



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
School of History, Classics
and Archaeology

“NO PRAISE CAN BE TOO HIGH” THE FORGOTTEN LABOUR OF THE BASQUE *SEÑORITAS*



A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment
of the degree of MA (Hons) in History and Politics

Nerea Wachter Galindo

April 2022

12,000 words

INTRODUCTION

Touted as a “remarkable chapter in British history”, the evacuation of thousands of Basque children to the UK in May 1937 is one of the lesser known projects undertaken by the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief (NJC) as part of the Aid Spain movement.¹ On May 21st, 1937, nearly four thousand Basque children, as well as fifteen priests, 96 teachers (*maestras*) and 120 auxiliaries (*auxiliares*) boarded the *SS Habana* at Santurtzi and arrived in the port of Southampton two days later, where the colourful bunting in honour of George IV’s coronation ten days prior was left up to celebrate their arrival.² The British expedition formed part of a series of children’s evacuations abroad initiated by the Basque government in March 1937, in response to the bombing of Bilbao on January 4th.³ Tens of thousands of children, mostly between the ages of five and sixteen, left to France, Belgium, Switzerland, Mexico and the USSR in similar expeditions to protect them from aerial bombardments and the advancing Francoist troops. Members of the NJC fought hard to obtain the British government’s permission to allow the children and their carers into the country, who at first objected on the grounds that it would be in violation of the Non-Intervention Act. Francoists and their supporters also opposed these evacuations, viewing them as Republican propaganda campaigns and ultimately unnecessary for the children’s safety. After the bombing of Gernika, however, public opinion in Britain swayed in favour of the Republic, and amidst a rise of humanitarian sentiment the children were granted entry. The Duchess of Atholl, Chairman of the Basque Children’s Committee, saw it as proof of “the true humanity latent in everyone that the Basque children are now here through the concerted efforts of people holding widely divergent views”.⁴

The children’s stay in Britain was at the time deemed a successful undertaking. Despite Francoist sympathisers constantly pushing for the children to be repatriated to Spain, a call that increased greatly after the fall of Bilbao which supposedly “ended” the civil war in the Basque country, the children found a new, secure home in Britain. They were rescued from an active warzone, received enough food to

¹ Hywel Davies and Chris Bell, *Fleeing Franco: How Wales Gave Shelter to Refugee Children from the Basque Country During the Spanish Civil War* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), v.

² “The Colonies: History of the Colonies,” BasqueChildren.org, <https://www.basquechildren.org/colonies/history>.

³ Alonso Carballés, “El Primer Exilio De Los Vascos, 1936-1939,” *Historia Contemporánea* 35 (2007): 687.

⁴ Mike Levy, *Get the Children Out! Unsung Heroes of the Kindertransport* (London: Lemon Soul Ltd, 2021), 33.

recover from malnutrition, regained the ability to continue their education, and were safe from advancing troops or aerial bombardments – until the outbreak of the Second World War, that is. By then, however, the majority had returned to Spain, although a few hundred took up permanent residence in Britain. The testimonies of the children also indicate the mission to be a success, since almost all describe their time abroad as “wonderful” or “delightful”, and deem themselves as having been “lucky”.⁵ Historians mirror the tone taken by contemporaries and praise the evacuation as one of “the great chapters in the unfolding of the refugee crisis of the twentieth centuries”, and an important step in British history, which until then “could boast precious little tradition of offering refuge to minors”.⁶

The credit or praise for this successful undertaking is seldom ever attributed to those who worked hardest at it: the Spanish teachers and auxiliaries that accompanied the children, the *señoritas*. *Señorita* is the Spanish equivalent of “Miss” and was the term used by the British to refer to both the *maestras* and *auxiliares*, regardless of their marital status. These women and their labour are mentioned time and time again in British newspaper articles, testimonies, and official reports and minutes of the Basque Children’s Committee (BCC), which constitute the primary sources this dissertation draws on. Despite this wealth of evidence pointing to the fact that the realization of the Basque evacuation could not have been made possible without the two hundred *señoritas* and their near uninterrupted, years-long work, British historiography is slow to put them in the spotlight. Other names are much more likely to be credited, like that of Leah Manning, Wilfrid Roberts, or Katharine Stewart-Murray, Duchess of Atholl. These people were all members of the BCC and did play an indispensable part in securing the children’s arrival and fought for their continued stay in the country, but their roles were administrative, political. They interacted little with the children save for some well-publicised visits to a few “colonies”, the term given to the homes that housed the children. It may only be natural that these people, who were Members of Parliament and public figures, receive increased attention in the historiography since they left the greatest paper trail. However, even when the focus is on the women who directly worked with the

⁵ Testimony of Josefina Savery, “Telling Their Stories”, Special Collections, University of Southampton, <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/archives/resources/voices.page>.

⁶ Peter Anderson, “The Struggle over the Evacuation to the United Kingdom and Repatriation of Basque Refugee Children in the Spanish Civil War: Symbols and Souls,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, no.2 (2017): 298.

children and lived in the colonies, names like Cora Portillo-Blythe, Frida Stewart, or Chloe and Poppy Vulliamy are much more likely to be mentioned than any Spanish woman's name. It is a challenge to find any *señorita*'s name at all, as they are often lumped together under the descriptors "Senoritas" or "Spanish woman teachers". In contrast to the Spanish historiography, British historiography is suspiciously void of these names in a way that does not reflect the reality of events.

The aim here is not to discredit the invaluable work performed by the British women who volunteered to help the Basque children or the politicians who advocated for them, but rather to help bring to light the women who did the most in return for very little. In order to do that, it is important to first clarify who the *señoritas* were and what brought them to Britain, followed by an exploration of the various kinds of labour they performed to keep their colonies and the expedition overall running. The time frame in question will be May 1937 to December 1939, by which time there were only about fifty *señoritas* left in Britain, many of which no longer worked for the BCC.⁷ Their contributions will then be contrasted to the way different contemporary British sources and historians portray the work of the *señoritas* and its importance to the success of the Basque expedition. In both cases the work these women provided is grossly undervalued and the sacrifices they made to help the children are not sufficiently appreciated. This also points to a wider issue within the discipline of labour history where women are not recognised for their labour, specifically domestic labour, because it is deemed "natural" for them, and not really work. In the words of the Duchess of Atholl, were it not for the *señoritas* "who, out of their own kindness and charity, have done so much for the children" the task "of looking after the children would have been increased tenfold".⁸

THE MAKING OF A SEÑORITA

The *señorita*, or rather, the need for her, was born out of the aerial bombardments carried out by the Francoist forces and their allies on the Basque

⁷ Gregorio Arrien, *Salvad a Los Niños! Historia del Exilio Vasco en Gran Bretaña* (Bilbao: Sabino Arana Fundazioa, 2014), 341-2.

⁸ Katharine Atholl, "The Basque Children," *The Scotsman*, July 5, 1938, 13.

country, specifically the bombing of Bilbao on January 4th, 1937.⁹ The rebel targeting of civilians deeply affected the population and the regional government decided to take up the French republican government on their previous offer to temporarily take in children from conflict zones.¹⁰ Families with children between the ages of five and twelve could sign them up for expeditions to France, and within the first week 1600 names were put down, proving there was a demand among Basque parents for this kind of undertaking.¹¹ After two months of planning and securing the British navy's protection of the ships, the first expedition left for southern France on March 21st with 450 children.¹² Ten days later, the Italian Legionary Air Force bombed Durango, resulting in the deaths of over 300 civilians.¹³ The demand to send children abroad increased greatly, as did the demand for personnel to accompany them, only to be outdone four weeks later with the bombing of Gernika.

The bombing and “destruction of Gernika made terribly clear the fate that overhung Bilbao”, and the Basque government increased its evacuation efforts.¹⁴ The day after the bombing, the Basque president José Antonio Aguirre made a global address, asking the global community to aid in the rescuing of the more than 300.0000 women and child refugees that had fled to Bilbao.¹⁵ He did not specifically request for them to be taken in abroad, but in late April and early May, the number of petitions asking for more child evacuations “increased exponentially”.¹⁶ Parents urged the Basque government to adopt a policy of evacuation, but to do so meant turning to countries other than France.¹⁷ The expedition to Britain was the first of the non-French expeditions and the biggest to date, with 3,861 child passengers.¹⁸ The full number agreed upon with the British government of four thousand children did

⁹ Carballés, “Primer Exilio,” 687.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid, 688.

¹³ Joan Maria Dresden Thomas, Ramon Arnabat i Mata, and Jon Irazabal Agirre, *Bombs over Biscay, Barcelona and Dresden (1937-1945): From the Spanish Civil War to the Second World War*. Vol. 44 (Tarragona: Publicacions URV, 2019), 29.

¹⁴ Katharine Atholl, *Searchlight on Spain* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1938), 199.

¹⁵ A. Etxeberria Odriozola et al, “Serie Nostalgias Pediátricas: La Labor De Los Pediatras En La Atención A Los Niños Evacuados Al Reino Unido En 1937”, *Boletín de la Sociedad Vasco-Navarra de Pediatría* 51, no.1 (2019): 13.

¹⁶ Carballés, “Primer Exilio,” 688.

¹⁷ Arrien, *Salvad*, 62.

