2024

“How did Guernica become the important painting and the universal symbol it is today?"

Or Lebel

Sotheby's institute of art
MA Thesis
2024

"How did Guernica become the important painting and the universal symbol it is today?"

By Or Lebel

The thesis submitted in conformity
with the requirements for the
Master's Degree in Art Business
Sotheby's Institute of Art

12897 words

Abstract

This thesis explores the intriguing journey that propelled "Guernica" from the initial obscurity of a commissioned artwork to its current status as a globally recognized symbol. The research unravels the multifaceted processes that have contributed to the transformation of a relatively overlooked artwork into an important painting and a universal emblem of protest, antiwar, and hope.

The research addresses the fundamental question of how "Guernica" evolved into an important and universally recognized painting. Answering this question allows me to explore and explain how "Guernica," despite its lack of immediate recognition, grew to possess an enduring significance. The research also tackles the paradox of an artwork that, when initially painted in response to the 1937 bombing of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War, did not gain substantial attention but eventually triggered its eventual rise as an impactful painting and a global symbol of human suffering and resistance.

This research methodology encompasses interdisciplinary exploration, combining art history, cultural studies, and political approaches. By analyzing art criticism, primary and secondary sources, the study examines the factors that contributed to "Guernica's" transformation. It delves into Picasso's creative periods and techniques, the symbols, the socio-political climate, and the evolving narratives surrounding the painting. Additionally, it investigates the role of exhibitions worldwide, media coverage, and the painting's relevance in today’s world situation.

The investigation unveils that "Guernica's" transformation from relative obscurity to global significance was a gradual but purposeful process. Over time, changing socio-

political contexts and an evolving human rights movement facilitated its transition into a powerful symbol of protest against injustice and warfare.

Understanding "Guernica's" transformation illuminates the potential for art to evolve beyond its original context, inspiring meaningful change across time and geography. The journey of the painting underscores the importance of interpretation, context, and activism in elevating an artwork's status. It serves as a testament to the enduring impact of visual symbols, highlighting their capacity to unite communities in advocacy for justice and peace.

Keywords: Guernica, transformation, universal symbol, art's impact, cultural resonance, human rights activism, visual communication, socio-political context.

Table of Contents

List of illustrations

Acknowledgment

I would like to thank my wife and mother for their endless support during the program and while writing my thesis paper. I also would like to thank my teacher and thesis advisor, Maria Sancho Arroyo, for always assisting me. Her online and in-person courses, as well as her lectures in my field study trip course, enriched me and pushed me to pay extra attention to Spanish artists and artworks, which led me to choose my thesis subject. Lastly, I want to emphasize the importance of chasing your dreams and believing you can achieve anything you wish for. It is never easy, but it is extremely rewarding and satisfying. The program and writing this paper forced me to make changes, adjust to new things, and sometimes push me to the limit, and I am thankful for all that.

Introduction

In a dimly lit room in a museum, visitors gather, all spellbound by a mural spanning an entire wall. It’s not only the vast size that catches their attention but also the discordant symphony of suffering, the twisted forms, and the starkness of black and white that evoke such strong emotions. This is "Guernica," Pablo Picasso's monumental cry against the horrors of the Spanish Civil War and the bombing of the Basque town of Guernica. This artwork, created in the throes of political upheaval and personal turmoil, is not just a painting—it is a powerful political statement, a chronicle of history, and an embodiment of human suffering and hope. But what propelled Picasso to paint such an artwork? Why does "Guernica" continue to be relevant to viewers across continents and eras? My research delves deep into these questions, hoping to illuminate the layers behind one of the most talked-about artworks of the 20th century.

At its heart, my investigation into "Guernica" stems from a profound fascination with how art, politics, and history entwine. I am captivated by Picasso's ability to transcend the canvas, creating works that don't just depict but actively engage with the tumultuous world around him. My thesis aims to reveal the multi-faceted nature of "Guernica," emphasizing its historical context, intricate symbolism, and undying relevance in contemporary society.

In the forthcoming chapters, I will discuss the extensive and crucial details that will help me answer this paper's question- “How did Guernica become the important painting and the universal symbol it is today?"

Chapter One delves into the enigmatic genius of Pablo Picasso, exploring the interplay between his personal life, his transformative artistic phases, and his creating periods, with particular emphasis on the period leading to "Guernica." I will also elaborate and compare some of his most famous artworks. Lastly, I will discuss what and who influenced Picasso and how it is implied in the painting.

Chapter Two sets the stage by excavating the political and historical backdrop against which "Guernica" was conceived. It provides insights into Picasso's motivations, the ramifications of the Spanish Civil War, the Franco regime, the Nazis' role, and the tragic events in the town of Guernica itself.

The journey of "Guernica" from its creation to its current revered status is a narrative of movement and influence. Chapter Three traces this odyssey, from its unveiling at the 1937 Paris Exhibition, its travels around the world in multiple continents and countries, its temporal residency at MoMA, and its eventual return to Spain, first to the Museo del Prado and then to its final destination- Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia where we can see the mural today.

As we all know, "Guernica" holds multiple layers of meaning, and chapter Four reveals the intricate tapestry of symbols within "Guernica." It will discover symbols rooted in Spanish and Western culture, diving into their interpretations and re-interpretations, shedding light on the universality of its messages.

Finally, I will provide my conclusion in chapter five and answer my thesis question. I will conclude this important mural's past and present and explain why I believe it will

continue to inspire, resonate, and caution us in the modern era and will only get more important and meaningful in today's challenging world.

Chapter one -The artist

Personal life and inspirations

The first chapter of my thesis paper briefly describes Pablo Picasso's life and bio, the artist who painted the Guernica. I find it essential to provide important details about the artist so the readers will understand some of the reasons and ideas behind one of Picasso’s most important artworks in the world and a significant symbol of antiwar and suffering.

Pablo Picasso, one of the most influential and celebrated artists of the 20th century, was born in Málaga, Spain, on October 25, 1881. Picasso's artistic journey spanned over seven decades, during which he continually pushed the boundaries of artistic expression and redefined the very essence of art. His artistic talents became evident at an early age. His father, José Ruiz Blasco, an art teacher, recognized his son's prodigious abilities and provided him with early artistic training. But it was not only a story about a talented boy who was taught how to become an artist by his father, but also a story about sadness due to Picasso’s sister's death in 1895, which led his father into a deep depression and eventually to give up his brushes and paintings and to transfer them to his son. By the age of 13, Picasso surpassed his father's skills, demonstrating an extraordinary command of traditional artistic techniques such as drawing and painting. This early proficiency laid the foundation for his later innovations in art.

Picasso's journey as an artist was marked by a ceaseless exploration of various styles and mediums. Early on, he was deeply influenced by the Spanish masters, particularly the works of Diego Velázquez and Francisco Goya, which laid the groundwork for his

profound understanding of classical techniques and the human form[1]. His early works, characterized by classical realism, demonstrated his remarkable technical prowess.

However, it was during his time in Paris, the epicenter of the art world, that Picasso truly began to evolve as an artist. In the early 20th century, he was exposed to the avant-garde movements of the time, including Cubism, Surrealism, and Fauvism[2]. These influences would shape his future work and reputation as a groundbreaking artist.

One of the defining aspects of Picasso's career is his versatility as an artist. He refused to be confined to a single style or medium, continually reinventing himself. His artistic output can be categorized into several distinct periods, each marked by a unique style and thematic focus.

But before we delve into the different periods that assembled Picasso's career, it is crucial to elaborate on Picasso as a person and not only an artist to understand the significant changes that occurred in his life. Picasso's personality was equally enigmatic. From one side, he was known for his charisma, charm, and magnetic presence. He was a highly social individual, often surrounded by a circle of intellectuals, artists, and admirers. He had a reputation as a womanizer and was involved in several tumultuous relationships, including those with Fernande Olivier, Olga Khokhlova, Dora Maar, and Francoise Gilot, who was his muse for some of his artworks like Dora Maar in the case of Guernica.[3]

---

[1] John Richardson and Marilyn McCully, *A Life of Picasso*: *The Prodigy, 1881-1906* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 13-37.

[2] Ann Temkin and Anne Umland, *Picasso Sculpture* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2015), 7-15. https://www.moma.org/d/pdfs/W1siZiIsIjIwMTgvMDYvMTMvODAwcmJrZXo0X01vTUFfUGljYXNzb1NjdWxwdHVyZV9QUkVWSUVXLnBkZiJdXQ/MoMA_PicassoSculpture_PREVIEW.pdf?sha=162132aae1e259a0.

[3] Françoise Gilot and Carlton Lake. *Life with Picasso* (New York: New York Review Books, 2019), 49-69.

From a different perspective, Picasso also had a private and rough side. He could be moody and introspective, a trait often reflected in the emotional depth of his artwork. He was known to work obsessively, sometimes spending long hours in the studio, deeply engrossed in his creative process.[4] "I had learned early that there was a real conflict between our temperaments. For one thing, he was very moody: one day brilliant sunshine, the next day thunder, and lightning".[5]

He was also considered an activist and, by others like the French police, an anarchist. Mainly because he was a foreigner and an antimilitarist, and back then, at the beginning of the 1900s, it was considered a crime. He was not the one who actively participated in protests and took the law into his own hands, but the one who ensured his thoughts would be heard whenever and wherever possible. "Picasso would enlist in almost all the twentieth-century wars, even if he never took up arms."[6] He had his own political and social point of view and opinions, which he strongly expressed in some of his paintings, and when he became more famous, everyone knew those opinions. At some point, he was considered part of a group called "the Spanish Colony of Paris." At another time, he was part of the communist party. He expressed his opinion about the Nazis, Franco's regime, and, most importantly to my subject, his resistance to the civil war in Spain and Guernica's bombing, which I will discuss deeply in the next chapter.

---

[4] Ibid., 70-83.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Annie Cohen-Solal, *Picasso the Foreigner*: *An Artist in France 1900-1973*, translated by Sam Taylor (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2023, 25.

Creating periods

Through my academic research, I found it clear that Picasso's creating periods eventually shaped his thought process and led him to paint the Guernica the way he did. Therefore, it is crucial to elaborate on these years. From his early years in Paris marked by personal struggles due to his sister's death, his father's depression traumas, and a melancholic outlook on life after his best friend- Carles Casagemas committed suicide in 1901.[7] This period is known as the "Blue Period"(1901-1904), characterized by a blue color palette and themes of poverty, sorrow, and despair. The famous painting "The Old Guitarist" is a good example of warmer brown tones amid the blue hues of artwork of that time[8]. After that came the Rose period, characterized by warmer colors and a shift toward more joyful and romantic themes. A good example of Picasso's mindset during these years was the repeatable circus performers and acrobat subjects he often included in his paintings, such as in the "Family of Saltimbanques" he painted in 1905[9].

Afterward, it was the time Picasso was fascinated by African art and Iberian sculptures. It influenced his move towards abstraction and the development of Cubism. "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon" (1907) is a groundbreaking work that signals his departure from traditional artistic conventions with its fragmented and angular depiction of the female form[10].

[7] Timothy Anglin Burgard, "Picasso and Appropriation." *The Art Bulletin* 73, no. 3, (1991): 479–494, https://doi.org/10.2307/3045817.

[8] Neil Cox, *An interview with Pablo Picasso* (New York: Cavendish Square, 2015), 11-28.

