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CHAPTER TWELVE

Gabriela Mistral, Virginia Woolf, and the Writing of the Spanish Civil War

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In April 1938, one year after the aerial bombardment of the Basque city of Guernica by the German Condor Legion (Luftwaffe), the Chilean writer, diplomat, and educationalist Gabriela Mistral (1889–1957)—Chile's cultural representative to the League of Nations and the first Latin American to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, in 1945—published a poetry collection entitled *Tala* under the imprint of Victoria Ocampo's Buenos Aires-based SUR publishing house. Utilizing a single Spanish noun (derived from the Spanish verb *talar*, meaning "logging" and "felling") for its apocalyptic title, the staccato *Tala* is linked to warfare and ecology, denoting the action of deforestation and military invasion, a destructive image intended as a sharp political statement against fascist violence in Spain. In the book's Epilogue, Mistral foregrounded her solidarity with the Spanish Republican cause by stating that proceeds raised from the sale of the book would be donated to Spanish child refugees.

In June 1938, two months after the publication of *Tala*, Virginia Woolf (1882–1941) published *Three Guineas*, a meticulously researched anti-war condemnation that complexly intertwines her feminist and pacifist agenda in order to expose the profound connections between fascism and the patriarchal subjugation of women. Written as a semi-fictional, epistolary response to the framing question: "How can women prevent war?," *Three Guineas* stands as one of Woolf's most politically engaged works that constitutes a multi-layered response to the Spanish Civil War (1936–39) and the rise of

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militarism in Europe, as well as a way of coping with the death of her nephew, Julian Bell, who died in the Spanish conflict supporting the left-wing Republican side. Woolf, too, donated the book as a gesture of solidarity to raise funds for the Refugee Society.[1]

Drawing on Jessica Berman's theorization of the term "transnationalism," which denotes not only a "cosmopolitan attitude" but also "a web of social and textual interrelationships linking modernisms worldwide," as well as an engagement with "the inadequacies of dominant categories of affiliation, especially regarding gender and nationality,"[2] this chapter investigates the linkages that arose out of Mistral's and Woolf's feminist pacifisms through their aesthetic and humanitarian responses to the Spanish Civil War. While I am mindful that the literary nexus between Mistral and Woolf is complicated by the different socio-economic backgrounds to which they belonged—Mistral's mixed race origins and poor upbringing in rural Chile contrast with Woolf's privileged upper-class milieu and Bloomsbury connections—I argue that the two women were part of what Gayle Rogers describes as the emergence of a "cosmopolitan feminist community" committed to fighting fascism through a "combination of writing and activism."[3] In so doing, the chapter follows the type of comparativist practices advanced by Mariano Siskind and Susan S. Lanser that privilege "comparative contiguity"[4] and "confluence over the more traditionally comparative project of influence,"[5] to focus on Mistral's and Woolf's pacifist resignification of the Spanish Civil War by tracing international pacifist networks through the globalities and conjunctures elicited by their respective engagements in the fight against fascism.

The chapter is also in dialogue with Mistralian scholarship, particularly since over the last two decades there has been a shift from early critical studies that championed a hagiographical version of Mistral—the pious educationalist from the Elqui Valley who endorsed traditional gender roles—to revisionist feminist narratives such as Licia Fiol-Matta's groundbreaking study *A Queer Mother for the Nation* (2002), which presents a contradictory image of Mistral as a "closet lesbian" and "the first female transnational figure of Latin America" who was both "radical and conservative" and became a "champion of the home and the family, even though she had neither a stable home nor a heterosexual family."[6] Other relevant studies have advocated a politicized and socially conscious dimension of Mistral, foregrounding her abiding support of organizations such as the League of Nations, PEN Club,

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UNESCO, and UNICEF, which constitute an integral part of the transnational epistemology this chapter embraces.[7]