¹⁸ Carballés, “Primer Exilio,” 691-2.

not reach Southampton because there was an air raid during the embarkation which killed eleven and prohibited one hundred from reaching the ship.¹⁹

Securing the British government's permission to allow these children into the country was no easy feat. The Aid Spain movement was vast, comprised of "twelve to fourteen major campaigns, committees, and funds, and a host of smaller ones", and although there was not one co-ordinating body, the National Joint Committee was the closest thing to it, embracing roughly 180 organisations of varying sizes.²⁰ Millions of Brits contributed in some way or another to the Aid Spain movement, and it became the "only movement, on anything like such a scale, which has in British peace-time history been concerned with events in a foreign nation".²¹ The people in the Aid Spain movement were quick to respond to the Basque government's request to send children abroad, but their efforts were hampered by their government, which had adopted a policy of non-intervention. Non-intervention, the British and French governments hoped, would keep the conflict contained to Spain and avoid confrontation with the fascist powers in Europe. It was not a formal agreement or a treaty and operated on a limited legal basis, supported only by a Committee set up in the Foreign Office's Locarno Suite in September 1936.²² Although the Committee formally forbade the participating nations from providing either side with arms or other military supplies, the question of non-political, humanitarian aid was unclear. The British adhered fiercely to non-intervention, even as it became obvious that it was little more than a farce and that the Committee had no means (or intentions) to punish those who violated it, namely Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union.²³

It was in this climate that supporters of the Republic or of humanitarian causes had to campaign for the Basque children's expedition. The NJC began pressuring the government to receive Basque refugees as early as February 1937, but it was largely fruitless until the Labour Party activist Leah Manning arrived in Bilbao on April 24th at the invitation of the Basque Nationalist Party.²⁴ Her witnessing the bombing of Gernika two days later and the global outrage it caused proved vital in obtaining the

¹⁹ Atholl, *Searchlight*, 199.

²⁰ Jim Fyrth, "The Aid Spain Movement in Britain, 1936-39," *History Workshop Journal* 35, no.1 (1993): 155.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 156-157.

²² David Jorge, *War in Spain: Appeasement, Collective Insecurity, and the Failure of European Democracies Against Fascism* (Milton: Taylor & Francis Group, 2020), 66.

²³ *Ibid.*, 66-7.

²⁴ Anderson, "The Struggle", 305.

governments' formal approval to receive the children on April 29th.²⁵ However, the Home Secretary Sir John Simon demanded that “the number of children to be brought to this country would be in strict accordance with the means [the NJC] has at its disposal and there is no charge on public funds for their maintenance” and that the Committee be prepared to “repatriate these children to Spain when conditions in that country made such a course possible”.²⁶ The debate over the exact number of children the NJC could evacuate to Britain was only settled eight days before the children's arrival.²⁷ The original number agreed upon was four thousand children, but the government backtracked and reduced it to half that. Activists in the NJC such as Leah Manning and the Duchess of Atholl worked tirelessly and sent dozens of telegrams to different government officials to get the number back to four thousand. Manning begged the Home Secretary in the “name civilization and humanity” to “obtain this authorization immediately”.²⁸ Her insistence eventually paid off, but Manning would later report in her memoirs that “the Basques had no sympathy either from the Home Office or the Foreign Office” who “regarded the whole thing as a nuisance and myself as an officious busybody”.²⁹ Her efforts paid off. 3,861 children boarded the *Habana* after passing a medical inspection and receiving vaccinations, each carrying one piece of luggage, with a hexagonal card around their necks that read *Inglaterra*.

The women who accompanied these children overseas as teachers and carers were volunteers and had to apply for a position. The Basque government publicised the openings through general advertisements in the press and through word of mouth, aiming them mainly at women in Bilbao.³⁰ They were promised a steady salary as well as board and lodging at their destination country, which appealed to many and the government faced no issues staffing the expeditions.³¹ The government placed a lot of emphasis on having well-staffed expeditions so that

²⁵ Anderson, “The Struggle,” 305.

²⁶ “Note of the Question of the Evacuation of Basque Children to this Country”, April 1937, in “Basque Children,” HO213/287, 1937, The National Archives, Kew, London (hereafter cited as HO213/287, TNA).

²⁷ Nerea Azurmedi, “Ocho Días Para Acoger A 4.000 Niños Vascos”, *El Correo*, May 7, 2017, <https://www.elcorreo.com/bizkaia/sociedad/201705/07/ocho-dias-para-acoger-20170505173326.html>.

²⁸ Leah Manning Telegraph to Sir John Simon, 14 May, 1937, in “Basque Children,” 1937, HO 213/288, The National Archives, Kew, London (hereafter cited as HO213/288, TNA).

²⁹ Dolores Legarreta, *The Guernica Generation: Basque Refugee Children of the Spanish Civil War* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1984), 105.

³⁰ Arrien, *Salvad*, 136.

³¹ *Ibid*, 139, 136.

parents would have enough confidence in these undertakings to sign their children up, and the British expedition even included fifteen priests to assuage Catholic parents.³² Women who wanted to serve as *maestras* had to be licensed teachers registered with the Department of Culture, but for those who wished to be *auxiliares* there were no specific requirements; they only had to inscribe themselves with *Asistencia Social*, the government's social work department. The Department of Culture would nominate the *maestras* for each expedition, and *Asistencia Social* the *auxiliares*, although women could voice a preference for their destination.³³ It is unclear how the process of selection worked exactly, but some of the *señoritas* who ended up in Britain had ties to the Basque government, which might have helped them secure a position. The BCC report on the Training College in Southampton noted that the *señorita* there was "said to be the wife of a member of the Basque Government," and Señorita M at one of the Cambridge colonies was the daughter of the Basque representative in Paris.³⁴

The recruitment process for these women was presumably the same across all expeditions. It is hard to say exactly how many women accompanied the total of 20,854 Basque refugee children as carers on their stays abroad, but the number is likely between 1,000 and 1,500, as the standard number of adults per children was 1:20.³⁵ Around 500 of these *señoritas* were stationed in France, while the smaller expeditions to Great Britain, Belgium, and the USSR were staffed by around 100 to 200 *señoritas* each.³⁶ All in all, the Department of Culture and *Asistencia Social* nominated 216 people to accompany the expedition to the UK, 96 *maestras* and 120 *auxiliares*, which equals roughly one adult per twenty children.³⁷ Four nurses boarded the *Habana* with them, but their names do not appear in any subsequent

³² Arrien, *Salvad*, 135.

³³ Etxeberria et al, "Serie Nostalgias," 13.

³⁴ "The Training College, The Avenue, Southampton," June 4, 1937, in "Basque Children Evacuated To United Kingdom: Visits To Homes And Camps", 1937 – 39, MH 57/323, The National Archives, Kew, London (hereafter cited as MH57/323, TNA); ³⁴ M. Isabel Gejo-Santos, "De Leah Manning A Rosita García Ascot: Cantar Y Bailar Para Vivir. Redes Filantrópicas En Torno A Los Niños Vascos Refugiados En Gran Bretaña (1937-1939)," in *Liberales, Cultivadas y Activas: Redes Culturales, Lazos de Amistad*, ed. Adelaida Sagarra Gamazo (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2017), 591.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 541-2.

³⁶ Carballés, "Primer Exilio," 688.

³⁷ "Passengers on the Habana: Listings of Niños, Maestras, Auxiliares y Sacerdotes," BasqueChildren.Org, <https://www.basquechildren.org/reference/passengers>.

records of the BCC, so these likely women did not stay in Britain but returned to Spain.³⁸

The recruitment process was therefore technically open to all, but the expedition to Britain was staffed by a specific kind of *señorita*. The *señoritas* who arrived in Britain were predominantly young, inexperienced women with existing familial ties to the children, from a very wide array of backgrounds. The historian Gregorio Arrien was able to compile a near complete list of the staff accompanying the children abroad, with only two missing names. It shows that except for two teachers (Vicente López and Martín Astiazarain) and three auxiliaries (Vicente Ibarra, Vicente Erquiaga, and Juan Palomera), all others were women.³⁹ This is to be expected as women dominated the teaching and child-minding careers at this time, and men faced conscription and military duties due to the war.⁴⁰ The other expeditions were similarly predominantly staffed by women.⁴¹ Arrien's list identifies women only by their first name and their paternal surname, and leaves out the second, maternal surname that is usually included in Spanish documentation. Just over half of them have traditionally Basque surnames, such as Goicoechea or Iñarritu, but there is no shortage of Martínez, López, or González, indicating a pretty even Basque/Spanish mix. Many surnames also repeat themselves, which suggests – especially with the less common names like Garaigordobil or Ispizua – that many were related to each other, especially amongst the *auxiliares*. The *maestras* were recruited from a wide variety of schools, from public to private, Basque to Spanish-speaking.⁴² According to Arrien's research, the majority of the women were under the age of twenty-five and single, and without “any apparent commitments”.⁴³

This is not exactly an accurate assessment. They might not have had marital commitments, but they certainly had familial commitments. Many of the *señoritas* were the biological mothers of the children, despite Arrien claiming the contrary.⁴⁴ The BCC reports on the different colonies place several mothers in the Training

³⁸ Arrien, *Salvad*, 149.

³⁹ “Passengers,” BasqueChildren.Org.

⁴⁰ Arrien, *Salvad*, 137.

⁴¹ The short film *Gernika* (1937) by Nemesio Sobrevila includes footage of homes in France, Belgium, Netherlands, which all appear to have a majority or solely female staff.

⁴² Arrien, *Salvad*, 136.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 320, 137.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 137. Original text: “No hay constancia de que fueran muchas las maestras madres que se desplazaron a Gran Bretaña en compañía de sus hijos”. All translations done by the author.