[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.

Then, from 1909 to 1919, came the Cubism period, which was co-founded by Picasso and Georges Braque and was perhaps the most revolutionary movement in Picasso's career. It deconstructed objects and subjects into geometric forms and multiple perspectives, as seen in "Guernica." This movement had a profound impact on modern art and paved the way for subsequent abstract movements.

After the tumultuous Cubist period, Picasso turned to neoclassicism, characterized by a return to more traditional artistic forms and a renewed interest in classical subjects. Works like "The Three Dancers" (1925) exemplify this shift[11].

At the end of the 1920s and beginning of the 1930s, Picasso briefly embraced Surrealism, collaborating with artists like Salvador Dalí. His paintings during this period, such as "The Weeping Woman" (1937), explore the realm of dreams, the subconscious, and fantastical imagery[12].

The last period I chose to mention in Picasso's chapter is the Great Depression period - one of the most pivotal moments in Picasso's career. This period began with the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 and continued in 1937 when the Spanish government commissioned Picasso to create a mural-sized painting for the Spanish Pavilion of the International Exposition in Paris. The result was "Guernica," which we all know today as

---

[11] H. W. Janson, "Alfred H. Barr, Jr., *Picasso—Fifty Years of His Art*." *College Art Journal* 6, no. 4 (July 1, 1947): 315–317. https://doi.org/10.1080/15436322.1947.10795355.

[12] Picasso and Dali. Accessed December 3, 2023. https://www.pablopicasso.org/picasso-and-dali.jsp.

a powerful and haunting depiction of the horrors of war[13]. The journey of one of the most important artworks of Picasso and perhaps the entire art world has begun, and so has my thesis paper.

[13] Ibid.

Chapter Two- The idea behind Guernica and its process

"The news of the bombardment of the Basque town of Guernica by German planes during the Spanish Civil War was the inspiration that set Picasso to work on Guernica, the picture that transcended the specific historical moment to which it refers to become the great icon of the twentieth century.[14]"

In the first chapter, I shed light on the artist behind Guernica, delving into his personality and life. Chapter two is dedicated to exploring the events and conditions of the 1930s that ultimately inspired Picasso to create Guernica. This chapter delves into a comprehensive examination of Picasso's political beliefs, the influence of the Nazi regime, the role of General Franco, the Spanish Civil War, the town of Guernica itself, the commissioning of the painting, as well as Picasso's motivations and arguments for embarking on the creation of this monumental mural. The chapter concludes by unveiling the intricate painting process and its unveiling at the 1937 Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne, which marked the mural's debut to the global audience. Alongside exploring the contextual factors and intricacies of the painting, I also analyze the initial reactions, critical reception, and political discussion and voices around the world, highlighting varying viewpoints and levels of interest in the artwork when it was first revealed.

---

[14] Timothy J. Clark and Marisa García Vergara. *Pity and terror: Picasso's path to Guernica* (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, 2017), 7.

Picasso's Political Opinions and "Guernica" as a political statement

Pablo Picasso's political journey was complex and evolving. Born in Spain in 1881, he came of age during a time of great social and political upheaval. In his early years as an artist, particularly during the early 20th century, Picasso was drawn to the ideals of social justice and the plight of the working class. His art, such as the groundbreaking "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon," reflected this interest as it refers to the injustice of Avignon Street in Barcelona, famed for its prostitution and brothels as well as inspired by African masks and Iberian sculptures.

In his youth and on, Picasso was affiliated with various leftist movements, including the French Communist Party and the French Anarchist movement. His association with these political parties and organizations was especially pronounced during the 1930s when the threat of fascism was looming. Picasso was deeply inspired by the struggles of ordinary people and the desire for societal reform, often participating in political activities alongside his artistic work.

In the face of the rise of fascist parties across Europe, including the notorious Spanish Falange, Picasso's resistance to the fascist party became more apparent. His art became a powerful weapon against fascism. He was not bound by strict ideological lines and remained critical of the limitations of any single political doctrine. He actively opposed the fascist forces that threatened not only Spain but also the broader international order.

As he grew older, Picasso's political views evolved further during the interwar period, which played an essential role in his works, particularly in response to the bombing and

the Spanish Civil War.[15] This transformation would later shape his involvement in the war and inform his creation of Guernica, an artwork that transcends specific political parties to make a more universal statement about the horrors of war and the suffering it inflicts. The painting represents not only a shift in his art but also a shift in his political stance, as he transitioned from early socialist sympathies to a broader, more antifascist perspective that is vividly evident in his iconic masterpiece, Guernica.

The Nazis and General Franco's Regime in the Context of "Guernica"

Understanding the intricate connections between the Guernica bombing, the Nazi regime, and General Franco before and during the Spanish Civil War requires a closer examination of the key figures, actions, and alliances that shaped this tragic event. This period was marked by a volatile geopolitical landscape and shifting allegiances.

On January 30, 1933, Adolph Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany. Fifty-three days after, the Nazi Party took over the German parliament officially. On June 30, Hitler consolidated power by ordering the extra-judicial killing of dozens, if not hundreds, of suspected political opponents in what became known as the night of the Long Knives. In November 1933, Spain's right wing parties triumphed over the leftist Republicans.[16] In October 1934, a year after the radical right-wing took over Picasso's country, Colonel

[15] Annie Cohen-Solal, *Picasso the Foreigner*: *An Artist in France 1900-1973*, translated by Sam Taylor (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2023, 286-287.

[16] John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso: The Minotaur Years. 1933-1943*(New York, Alfred A Knopf 2021), 106-109.

Franco oversaw the miners' massacre in Madrid and Barcelona after those protested against the uprising of the right-wing and their involvement in the government. Thousands were killed, and over 40,000 were arrested. Picasso heard the news about Franco's brutality while he was working on the “blind minotaur” and was horrified. [17]

“Picasso knows, we all know, that we will be among the first victims of fascism of French Hitlerism.” The critic Georges Hugnet wrote in 1935[18]. Political pressure, like being a Spanish civilian in France, together with the personal pressure of his potential divorce agreement and his business pressure, pushed Picasso to take practical action. He kept disappearing from Paris and, more importantly, abandoned his sitting on the fence attitude and became politically active. What used to be secondary thoughts so far turned into an important side of Picasso’s life.[19]

In 1936, on July 17th, the Spanish Civil War erupted as Republicans, representing left-leaning groups, clashed with the Nationalists led by General Francisco Franco. The conflict was not just a domestic struggle but a focal point for international political maneuvering. In July 1936, Nazi Germany, under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, and Fascist Italy, led by Benito Mussolini, saw an opportunity to advance their ideologies and form alliances with like-minded factions.

General Franco's Nationalist forces received substantial support from these fascist regimes, particularly in 1936 and 1937, and the German Condor Legion, commanded by

---

[17] Ibid., 124-5.

[18] Dore Ashton, “Picasso as Anti-Fascist.” *The Brooklyn Rail*, (December 12, 2006), https://brooklynrail.org/2006/11/express/picasso-as-anti-facist.

[19] Ibid.

General Hugo Sperrle, was sent to assist Franco's troops. This period saw the introduction of a new and brutal form of warfare, including the devastating bombing of Guernica on April 26, 1937. Besides the bombing, Adolph Hitler put his new art policy into practice for the first time in the same year. Extermination, purification, and confiscation of Jewish, communist, and any non-German artworks was the target, as well as the purification of the German museums from all works of so-called degenerate art. As a result, 509 pieces by Max Beckmann and 260 by Otto Dix were confiscated. Guernica was considered a target of these purification rites, and the Germans would have been happy to get rid of the mural by any chance.[20]

Returning to the massacre, the bombing of Guernica was not merely a military operation but a calculated political maneuver. It aimed to demoralize the Republican forces, who had strong sympathies in the town, and to crush any opposition. The devastation was extensive, resulting in significant civilian casualties.

In this critical context, Pablo Picasso's painting "Guernica" takes on profound significance. It is not just a work of art but a powerful condemnation of the atrocities committed in the name of political ideologies. Picasso's creation becomes a visual record of the horrors that emerged from the convergence of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and General Franco in the tragic bombing of Guernica. It emphasizes the enduring importance of art as a means for critical reflection on the political events that have shaped our world.

[20] Werner Hofmann, “Picasso’s ‘Guernica’ in Its Historical Context,” *Artibus et Historiae* 4, no. 7 (1983): 141-169, https://doi.org/10.2307/1483186.

The Spanish Civil War and the Basque Town

The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) was a tumultuous period of violence and political upheaval that profoundly impacted the Spanish nation and its people. Multiple events happened during the war that shocked the world and had a profound impact on Picasso. From the bombing of the Prado Museum (of whom Picasso had been named director while he was living in France), the national library, and the Liria Palace to the burning of Madrid and the bombing of Guernica town. Within this context, the city of Guernica (Gernika in Basque) occupies a main place, as it became a symbol of the horrors of war. Located in the heart of the Basque Country, Guernica is a historic town rich in culture and tradition.

In April 1937, the Basque town of Guernica was brutally bombarded by the combined forces of General Francisco Franco's Nationalists and their allies, Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Forty-four Nazi bombers, assisted by thirteen Italian planes, dropped over 2500 bombs in less than four hours, resulting in widespread destruction and a staggering loss of life. It is estimated that over Sixteen hundred people were killed, and thousands were injured because of the attack. To ensure no survivors, the Italian planes flew low and used machine guns for verification. It was a moment of shocking brutality, and the world watched in horror as Guernica burned. The event, occurring on April 26, 1937, is remembered because it signaled the start of the systematic attack on civilians as a strategy of war, a kind of rehearsal of the so-called ‘total war’ against the population. It shook the international community and resonated deeply with artists and intellectuals worldwide.

Pablo Picasso, who had been residing in Paris and heard about the bombing two days later from the Spanish and the French newspapers and a letter from his mother, was

profoundly affected by the news of the Guernica bombing. He had maintained close ties to his home country and was aware of the political turmoil that had gripped Spain. The events of the Spanish Civil War and the devastating bombing of Guernica deeply moved him. Picasso, like many intellectuals and artists of the time, felt a strong urge to respond to the violence and suffering that had befallen his homeland.

In this critical moment, Picasso's artistic impulse met his political convictions. He was a committed antifascist, and the news of the Guernica bombing fueled his determination to create a work that would not only capture the horrors of war but also stand as a timeless indictment of violence and inhumanity. The artist set to work on "Guernica" with a sense of urgency and purpose.

Picasso's creative process was meticulous and reflective of the emotional turmoil of the era. He experimented with different forms and visual languages to encapsulate the depth of human suffering and the chaotic aftermath of violence. The final painting, completed in early 1937, stands as an artistic testament to the raw emotions that Picasso and the world at large experienced during this period.

The mural's Commissioning, motivation and Inspiration

"Picasso was striving to find a "new vision of the world" with which to overcome or comprehend two crises, one personal and artistic, and the other sociopolitical."[21]

Let us go back to September 1936. A young left-wing political activist and Spain's director of fine arts, Mr. Josep Renau, approached Picasso and offered him to become the

[21] Timothy J. Clark and Marisa García Vergara. *Pity and terror: Picasso's path to Guernica* (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, 2017), 7.

director of the Prado Museum. Picasso accepted Renau's offer and mentioned he had never felt so Spanish nor so committed to a cause. The cause was joining and fighting the holy war against fascism. [22] In November of the same year, the Germans dropped nine bombs on the Prado Museum. Luckily, although Picasso, as the museum director, never left Paris, the paintings were stored in the basement, and sandbags protected the sculptures. No harm was done to the collections, but the museum was partially destroyed.

