 whose leg had been amputated above the knee (Figure 4). The left leg of the individual

FIGURE 3. Grave 1121. Two of four bodies in the grave, with heads to the north, one prone the
other supine. The right wrist of individual 175 appears to have been tied to the left wrist of Individual
178. Fragments of rope were recovered from the area of the wrists.
Individual 239 from grave 1177 with a healed leg amputation. The body position is irregular, with head to the north and there are multiple commingled individuals in the grave, all of whom suffered gunshot trauma to the head.

below 239, in the same grave, showed a healed complete fracture at the mid-shaft of the femur. Evidence of amputations was also seen on bodies exhumed from burials in the hospital zone, but in those cases the injuries showed no evidence of healing (i.e., the persons died during or within a few days of surgery) and there was a stark difference in the manner of burial.

Other examples of antemortem trauma among these 30 individuals include healed fractures that would have inhibited movement of either upper or lower limbs. Individual 155 demonstrated a complete fracture of the humeral head, a fracture at the glenoid fossa of the scapula, and the lateral third of a clavicle showed new bone growth and alteration of normal shape—all of which would have affected shoulder movement.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that the injuries occurred during the war and that these people were taken to the Uclés field hospital for treatment. Perhaps the injuries were not completely healed or some rehabilitation was necessary before the patients could leave the hospital. It is clear, however, that these men did not die of these old injuries; all individuals had more serious, perimortem trauma that contributed to, or more likely caused, their deaths. Similar crimes against prisoners or others who posed an ideological threat to the insurgent Nationalists occurred in Spain despite rules in place to protect prisoners of war (Geneva Convention 1929; Hague Convention 1907; e.g., Jackson 1965; Juliá 1999; Zapico Barbeito 2010). It is possible that the individuals
exhumed from these Central zone graves are victims of a similar postwar purge. A recent case of a purge of invalid enemy combatants and hospital staff was investigated by the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (Stover and Peress 1998:104–107).

All individuals exhumed from the eight unconventional graves suffered trauma to the head or neck (see Table 2) that occurred at or around the time of death. The cause was clearly projectile trauma (e.g., gunshot), in all but four cases. In the remaining four, injuries were consistent with projectile trauma, but the determination was not as clear. Several individuals exhibited multiple gunshot wounds to the head. Additional gunshot wounds were observed to other parts of some of the bodies, mostly in the thorax (ribs/shoulders) and pelvis. Such injury patterns can be considered consistent with firing squad executions.

The position of bodies in some graves and in particular, the juxtaposition of wrists of different individuals, suggests that their hands were bound together. If true, this would contribute to the belief that these individuals were executed prisoners, rather than hospital patients who died of their wounds. This practice of tying the wrists of prisoners together has been well documented in Spanish Civil War literature and photography (Figure 5).