College in Southampton, the Brixton Orphanage, at Baydon Hole Farm, at Keighley, and at Blair Atholl castle.⁴⁵ In Natalia Benjamin's *Recuerdos*, which compiles the testimonies of the Basque children themselves on their time in the UK, one of them states that at the colony in Montrose, "the Spanish teacher only looked after her two daughters who had come with her (...) She never taught one lesson".⁴⁶ A magazine article which interviewed some of the *señoritas* at the camp in Southampton mentions Señora de Eguia, who is there "with six of her children", and Señora de la Torre, a mother to three boys.⁴⁷ By no means did mothers make up a majority of the workforce, but they were no rarity. Their prevalence is understandable, given that while Leah Manning helped coordinate the expedition, she insisted time and time again that young mothers be evacuated from Bilbao.⁴⁸ However, since this was a children's expedition, the only way mothers could accompany them was by enrolling as *maestras* or *auxiliares*. Even if they were not their mothers, many *señoritas* had blood relations to the children, such as Señorita Palomera of Elford Hall, who complained that at her colony "she was not allowed any free time" and would like to be "transferred to another centre with her three brothers".⁴⁹ The *señoritas* were thoroughly tied to these children, and their relationships to them were more than just professional, but also deeply emotional.

When they arrived in Britain, the *señoritas* and the children spent several weeks quarantining in a makeshift camp in Eastleigh, Southampton. They were then dispersed to the different colonies, where they spent the majority of their stay. The camp was originally meant to house just two thousand children, but at the last minute had to be upgraded to house twice that many, making aspects of it very makeshift and cobbled-together. Five hundred white bell tents housed eight children each, who slept on homemade straw mattresses.⁵⁰ The *señoritas* slept in these tents as well.⁵¹

⁴⁵ MH 57/323, TNA; "Repatriation of Basque Children," December 16, 1939, in "Unexploded bombs - Precautions; sleeping car services; repatriation of Basque children...", AN 2/1093, 1939-1940, The National Archives, Kew, London; Mike Levy, "The 'Red Duchess' - Katharine, Duchess of Atholl", 6, BasqueChildren.Org, <https://www.basquechildren.org/-/docs/articles/atholl2019>.

⁴⁶ Natalia Benjamin, *Recuerdos: Basque Children Refugees in Great Britain* (Oxford: Mousehold Press, 2007), 74.

⁴⁷ John Bull, "Heart of Humanity Camp," June 5, 1937, Warwick Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick (hereafter Modern Records Centre, UoW).

⁴⁸ Telegram of Leah Manning to Clement Atlee, May 2 1937, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

⁴⁹ "Minutes," BCC, January 31, 1939, 3, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

⁵⁰ "The Journey," Havens East, <https://havenseast.org/the-journey/>.

⁵¹ "Minute Sheet: S.M.O. Med. I," in "Basque Children Evacuated to United Kingdom: Reception Arrangements; Visits to Refugee Camps", 1937-38, MH57/322, The National Archives, Kew, London (hereafter MH57/322, TNA).

The organisation and administration of the camp was so poor that the British Red Cross Society withdrew its support and its V.A.D.s only two weeks in, stating they would only return once the administration improved.⁵² They never did return. The grounds flooded early on in their stay and became muddy, and the Senior Medical Officer was appalled by the circumstances in which they lived, and complained time and time again that “the assistance afforded by the adult refugees is limited” and that they required “daily instructions in elementary camp hygiene”.⁵³ He even went so far as to say that “if disease breaks out in the camp it will be largely due to lack of Spanish co-operation with our Medical and Sanitary Departments”, but he did concede that the difficulties arose mainly from communication issues and lack of interpreters.⁵⁴ There was in fact a typhoid outbreak in June which slowed down the children’s dispersal to the colonies.

By July of 1937, the majority of the children had been relocated to these colonies, also sometimes referred to as hostels. Nearly half stayed in convents or church-owned orphanages, since the Salvation Army agreed to house 400 children and the Catholic Church 1200, but these were children whose parents had agreed or requested they stay at a religious home.⁵⁵ The colonies were predominantly mixed-sex in an effort to keep siblings together, but many – especially the religious homes – were single sex. Every colony had a “director”, most often a British woman, and each was also supposed to have a *señorita*, specifically a *maestra*, to continue the children’s education.⁵⁶ However, there were over 100 colonies all over Britain and just 96 maestras, so while some former children recall having five Spanish teachers, others state that they “didn’t have many teachers. In fact it was very difficult to get any teachers”.⁵⁷ The colonies also greatly varied in size, from just a handful of children to hundreds sent to live in convents, although the BCC tried to house them in groups of twenty to fifty. Similarly, the number of *señoritas* per child varied, from 1 per 10 to 1 per 25 or more.⁵⁸ The colonies were staffed by mostly British personnel, which, depending on the funds available to each colony, could include a nurse, a

⁵² Letter from British Red Cross Society Director General to Minister of Health, June 7, 1937, MH 57/322, TNA.

⁵³ “Minute Sheet: Dr. Camwath,” MH 57/322, TNA.

⁵⁴ Letter by R.W. Taylor, May 30, 1937, MH 57/322, TNA.

⁵⁵ Atholl, *Searchlight*, 199.

⁵⁶ Gejo-Santos, “Leah Manning,” 588.

⁵⁷ Testimony of Jose Armolea. “Telling Their Stories”, UoS.

⁵⁸ “Borough of Eastleigh,” June 18, 1937, MH57/323, TNA.

maid, a cook, handyman, and additional carers and teachers, although it was rare for a colony to be so well-staffed.⁵⁹

Having that amount of staff required significant funds, and each colony had a local committee, comprised mostly of local women. They organised fundraisers and pledged money to keep the colonies running, since the NJC could not afford to fully finance them all.⁶⁰ It was predominantly women who participated in and supported the efforts of the local committees; they attended concerts, organised bake sales, hosted charity dinners, “adopted” Basque children by financing their upkeep, or donated money outright.⁶¹ In a 1938 circular by the BCC, the local committees were praised for “doing wonders” in caring for and supporting the children, especially those in “the distressed areas” of South Wales and Durham.⁶² Since the Basque expedition could count on no government aid, these local committees and their ability to produce funds were invaluable to the continuation of the mission. If a *señorita* received a steady salary or “pocket money”, it most likely came from the efforts of the local committee.

Such were the working conditions and environments of the *señoritas*. They may have arrived in Britain as largely young and “inexperienced” women, but the needs of the children and of the expedition would soon have them gain an array of skills.

THE SEÑORITA: JACK OF ALL TRADES

The title is not intended to be hyperbolic. The Basque *señoritas* engaged in an impressive amount of work, both in terms of hours and variety, without which the different colonies and the expedition as a whole could not have functioned. The following section aims to capture the different kinds of labour performed by the *señoritas* despite significant obstacles, and its importance to the success of the mission.

⁵⁹ Gejo-Santos, “Leah Manning,” 588.

⁶⁰ Frida Stewart, *Firing a Shot for Freedom*, 153.

⁶¹ Gejo-Santos, “Leah Manning,” 537.

⁶² G.T. Garret, “Circular/Appeal Sent to Previous Supporters of BCC,” February 4, 1938, 1, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

The most obvious work done by the *señoritas* in the colonies was teaching and entertaining the children. It was, after all, advertised as the main reason they would be accompanying the children abroad. Since the Basque government did not initially expect the evacuation to last longer than a few months, they stressed the importance of continuing the children's education so that they would not fall behind in school once they returned.⁶³ This task was specific to the 96 *maestras*, who would teach the children anywhere from three to six hours a day, usually doing a morning session and an afternoon one. They were not the sole teachers of the children, and many colonies had additional local educators instruct the children in subjects like English and art. However, the BCC respected the Basque government's wishes to keep the children's education as "Spanish" as possible, so the *maestras* remained the primary source of education. The *auxiliares* either assisted the teachers or helped structure routines and activities for the children. These efforts were vital in restoring a "normal" life for the children and are remembered fondly by them in their accounts of their stay abroad.⁶⁴

It was by no means easy work. Besides the lack in materials such as Spanish-language schoolbooks, the *maestras* struggled with the "wide range of ages and intellectual level of the children", who due to their numbers and lack of staff usually had to be taught together.⁶⁵ Many of the children had also not attended school regularly since the outbreak of the war and thus struggled adapting to the discipline and rigid schedule that dictated life in the colonies.⁶⁶ In addition, BCC inspectors noted that the young *señoritas* had issues exerting control and authority over older boys, as they were sometimes only a few years apart in age.⁶⁷ The inexperience of many of the *maestras* and the tumultuous nature of their situation meant that some children also complained that they never received any lessons at all, though they are in the minority.⁶⁸ A few weeks into their stay, Bilbao fell to the rebels and the *maestras* were virtually left to their own devices, cut off from the guidance of the Departamento de Cultura, whose experts in education had mostly fled to Paris and

⁶³ Nerea Azurmendi, "Ocho Días Para Acoger a 4.000 Niños Vascos," *El Correo*, May 7, 2017. <https://www.elcorreo.com/bizkaia/sociedad/201705/07/ocho-dias-para-acoger-20170505173326.html>.

⁶⁴ Benjamin, *Recuerdos*, 220.

⁶⁵ "Bulletin No.2", BCC, August, 1938, 10, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

⁶⁶ Gregorio Arrien, "Emakumes y Andereños," *Deia*, February 2, 2013. <https://www.deia.eus/actualidad/historias-de-los-vascos/2013/03/02/emakumes-andereños/281907.html>.

⁶⁷ "Basque Refugee Children, St. Mary's School, North Hyde, Southall, Middlesex," MH 57/323, TNA.

⁶⁸ Benjamin, *Recuerdos*, 74.