Two months later, in January 1937, the same Josep Renau, on behalf of the Spanish government, approached Picasso and asked him if he would be willing to represent the Spanish Republic and create a monumental work for the Spanish Pavilion at the upcoming International Exposition in Paris. The decision to choose Picasso for this prestigious commission was deliberate, as the Spanish government saw him as a renowned artist and a passionate supporter of the Republican cause. This invitation represented a powerful convergence of art and politics.

Picasso's first response to Josep Renau was that he was unsure he could produce a picture of the kind they wanted. Yet he agreed.

To move forward and discuss Picasso's motivation to paint Guernica, we need to go back first to his childhood inspiration. First, to the 1884 earthquake in Malaga that destroyed his hometown when he was only three years old- a crucial time in a child's development. Then, eleven years later, his sister Conchita died from a disease, and after, his best friend Carles Casagemas committed suicide. Lastly, the bombing of his birthplace, Malaga, by Franco's Moroccan troops in January 1937. Although Picasso was a quiet person during

[22] Ibid., 213.

his life, he was rage-filled consistently. This sequence of death and sad events in his life positioned him in a one-way direction that the upcoming mural expressed everything he has been through. [23]

In addition to the events, despite Picasso's residence in France, his personal connection to Spain remained strong. The news of the bombing and the widespread suffering of civilians struck a chord with him. Picasso's emotions were raw, and his sense of outrage palpable. The Spanish Civil War became a deeply personal and political issue for him, and he was committed to using his art to make a statement.

The commissioning for painting provided Picasso with an opportunity to channel his emotions and artistic talent into a powerful work that would serve as a condemnation of the violence perpetrated by fascist forces. He accepted the task with a profound sense of responsibility, understanding that this mural was not just an art project but a political statement. Picasso's commitment to the Republican cause and his antifascist sentiments drove him to embark on this ambitious endeavor.

From the moment he agreed

"Months would go by before the artist started work." [24]

Unknowingly, the first step action in Picasso's journey to the Guernica mural began on January 8, 1937, when Picasso created the "Dream and Lie of Franco." A two-sheet series

[23] Ora Attia "Separation and Individuation in Picasso's Guernica." *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 92, no. 6 (December 2011): 1561–81, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-8315.2011.00418.x.

[24] John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso: The Minotaur Years. 1933-1943*(New York, Alfred A Knopf 2021), 203.

of 18 etchings depicting Franco as a pig attacking a sculpture and as a horse gored by a bull with a prose poem. Those etchings were meant to describe Franco's victims. However, they were not meant to represent Spain in the exhibition but were an essential part of the evolution of Guernica. The etchings were revealed on June 7th after the bombing of Guernica and were sold in copies of thousands during the Paris exhibition to benefit the Spanish people and refugees.

Then, nine days after, on January 17, came the first air raid on Malaga by Franco's forces that shaped Picasso's mind and inspired him to take the following steps. This attack on his hometown led Picasso to paint the "Figure of a Woman Inspired by the War in Spain" in a single day, but he still had no superior ideas for the upcoming exhibition. Indeed, he sketched twelve preliminary sketches depicting some studio scenes with painters and models, but he quickly abounded these after the bombing in April. Only then, four months after the meeting with Josep Renau, did Picasso officially settle on a subject for his World's Fair commission.

It took approximately Six months from the day Picasso got the honor to represent Spain in the Paris exhibition and less than Six weeks from the moment he decided that Guernica would be the subject of the painting. From May to early June 1937. He worked on this monumental mural, measuring approximately 3.5 meters in height and 7.8 meters in width, longer than any wall in the two top-floor studio in the rue des Grands-Augustins in Paris that he had rented in advance. During this period, Picasso was deeply focused on his work, often spending long hours in the studio, driven by his commitment to conveying the emotional and political depth of the subject.

One of the challenges Picasso faced was the scale of the mural. The monumental size presented unique technical and logistical challenges, and he had to create the mural in sections that would later be assembled. The composition was a deliberate juxtaposition of abstract and symbolic forms, with fragmented and anguished figures, animals, and structures scattered across the canvas.

Picasso immersed himself in the subject matter, producing numerous sketches and studies as he explored various visual representations of the tragedy. He produced six on the first day- May 1st, and four on the second day. Overall, he did Forty-five sketches before he even touched the canvas and sixty-two preliminary sketches for the mural, experimenting with different forms and compositions in total.

These sketches were vital in honing the composition and elements that would make up the final mural. Picasso experimented with different forms and visual languages, constantly refining his approach to convey the depth of human suffering and the chaotic aftermath of violence. Picasso "used" centuries of literature, religious and artistic sources, and references for the sketches and, eventually, the masterpiece. El Greco, Goya, Raphael, Manet, ancient Greek art, Catalan art, Roman art, and more are only some of these references. He combined tragedies, horrors, death, destruction, salvation, redemption, and more. The process can be described as "the suicide of the old world." [25]

Although some sketches were painted in color, the palette chosen for "Guernica" was monochromatic, primarily in shades of black, white, and gray. This choice added to the mural's stark and haunting quality, emphasizing the stark contrast between light and

[25] Ibid., 360-366.

shadow, Life and death. The absence of color allowed the artist to focus on form, emotion, and the stark reality of the subject matter.

One notable aspect of "Guernica" was Picasso's ability to weave elements of the personal into the universal. His romantic partner at the time, Dora Maar, was both a muse and a collaborator during the mural's creation. Maar's presence in Picasso's life, along with her own artistic talents, influenced some elements of the mural. Her political views and emotional support during this period played a significant role in the creative process, as well as the photos of the painting she took throughout the process, allowing Picasso to review it then and for us to document it now.

During the process, Picasso allowed a selected number of friends, influential people, and politicians to watch him at work to create a buzz around the painting, and he brought the great canvas to completion on June 4th.

1937 Paris exhibition

On May 25, 1937, the Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne began in Paris and lasted six months. The fair intention was to promote the pacifying role of art and technology in society and draw an international congregation of artists, architects, historians, journalists, innovators, art connoisseurs, and critics. Although forty-four national pavilions were designed for the fair, only five were prepared for the grand opening. Among these, you could find the Soviet and the Nazi pavilions, as well as the Spanish ones. In the Spanish pavilion, we could see four sculptures along the building’s exterior- two by Picasso and two by other Spanish artists and a sort of stairway

that led into the entrance where we could find the Guernica. In the same room, we could see a sculptural fountain by Alexander Calder and "The Reaper" painting by Juan Miro. Nearby, the first floor hosted a stage used for dance performances and film screenings, including Brunel's Civil War documentary, Espana 1936, as well as a kiosk selling prints and posters of the "Dream and Lie of Franco." Picasso, who was in charge of the installation of his work, did not attend the opening ceremony of the Spanish pavilion on July 12 and left with his partner Dora Maar to the French town Mougins. Throughout the exposition's early stages and the subsequent months, Picasso maintained a conspicuous silence about 'Guernica,' evading the press and public, as he remained uncertain about its reception. In stark contrast, visitors and critics were vociferous in their responses. Despite Picasso's international fame, the French press virtually ignored Guernica. Even Louis Aragon, star of the communist newspaper L'Humanite, failed to mention it in his writings. Another voice came from the ethnographer Michel Leiris, who said, "Picasso sends us our letter of doom: all that we love is going to die." All those voices were only the beginning. Over the next several months, negative voices inside the Spanish organizers were also heard. It was not a secret that the Spanish Republic government officials were expecting a happier and less controversial artwork when they commissioned it at first. Some of them questioned the artwork, and some disapproved of its style. Representatives of the Spanish embassy in Paris were forced to defend the Guernica after many critics accused the artwork of being too abstract and difficult for the Spanish pavilion. Other Spanish officials felt Guernica was too Avant Garde for the average visitor to understand and did not fall into the popular art category.[26] Some even

[26] Jutta Held, and Alex Potts. "How Do the Political Effects of Pictures Come about? The Case of Picasso's 'Guernica.'" *Oxford Art Journal* 11, no. 1 (1988): 33–39. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1360321.

called to remove the artwork from the wall. The negative reviews kept flowing. Le Corbusier, the architect who reviewed all the murals at the World's Fair, wrote that Guernica alone "saw only the backs of visitors, for they were repelled by it."[27] Some Spanish modernists like Luis Buñuel argued that they could not stand the Guernica, although they helped to hang it. More critics kept saying the mural made them uncomfortable as it politicized art. The Nazis reacted to Guernica with contempt calling the painting a "hodgepodge of body parts that any four years old could have painted," but more surprising was the Basque government's reaction when Picasso offered the painting to the Basque people when the exposition ended, but their president José Antonio Aguirre declined. [28] Rejection from the international community was one thing, as this artwork was related to a specific city in the Basque region, and some of those and the rest of the Spanish people had direct feelings about the painting, but the decline of Jose Aguirre said a lot about the situation. Despite the exposition receiving constant daily coverage in international newspapers, the work received no significant mention. On November 1st, the exposition closed, and Contrary to other significant and important artworks by Picasso and other artists, the massive mural was handed back to Picasso. No other institution asked for the work. It is right to say that although Guernica represented Spain's republic at the 1937 International Art Fair, it did not get worldwide recognition nor become

---

[27] Hugh Eakin, "Before 'Guernica' Won over the World, It Flopped." The Atlantic, September 12, 2022, https://www.theatlantic.com/books/archive/2022/07/picasso-guernica-political-art-history-myth/670496/.

[28] John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso: The Minotaur Years. 1933-1943*(New York, Alfred A Knopf 2021), 297.

universal at that time. The debut of Pablo Picasso's dark, howling mural against fascist terror was not as successful as he was.

Chapter Three-The painting's travels

In the last part of chapter two, I delved into the seemingly underwhelming debut of Pablo Picasso's Guernica. Despite the initial excitement and grandeur surrounding the painting, it faced a cold reception and widespread criticism in its early months. This chapter now aims to thoroughly explore the journey of Guernica—from its less-than-stellar beginnings to its eventual recognition as an international symbol and a significant work of art. This evolution unfolded over the years through a series of travels, some successful and some not, exhibitions, and geopolitical events that began after the Paris 1937 exposition, concluding in 1992 when Guernica found its current home in the Reina Sofia Museum in Spain and continues to be exhibited there today.

I will note that the mural's initial travels were not driven by its popularity or fame but rather by the need to raise funds for refugees and victims of the Spanish Civil War. This utilitarian use of the painting can be seen as a cynical extension of its lackluster premiere.