Bullets or ballistic fragments and rope used to bind individuals to one another were found in six of the eight graves from which remains were exhumed (Table 2; Figure 7).
## Table 2. Details of Trauma and Burial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grave</th>
<th>Ind</th>
<th>Position and Orientation</th>
<th>Antemortem Trauma</th>
<th>Perimortem Trauma</th>
<th>Material Evidence</th>
<th>Biological Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1040</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>Supine, N–S None</td>
<td>Head (GSW ant-post), thorax, pelvis</td>
<td>Lime, buttons</td>
<td>Young adult male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1040</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>Supine, N–S None</td>
<td>Head (GSW post-ant), thorax</td>
<td>Buttons, soles, may have been bound</td>
<td>Young adult male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1040</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>Supine, N–S Fracture R humerus</td>
<td>Head (GSW ant-left lat/post), thorax</td>
<td>Bullet fragment, lime, buttons,</td>
<td>Young adult male</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1040</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>Prone, N–S None</td>
<td>Head (GSW), thorax, pelvis</td>
<td>Bullet fragment, buttons, shoe soles, coin(s) in cloth</td>
<td>Young adult male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1099</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>Lateral right, N–S Fracture L shoulder</td>
<td>Head (GSW R lat to sup and L lat), thorax</td>
<td>Rope, buttons, gold ring, lime</td>
<td>Mid-aged adult male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1099</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>Left lateral, N–S Infection L leg</td>
<td>Head (GSW mandible, neck)</td>
<td>Rope fragments, buttons, soles</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1099</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>Right lateral, N–S Fracture R clavicle</td>
<td>Head (GSW R eye, mandible, thorax, extremities)</td>
<td>Buttons, lime, ring on finger</td>
<td>Young adult male</td>
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<tr>
<td>1102</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>Supine N/A</td>
<td>Head (GSW)</td>
<td>Buttons, lime</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
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<tr>
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<td>132</td>
<td>Prone, N–S None</td>
<td>Head (GSW ant-post), thorax</td>
<td>Button, soles</td>
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<tr>
<td>1102</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>Supine, N–S None</td>
<td>Head (GSW ant-post), thorax, extremities</td>
<td>Bullet fragment</td>
<td>Young adult male</td>
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</table>

(Continued)
<table>
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<th>Grave</th>
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<th>Position and Orientation</th>
<th>Antemortem Trauma</th>
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<th>Material Evidence</th>
<th>Biological Profile</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1102</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>Right lateral, N–S</td>
<td>Osteoarthritis throughout feet</td>
<td>Head (GSW, 2, post-R lat), extremities</td>
<td>None found</td>
<td>Older adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1102</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>Supine</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head (?GSW)</td>
<td>Shoe soles (alpargata canvas and rope sole)</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1121</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>Prone,</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Shoe soles, lime</td>
<td>Mid-aged adult male, gold dental restorations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1121</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>Supine, N–S</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Head (GSW sup-L lat)</td>
<td>Rope, buttons, soles, pencil, bullet jacket fragment</td>
<td>Mid-aged adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1121</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>Supine</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Buttons, hands together behind back</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1121</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>N–S</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>None found</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1177</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>Prone, feet up on walls, N–S</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Shoe soles</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1177</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>Supine</td>
<td>Healing/healed amputated L leg</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Buttons</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1177</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>Supine, N–S</td>
<td>Healed fx L femur; fused intermediate-distal phalanges of L foot at 90°</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Buttons</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued)
### TABLE 2. Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grave</th>
<th>Ind</th>
<th>Position and Orientation</th>
<th>Antemortem Trauma</th>
<th>Perimortem Trauma</th>
<th>Material Evidence</th>
<th>Biological Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1178</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>L lateral, foot up grave wall, S–N</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Shoe soles</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1178</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>Prone, S–N</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>None found</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1178</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>R, lateral, N–S Sacrum and R innominate fused</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Lime, buttons, soles, rope</td>
<td>Mid-aged adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1179</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>Prone, S–N</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Shoe soles</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1179</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>Prone Edentulous</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head (?GSW, L face and mandible)</td>
<td>Shoe soles, rope near R wrist</td>
<td>Adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1179</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>Prone</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head (GSW, face and mandible)</td>
<td>None found</td>
<td>Adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1185</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>Supine/R lateral, N–S</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Rubber shoes from tire treads</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1185</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>Supine, N–S</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head (rocks)</td>
<td>Buttons, remnants of shoes, soles</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1185</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>Prone, S–N</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1185</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>Supine, S–N</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head, pelvis</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1185</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>Prone, S–N</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Head (?GSW), thorax</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Adult male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N/A = not analyzed in lab); GSW = gunshot wound); Fx = fracture); N–S = head north, body south); S–N = head south, body north); R = right); L = left); ant = anterior); post = posterior); sup = superior); lat = lateral).
Several bullet fragments adhered to bone, and some fractured bones displayed green staining, likely due to copper alloy bullet jackets. No shell casings were recovered from within or around the grave, suggesting the execution site and the burial site were not the same.