Barcelona.⁶⁹ Their lines of communication were volatile at best. The fact that the *maestras* were also in charge of religious education led to conflicts, most commonly when staunchly Catholic women were placed in colonies that mainly consisted of children from far-left, anticlerical families.⁷⁰ As difficult as it was for the “Spanish woman teachers” to actually teach, they did manage to do it, and the children “profited” from a level of education that was not attainable to them in war-torn Spain.⁷¹ The chief complaint of the *señoritas* was something else entirely. In the words of one *maestra*, María Learreta: “As you know, I was sent to this home in order to teach – at least that is what I was told – but I am being everything except a teacher”.⁷²

Learreta continues that she is in charge of “doing the laundry, repairs, and ironing of forty children, and supervising during mealtimes and helping out in the kitchen, as well as other jobs”.⁷³ The majority of the labour performed by the *señoritas* was domestic labour to maintain the colony and children. The fundraising film *Children of Spain* by John Brunney illustrates the daily lives of the Basque children at the Cambridge colonies during the summer of 1938, and it shows women sweeping, scrubbing floors, making beds, and preparing meals – performing more domestic labour than anything else.⁷⁴ It was treated as an extension of their child-minding duties, and *señoritas* were “*expected* to wash their clothing, attend to their bathing and to the tidiness of their bedding etc” of the children in their care, whose numbers could vary anywhere from ten to forty.⁷⁵ The “etc” is quite expansive and includes all tasks needed to ensure acceptable living conditions for the children, such as laundry, cleaning, sewing, mending, tidying, washing up and sometimes cooking. Usually colonies employed local cooks, but it was not uncommon for a *señorita* to be in charge of the kitchen, even if she was not trained in it. The Faringdon colony, for example, suffered from poor quality food because a *señorita* had been assigned to the kitchens despite not being a cook.⁷⁶ Some expressed their

⁶⁹ Arrien, “Emakumes”.

⁷⁰ Arrien, *Salvad*, 324.

⁷¹ “Bulletin No.2”, 9.

⁷² Arrien, *Salvad*, 339. Original text: “Ud. sabe que a mí me enviaron a esta casa en calidad de maestra, al menos a mí así me dijeron; pero menos maestra estoy siendo todo”.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 399-40. Original text: “yo soy la que me preocupo del lavado de la ropa, compostura y planchado de 40 chicos, servicio de comedor y ayuda en la cocina y otros menesteres”.

⁷⁴ John Brunney, “Children of Spain,” 1937. <https://youtu.be/jYiiGGnhWE>.

⁷⁵ “Mr Roundell. Basque Refugee Children,” MH 57/323, TNA. Emphasis mine.

⁷⁶ “Minutes,” BCC, November 8, 1938, 2, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

gratitude by volunteering to assist in the housework, but in the majority of cases it does not appear to have been a voluntary activity on behalf of the *señoritas*.⁷⁷ The domestic workload of each *señorita* depended on the colony she was at and its staff availability, as some colonies had sufficient funds to hire a “daily woman” or maid, but each of them were clearly expected to perform some kind of housework.⁷⁸

As demonstrated by María Learreta’s remarks, this distribution of labour was not acceptable to many – especially the *maestras*, who felt that the burden of domestic tasks infringed on their primary purpose of teaching. The BCC’s Minutes from a meeting on July 20th, 1937 stated that they were having issues with the *señoritas* co-operating because their “duties were difficult to define and they were not in all cases willing to co-operate”.⁷⁹ The duties were intentionally kept vague from the very beginning of the expedition. The document issued by *Asistencia Social* detailing the working conditions for the *auxiliares* did not specify the length of their workday or the tasks they were expected to perform, but left this to be determined by the NJC.⁸⁰ The women were expected to follow the Committee’s orders with the “utmost zeal and neatness”.⁸¹ They may not have done that, but BCC inspectors were nevertheless satisfied with the conditions at most colonies, and those that did raise concern mainly had issues unrelated to domestic labour, like lack of lavatories, overcrowded dormitories, or faulty insulation.

The *señoritas*’ duty of care to the children, however, was not limited to just ensuring their educational and physical well-being, but also looking after the children’s emotional health. As outlined in the contract presented to the women leaving for the French expeditions, they were to act “as mothers, sorting out the problems of the children, relieving their doubts and helping them at any moment and whenever they may need it, under any circumstances”.⁸² It stands to reason that the women sent to Britain received similar instructions. The document stresses that the children are left without their families’ love and care and it is a *señorita*’s duty to

⁷⁷ “Arrangements for Basque Children. Nazareth House, Southampton,” MH 57/323, TNA.

⁷⁸ “Rusthall Beacon,” MH57/323, TNA.

⁷⁹ “Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting,” BCC, July 20, 1937, 4, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

⁸⁰ Arrien, *Salvad*, 139.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* Original text: “con el mayor celo y pulcritud”.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 138. Original text: “Deben officiar, en resumen, de madres resolviendo las dudas de los escolares, aliviando sus preocupaciones y ayudándoles en todo momento y en cuanto necesiten en cualquier circunstancia”.

provide a substitute for that love while they are abroad.⁸³ The women were tasked with *loving* the children, not just caring for them. Some took this parental role very seriously, like the *señorita* in charge of twenty girls at the Training College colony in Southampton, who was the biological mother of three of the girls, but “constituted herself mother to the whole group”.⁸⁴ The women who explicitly asserted themselves as “mothers” to the children were in the minority, but many expressed strong feelings of affection for their children in correspondence.⁸⁵ Besides being a stand-in for their parents, the *señoritas* served as the actual link and sometimes mediator between the children and their parents or the Basque government.⁸⁶ They helped the children write and deliver letters, and it was they who received news and updates from the civil war.⁸⁷

Their parental role subjected the women to what Gregorio Arrien calls “a labour of constant vigilance”, wherein they had to tend to children night and day, with no designated time off.⁸⁸ None of the documents examined even indicated that the *señoritas* had a right to time off. The women who worked in well-staffed and well-funded colonies, or in convents, might have had greater chances at free time, but clearly it was not a major concern. Their continual labour evidently paid off. The majority of the children remember their time in Britain fondly, describing their colony as “a really happy house”, with women “full of affection who took us and cared for us with all motherly [love] doing their utmost to help us forget by degrees the tragedies which we had to suffer”.⁸⁹ M. Isabel Gejo-Santo’s study of the Cambridge hostels credits the *señoritas* “C”, “E”, and “M” for the recovery of the children’s wellbeing, making it into one of the BCC’s “model” colonies.⁹⁰ The success of the Cambridge colonies bolstered the respectability and charitable appearance of the BCC, which was vital for securing funds.

Financial insecurity and the need to fundraise were present themes throughout the entirety of the children’s stay in the UK, meaning that the *señoritas*

⁸³ Arrien, *Salvad*, 138.

⁸⁴ “The Training College, The Avenue, Southampton,” MH 57/323, TNA.

⁸⁵ Arrien, *Salvad*, 278.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 322.

⁸⁷ Testimony of Manuel Rodriguez Urbano, “Telling Their Stories”, UoS.

⁸⁸ Arrien, *Salvad*, 320-1.

⁸⁹ Testimony of Felipe, “Telling Their Stories”, UoS.

⁹⁰ Gejo-Santos, “Leah Manning”, 589.

not only had to worry about the children, but also about the finances. If funds dried up and colonies had to close, they could face repatriation. This problem stemmed from the British government's strict insistence that the Basque expedition be entirely self-sufficient. In his letter to Prime Minister Baldwin on May 6th, 1937, Wilfrid Roberts expressed doubt that "voluntary action [alone] cannot possibly meet a problem of this magnitude" and pleaded for the British government to take financial responsibility of the children, following the example set by the French – to no avail.⁹¹ The task of fundraising was by no means left to only the *señoritas*, but was shared by the British staff members of colonies, the local committees, and the NJC. However, the activity that proved to generate the most income – organising concerts at which the Basque children performed – was heavily reliant on the labour of the *maestras* and *auxiliares*. Only they had sufficient knowledge in Basque culture to instruct the children and draw up a repertoire that would attract spectators. Their efforts began within a few days of their arrival.⁹² As recalled by one of the children, the *señoritas* taught them folk dancing and formed dance groups which then went on tour around the country.⁹³ The women also sometimes performed themselves. A newspaper clipping about a performance at the Worthing colony that raised six guineas states that the ladies who performed were "Senorita Velasco, who gave a piano recital of Spanish music, and Senorita Garmendia, soloist".⁹⁴ During their stay, the BCC also produced a record in June 1937 which featured a choir of forty children and ten *señoritas* whose proceeds helped fund the colonies.⁹⁵ The minutes of a Committee meeting on October 6th, 1938 also note that the "Señoritas Carmona and Rosita" were at the time coaching children in singing and dancing in order to make a song book that would be sold to increase funds.⁹⁶

The importance of these fund-raising events cannot be underestimated. Although they were highly valued for keeping the children in touch with their culture whilst abroad, they were also the most lucrative source of income for the BCC. An

⁹¹ Letter from Wilfrid Roberts to Stanley Baldwin, May 6, 1937, 2-3, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

⁹² Gejo-Santos, "Leah Manning," 553.

⁹³ Testimony of Rafael Leandro Flores, "Telling Their Stories", UoS.

⁹⁴ "The Scrapbook," Marx Memorial Library, 100. <https://www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk/project/basque-children-refugee-album/scrapbook#overlay-context=project/basque-children-refugee-album/child-refugees-spanish-civil-war-scrapbook-tells-story>.

⁹⁵ Gejo-Santos, "Leah Manning," 557.