Guernica's travels in Britain and the Scandinavian countries

After the Paris exhibition, when no organizations expressed interest in showcasing Guernica, Picasso took it upon himself and sent the painting to be part of the Matisse-Picasso-Braque-Laurens exhibition in the Scandinavian countries- Norway, Denmark, and Sweden that was curated by the Norwegian painter Walther Halvorsen. The mural did not attract many viewers, and soon enough, the press and the public considered the painting a political weapon rather than a genuine work of art and did not want to be part

of what they considered propaganda. The three-month tour concluded without leaving a significant impact and with lingering doubts about the painting's future. [29]

In October 1938, exactly one year after the Paris exposition, Guernica and its studies embarked on a journey to Great Britain for several exhibitions, including ones in London's Mayfair at the New Burlington Gallery and the Whitechapel Gallery and the last one in Manchester. The main goals were to extract artistic and propagandistic value from the painting and to raise funds for Spanish war refugees and victims.[30] Once again, these exhibitions turned out to be failures, with lower attendance than expected and the press expressing conflicting opinions about whether the mural was a stroke of genius or an expression of Picasso's personal thoughts detached from broader relevance.

Now, let us delve deeper into the rationale behind Guernica's trip to Great Britain. Despite the consistent lack of enthusiasm and resistance the mural faced during its travels, why did Picasso agree to bring it to England? The answer lies in the absence of alternative ways to revive interest in the painting. Although Picasso enjoyed a stellar reputation in Europe, he found himself in a situation where he was more invested in his painting than the audience. As a result, he had to resort to unconventional solutions, such as loaning Guernica to exhibitions, knowing it would serve more as a tool for propaganda and fundraising than as an artwork. He had to compromise and abandon his values in order to fight for Guernica's future. Another testimony to Guernica's status so far was

---

[29] Teresa Ochoa de Zabalegui Iriarte and Mafalda Rodríguez. *The travels of Guernica* (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2019), 149.

[30] Timothy J. Clark and Marisa García Vergara. *Pity and terror: Picasso's path to Guernica* (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, 2017), 145-146.

Picasso’s absence from all Guernica exhibitions since the Paris expo, although he was warmly invited as a guest of honor.[31]

Permanent loan to MoMA Museum and the tours in the USA

After more than two unsuccessful years of journeys, the turning point in the mural's reputation began on May 1st, 1939, when the Guernica, along with its preliminary drawings and postscript studies, arrived at the port of New York. Alfred H. Barr, the first director of the MoMA Museum, was determined to bring Guernica to the MoMA after receiving a postcard of the Guernica already in the middle of the Paris exhibition from Dora Marr and reached out to Picasso to discuss the possibility of loaning the artwork to the museum. Eventually, Barr successfully convinced Picasso to lend the masterpiece for the "Forty Years of His Art" tour exhibitions in various American cities. Subsequently, Picasso entrusted the painting to the museum for the duration of the war and eventually until the fall of the dictatorship regime in Spain. Among the reasons for this decision was to spread the powerful anti-war message of the painting, as well as to save the painting from the Nazi's hands and the need for exposure in one of the largest art hubs in the world after the failure in the previous tours.

Guernica became the highlight of the "war loans" paintings during the tour, spanning over four years and eight venues in the United States. These venues included the Fogg Museum in Harvard, the San Francisco Museum of Art, Boston, St. Louis, Cincinnati, and the Art Institute of Chicago. Despite name changes and four editions of the tour,

---

[31] John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso: The Minotaur Years. 1933-1943*(New York, Alfred A Knopf 2021), 326-330.

American art lovers finally had the opportunity to witness cubist European Avant-Garde and Picasso's works, which gradually became normalized in the United States.

The mural's real debut took place, capturing international attention and becoming a focal point for discussions among scholars, artists, and the public on the intersection of art and activism. Visitors were prompted to confront the uncomfortable realities depicted on the canvas, marking a significant moment in the mural's history. [32]

While evaluating the increasing fame and importance of the Guernica, we must examine the significant role of Barr and the MoMA Museum in the rising of the mural awareness and its unconditional reputation as an international symbol. As soon as Barr successfully brought Guernica to the museum, his fascination with the painting became all-consuming. He argued that the Guernica played a redemptive role in the military sense and the narrative of art history in the United States. He compelled the museum team to incorporate promotions, discussions, images, studies, and articles about the painting into the museum's content. Additionally, he produced a documentary on Guernica for the museum, urged other participating institutions in the tour to leverage the painting and its museum for academic and artistic purposes, and, most significantly, assembled experts, critics, and artists to thoroughly explore, analyze, and interpret the painting. The more studies and diverse opinions the painting attracted, the greater the interest and heightened significance it gained. All of these efforts elevated the painting to a completely different level from its state before it arrived in the US and was under the care of Alfred Barr. A

[32] Teresa Ochoa de Zabalegui Iriarte and Mafalda Rodríguez. *The travels of Guernica* (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2019), 151-170.

good example illustrating the ongoing evolution of the painting's reputation was the disagreement among Barr, Kahnweilrt, and Juan Larrea, the artist, over the interpretation of the painting. When Barr asked Kahnweilrt to question Picasso about the meaning of the bull and horse symbols, Picasso's simple response, "The bull is a bull, and this horse is a horse," left the discussion and the painting's meaning open-ended. This ambiguity sparked more questions and encouraged more people to interpret the mural's significance.[33] Barr succeed. The painting gained exponential interest, and the MoMA, in hosting Guernica, became a forum for grappling with the ethical implications of artistic expression in the face of global conflict.

In 1944, after the liberation of Paris and prior to Germany's imminent defeat, Picasso declared his political affiliation within the new international framework, and immediately after this announcement, Barr informed Picasso of MoMA's interest in acquiring Guernica and the associated works from him. Picasso did not reply to the request, yet in the same year- 1947, the loan from the artist was extended, and the painting remained in the museum's hands.

Tours outside the USA

From 1939 to 1981, the MoMA functioned as the primary location for housing the Guernica. As the painting's owner, Picasso held the ultimate authority over permitting external tours and exhibitions. Given the escalating demand to exhibit the mural, numerous museums and institutions sought to borrow both the painting and its

[33] Ibid., 195-200, 206-218.

accompanying studies and sketches. However, Barr, despite the widespread interest, exhibited reluctance towards loaning the artwork. Interestingly, Picasso never once requested Barr's permission to ship the artwork, causing some frustration on his side. It happened during the second biennial de Sao Paulo in 1953- an important cultural event beyond Europe and the USA where the Guernica was shipped and exhibited. Additionally, it happened on the global tour from 1953 to 1956 when the painting traveled through numerous European cities, including Milan, Paris, Munich, Brussels, Hamburg, Cologne, and Amsterdam, where the mural was showcased in the "Guernica, avec 60 etudes" solo show with its studies. The exhibition of the mural in German cities nearly a decade after the fall of the Nazi regime signifies a notable shift in perception and the transformation of the artwork in the eyes of viewers, influencing the meaning and interpretation of the mural. Similar to its success in the São Paulo Biennale, the European exhibitions of Guernica in the 1950s achieved unprecedented acclaim. Regarded as a democratic Spanish masterpiece of modern art, Guernica held a central position in the eyes of the European public and was dangerous in the eyes of Franco due to the "extremist ideas" verging on communism the painting represents again in the European territory. If we compare the first time Guernica left Europe in 1939 with very little recognition, nor political or artistic meaning to many, now when it left back again to the US, the European citizens, and the Spanish public in particular, felt like there was no longer any hope of democracy and the killing everywhere would continue.

Another indicator of the mural's growing interest and power was its failed travels. After its first years, when the painting responded to the majority of the requests and was used mainly as a fundraising tool and not as recognized artwork, a time came when Picasso

could be discerning about the mural journeys, considering factors such as priority, political considerations, or security and shipping concerns. Instances of unsuccessful travel include attempts to exhibit in Caracas- Venezuela, in 1948, in Mexico, in 1944 and 1949, and in 1968 when Franco sought to bring the painting back to Spain without success. [34] Another unsuccessful trip that is essential to mention was Guernica's travel to Japan. In 1957, Yiro Enjoji, a member of the exhibition's organizing committee, requested the loan of the original mural for a 1962-3 tour across various Japanese cities. In correspondence with the then-director of the MoMA, Rene d'Harnoncourt, Enjoji's plea was met with refusal. This juncture in time marked a noteworthy phase, with the burgeoning reputation of American painting in the 1950s prompting interest from Asian museums and art enthusiasts. D'Harnoncourt's response indicated a shift wherein both the MoMA and Picasso could assert their right to decline, and indeed they did. Consequently, the original painting never reached Japan; however, a replica tapestry of Guernica embarked on a tour, demonstrating the Japanese commitment to experiencing the mural. Despite not being the authentic piece, the tapestry proved to be the tour's highlight, achieving significant success as it toured four major cities in Japan.

In May 1957, immediately following the worldwide tour, Barr concluded his final curatorial exercise with the exhibition "Picasso: 75th Anniversary.". This occurred before Picasso's request to return the works he had entrusted to MoMA, excluding Guernica and

---

[34] "Rethinking Guernica. Picasso's Twentieth-Century Work-Icon Close-Up," Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, accessed March 2, 2024, https://guernica.museoreinasofia.es/en#investigacion.

its associated drawings and studies. Once again, the mural took center stage at the exhibition, drawing a larger audience of admirers and inspiring more viewers than it had eight years earlier upon its initial arrival in the United States.

The effect of the global wars

Having delved into WWII, exploring its significance and its connection to Guernica as both a work of art and a symbol in the initial two chapters, let us now delve into the link between post-WWII conflicts and the mural tours. We will also examine how these tours influenced the popularization of painting.

Upon its arrival in the US in 1939 during the war, Guernica primarily symbolized horrors and the impact of war on the Spanish public, given its connection to the Spanish Civil War. As detailed earlier, MoMA and Barr dedicated substantial resources to promote both the painter and the painting. However, another pivotal factor that elevated Guernica to an international anti-war symbol and heightened its global awareness was the occurrence of wars worldwide from that time onward.

The initial factor was the Cold War, which drew the American public towards "War art" due to U.S. involvement. The artwork gained increased relevance and public interest when showcased in one of the country's largest and most esteemed museums. Subsequently, from 1950 to 1953, during the period leading up to the painting's European tour, the occurrence of the Korean War further heightened its relevance for the American public. The mural became even more relevant to them as the United States supported South Korea during this conflict.

Returning to the Guernica tapestry tour in Japan in 1962-1963, it is essential to grasp the factors behind its success. Despite not being the original artwork, the Japanese public

connected with and profoundly appreciated the piece, having experienced two bombing attacks by the US army on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. Demonstrating empathy and solidarity, the Japanese visitors aligned with the Spanish public in viewing the artwork as a symbol of horrors and anti-war sentiment.[35]

In the 1960s and the initial half of the 1970s, the painting attained its peak popularity. In Spain, posters featuring the artwork adorned nearly every household, office, and restaurant. Particularly notable was Guernica's prominence as a depiction of war crimes and atrocities for the right-wing perspective while simultaneously serving as a symbol of peace, democracy, and anti-war sentiment on the left side of the political and cultural spectrum in the United States. This dual interpretation was accentuated by the backdrop of the Vietnam War, which was escalating in intensity during that period.