I am also reliant on Berman's and Rogers's interrogation of the Anglocentric tendencies of modernist scholarship on the Spanish Civil War, calling for a transnational rethinking, one that not only repositions the war within a wider geopolitical landscape, but also revalues the literary responses that emerged from within Spain itself, thus rescuing what they describe as the "hidden other voices of the war" and the "marginalisation of Spanish writers chronicling the war that took place on their own soil."[8] Marina MacKay commends Gayle's and Berman's compelling comparativist frameworks that marshal "British and Spanish literary cultural engagements" to show how "Spain served as a testing ground for ideas about the cultural map of Europe and the fate of cosmopolitanism in a continent ravaged by the Great War."[9] At the same time, within the field of Hispanic Studies, an analogous rethinking of its prevailing critical tendencies demands scrutiny, particularly since the Spanish Civil War poetic archive has been patently dominated by male writers, as is the case with Miguel Hernández, Antonio Machado, Rafael Alberti, Emilio Prados, Pablo Neruda, César Vallejo, and Vicente Aleixandre. Though I do not seek to deny the significance of this aesthetic tradition and its concomitant political investment, it is important to note the exclusion of female voices—or the overwhelming "gendering of the war as male" as Angela K. Smith puts it[10]— in this case, of a prominent figure such as Mistral, whose aesthetic and political responses to the war rarely feature in the critical scholarship, an omission this chapter seeks to address.[11] While Woolf's *Three Guineas* has been widely discussed in relation to the Spanish Civil War, not enough attention has been paid to what J. Ashley calls the "larger pacifist conversation," particularly how women writers "worked actively with international organizations and peace networks to provide relief work and change the consciousness of the public, for 'think[ing] peace into existence.'"[12]

Mistral and the Spanish Civil War

Historians Carolyn P. Boyd, Nigel Townson, and Mario Ojeda Reva have drawn attention to the fact that a great deal of the historiography on the Spanish Civil War has focused on the Anglophone and European dimensions of the conflict, "whether it be the Non-Intervention Committee, the participation of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy on the side of the insurgents, or the backing of

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the Soviet Union for the Second Republic."[13] This implies that "Latin American responses to or involvement in the Spanish conflict have been almost completely neglected,"[14] not least Mexico's declaration of "solidarity with the beleaguered Spanish Republic and pledged support to its cause."[15] Beginning in the 1980s, landmark studies such as Thomas G. Powell's *Mexico and the Spanish Civil War* (1981) and Mark Falcoff's and Frederick Pike's volume of essays, *The Spanish Civil War 1936–39: American Hemispheric Perspectives* (1982), rectified this essential historical lacuna by focusing exclusively on a selection of Latin American nations (Mexico, Cuba, Colombia, Peru, Chile, and Argentina), as well as the US, through their variegated responses to the Spanish war and, later, the humanitarian efforts deployed in the evacuation of Republican refugees, thus providing valuable historiographical perspectives for subsequent scholarship to continue and develop.[16] Above all, what these pioneering studies made evidently clear is that far from adopting a unified, homogeneous ideological position, the various Latin American republics issued different and, in the case of Mexico, divergent responses to the war, thus decreeing foreign and domestic policies that reflected their own political and diplomatic agendas at home. As Mark Falcoff notes, Latin American responses to the Spanish conflict "varied enormously from country to country, depending on its racial makeup and historical experience in the conquest and the wars of independence, the size of its Spanish community, the strengths (or weakness) of liberal institutions, the countervailing powers of the clergy and military, and the general direction of its political life."[17]

As a radical globe-trotter defiantly operating in the male-dominated world of diplomacy, Mistral's ideological response to the Spanish war was inevitably shaped and complicated by the various geographical locations across Europe and the Americas where she resided before and during the war, including Mexico, Puerto Rico, Spain, Italy, France, and Portugal. Mistral's native Chile—under the regime of rightist President Arturo Alessandri—was pro-Francoist and had been brutally engaged in the systematic persecution of left-wing "subversives." As Elizabeth Horan notes, "complicating Mistral's efforts to aid people in leaving Spain was that she had to work around the Chilean government under Alessandri, which was not at all sympathetic to the Republic, and which had trading interests with Germany, which was actively aiding the Nationalist insurgents."[18] However, the decisive election victory of the Chilean Popular Front Coalition in December 1938, under the candidacy of Mistral's friend and lifelong supporter, Pedro Aguirre

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Cerda, meant that Chile experienced a sudden and decisive lurch to the left, which significantly resulted in a shift of foreign policy, enabling Chile to participate, at the eleventh hour, in the international evacuation of Republican refugees. While the newly elected Aguirre was aware that the arrival of Republican refugees to Chile "might enrage the [defeated] right," he still pledged to accept thousands of Spanish exiles, albeit on a case-by-case basis, by giving preference to "farmers and workers rather than intellectuals, politicians, and professionals."[19] Behind the scenes, Aguirre's cautionary plan was inevitably flouted, not least since left-leaning, Communist party member and staunch political activist Pablo Neruda—in his diplomatic capacity as Consul General of Madrid—was deliberately placed in charge of the refugee operation. Mistral also made an enormous contribution to the evacuation efforts from her consulship in Lisbon, which means that, in the end, Chile "did far more for Spanish refugees than did most of Latin America, with the exception of Mexico."[20]