⁹⁶ "Minutes of A Meeting of the Administrative Sub-Committees," BCC, October 6, 1938, 4, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

article by the *Daily Telegraph* from September 1st, 1938 details how the concert held by the children of the Whetherstead Park colony helped raise £300 – enough money to keep the colony from closing and the children from being repatriated.⁹⁷ It is also important to note that the majority of the performances were given by girls, even when they were mixed colonies. The *Children of Spain* film shows a “National Dance” recital wherein only girls dance, despite the Cambridge colonies being mixed-sex.⁹⁸ The majority of Basque national dances are performed by men and women, and the male *aurreku* performance (wherein a man dances solo executing very high kicks) is arguably the most popular Basque dance. This raises the important issue that oftentimes the *señoritas* were assisted in their labour by the older refugee girls, blurring the line between these two categories.

Señoritas recruited the older girls (“older” meaning above the age of twelve) to assist in and lighten their workload, especially with housework. Girls were made to perform domestic labour under the rationale that it was “useful training, helps to keep them busy, [and] gives them self-respect”.⁹⁹ They helped in the kitchens with the preparation of meals.¹⁰⁰ The *Children of Spain* film also shows girls ironing, cleaning windows, and doing laundry. The majority of the reports made by BCC inspectors of the colonies reference girls helping out with housework in some form or another as a way of noting that things were going well. As easy as it was to occupy older girls through domestic duties, many lamented that it was difficult to provide the older boys with similarly “suitable occupations and recreations”.¹⁰¹ Clearly, housework was not a “suitable” occupation for them. Even if colony staff had deemed it so, many were surprised by the boys’ extreme hostility in regards to housework. Judging by the reports of the colonies, boys only performed housework regularly when they were in single-sex colonies.¹⁰² At the Elm Trees colony, the boys could only be moved to wash floors after it was sold to them as “man’s new prerogative”.¹⁰³ As put by one of the boys to a reporter at the *Hull Daily Mail*, “Washing on the line - sign of a good girl. We make our mark on the floor”.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁷ “Daily Telegraph,” MH 57/323, TNA.

⁹⁸ Brunney, “Children of Spain,” 9:13.

⁹⁹ “Refugees in England: A Basque Children’s Camp in Berkshire,” *The Bystander*, August 24, 1938, 292.

¹⁰⁰ “Witney and District Gossip,” *Oxford Mail*, June 30, 1937, 3.

¹⁰¹ “Brixton Orphanage, 57, Barrington Road, Brixton,” MH 57/323, TNA.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ “No Trouble with Hull’s Basque Guests,” *Hull Daily Mail*, July 17, 1937, 4.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

The work expected of the older girls did not stop at domestic tasks, but extended into child-minding. One of the former children recalls that the older girls looked after the younger ones, helping them brush their hair and get dressed.¹⁰⁵ At one point, there was even a girl of seventeen in charge of the forty children at Aston together with one other *señorita*.¹⁰⁶ The majority of the older children were girls because one of the stipulations given by the British government to the NJC for the arrival of the Basque refugees was that “in the case of the older children the preference, for obvious reasons, should be given to girls”.¹⁰⁷ One of the justifications for this was that it would protect girls should the “Moors”, i.e. the Army of Africa, enter Bilbao, who were racially stereotyped as sexual predators likely to harm teenage girls.¹⁰⁸ Both Leah Manning and the Duchess of Atholl stressed this line of argument to increase the upper age limit for the children from twelve to fifteen. It is more likely, however, that older girls were preferred due to their potential as a source of free labour.

The *señoritas*, however, also provided free labour, as there were a multitude of issues in regards to their payment that resulted in delays, poor payment, or no payment at all. In the allocation of the limited funds, the *señoritas*' wages were not the top priority, even though the Department of Culture assured the *maestras* that they would continue to be paid their normal salary while attending to the children in Great Britain, and the *auxiliares* were promised a monthly wage of 250 francs.¹⁰⁹ The Basque government struggled – and eventually failed – to make good on those promises. Payment of wages occurred sporadically, whenever there were sufficient funds or the complaints of the *señoritas* had stacked up high enough on the desk of Miguel Uranga, the representative of *Asistencia Social* in England.¹¹⁰ There was also great confusion over whether the money was to be paid to them in pounds or francs.¹¹¹ The *señoritas* wrote numerous letters to the Basque delegation in London inquiring about their salaries; one of them, written by the staff of the Hexham colony reads “we have no money and no way of earning any; we need winter clothes and to

¹⁰⁵ Arrien, *Salvad*, 256.

¹⁰⁶ “Basque Children at Aston”, *Witney Gazette*, June 25, 1937, 3.

¹⁰⁷ “Basque Children,” 1937, HO 213/288, TNA.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁹ Arrien, *Salvad*, 139-40.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, 329.

¹¹¹ Gejo-Santos, “Leah Manning,” 588.

replace many things that have been damaged during the five months we have been in England".¹¹² They received their first payment in October, and it was not paid to them by the Basque government, but by the priest Pedro Atutxa who had travelled with them, out of his own personal funds.¹¹³

In any case, their earnings were meagre. The Duchess of Atholl described it as "only a nominal salary".¹¹⁴ This also caused the BCC and local committees to have trouble recruiting "an adequate staff of Spanish-speaking competent persons" since there were not many willing to provide labour "voluntarily or at very small salaries".¹¹⁵ Clearly the life of a *señorita* did not have great appeal. In his study of the Basque children's exile to Great Britain, Gregorio Arrien notes that the funds allocated by the Department of Culture's English outpost to the payment of the *maestras* and the priests totalled only 5 298.60 francs a month, a remarkably small fraction of the department's total budget.¹¹⁶ The BCC had to start supplementing the *señoritas'* pay with weekly "pocket money" worth half a crown shortly after their arrival since the Nationalist victory over Bilbao rendered the Basque government's currency valueless.¹¹⁷ It is unclear when exactly the women stopped receiving wages from the Basque government altogether, but eventually their only remuneration was the BCC's "pocket money".¹¹⁸ In the BCC reports on the different colonies, the staff were usually divided into "paid" and "voluntary" sections, and the "Spanish woman teachers" featured almost exclusively in the latter.¹¹⁹ The issue of pay was one that plagued every *señorita*. Their extensive and tiresome workload was mostly going unrewarded when steady pay had been promised to them, and it caused – in the words of Arrien – "un lío gordo" (literally: a fat mess).¹²⁰ They continued to work despite their grievances, preventing the expedition from falling apart.

Despite the myriad of hardships they suffered, the *señoritas'* assessment of colony life was mostly positive. Especially at the start, the majority were content with

¹¹² Arrien, *Salvad*, 329. Original text: "no tenemos dinero y no podemos ganarlo; necesitamos ropa de invierno y muchísimas cosas que se nos han estropeado en los cinco meses de permanencia en Inglaterra".

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Atholl, "Basque Children," 13.

¹¹⁵ "Scrapbook," Marx Memorial Library, 106.

¹¹⁶ Arrien, *Salvad*, 494.

¹¹⁷ Legarreta, *Guernica Generation*, 126-7.

¹¹⁸ Azurmendi, "Ocho Días".

¹¹⁹ MH57/323, TNA.

¹²⁰ Arrien, *Salvad*, 331.

their living situations in the colonies and much preferred it to the camp in Eastleigh, whose hasty erection had given rise to a variety of issues.¹²¹ Not all colony reports made by the BCC included the opinions of the Spanish women, but when they did, they were generally pleased and described the *señoritas* as being grateful for their arrangements.¹²² Recalling her mother's experiences as a *señorita*, Carmen Kilner (now president of the Basque Children's Association) states that although working in the colonies was tough, the *maestras* were very much aware that life would not have been better for them as government employees back home.¹²³ British press interviews conducted shortly after their arrival portray the women as relieved to be away from the violent conflict, and happy to have access to things like white bread and butter that were hard to come by back home.¹²⁴ In their letters, they also express great fondness for the children. The *maestra* Teresa Larrucea Bustinza at the Carlisle colony regularly wrote about her twenty-five children to her superiors, praising them for being so studious and well-behaved.¹²⁵ Maria Teresa Mayoral wrote that she loved the children in her care "with all [her] heart", but she also lamented feeling too tired to keep working.¹²⁶

The feeling of being overworked and in need of a break also features heavily in the accounts of the *señoritas*. In July 1938, the Duchess of Atholl even published an insert in *The Scotsman* asking if "there are any kind people living in the country or by the sea who would be willing to give one or two of them a holiday in their own homes?".¹²⁷ She writes that these women are "now tired out [...] and sadly in need of a holiday".¹²⁸ It is unclear whether anything ever came from it. The *señoritas* relied heavily on interpreters, as almost none spoke English, and struggled to find a life outside of their work in the colonies. They were mostly well-received by local communities, who found their limited vocabulary of "'Pleese,' 'Thankeryou,' and 'O.K.'" amusing.¹²⁹ However, an incident from October 26th, 1937 shows that the *señoritas'* lack of familiarity with English laws and customs was a real issue. The

¹²¹ Arrien, *Salvad*, 319.

¹²² "St Joseph's Missionary College, Honiton, Devon," MH 57/323, TNA.

¹²³ Azurmendi, "Ocho Días".

¹²⁴ Bull, "Heart of Humanity".

¹²⁵ Gregorio Arrien, "Las Últimas Andereños del Exilio Inglés," *Euskalkultura*, July 10, 2018.

<https://euskalkultura.eus/espanol/blogs/pulsando-la-memoria/las-ultimas-andereños-del-exilio-ingles>.

¹²⁶ Arrien, *Salvad*, 278.

¹²⁷ Atholl, "Basque Children", 13.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ "Basque Refugees Greet New Home with Shouts of 'viva!'," *Derby Daily Telegraph*, June 18, 1937, 9.