In October 1967, the Art coalition in the United States called for the removal of Guernica from MoMA as a protest against the war. Concurrently, the art workers' collective organization sent a letter to Picasso requesting the removal of Guernica, but the artist declined. The struggle over the political significance of Guernica within institutional contexts proved more profound than initially perceived. Illustrating this, the Rockefeller family, counted among MoMA's trustees, was concurrently profiting from the industrial and military sectors. The mural's relevance expanded to the point where it almost became a movement, whether perceived as a political or cultural movement, depending on one's

---

[35] "Exposiciones - Picasso: Guernica, Tokyo, Kyoto, Kuruma, Nagoya, 1962-1963," Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía,, accessed January 2, 2024, https://guernica.museoreinasofia.es/en/exposiciones/picasso-guernica-tokyo-kyoto-kuruma-nagoya-1962-1963-5434.

viewpoint. Numerous intellectuals, authors, and anti-war artists drew inspiration from the painting, using it as both a cultural and political weapon. Many artists employed the images and symbols within Guernica to craft posters, paintings, songs, newspaper articles, and books expressing protest against a war that inflicted grievous harm on mothers and babies. All these expressions of dissent found their roots in the powerful symbolism of Guernica.

On February 28, 1974, a year before the war ended, Tony Shafrazi, a political activist and AWC member, spray painted the words “kill lies all” in red letters on the mural, which lacked any physical or visual barriers for protection. With this act, Shafrazi intended to "liberate Guernica from its chains of ownership" and restore it to its revolutionary essence. Shafrazi was arrested, turning MoMA into a makeshift field hospital for a few days and prompting a significant surge in media coverage. At this juncture, every person in the United States was familiar with Guernica's existence. The incident left a political impact, solidifying its status as a cultural symbol. [36]

The return “home”

Although Guernica was not created in Spain, nor did Picasso live there during his adult life, it was initially painted to represent the suffering of the Spanish people and Guernica town population, particularly during the Spanish Civil War. Through its extensive global journeys and exhibitions, the painting transformed into “everyone’s” painting, gaining appreciation from Latin America to Europe, Asia, and Africa. As previously noted in the first two chapters, Picasso became a member of the communist party only in 1944,

[36] Teresa Ochoa de Zabalegui Iriarte and Mafalda Rodríguez. *The travels of Guernica* (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2019), 221-228.

although his anti-Franco and anti-fascist convictions had roots in his early years. One rationale behind the decision to loan Guernica to the MoMA was the belief that as long as Franco's regime, implicated in bombings and characterized by dictatorial rule, governed, the painting would remain outside of Spain. The initial effort to repatriate Guernica occurred in 1968 by General Franco. He understood the painting's popularity and sought to control its narrative to his advantage. Franco's emissaries sent five letters to Picasso requesting the painting back in Spain, arguing that it was where it belonged. Picasso was determined in his refusal, saying, "By means of Guernica, I have the pleasure of making a political statement in the middle of New York City." [37]At that time, Franco even used Goya's art to foster his image abroad, an art which, during the Spanish Civil War, had come to stand as a symbol of the resistance against fascism.

There were additional attempts to return the mural back to Spain. Jose Renau, the director of the art academy in Madrid, met Picasso before he handed the Guernica permanently and offered him to exhibit the mural in a special room in the Prado Museum together with Velazquez's Las Meninas and Goya's Execution on the 3rd May all together when the war comes to an end. [38]Picasso remained steadfast in his decision. The painting "Guernica" remained under the guardianship of the MoMA until individual liberties were restored to Spain, signifying the end of Franco's regime and the country's liberation from fascist control. The process of returning the painting accelerated after Picasso's death in April 1973, Franco's death in November 1975, and the democratic elections in Spain in 1977.

---

[37] Lynda Morris and Christoph Grunenberg. "Picasso's Politics." *The Burlington Magazine* 153, no. 1295 (2011): 103. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25781987.

[38] Jutta Held, and Alex Potts. "How Do the Political Effects of Pictures Come about? The Case of Picasso's 'Guernica.'" *Oxford Art Journal* 11, no. 1 (1988): 33–39. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1360321.

Finally, in 1981, adhering to Picasso's wishes, Guernica, along with its preliminary studies and postscripts, was returned to democratic Spain and housed at the "Cason del Buen Retiro," an annex to the Prado Museum in Madrid, marking the end of 42 years in diaspora.

Guernica's return to Spain was unquestionable and considered a trophy for the Spanish people, but its meaning and interpretation were very much debated. Questions emerged about whether the painting's return to Spain signified closure or opened a new chapter. Some were concerned that the painting would lose some of its resistance, anti-fascist meaning, and symbolic value as it would become a tourist attraction. The reality was that the painting's meaning shifted from a cry against war, anti-fascist, and a symbol of horrors and struggles into a local and universal symbol of democracy, humanity, peace, and anti-war. The same painting, which had symbolized resistance against fascism for four decades, symbolized harmony and reconciliation. Its return home represented the final act in the closing of the Civil War and the change in attitude toward modern art.

In 1992, Guernica embarked on its final journey, finding its permanent residence at the Museo Reina Sofía in Madrid, where it remains to this day. Since then, the Guernica tapestry and replicas have appeared several times at international events and assemblies. Notably, during the 1990s and the early 2000s, they adorned the United Nations headquarters in New York, marking a shift from the confines of museums to the diplomatic stage. This underscored its emerging role as a universally accepted symbol of peace and democracy, transcending national boundaries.

Chapter Four -Symbols and their meanings

"In his painting, Picasso portrayed neither the air raid nor the bombs. He depicted twisted and distorted victims instead, each one seeming alone and separate, either physically or emotionally".[39]

In the upcoming chapter, I will look into the elements of Guernica, including its medium, colors, and symbols. I will explore diverse interpretations, meanings, and explanations and display how each symbol's perception evolved over the years throughout various events and times. Additionally, I will highlight the similarities and references of some symbols, explaining how they increased the mural's popularity. Chapter four seeks not only to identify the symbols within the painting but also to explain their underlying meanings and how each symbol and color were seen in the eyes of the Guernica population, international art critics, exhibition visitors, and art lovers. This chapter will trace how these symbols and colors have been perceived over time, ultimately culminating in Guernica's status as the iconic antiwar masterpiece we recognize today.

Mural's size

Guernica measures nearly 25 feet (approximately four by eight meters), making it one of the largest murals of its time and Picasso's most monumental work. The sheer size posed a challenge during its creation, as the canvas barely fit into Picasso's studio, necessitating a piecemeal approach to painting. The term "Mural" denotes a grand-scale painting on either a wall or, in Guernica's instance, a canvas. Picasso envisioned a piece that would

[39] Ora Attia "Separation and Individuation in Picasso's Guernica." *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 92, no. 6 (December 2011): 1561–81, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-8315.2011.00418.x.

profoundly impact viewers, allowing him to encapsulate numerous characters, ideas, beliefs, and emotions. By painting on such a scale, he could paint figures true to life or even larger, capturing intricate details and emphasizing the magnitude of the tragedy both personally and globally. Moreover, Picasso drew inspiration from artists like Michelangelo (Sistine Chapel, The Last Judgement Mural 1541), Raphael, and Diego Rivera, who were known for their monumental murals. He was seeking to align himself with their historical significance and recognition.

Furthermore, the viewer's perspective in relation to the painting is crucial. Observing closely, one notices the painting's enclosed space, bounded by its ceiling, floor, and walls. This spatial arrangement prompts contemplation about the viewer's stance regarding the artwork and, more profoundly, their role within the context of war and its atrocities.

The mural's lack of color

Guernica emerged from Picasso's brush in a palette restricted to black, white, and gray hues. While early sketches contained color, the final masterpiece exudes a monochromatic intensity. The deliberate choice of these somber tones carries multifaceted significance. Firstly, the amalgamation of gray tones alongside black and white echoes the aesthetic of vintage cinema and the tradition of grisaille murals prevalent during the 15th century, notably executed by Flemish artists in the adornment of palaces and churches. Picasso strategically adopts this unconventional technique to place himself within the narrative arc of history. Secondly, these hues are recognized symbols of mourning, melancholy, and tragedy. Furthermore, these colors represent destruction and warfare, evoking a profound sense of drama (similar to El Graco style). Last and most significantly, in my view, the absence of vibrant hues enables a vast

universal connection to the artwork, transcending cultural, religious, and national boundaries. The timeless nature of black, white, and gray hues ensured Picasso's artwork would withstand the test of time, unaffected by fleeting trends, as evidenced by its enduring relevance today. [40]

Reference to other artists

During Picasso's artistic life, he frequently drew inspiration from various renowned artists for his artworks, characters, and techniques. In the context of Guernica, besides incorporating mural painting techniques and colors, as mentioned earlier, it is conceivable that he also drew influence from other artists when determining the positioning and proportions of the characters.

Foremost among Picasso's influences was his idol, Francisco Goya, whose personality and art deeply impacted him. Picasso's contemplation of Goya's print series "The Disasters of War " (1810), which vividly illustrated the horrors of war, sheds light on some of the inspiration guiding Picasso's creative journey with Guernica.

Another homage to Goya's art within Guernica is evident in the depiction of the screaming lady on the mural's right side. This figure resembles the agonized individuals portrayed in Goya's masterpiece, "The Third of May 1808," both artworks share a similar placement of the distressed figure. The last important reference to Goya is the repeated use of the bull’s character that Goya was known for in his paintings.

---

[40] Werner Hofmann, “Picasso’s ‘Guernica’ in Its Historical Context,” *Artibus et Historiae* 4, no. 7 (1983): 141-169, https://doi.org/10.2307/1483186.

In three additional scenes within Guernica, I assume that Picasso drew inspiration from several other artworks. Firstly, depicting the dead baby cradled in its mother's arms appears reminiscent of Michelangelo's Pietà sculpture. Secondly, the portrayal of the screaming women and the figure holding an oil lamp may allude to Peter Paul Rubens' "An Allegory Showing the Effects of War" from 1638, where a woman is depicted with her hands raised to the sky and holding a torch. Finally, the elongated figures and their dynamic compositions that draw inspiration from the unique style of the Greek artist El Greco.

The ambiguity and diverse interpretations are evident in Picasso's references, characters, and spatial arrangement within the mural evoke numerous unanswered questions, thus ensuring the continued relevance of the painting. This enables viewers and scholars alike to engage in ongoing discussions regarding the meaning behind those elements.

After examining Guernica's dimensions, color palette, and allusions, I will now delve into a detailed analysis of the painting's characters and symbols. This exploration will involve describing select figures and elucidating their significance, tracing the evolution of these symbols over time. Additionally, I will explore the figure's historical connotations and contemporary interpretations and assess their impact on the artwork's enduring popularity.

The symbols

Within the painting, four women are depicted. Positioned on the left side, one woman stands out as she holds a lifeless infant and is visibly segregated from the rest—a testament to her significance. One interpretation suggests that this isolated figure could represent Picasso's mother, holding him as a baby, or perhaps symbolize his wife or

mistress holding his baby. This woman gazes towards the bull with tears streaming down her face, gripped by terror at the unfolding events, yet the bull remains indifferent to her anguish. This scene serves as a poignant reference to the brutality of the Spanish Civil War, where Franco and his allies carried out merciless actions toward Guernica's residents while they prayed for a better future but remained miserable and terrified. Towards the right side of the painting, we can find the screaming, burning woman symbolizing the bombing and the profound suffering endured by both the Spanish nation and the inhabitants of Guernica. In contrast, we can see the running woman who might be pregnant, a symbol of the future generation, watching towards the light, representing hope. Her depiction captures the essence of striving to escape the ravages of war for a brighter present and future, even if they seem distant. The fourth woman holding the oil lamp serves as a symbol of truth and justice. Another interpretation arises from the ratio of three women to one, potentially representing Franco and his allies arrayed against the lone Spanish republic. [41]

The soldier lying under the bull and the horse with a shattered sword could symbolize the aftermath of the war: a broken man bearing both physical and metaphorical wounds yet still clinging to life. While he may be perceived as a victim of the conflict, his position beneath the horse might imply an association with Franco's troops, adding complexity to his portrayal and hinting at potential villainy.