The individuals were at least partially clothed when buried; shoe soles, buttons, and the imprints of clothing in lime were all found in the graves (Figure 6). Individual 178 from grave 1121 had a thick, dark shirt with a metal button, the cloth having been preserved due to the bacteria-killing effects of the metal in the button. Other victims were presumed to have been wearing long-sleeved shirts at burial as evidenced by white buttons recovered in the area of the torso and wrists, the latter being smaller than the former. From the few remnants of fabric recovered, all but one seemed to be nonmilitary attire: domestic-style shoes, including those made of recycled vehicle tires and alparcatas, which is a traditional slipper with a woven fiber sole still in use today in Spain. It should be noted, however, that many who fought for the Republic did not have formal uniforms (Orwell 1938). Personal effects including gold rings on fingers, coins, and a pencil were also excavated from the graves.

DISCUSSION

The task of identification has very much fallen upon the coordination of very limited archives, logical reasoning based on detectable site patterns, available witness testimony
FIGURE 7. Pleated rope, preserved by quicklime, was found at the overlapping wrists of Individuals 155 and 156 in grave 1099.

(of mixed reliability), conventional anthropological analysis, and weighing of all combined evidence. Ríos et al. (2010, 2012) have reported similar challenges in the identification of Spanish Civil War victims. Funding for DNA sampling typically comes from the families of presumed victims, although with so many cases at Uclés, other methods are required to winnow down potential identifications to make directed DNA testing a worthwhile exercise.
Although the Uclés graves were excavated under serious time and resource constraints and with a humanitarian focus, careful excavation allowed us to recover more than just the skeletal remains of individuals buried in these graves. Imprints in the lime around the bodies confirmed the location and weave of rope, even if the rope degraded before or during removal. We were able to ascertain the color, pattern, and details of some of the clothing worn by the deceased. Not having more knowledge about the garments worn by prisoners or hospital patients has prevented us from drawing any useful conclusions about the identity of the people based on their clothing.

Frequent visits by locals during site work at Uclés helped confirm information deduced from excavations of the hospital burial sector of the site: that trenches were created for burial in anticipation of battle casualties, which was further supported by the presence of amputated limbs. Hospital burials were nearest to the original site entrance (which was at the south) and this supports the conclusion about the chronological order of the burials across the entire site. In contrast, it is probable that those who died in battle during the war would have been buried at or near their place of death rather than being driven to a hospital and then buried at Uclés (immediately around which large battles did not occur). Skeletons from the Central zone showing gunshot trauma to the head, and particularly multiple gunshot wounds, can be distinguished from the hospital burials on these grounds alone. In both of these zones, multiple individuals were buried in single graves, but the form of the graves and burials, frequency and proportion of mass burials, the trauma observed, and material culture all worked together to distinguish the groups.

The evidence found strongly suggests that the bodies exhumed from the eight north–south mass graves are of people who were executed by the Nationalist authorities from around the end of the war (April 1939) through the first days of the prison at Uclés (February 1940). Spatially, these Central Zone graves were between the wartime hospital burials and other, more normative burials from the postwar prison. Some or all of the victims were tied to one another with cord at the time of burial (and, presumably, at the time of their deaths). No evidence suggested that these people were soldiers who died in combat. The bodies were thrown, rather than placed into the graves, one on top of the other with limbs sprawled out in all directions. Large stones were thrown onto the heads of some of the bodies, fracturing them. The orientation of the graves is also very informative as the conventional orientation of burials in Spain, according to Catholic tradition, is west–east. This convention was followed for burials during the war by the Republican authorities and for the later prison burials under the Nationalist authorities. The eight graves examined in greater detail were oriented north–south, a presumably deliberate act. Ideological rhetoric during the Spanish Civil War was thick; the Nationalists fighting to preserve traditional Spain (of which the Catholic Church was a major part) against liberal, secular reforms by the Republican government (Casanova 1999). Soviet support for the Republic contributed to the form of propaganda exercised by the Nationalists, who labeled their enemies as “Reds,” “atheists,” and “Marxists” (Reig Tapia 2006; Sevillano Calero 2004; Whitaker 1942). In the eyes of the killers, a burial that is the opposite of Catholic convention was fitting and emphasized the distinction between those killed and their “righteous” killers, particularly given that the burials were
conducted on the property of a Catholic monastery (although not in the monastery cemetery). The juxtaposition of pig burials, decades later, dug into those of the prisoners emphasizes the lack of importance and respect given to those who died or were killed. When the war had just ended and tensions were still high, the first among those who were executed were given particularly “special” burials that degraded victim status even further.