Daily Mirror reported that while on a walk with her children, a *señorita* unknowingly trespassed onto a man's property, and when she could not understand his complaint, he assaulted her with a stick.¹³⁰ That is an extreme case and seems to be the only violent assault on a *señorita* that took place, but it goes to show that the different women had different experiences in the UK. It is important to note, though, that there is not one *señorita* in surviving records that expressed regret about joining the expedition.

THANKLESS WORK

Having listed and explored the various forms of labour provided by the *señoritas* and their importance to the success of the Basque expedition, this section argues that their contributions have hitherto been undervalued. Both contemporaries and historians have failed to appreciate just how important the *señoritas* were to the expedition, giving a disproportionate amount of publicity to others – mostly British men – instead. This sheds light on a wider issue, namely that women's labour, specifically that related to childminding and housekeeping, is still not recognised as “real” labour by many labour historians.

The labour performed by the *señoritas*, although surely appreciated, was periodically undervalued by their contemporaries. They did not receive the same level of praise in the public eye as their British counterparts despite being absolutely essential to the undertaking. The closest they got in the ways of public appreciation was the Duchess of Atholl stating that “no praise can be too high for what they have done”.¹³¹ Those who received the greatest attention and were credited for the mission's success were mostly already public figures. When talking about who brought the Basque children over and who kept them in Britain, the names most commonly mentioned by newspapers are Leah Manning, the Duchess of Atholl, Wilfrid Roberts, Eleanor Rathbone, and Janet Campbell. These were all politically active and well-connected people or famous philanthropists, who were able to create great visibility by publicizing their visits to the children or writing letters to the press

¹³⁰ *Daily Mirror*, MH 57/323, TNA.

¹³¹ Atholl, “Basque Children,” 13.

on behalf of the cause.¹³² Leah Manning especially was credited time and time again as the “mother” of the four thousand children, or “the real personality behind the whole thing”, despite not being overly involved with the cause once the children had been brought over.¹³³ It is perhaps understandable that British media should focus their attention on already well-known local figures that readers would recognise, but even when it delved into the unknown, everyday people working with the children, British men received a disproportionate amount of publicity. They were praised for being teachers, instructors, directors, and benefactors in ways that women were not.¹³⁴ When women were the focus of attention, it was almost always British women. For example, an article in the *Evening Telegraph* about the newly established colony in Montrose talked mostly about the matron, Miss M. Wilson, only briefly mentioning the 24 children and the “two Basque adults”.¹³⁵

This is indicative of a wider pattern. The *señoritas* were hardly ever recorded by name, instead they were labelled “Spanish woman teachers”, “Senoritas”, or “Basque adults”. The *Wessex News* ran an article on the Moorhill colony, stating that “the home itself is very effectively run by Miss F.E. Vessey (Matron) and Miss E. Lewis” who are “assisted by Spanish women teachers”.¹³⁶ The girls at the Bristol colony lived “under the care of Miss Layton” and “the Spanish senorita”.¹³⁷ The *señoritas* received similar treatment in BCC records. A report on the Baydon Hole Farm colony, for example, lists the staff as Major Tompkins, Mrs. Allsebrook, Miss Neame, Miss Jackson, Mr Hoffler, and “two Spanish women”.¹³⁸ Most *señoritas* were only named publicly in articles about them marrying British locals. The names of Maria Astiazarain, Louise Urquijo Esteban, and Honora Izipzua Idalgo’s are not mentioned again outside of their betrothal stories.¹³⁹ The appeal the Duchess of Atholl made on their behalf in *The Scotsman* in July 1938 is the only surviving piece of public media whose sole focus is the *señoritas*. After working for over a year

¹³² “Scrapbook,” Marx Memorial Library, 16, 90.

¹³³ Bull, “Heart of Humanity”.

¹³⁴ Brunney, “Children of Spain,” 2:42; Bull, “Heart of Humanity”; “Basque Children at Montrose,” *Evening Telegraph*, September 17, 1937, 6.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹³⁶ L. Witt, “Basque Children,” *Wessex News* 3, no.17, March 8, 1938, 1.

¹³⁷ “Basque Children Arrive in Bristol,” *Western Daily Press*, July 10, 1937, 9.

¹³⁸ “Baydon Hole Farm,” MH57/323, TNA.

¹³⁹ “Refugee Bride for Briton,” *Evening Telegraph*, July 24, 1939, 9; “Refugees Camp Romance: Spanish Teacher Marries Radio Engineer,” *Gloucestershire Echo*, September 17, 1937, 1; “Basque Refugee Hostel Romance,” *Evening Telegraph*, May 17, 1938, 3.

“under very difficult conditions”, the women are “tired out with the work and responsibility” and their need for a holiday is what prompted the Duchess to reach out to the public.¹⁴⁰ It is understandable that *British* media would focus on the contributions *British* people made to the cause, but what resulted was a gross underrepresentation and underappreciation for the work done by the *señoritas*.

This underrepresentation has also been replicated by historians, specifically British historians. Although the scholarship on the Aid Spain movement and women’s involvement in it is extensive and continues to grow, the Basque expedition remains quite a niche aspect of it. It is mentioned in passing as an “achievement”, a “practical result” of the NJC’s work during the civil war, and rarely given the attention it deserves.¹⁴¹ The few papers that do devote themselves to the topic either focus on the children or on the British response to them, leaving little room for the *señoritas*. They continue to be nameless. In addition to that, historians tend to name men more than women. In his description of the Pampisford colony, Mike Levy is able to identify the children’s English teacher as Eric Hawkins, but refers to the other teachers only as “the three ‘senoritas’”.¹⁴² Peter Anderson in his study of the push for the evacuation and later repatriation of the children refers to Wilfrid Roberts as the “heart and soul of the BCC”, totally ignoring the important contributions done by women (Spanish or British) in keeping the children from being repatriated.¹⁴³ In his study of Welsh colonies, Hywel Davies focuses very narrowly on the efforts of the (all-male) trade unions and does not sufficiently examine the contributions of women. This can also be seen in Spanish historiography, albeit to a lesser degree. Gregorio Arrien, for instance, is able to give detailed descriptions of the lives of every priest and doctor accompanying the expedition, but cannot do the same for the *señoritas* or the nurses that boarded the Habana.¹⁴⁴ Like others, he does not problematize this lack of information regarding the *señoritas*.

Even those historians that do acknowledge that women played a primary role in the maintenance of the Basque children tend to value the contributions of British women over those of Spanish women. British women occupied higher positions than

¹⁴⁰ Atholl, “Basque Children,” 13.

¹⁴¹ Fyrth, “Aid Spain Movement,” 156.

¹⁴² Levy, *Children Out!*, 33.

¹⁴³ Anderson, “The Struggle,” 306.

¹⁴⁴ Arrien, *Salvad*, 142-45, 149.

the *señoritas* at the colonies, working as “matrons”, “wardens” or “directors”, and as such enjoyed greater visibility. There is only one example of a colony run by a *señorita*, and that was due to lack of available British staff.¹⁴⁵ Their visibility has been conflated with these women playing a greater role or being of more importance to the mission. Levy credits Leah Manning as being “in charge” of the 29 children at Pampisford, when she did not live at the colony and had the help of 3 *señoritas*, an unusually high number for so few children.¹⁴⁶ Both Angela Jackson and M. Isabel Gejo-Santos praise Frida Stewart for her abilities to organise fundraising concerts for the Basque children, without acknowledging that *señoritas* did this as well, while being significantly less well-connected than Stewart.¹⁴⁷ The Havens East heritage project by the Anglia Ruskin University and The National Lottery aims to reconstruct the lives of the children at the Cambridge and Norfolk colonies, but its curators only name Jessie Stewart and Poppy Vulliamy as “rescuers” of the refugees despite showcasing footage that clearly captures other women working at the colonies.¹⁴⁸ The aim here is not to critique the legitimate historical undertaking of exploring and assessing the contributions made by the British public, specifically women, to the success of the Basque expedition. By virtue of their location, the majority of people who helped these children *were* British, and without their contributions of labour, money, and goodwill, the expedition would never have reached the level of success that it did. As a project that could count on no governmental assistance, the Basque expedition relied on the British public. However, more often than not, historians have framed their works on British contributions in a way that implies that these are the only contributions that mattered in sustaining the children. It advances the incorrect, but very heroic and alluring, narrative that the British people alone saved these Basque children.

This narrative leaves no space for the *señoritas*. Their absence in British historiography means that the risk at which these women put themselves by choosing to volunteer for the expedition has gone virtually unexplored. For one, the *señoritas* risked the punishment of Francoists. Although historians have explored the

¹⁴⁵ “Basque Children at Aston,” 3.

¹⁴⁶ Levy, *Children Out!*, 33.

¹⁴⁷ Angela Jackson, *British Women and the Spanish Civil War* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2003), 66-7; Gejo-Santos, “De Leah Manning,” 532.