---

[41] John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso: The Minotaur Years. 1933-1943*(New York, Alfred A Knopf 2021), 258.

The upper center bulb could represent hope and illumination, while its diminutive size could symbolize the limited presence of truth and kindness left in the world and in Franco's regime. Alternatively, it may serve as a metaphor for the resilience and influence of the peasants and middle class within the tumultuous landscape of the Spanish Republic during wartime.

The following two symbols carry a paramount significance and are highly interpretable. They encompass myriad meanings, explanations, and references and play a pivotal role in the painting's discourse.

The first significant symbol is the horse figure, depicted in a state of agony and at the center of the depicted turmoil. It likely embodies the Andalusian horse breed, renowned for its cultural significance in Andalusia-Malaga and Spain. His wounds mirror the wounds inflicted upon the Spanish nation, serving as a poignant representation of the collective suffering endured throughout the war—symbolizing both the victims of bombings and the fallen. Additionally, the horse, embodying the majestic Pegasus of Greek mythology, enriches the interpretation by suggesting Pegasus's eventual ascent to Olympus, offering hope to the Spanish people for further peace and solace. This association also invites contrasts with the mythological figure of the Minotaur, a comparison to be explored further. Moreover, an alternative interpretation suggests the horse symbolizes a pregnant female figure, supported by its portrayal in early sketches. Like a woman and a mother, the horse's qualities, such as softness, goodness, and faith, further enrich its symbolism.

The second significant figure portrayed in the painting is the Bull. In the initial chapter of my thesis, I delved into Picasso's familial dynamics, exploring his connections with his

parents and sister. From childhood, Picasso's father introduced him to the tradition of bullfighting in Spain, a cultural phenomenon revered as a national symbol by Andalusians and the broader Spanish populace. This early exposure left an indelible mark on Picasso, leading to a lifelong connection with bulls and bullfights, evident in his numerous corrida artworks such as "Bullfight: Death of the Toradora 1933." Picasso's fixation extended beyond the physical bull to include the Greek mythological figure of the Minotaur, a creature beloved by surrealist artists (Like Dali) for its enigmatic nature, embodying human and bull qualities. A good example is "Minotauromachy" 1935 by Picasso.

Returning to Guernica, we should analyze and try to understand the conflict with the bull figure. On the one hand, it is Picasso’s national symbol, a reminder of his beloved country, memories from his father and family, and the loss and traumas he experienced, such as his sister’s death, the earthquake in Malaga and his father’s death. On the other hand, for many, the bull represents the center of evil, Franco and his troops, and the war.

Another compelling example of Picasso utilizing the minotaur and bull motifs to convey personal emotions and ideas is depicted in the painting "Blind Minotaur Being Led by a Little Girl." Within this artwork, we encounter a poignant representation wherein Picasso's deceased sister leads a minotaur while the visage of his lover, Maria Theresa, is also present. This composition underscores that Picasso's incorporation of the bull figure transcends mere symbolism of malevolence; rather, it encompasses nuanced layers of meaning, with the bull assuming a secondary, though not necessarily predominant, significance. This nuanced portrayal suggests that while Picasso often employed the bull and minotaur to symbolize negativity, there were instances where he humanized these

motifs, illustrating their complexity and potential for representing goodness. [42]

At the end of this discussion about the bull, it is important to highlight another significant point: General Franco prohibited women from becoming bullfighters during his time in power. Picasso's deliberate inclusion of four women alongside one bull in the mural enabled him to articulate his staunch opposition to this gender-based restriction and convey his personal opinion on the matter.[43]

Although they can be seen and analyzed separately, the Bull and the Horse share an unbreakable bond in this artwork, each is integral to comprehending the other. They represent dichotomies such as order versus chaos, peace versus war, the Spanish populace versus the Spanish Civil War, good versus evil, masculine versus feminine, or the nurturing bond between a mother and her child. The bull embodies themes of rivalry, strife, and complex relationships, while the horse embodies compassion, optimism, and aspirations for a better future. Together, they invite viewers to empathize with the artwork, offering varied perspectives based on individual opinions or circumstances. [44]

In the preceding chapter, I highlighted Alfred Barr and the dealer Kahnweiler's inquiry to Picasso about the symbolism behind each figure in his artwork. Picasso, however, opted for ambiguity, famously remarking, "A horse is a horse, and a bull is a bull." This

---

[42] John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso: The Minotaur Years. 1933-1943*(New York, Alfred A Knopf 2021), 121-132

[43] Ora Attia "Separation and Individuation in Picasso's Guernica." *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 92, no. 6 (December 2011): 1561–81, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-8315.2011.00418.x.

[44] Carla Gottlieb, "The Meaning of Bull and Horse in Guernica." *Art Journal* 24, no. 2 (1964): 106. https://doi.org/10.2307/774777.

statement underscored his belief in allowing viewers to find their own meanings within the artwork. Picasso ensured a timeless and universally relevant mural by emphasizing the viewer's autonomy in interpreting the figures, size, and colors. The interpretations I have presented are merely a glimpse into the myriad possibilities. Through his deliberate use of colors, mediums, references, and figures, Picasso crafted a work open for discussion and interpretation across cultures and eras. He deliberately avoided specificity to any particular nation, event, or creed, thereby preserving the mural's relevance to this day while encouraging the unfettered exploration of the viewer's imagination.

At the end of the 20th century, the number of interpretations proliferated as the art world underwent significant evolution marked by diverse approaches, extensive research, publications, cultural discourse, and varied opinions. This trend prompted the public and art enthusiasts to scrutinize each symbol and color within the artwork, fostering a culture of inquiry and contemplation. Importantly, there was no singularly correct interpretation of symbols or meanings, granting Guernica's viewers the freedom to emphasize their perspectives without prejudice.

Thanks to MoMA's and Alfred Barr's extensive research and their sub-mission to transform the artwork from a political to a neutral one, Guernica has evolved significantly over the years. The global wars during the era heightened awareness and prompted various interpretations of the painting and its symbols. Indeed, attitudes may have shifted with the end of each war. For example, after the Vietnam War, the horse became a powerful symbol of human rights and social justice for many, while the bull ranged from representing resistance to embodying the ravages of war and everything in between. Some beheld Guernica purely as a masterpiece of artistry or were bored by its lack of

color, while others were impressed by its cubist style. The impact of Guernica extended far beyond the realm of visual art, permeating literature, film, music, and theater in Spain and worldwide. Each artist and playwright (such as Rafael Alberti Merello and Fernando Arrabal) approached Guernica uniquely, offering diverse descriptions and interpretations in Spain and internationally. Some artists referenced Guernica directly in their works, while others incorporated motifs or symbols into their compositions. In doing so, they imbued their creations with personal emotions and opinions. Over time, the meanings attributed to Guernica's symbols and colors have shifted, a testament to the collective influence of society. Our continued engagement has kept Guernica relevant and accessible to all, ensuring its enduring significance for future generations.

Today, In the 21st century, the symbols depicted in Guernica hold significance as enduring symbols of the ongoing struggle for justice and the perpetual pursuit of positive change. They reflect a journey of progress and the fostering of open dialogue concerning diverse cultures, perspectives, opinions, and religions. What once appeared to me as symbols of sheer evil when I began writing my paper now resonate as beacons of hope for a brighter future. I believe the perception of the painting’s transformation is not unique to me but extends to everyone- from the Spanish populace to local and international visitors of the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid, to students and scholars around the world, and will continue to exist for anyone who delves into the artwork meaning, interpreting its symbols and colors according to their understanding, research, and experiences.

Chapter Five-Conclusion: Then and now

In this paper, I outlined the progression of Picasso's Guernica and elucidated its transformation into the significant artwork and universally recognized symbol it embodies today.

Commencing with an overview of the artist's background, I gave readers essential context to grasp the intricacies and motivations behind his artistic decisions throughout his creative journey. From his upbringing as the son of an art teacher to his early influences from Spanish masters Diego Velázquez and Francisco Goya and his subsequent relocation from Spain to Paris, I detailed Picasso's formative years. Delving further, I explored the impact of his various relationships, which alternately served as inspiration, muses, as well as a source of turmoil. Furthermore, I delved into Picasso's artistic phases, including the Blue period (1901-1904), characterized by melancholic works, the Rose period, and the profound influence of African art and Iberian sculptures on his evolving style, culminating in the development of Cubism. Transitioning into the late 1920s and early 1930s, I discussed Picasso's encounter with surrealism, mainly influenced by Salvador Dalí and his experimentation with surrealist techniques. The chapter concluded with a pivotal juncture in Picasso's career during the Great Depression, marked by the creation of Guernica, which serves as the focal point of this study.

In the second chapter, I delved into Picasso's political convictions and the circumstances that drove him to create Guernica. Emphasizing the parallels between Franco's regime and the Nazis, highlighting Picasso’s resistance to fascism, detailed the bombing of the Basque town and its profound impact on Picasso's decision to depict the tragedy in his

artwork for the 1937 Paris exhibition. I elucidated Picasso's motivation and the significance of selecting Guernica as the subject at the request of the Spanish government. It was imperative to underscore the profound personal, political, and artistic ramifications of the bombing on Picasso. After laying the groundwork leading up to the creation of the artwork, I delved into the creative process, spanning from Picasso's "Dream and Lie of Franco" series to the intensive craftsmanship in his modest studio. The chapter concluded with the lukewarm reception of the monumental mural at the 1937 exhibition and its initial rejection by the international community. This aspect was pivotal in illustrating the painting's journey from its humble beginnings to its eventual status as an iconic anti-war and political symbol, marking the inception of my exploration into the reception of Guernica from its inception.

Moving forward, chapter Three, significant findings emerge regarding the extensive journey undertaken by Guernica from the conclusion of the Paris exposition until its homecoming to Spain in 1981. Initially, the painting embarked on seemingly inconsequential voyages to London and Scandinavian countries, primarily for fundraising purposes, garnering limited attention. However, its trajectory shifted dramatically with its fundamental loan to the MoMA Museum and the large number of exhibitions in the US. Throughout the years, Guernica traversed the United States and numerous European cities, including Milan, Paris, Brussels, Hamburg, Cologne, and Amsterdam, culminating in a notable exhibition in post-war Munich, Germany. These travels were a critical and inseparable part of the painting's increased interest and popularity, which assisted in its evolving status as a future icon. Moreover, the contextual backdrop of wars during this period, notably the US bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Cold War, and the

Vietnam War, infused Guernica with heightened political, cultural, and social relevance, expanding its interpretative scope beyond its origins in the Spanish Civil War. Following Franco's death, the painting returned to Spain in 1981 and marked a significant milestone, symbolizing the end of war and fascism while inaugurating a new era as a potent symbol of peace and anti-war sentiment. Its permanent residency at the Reina Sofia Museum after 42 years in diaspora solidified its status as a culturally significant masterpiece.