**CONCLUSION**

Excavations and analyses of unmarked graves at Uclés revealed a series of events indicating both actions and intentions of those responsible for the deaths and burials. A multiple-person burial of people who died of gunshot trauma in wartime is not unusual and not even necessarily criminal. A multiple-person grave of noncombatants, prisoners who were tied to one another at the wrists, executed, dumped into the grave, and buried one on top of the other, lays bare a very different, criminal act that violates the human rights of those who were killed as well as those of their families and communities. A lack of state-led investigations into these victims of forced disappearance constitutes a continuing violation of the rights of families 75 years after the crimes.

In this article, we argue that eight anomalous burials discovered at the Uclés burial site demonstrate a deliberate and ideological expression of the authorities in Uclés to socially ostracize the victims in an attempt to punish them and their families beyond the victims’ death. This interpretation is supported by the north–south orientation of the graves, the commingling of the victims’ remains in single person–sized graves, the material and spatial evidence of wrists having been tied and the multiple gunshot trauma to the heads and torsos of the buried bodies. While it can be argued that burying prisoners together in mass graves merely demonstrates logistical expediency, comparable graves in the hospital sector of the burial grounds show that even when multiple deaths occur at once (and unexpectedly, as after a battle), minimum arrangements can be made for respectable and acceptable burial despite very limited resources. Many archaeological methods—specifically spatial analysis—are almost never practiced in forensic investigations of missing persons. A fine exception to this is a recent study by Tuller et al. (2008) on the spatial analysis of commingled remains in a mass grave. We believe that spatial thinking and incorporating multiple lines of archaeological and anthropological evidence provides a much more complete picture of human rights violations such as forced disappearance.

In the face of state inaction, Emilio Silva had the courage and professional support to go and find his grandfather’s grave. The remains exhumed were not so degraded as to preclude DNA extraction and amplification, and Silva had the private resources to pay for DNA analysis. Other families in Spain, as in many other countries, have a far less realistic chance of finding and identifying their loved ones and of giving them a dignified burial in a culturally and legally acceptable way.

When the responsibility of investigation of forced disappearance is not accepted by the state, we advocate forensic practitioners help initiate the process. Scientists may do...
this either through active lobbying of state figures and agencies or by direct action in accordance with the law on behalf of families and communities of victims. In Spain this has only been possible in some—though not all—regions by a series of legal vagaries and political acquiescence.

In Uclés, professional archaeological and anthropological methods—thorough documentation; controlled excavation; and analysis of spatial, material, and osteological evidence—have ensured that a large, mixed body of data has been recovered, documented, and analyzed (Table 2; Figure 8). Although criminal justice is an extremely remote possibility for the families of the recovered victims, the evidence has elucidated the actions of those responsible for the deaths, which now forms part of the historical record. Koestler lamented that history could not make the dead arise. If the families of the victims seek justice for the dead and permit it, forensic scientists can and should raise the dead.

NOTE

Acknowledgments. We would like to thank ARHM Cuenca and all the Spanish and international volunteers who participated in the exhumations and analyses. Without their work we would still be ignorant about those who died and were killed at Uclés.
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