¹⁴⁸ “The Cambridge Hostels”, “Poppy”, Havens East.

repatriation of the children and the less-than-warm welcome they received upon returning to a nationalist country, the fact that this was also true for the *señoritas* is left unsaid. Nationalist officials had little sympathy for either.¹⁴⁹ While the children were disliked for being the children of supposed Republican sympathisers, the *señoritas* were presumed to *be* Republican sympathisers who had embarked on a political mission to turn the children into “rabid little communists” whilst abroad.¹⁵⁰ Upon her return to Spain in April 1938, Maria Luisa Fuentes was interrogated by police who asked whether she worked “for the reds”.¹⁵¹ There was wide-spread fear among the *señoritas* about returning home and the kinds of reprisals that might await them.¹⁵² They had no guarantees from the Franco regime that they would not face retribution for their participation in the expeditions which the rebels had deemed unnecessary Republican propaganda.¹⁵³ BCC records include no information on the kind of treatment the children and *señoritas* received upon return as the Francoist authorities did not permit BCC delegates to stay long or to conduct investigations.¹⁵⁴ One of the priests on the expedition, Father Gabana, assured the BCC that “if any of those girls were sent back to Northern Spain they would be arrested on arrival”.¹⁵⁵ A few weeks later, he believed they would be “imprisoned or shot”.¹⁵⁶ As a result, the *señoritas* repatriated at a much slower pace than the children. As of May 1939, just under a third of the children were left in the UK, but 122, more than half, of the *señoritas* were still left.¹⁵⁷ Of those 122 only fourteen had expressed a recent desire to return to Spain.¹⁵⁸ Further complicating the matter of returning was that in July 1939, the Franco regime decreed that all *señoritas* wishing to enter Spain needed a Franco passport, resulting in twenty-three *señoritas* being turned away at the border.¹⁵⁹ In order to obtain that passport, the *señoritas* required “from some personal friend of standing in Spain a guarantee of their nationalist sympathies and innocence under the ‘Law of Responsibilities’”.¹⁶⁰

¹⁴⁹ Kate Thornycroft, “Report on the Journey to Hendaye,” February 3, 1938, 2. <https://www.basquechildren.org/-/docs/lettersetc/thornycroftletter1>

¹⁵⁰ Anderson, “Struggle,” 314.

¹⁵¹ Davies and Bell, *Fleeing Franco*, 127-8.

¹⁵² Arrien, *Salvad*, 342.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ “Minutes of Joint Meeting,” BCC, November 23, 1937, 2, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

¹⁵⁵ “Minutes of the Executive Committee,” BCC, September 20, 1937, 3-4, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

¹⁵⁶ “Report of Repatriation Committee,” BCC, October 8, 1937, 7, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

¹⁵⁷ “Report on Repatriation,” BCC, May 1939, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹ “Meeting,” BCC, July 29, 1939, 3, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

Unable – or unwilling – to return to Nationalist Spain, many *señoritas* sought to emigrate. BCC records stressed time and time again that of the hundred-odd women left in Britain in 1939, many “[would] be unable to return to Spain”.¹⁶¹ As a result, the Committee urged the women to either emigrate or find employment in Britain, although they could only work in nursing or as domestic workers.¹⁶² Many chose emigration, and BCC records include notes on *señoritas* leaving to France, Mexico, Cuba, and the United States.¹⁶³ The Basque government was not supportive of these emigration schemes and urged *señoritas* to return home, assuring them that they could return to Spain “and live there relatively well”.¹⁶⁴ There is no exact data available on how many *señoritas* stayed in Britain, returned to Spain, or went elsewhere. The choice to assist these children abroad therefore branded the *señoritas* as Republican sympathisers and complicated, or even prohibited, their return home.

The historiography has failed to capture not only how dangerous it was for these women to join a mission planned by Republicans and protested by the rebels, but also the extreme emotional strain they endured whilst abroad. For one, many *señoritas* arrived already traumatised from the events they had witnessed back in the Basque country. Maria Cruz Ternandez, for example, was at the bombing of Gernika, which she described in vivid detail to a reporter.¹⁶⁵ *Señorita* C from the Cambridge colony had to receive medical treatment for her post-traumatic stress disorder that she developed after experiencing aerial bombardments in Madrid.¹⁶⁶ The *señoritas* also suffered greatly being away from their families, like *Señorita* González, who “had heard no news of her family since she left Spain, and her brother had been missing for weeks”.¹⁶⁷ Some had also recently lost loved ones in the war.¹⁶⁸ When Bilbao fell on June 18th, 1937, and the news reached the camp at Eastleigh, the *señoritas* joined the children in “crying right through the night” and breaking down in “complete hysteria”.¹⁶⁹ Whilst dealing with their own trauma, the

¹⁶¹ “Circular,” NJC, 1939, 10, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

¹⁶² “Minutes,” BCC, October 6, 1938, 4, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

¹⁶³ “Minutes,” BCC, June 22, 1939, 4, Modern Records Centre, UoW; “Minutes,” BCC, October 6, 1938, 4; Gejo-Santos, “Leah Manning,” 590.

¹⁶⁴ Arrien, *Salvad*, 609. Original text: “y vivir allí relativamente bien”.

¹⁶⁵ “Basque Refugees Greet New Home”, 9.

¹⁶⁶ Gejo-Santos, “Leah Manning,” 590.

¹⁶⁷ “Witney and District Gossip,” 3.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ Legarreta, *Guernica Generation*, 115.

señoritas had to look after equally traumatised children. Many of the *auxiliares* had no background in childcare, but were nurses or dressmakers or farmers, further complicating their labour.¹⁷⁰

The *señoritas* suffered from feelings of isolation and homesickness whilst abroad. The majority of them spoke no English and relied heavily on interpreters which were notoriously scarce. In the appeal made by the Duchess of Atholl, she stressed that these women “have nowhere to go” for a holiday, indicating that the *señoritas* struggled to form bonds or socialise outside of the Basque expedition.¹⁷¹ Not to mention that some parts of the British public – those on the right and Francoist sympathisers – were opposed to the Basque’s presence and circulated “hostile rumours”, branding the children and their adult companions as disruptive, violent, radical leftists.¹⁷² Opponents to the expedition began campaigning for the children’s repatriation as soon as June 1937, after the rebels took Bilbao.

The *señoritas* were also burdened by feelings of “*destierro*”, which translates to exile or banishment. The Gabarain sisters, two *auxiliares*, wrote in their letters that “we cry many, many days, because the loneliness and sadness we feel leave us without the strength to bear this life of *destierro*”.¹⁷³ In his study of the *señoritas*’ correspondence, Arrien notes that the women often wrote about being pained because they were so far from their homes and their loved ones.¹⁷⁴ Another stressor in their lives was the uncertainty of their position. As the repatriation of the children began in late 1937, the need for the *señoritas* lessened. They complained to the BCC that this made them “anxious and unsettled”.¹⁷⁵ Rosario Esnarrizaga and Maria J. Asla wrote to Father Gabana, saying that they had “nobody to advise [them]” and did not know what to do.¹⁷⁶ In October 1938, the Home Office had agreed to allow *señoritas* to take up domestic posts, but finding employment outside of the colonies

¹⁷⁰ “Refugees Camp Romance,” 1.

¹⁷¹ Atholl, “Basque Children,” 13.

¹⁷² “A Defence of Basque Children’s Conduct,” *Tamworth Herald*, August 21, 1937, 9.

¹⁷³ Arrien, *Salvad*, 339. Original text: “Muchos, muchos días lloramos, pues es una soledad y una tristeza la que sentimos que no tenemos fuerzas para sobrellevar esta vida de *destierro*”.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 338-9.

¹⁷⁵ “Minutes of Administrative Sub-Committee,” BCC, February 28, 4, 1939, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

¹⁷⁶ Arrien, *Salvad*, 336. Original text: “sin nadie que nos aconseje”.

meant that they were no longer supported by the BCC and effectively on their own.¹⁷⁷

The silence of the *señoritas* in the historiography surrounding the Basque children's expedition is not surprising. It forms part of a wider pattern that labour historians have only recently begun to dismantle, namely that women's work – domestic work specifically – is often not treated as “real” work. It is not given the same weight as “productive” labour. Domestic labour forms part of subsistence production and is vital to human survival and prosperity in a capitalist society.¹⁷⁸ It is heavily informed by misogynistic gender ideology and to this day, women perform the vast majority of unpaid domestic and care work globally.¹⁷⁹ Of course raising funds and fighting the push to repatriate the children was important, but money and time had to be transformed into food, clothing, lessons, outings, routines, and more for them to help the children. That was the task of the *señoritas*. They transformed the resources at their disposal to enable the children to live better lives in Britain than they could in Spain. However, since domestic labour has long been regarded as a woman's “natural role”, she is seldom praised or acknowledged for it.¹⁸⁰

The devaluation and presumed “naturalness” of domestic labour and child care was a tool used by twentieth century contemporaries to subordinate women.¹⁸¹ This subordination continues in historical literature. Domestic labour does not fit the definition of “work” as used by traditional labour historians, who focus primarily on organized, industrial white male labour in the global north.¹⁸² Through such a lens, domestic labour is labelled “unproductive” (or at best only “reproductive”) and made insignificant to labour history.¹⁸³ However, in recent decades feminist labour historians have contested and redefined this traditional definition of work to include women's labour, whatever form it may take. They have been quite successful in

¹⁷⁷ “Minutes,” BCC, October 6, 1938, 4; Vincent Tewson, Letter to G.H. Jones, April 25, 1940, 2, Modern Records Centre, UoW.

¹⁷⁸ Eileen Boris, “Subsistence and Household Labour” in *Handbook Global History of Work*, eds. Karin Hofmeester and Marcel van der Linden (Wien: De Gruyter, 2017), 330.

¹⁷⁹ Susan Ferguson, “The Labour Lens,” in *Women and Work: Feminism, Labour, and Social Reproduction* (Pluto Press, 2020), 9.

¹⁸⁰ Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk, Silke Neunsinger, and Dirk Hoerder, “Domestic Workers of the World: Histories of Domestic Work as Global Labor History,” in *Towards a Global History of Domestic and Caregiving Workers* (Leiden, Brill: 2015), 6.

¹⁸¹ Boris, “Subsistence,” 339-40.

¹⁸² Nederveen et al, “Domestic Workers,” 2.