The concluding segment of my paper delves into the symbolic significance, monochromatic palette, and scale of Guernica, contextualizing them alongside references to other artworks and artists. Key findings in this section revolves around the myriad interpretations of each element within the mural, constituting a vital aspect of its evolution into the enduring icon it represents today. Through exhaustive research and the utilization of Guernica by fellow artists, the continual exploration of its symbols, scale, colors, and meanings intertwines seamlessly with the artwork's growing recognition and resonance. The symbolic meanings attributed to the bull, horse, and woman within the painting, coupled with the deliberate absence of vibrant hues, underscore the multifaceted nature of interpretations, ensuring that myriad perspectives continue to enrich discussions surrounding the artwork indefinitely. Picasso's deliberate inclusion of the bull motif and each figure's profound impact serve as personal and universal catalysts for the painting's inception, ensuring its enduring relevance and perpetual discourse.

Today, Guernica is an international protest and antiwar icon and is considered one of Picasso's and the entire art world's most important and well-known artwork. It constitutes a place of pilgrimage for scholars, visitors, and students in room 205.10 of the Reina Sofia Museum, accompanied by its early sketches, relevant newspapers, and posters. It

was prominently featured in the museum's 2017 "Pity and Terror" exhibition, which sought to illuminate Picasso's journey to creating Guernica. The exhibition was backed by various documentary resources, documents, references, correspondences, and photographs. Despite the plethora of articles, papers, and research dedicated to Picasso and Guernica in recent decades, as well as the immeasurable written and online information, I believe that each additional paper, including mine, plays a crucial role in perpetuating the artist's legacy and the painting's ongoing evolution.[45] Similar to the research and interpretations that have elevated Guernica to its status as a global symbol of antiwar and peace, continued documentation is essential to sustain the artwork's continual progression. The presentation of multiple interpretations and explanations concerning the painting's inspiration, journey, and symbolism in this paper adds another layer to its relevance, aiding scholars, students, and art enthusiasts in exploring the artwork both presently and in the future.

While addressing my thesis inquiry, I encountered certain limitations and constraints that warrant acknowledgment. My investigation primarily focused on tracing Guernica's transformation from a conventional painting to a globally recognized antiwar emblem. In order to navigate the painting's evolution effectively, I found it necessary to set aside certain queries and considerations that piqued my curiosity. For instance, I was intrigued by the potential impact of Picasso's familial relationships, particularly the influence of his

---

[45] "Exposición - Pity and Terror - Picasso, Pablo (Pablo Ruiz Picasso), Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía." 2017. https://www.museoreinasofia.es/en/exhibitions/pity-and-terror-picasso.

sister's passing, on his decision to create Guernica, as well as how their complex dynamic might have been reflected in the final artwork. Additionally, I harbored a keen interest in understanding the underlying reasons behind the discord between Picasso and his homeland - how this juxtaposed with his portrayal of Spain through Guernica and the paradox of his engagement and obsession with its politics and the regime while encountering obstacles in showcasing his works there and living in another country. While I recognized that delving deeper into these areas could potentially veer me off course from my thesis question, I remain hopeful that these avenues will serve as a fertile ground for future exploration and research endeavors.

My thesis delves into a widely recognized topic that has garnered substantial scholarly attention. While the abundance of existing literature provided a wealth of information to draw from, it also posed a challenge as the sheer volume risked overwhelming me. To navigate this, I established a structured methodology. Initially, I immersed myself in comprehensive literature, primarily focusing on biographies to gain insights into the artist and his background, thereby elucidating the motivations behind his creation of Guernica. Subsequently, I supplemented this foundational understanding with various primary and secondary resources, including articles, research papers, newspapers, and official websites. These supplementary materials enabled me to thoroughly analyze aspects such as the painting's symbolism, interpretations, and broader implications, thus facilitating a holistic comprehension of the subject matter.

When Alfred Barr began exploring Guernica at the MoMA Museum, scant information regarding the painting and its significance was available. Barr and the museum committed substantial time and resources to supporting, promoting, and advocating for

the artwork. Since then, significant developments have transpired, catapulting the painting into an internationally recognized antiwar symbol with widespread appeal. However, despite its current renown, a vast terrain of the uncharted territory remains waiting to be discovered and understood. Questions abound regarding the impact of various wars on the painting's popularity, particularly the Vietnam War's impact on the American populace. Additionally, the extent to which Picasso was influenced by Greek mythology in his depiction of some of the figures in the painting and the implications of modern technology on the painting's contemporary relevance and interpretation warrant further investigation. These inquiries, among others, serve as a fertile ground for future research endeavors.

Quantifying the number of individuals who have seen the artwork firsthand remains elusive, and the amount of paper, books, plays, and research is uncountable. Yet, it's undeniable that the impact of Guernica has reverberated across the globe, touching the lives of hundreds of millions of people. In a world fraught with political and social discord, plagued by conflicts and geopolitical tensions, Guernica's relevance stayed unabated, resonating as powerfully today more than it did 85 years ago. In this digital age, with the emergence of the technologically savvy Gen Z generation, there exists a greater unique opportunity to amplify the exposure of this poignant masterpiece to a broader audience than ever before. Recent strides, such as lifting restrictions on photographing the artwork, reflect a recognition of its enduring value and the realization that its preservation remains unscathed by digital reproduction. Moreover, in an increasingly interconnected and digitalized world, disseminating Guernica's message,

photos, research, and information to a global audience has never been more feasible and more accessible.

Perhaps now it is time for a renewed global tour of the mural, offering diverse continents and countries the chance to explore and research its political and cultural effects, engage with its profound significance, and enjoy superb art. Such an initiative promises to enrich cultural experiences and foster a deeper understanding of the artwork's universal themes, thereby perpetuating its enduring popularity and relevance.

Illustrations

Figure 1: Man Ray and American. *Pablo Picasso*. (1932). Gelatin silver print, sheet (trimmed to image): 29.9 x 23.9 cm (11 3/4 x 9 7/16 in.). The National Gallery of Art (Washington, D.C.); Patrons' Permanent Fund. https://jstor.org/stable/community.14921787.

Figure 2: (1937). *3 L'Humanite.* Love, War, and the Bullfight, Art Journal, Winter, 1973-1974, Vol. 33, No. 2, 101.

Figure 3: *Sueno y mentira de Franco I (Dream and Lie of Franco I),* (1937). Etching and aquatint on paper, 38.8*57 cm Pity and terror: Picasso's path to Guernica, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia DE00109, 148.

Figure 4: *Sueno y mentira de Franco II (Dream and Lie of Franco II),* (1937). Etching and aquatint on paper, 38.9*57 .1 cm Pity and terror: Picasso's path to Guernica, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia DE00110, 148.

Figure 5: Maar, Dora (Henriette Theodora Markovitch) *Picasso in the rue des Grands- Augustins Studio Working on Guernica,* (1937). Gelatin silver print on paper, 20.7 × 20 cm Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía DE01329, Pity and terror, 3.

Figure 6: Lino Vaamonde, Jose. *Spanish Pavilion, International Exposition of Art and Technology in Modern Life,* (1937). Bibliotheca y Centro de Documentacion, The travels of Guernica, 39.

Figure 7: *Clement Attlee, leader of the British Labour Party, gives a speech at the opening of Guernica,* (1939). Pictures by Picasso, Whitechapel Gallery Archive. Lee Miller Archives, England, The travels of Guernica, 170.

Figure 8: *Guernica in the exhibition Picasso: Forty Years of His Art*. The Museum of Modern Art, (1939) New York, Museum Reina Sofia, 173.

Figure 9: *Picasso's Guernica, exhibition view San Francisco Museum of Art* (1939). The travels of Guernica, Museum Reina Sofia, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Archives. 149.

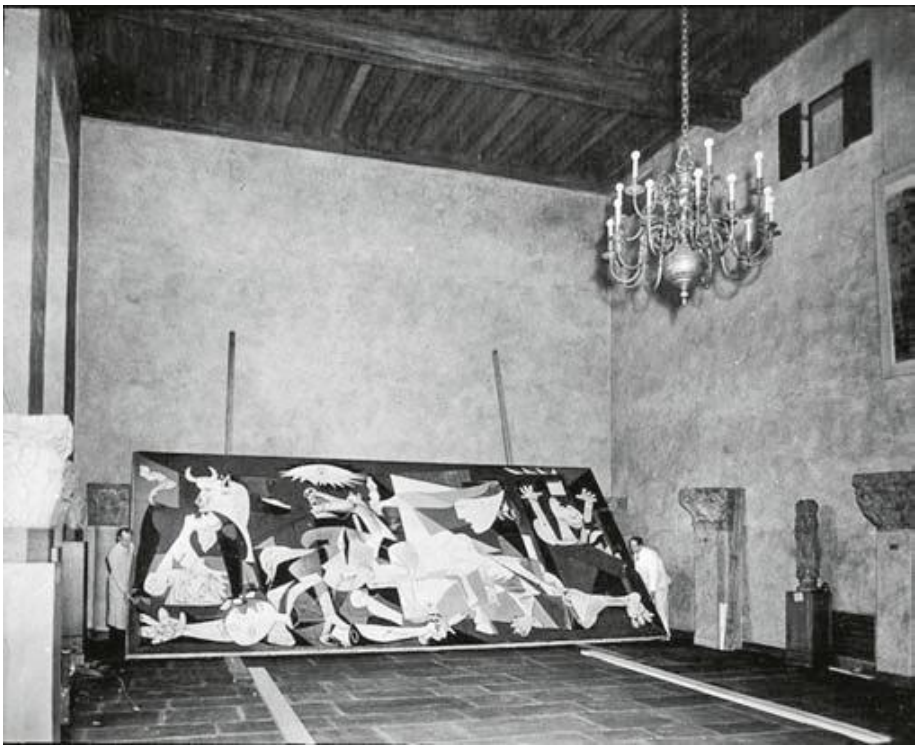

Figure 10: *Installation of Guernica*, (1941). Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard Art Museums Archives / Biblioteca y Centro de Documentacion, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, The travels of Guernica, Museum Reina Sofia, 154.

Figure 11: Picasso, Pablo, (1953). exhibition view, Palazzo Reale, Milan, The travels of Guernica, Museum Reina Sofia, 22.

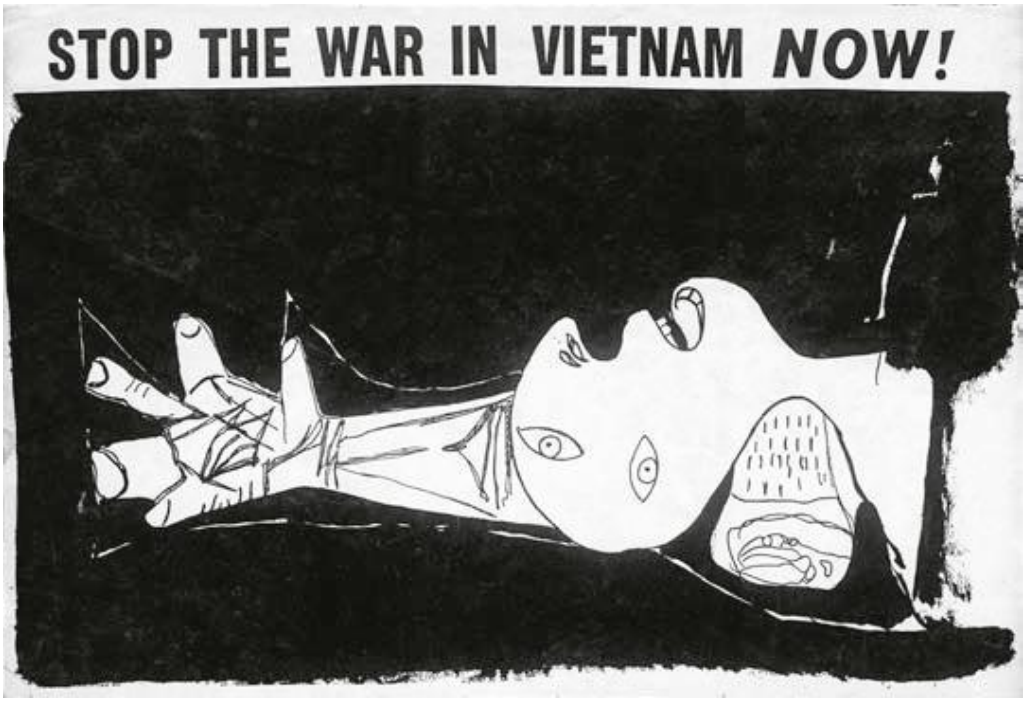

Figure 12: Baranik, Rudolf, (1967). *Artists' Poster Committee of Art Workers' Coalition, Stop the War in Vietnam Now*, The Estate of Rudolf Baranik & RYAN LEE Gallery, New York. The travels of Guernica, Museum Reina Sofia, 220.

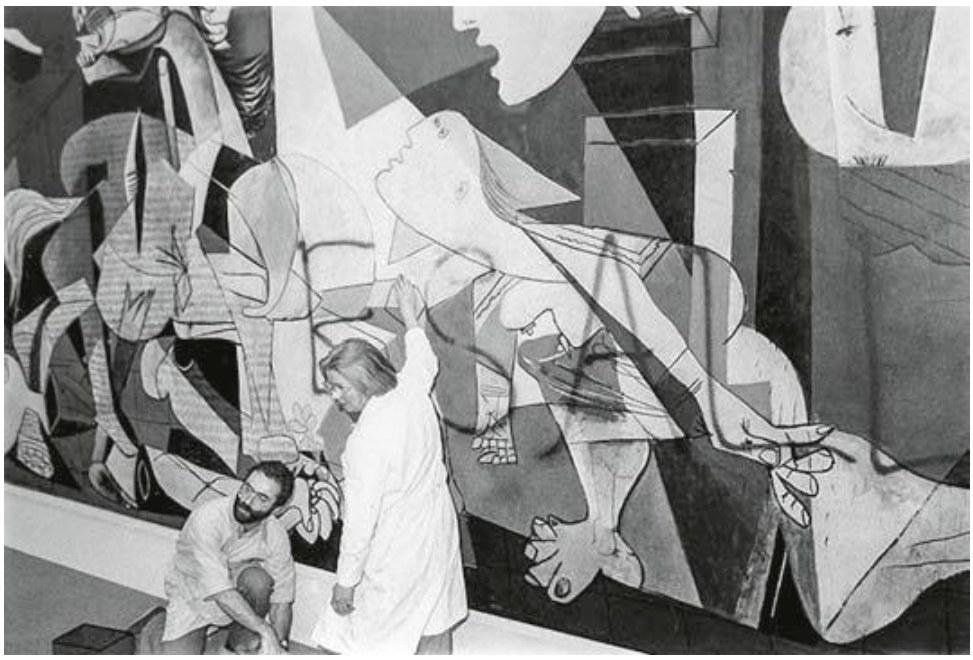

Figure 13: Le Gran, Leonardo. (2019). *MoMA restorers clean Guernica after it was graffitied by Tony Shafrazi on February 28, 1974*. Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York / Scala, Florence, The travels of Guernica, Museum Reina Sofia, 18.

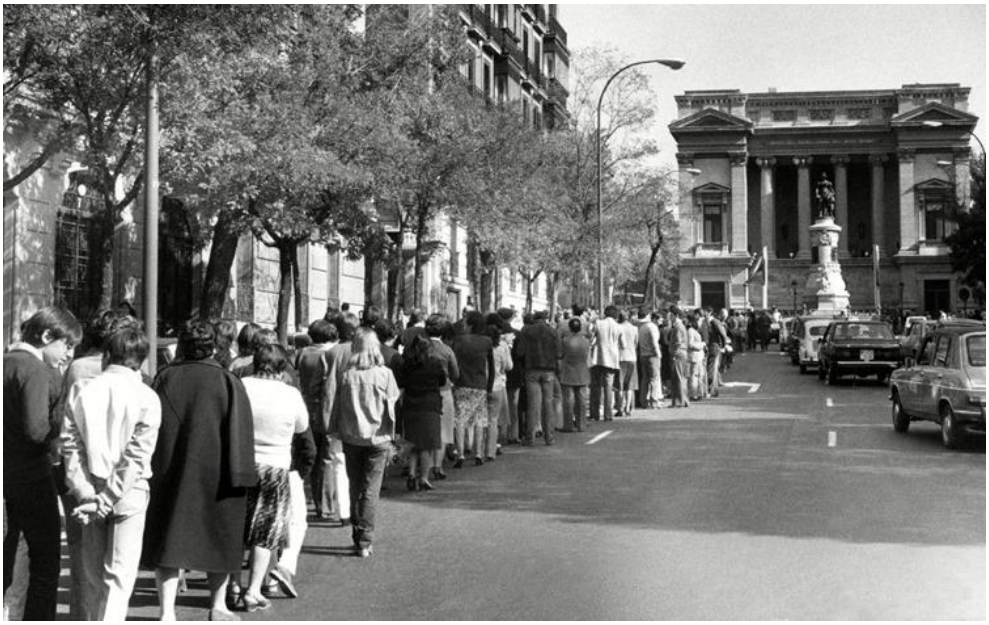

Figure 14: 1981 - Cason del Buen Retiro, *Madrid public view - for the first time in Spain - on the 100th anniversary of Picasso's birth*. Sancho Aroyo, Maria. (2023, January 27). "XIX and XX century: From Pradilla to Picasso"

Figure 15: Cortés, Joaquín and Román Lores. *Installation view of Picasso's* Guernica. Courtesy of Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.

Figure 16: *Women figure in Guernica as a reference to Goya, 3rd day of May 1808*, (2020). "Picasso's Guernica: Great Art Explained." YouTube. https://youtu.be/qJLH7JAsBHA.

.

Figure 17: *Women with a dead baby figure in Guernica as a reference to Michelangelo, Pietà*. (2020). Picasso's Guernica: Great Art Explained. YouTube. https://youtu.be/qJLH7JAsBHA.

Figure 18: Picasso, Pablo, (1927) *G.I, 125*. Art Journal, Winter, Guernica: Love, War, and the Bullfight 1973-1974, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Winter, 1973-1974), 106.

Bibliography

Ashton, Dore. “Picasso as Anti-Fascist.” *The Brooklyn Rail*, (December 12, 2006). https://brooklynrail.org/2006/11/express/picasso-as-anti-facist.

Attia, Ora. “Separation and Individuation in Picasso’s Guernica.” *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 92, no. 6 (December 2011): 1561–81. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-8315.2011.00418.x.

Burgard, Timothy Anglin. "Picasso and Appropriation." *The Art Bulletin*, (1991): 479–494. https://doi.org/10.2307/3045817.

Breton, André, and Simon Watson Taylor. *Surrealism and painting*. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Cohen-Solal, Annie. *Picasso the Foreigner: An Artist in France, 1900-1973*. Translated by Sam Taylor. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2023.

Cox, Neil. *An Interview with Pablo Picasso.* New York: Cavendish Square, 2015.

Eakin, Hugh. “Before ‘Guernica’ Won over the World, It Flopped.” The Atlantic, September 12, 2022. https://www.theatlantic.com/books/archive/2022/07/picasso-guernica-political-art-history-myth/670496/.

Gilot, Françoise, and Carlton Lake. *Life with Picasso*. New York: New York Review Books, 2019.

Glueck, Grace “PICASSO'S ANTIWAR 'GUERNICA' QUIETLY LEAVES U.S. FOR SPAIN” *New York Times; (*Sep 10, 1981).

Gottlieb, Carla. “The Meaning of Bull and Horse in Guernica.” *Art Journal* 24, no. 2 (1964): 106. https://doi.org/10.2307/774777.

Held, Jutta, and Alex Potts. “How Do the Political Effects of Pictures Come about? The Case of Picasso’s ‘Guernica.’” *Oxford Art Journal* 11, no. 1 (1988): 33–39. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1360321.

Hofmann, Werner. “Picasso’s ‘Guernica’ in Its Historical Context.” *Artibus et Historiae* 4, no. 7 (1983): 141. https://doi.org/10.2307/1483186.

Iriarte, Teresa Ochoa de Zabalegui, and Mafalda Rodríguez. *The travels of Guernica*. Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2019.

Janson, H. W. “Alfred H. Barr, Jr., *Picasso—Fifty Years of His Art*.” *College Art Journal* 6, no. 4 (July 1, 1947): 315–317. https://doi.org/10.1080/15436322.1947.10795355.

J. Clark, Timothy, and Marisa García Vergara. *Pity and terror: Picasso's path to Guernica*. Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, 2017.

Morris, Lynda, and Christoph Grunenberg. "Picasso's Politics." *The Burlington Magazine* 153, no. 1295 (2011): 103. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25781987.

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía." Exposición - Pity and Terror - Picasso, Pablo. 2017. https://www.museoreinasofia.es/en/exhibitions/pity-and-terror-picasso.

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía. "Exposiciones - Picasso: Guernica, Tokyo, Kyoto, Kuruma, Nagoya, 1962-1963." accessed January 2, 2024. https://guernica.museoreinasofia.es/en/exposiciones/picasso-guernica-tokyo-kyoto-kuruma-nagoya-1962-1963-5434.

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía."Rethinking Guernica. Picasso's Twentieth-Century Work-Icon Close-Up." accessed March 2, 2024, https://guernica.museoreinasofia.es/en#investigacion.

Pablo Picasso Biography. Accessed March 3, 2024. https://www.pablopicasso.org/picasso-biography.jsp.

"Picasso's Guernica: Great Art Explained." YouTube, June 16, 2020. https://youtu.be/qJLH7JAsBHA.

Picasso and Dali. Accessed December 3, 2023. https://www.pablopicasso.org/picasso-and-dali.jsp.

Richardson, John, and Marilyn McCully. *A Life of Picasso: The Prodigy, 1881-1906.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007.

Richardson, John. *A Life of Picasso: The Minotaur Years*. *1933-1943*. New York: Alfred A Knopf, 2021.

Sancho Aroyo, Maria. (2023, January 27). "XIX and XX century: From Pradilla to Picasso"

Temkin, Ann, and Anne Umland. *Picasso Sculpture*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2015. https://www.moma.org/d/pdfs/W1siZiIsIjIwMTgvMDYvMTMvODAwcmJrZXo0X01vTUFfUGljYXNzb1NjdWxwdHVyZV9QUkVWSUVXLnBkZiJdXQ/MoMA_PicassoSculpture_PREVIEW.pdf?sha=162132aae1e259a0.