¹⁸³ *Ibid*, 4.

asserting that “household activities constitute work (as opposed to a divinely ordained duty)”.¹⁸⁴ Despite arriving in Britain as workers employed by the Basque government, the *señoritas*’ labour was (and is still) downplayed. Their contributions were not as worthy of praise and historical analysis as those of the priests, or Leah Manning, or Eric Hawkins, or the sisters Vulliamy. This dissertation has sought to remedy that and bolster the move towards a feminist labour history. A successful history of labour requires the inclusion of women’s work, much like how the success of the Basque children’s expedition hinged on the work of the *señoritas*.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the *señoritas* that accompanied the Basque children ashore on May 23, 1937, at Southampton have unfairly been relegated to the shadows of history. These 211 women volunteers boarded the *SS Habana* with nearly four thousand children seeking protection abroad from aerial bombardments and other horrors of war. Securing British permission for the expedition was difficult in the climate of non-intervention, and the public remained divided in its reception of the refugees. The expedition could draw on no government funds, meaning it relied on donations to function which caused much financial instability.

The majority of the *señoritas* were very young and inexperienced, the elder sisters or cousins or even mothers of some of the children, and many of them would work abroad for years despite initial beliefs that the expedition would only last a few months. Their orders were to care for the children according to the direction of the NJC – there were no limitations, no protections, no other specifications for their labour.¹⁸⁵ The *señoritas* worked as educators, entertainers, carers, domestic servants, seamstresses, fundraisers, choreographers, and performers, and provided much-needed emotional labour and familial intimacy to children traumatised by war. Their work was invaluable to the success of the Basque expedition, but it came at a high cost. The long work hours – rewarded only with little to no pay – and living in a foreign country deeply affected the women. Their decision to embark on the

¹⁸⁴ Ferguson, “Labour Lens,” 17.

¹⁸⁵ Arrien, *Salvad*, 139.

expedition painted them as Republican sympathisers in the eyes of the Francoist government and many did not return to Spain.

Works written on the Basque expedition so far have devoted insufficient attention to the *señoritas*' invaluable contributions. Instead, they tend to replicate the pattern already established by contemporaries which values the labour of men over that of women, and British contributions over Spanish contributions. This reflects a deeper issue in the study of history, particularly the history of labour, where domestic labour, because it is "not productive" and performed by women, is systematically undervalued. This tendency is rooted in misogynist gender ideology. Feminist historians have done much in recent decades to reverse and redress this injustice, but as the case of the Basque *señoritas* shows, there is still a lot of work to be done.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cover image: Picture of Moorhill House Colony, found at “Moorhill House Colony”, BasqueChildren.Org, <https://www.basquechildren.org/photo/set012-photo553>. Edited by author. The *señoritas* in question here are (from left to right) Eulalia Mateo Urteaga, Rita Gomez Matto, *señorita* Carmen, and *señorita* Maria.

Primary:

“Basque Children Evacuated to United Kingdom: Reception Arrangements; Visits to Refugee Camps.” MH 57/322. The National Archives, Kew, London.

“Basque Children Evacuated To United Kingdom: Visits To Homes And Camps.” MH 57/323. The National Archives, Kew, London.

“Basque Children in Britain.” Warwick Modern Records Centre, The University of Warwick.

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/mrc/archives_online/digital/scw/ninos/.

“Basque Children.” HO 213/287. The National Archives, Kew, London.

“Basque Children.” HO 213/288. The National Archives, Kew, London.

“Telling Their Stories.” Special Collections, University of Southampton.

<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/archives/resources/voices.page>.

“Unexploded Bombs - Precautions; Sleeping Car Services; Repatriation of Basque Children...”. AN 2/1093. The National Archives, Kew, London

Atholl, Katharine. *Searchlight on Spain*. London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1938.

Brunney, John. “Children of Spain.” 1937. <https://youtu.be/jYiGGhnhWE>.

Marx Memorial Library. “The Scrapbook.” <https://www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk/project/basque-children-refugee-album/scrapbook#overlay-context=project/basque-children-refugee-album/child-refugees-spanish-civil-war-scrapbook-tells-story>.

Thornycroft, Kate. “Report on the Journey to Hendaye.” February 3, 1938, 2.

<https://www.basquechildren.org/-/docs/lettersetc/thornycroftletter1>

Newspaper articles:

“A Defence of Basque Children’s Conduct.” *Tamworth Herald*, August 21, 1937.

“Basque Children Arrive in Bristol.” *Western Daily Press*, July 10, 1937.

“Basque Children at Aston.” *Witney Gazette*, June 25, 1937.

“Basque Children at Montrose.” *Evening Telegraph*, September 17, 1937.

"Basque Refugee Hostel Romance." *Evening Telegraph*, May 17, 1938.

"Basque Refugees Greet New Home with Shouts of "Viva!"." *Derby Daily Telegraph*, June 18, 1937.

"No Trouble with Hull's Basque Guests." *Hull Daily Mail*, July 17, 1937.

"Refugee Bride for Briton." *Evening Telegraph*, July 24, 1939.

"Refugees Camp Romance: Spanish Teacher Marries Radio Engineer." *Gloucestershire Echo*, September 17, 1937.

"Refugees in England: A Basque Children's Camp in Berkshire." *The Bystander*, August 24, 1938.

"Witney and District Gossip." *Oxford Mail*, June 30, 1937.

Atholl, Katharine. "The Basque Children." *The Scotsman*, July 5, 1938.

Secondary:

Anderson, Peter. "The Struggle over the Evacuation to the United Kingdom and Repatriation of Basque Refugee Children in the Spanish Civil War: Symbols and Souls." *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, no. 2 (2017): 297-318.

Arrien, Gregorio. "Emakumes y Andereños." *Deia*, February 2, 2013.

<https://www.deia.eus/actualidad/historias-de-los-vascos/2013/03/02/emakumes-anderenos/281907.html>.

Arrien, Gregorio. "Las Últimas Andereños del Exilio Inglés." *Euskalkultura*, July 10, 2018. <https://euskalkultura.eus/espanol/blogs/pulsando-la-memoria/las-ultimas-anderenos-del-exilio-ingles>.

Arrien, Gregorio. *Salvad a Los Niños! Historia del Exilio Vasco en Gran Bretaña*. Bilbao: Sabino Arana Fundazioa, 2014.

Azurmedi, Nerea. "Ocho Días Para Acoger A 4.000 Niños Vascos." *El Correo*, May 7, 2017. <https://www.elcorreo.com/bizkaia/sociedad/201705/07/ocho-dias-para-acoger-20170505173326.html>.

BasqueChildren.Org. "Passengers on the Habana: Listings of Niños, Maestras, Auxiliares y Sacerdotes." <https://www.basquechildren.org/reference/passengers>.

BasqueChildren.Org. "The Colonies: History of the Colonies." <https://www.basquechildren.org/colonies/history>.

Benjamin, Natalia. *Recuerdos: Basque Children Refugees in Great Britain*. Oxford: Mousehold Press, 2007.

Boris, Eileen. "Subsistence and Household Labour." In *Handbook Global History of Work*, edited by Karin Hofmeester and Marcel van der Linden, 329 – 345. Wien: De Gruyter, 2017.

Carballés, Alonso. "El Primer Exilio De Los Vascos, 1936-1939." *Historia Contemporánea* 35 (2007): 683-708

Davies, Hywel, and Chris Bell. *Fleeing Franco : How Wales Gave Shelter to Refugee Children from the Basque Country During the Spanish Civil War*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011.

Etxeberria Odriozola, A, M. Urrutikoetxea Aiartza, P. Gorrotxategi Gorrotxategi, and M. Zafra Anta, "Serie Nostalgias Pediátricas: La Labor De Los Pediatras En La Atención A Los Niños Evacuados Al Reino Unido En 1937." *Boletín de la Sociedad Vasco-Navarra de Pediatría* 51, no. 1 (2019): 12-16.

Ferguson, Susan. "The Labour Lens." In *Women and Work: Feminism, Labour, and Social Reproduction*, 9–20. Pluto Press, 2020. Fyrth, Jim. "The Aid Spain Movement in Britain, 1936–39." *History Workshop Journal* 35, no. 1 (1993): 153-164.

Gejo-Santos, M. Isabel. "De Leah Manning A Rosita García Ascot: Cantar Y Bailar Para Vivir. Redes Filantrópicas En Torno A Los Niños Vascos Refugiados En Gran Bretaña (1937-1939)." In *Liberales, Cultivadas y Activas: Redes Culturales, Lazos de Amistad*, edited by Adelaida Sagarra Gamazo, 532-624. Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2017.

Havens East. "The Journey." <https://havenseast.org/the-journey/>

Jackson, Angela. *British Women and the Spanish Civil War*. London: Taylor and Francis, 2003.

Jorge, David. *War in Spain: Appeasement, Collective Insecurity, and the Failure of European Democracies Against Fascism*. Milton: Taylor & Francis Group, 2020.

Legarreta, Dolores. *The Guernica Generation: Basque Refugee Children of the Spanish Civil War*. Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1984.

Levy, Mike. "The 'Red Duchess' – Katharine, Duchess of Atholl". BasqueChildren.Org. <https://www.basquechildren.org/-/docs/articles/atholl2019>.

Levy, Mike. *Get the Children Out! Unsung Heroes of the Kindertransport*. London: Lemon Soul Ltd, 2021.

Thomàs, Joan Maria Dresden, Ramon Arnabat i Mata, and Jon Irazabal Agirre. *Bombs over Biscay, Barcelona and Dresden (1937-1945): From the Spanish Civil War to the Second World War*. Vol. 44. Tarragona: Publicacions URV, 2019.

van Nederveen Meerkerk, Elise, Silke Neunsinger, and Dirk Hoerder. "Domestic Workers of the World: Histories of Domestic Work as Global Labor History." In

Towards a Global History of Domestic and Caregiving Workers, 1–24. Leiden: Brill, 2015.