As a teacher/poet-turned-diplomat—she was appointed Consul for Life by the Chilean government in 1935, having previously served in an honorary capacity—Mistral's socialist and anti-fascist moral imperatives were dangerously at odds with the fascist states where she was originally posted by the right-wing government of Alessandri: first, Mussolini's Italy and, second, the far-right *Estado Novo* (New State) regime of António de Oliveira Salazar's Portugal. When appointed honorary consul of Naples in 1932, Mistral was discriminated against by Mussolini's administration on the basis of gender, as she unequivocally explained in a letter to her friend Raúl Silva Castro: "El gobierno italiano no acepta mujeres en esos cargos" ("The Italian government doesn't accept women in those positions").[21] The rejection was compounded by Mistral's anti-fascist declarations, political views she had polemically aired in a 1924 visit to Italy, where she took part in an educational delegation sponsored by the Mexican Minister of Public Education José Vasconcelos—having previously been invited by President Álvaro Obregón (1920–24) to participate in Mexico's post-revolutionary rural educational reforms. As well as her sex, Mistral's bi-racial ethnicity (she was of Basque and *Diaguita* descent, a South American group native to Chile and Argentina) would have impacted Italy's decision, together with her status as a professional, economically independent, unmarried (queer) woman operating in a masculinist order, thus challenging the male chauvinism that excluded women from the professions and exposing the deeply

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intertwined ideologies of fascism and patriarchy that Woolf had so ardently denounced in *Three Guineas*: "Fighting the tyranny of the patriarchal state as you are fighting the tyranny of the Fascist state."[22] While not outrightly rejected by Salazar's government, Mistral's anti-fascist activism meant that during her consular service in Lisbon she became, in the words of her friend, the Mexican economist and historian Daniel Cosío Villegas, "un objecto de una vigilancia policíaca continua" ("an object of constant police surveillance"), risking her own safety to "develop routes of escape so that endangered intellectuals could get out of Spain."[23] Therefore, Mistral's career in the Chilean diplomatic corps paradoxically provided her with official "protection," while simultaneously exposing her to a hostile, misogynistic climate that she valiantly resisted.

In the "Epilogue" to *Felling*, entitled "Razón de este libro" ("Purpose of this Book") Mistral strategically positions the book as an aesthetic, political, and humanitarian response to the Spanish Civil War by addressing a politically charged issue: the question of refugee children. Portraying herself as a proud *mestiza* of Basque ancestry, Mistral presents *Felling* as her personal and poetic "gift" to the "niños españoles dispersados a los cuatro vientos" (*Tala* 239; "Spanish children scattered to the four winds"), who had been evacuated from conflict-ridden Euskadi and given asylum in Britain, France, Belgium, Russia, and Mexico, amongst the most prominent host countries.[24] By donating the book to this humanitarian cause—the funds were directed to foundations set up for Spanish child relief—Mistral "renounced what could have formed a basis for her economic security."[25] Therefore, the ecology of *Felling* suggests not just the impact of total war, interlinking mass murder and deforestation, but also the trauma that war inflicts on the self, symbolizing the intimate act of giving, what Margot Arce de Vázquez describes as "fragments cut from the living body, which still retains the stumps and roots" and Nuria Girona calls the act of *despojarse*—a reflexive verb that can be translated as "dispossessed" and "disembodied."[26] Similarly, Paul Burns interprets *Felling* as a "paring down that is a necessary preparation for writing and a form of liberation,"[27] transforming the aesthetic act into a personal "tala" or "despojo absoluto" of the grieving, dislocated self. As her own poetic way of grappling with "la tragedia de los niños vascos" (*Tala* 239; "the tragedy of the Basque children"), the book emerges as Mistral's elegy for Spain, an aesthetic gesture-turned-humanitarian activism by yielding a monetary profit to be used for the welfare of the orphaned children.

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Yet despite describing *Felling* as an act of love, Mistral simultaneously launched a blistering critique of Spanish America's deplorable response—with the notable exception of Mexico[28]—to the Basque refugee crisis. In the "Epilogue" to *Felling* she wrote indignantly:

> Es mi mayor asombro, podría decir también que mi más aguda vergüenza, ver a la América Española cruzada de brazos delante de la tragedia de los niños vascos. En la anchura física y en la generosidad natural de nuestro Continente, había lugar de sobra para haberlos recibido a todos, evitándoles los países de lengua imposibles, los climas agrios y las razas extrañas. (*Tala* 239)
>
> I am utterly stunned, and I would even say deeply ashamed, to see my Spanish America with her arms folded in the face of the tragedy of the Basque children. In the physical breadth and natural generosity of our continent, there was plenty of room to have welcomed them all, sparing them countries of impossible language, bitter climates and strange peoples.

This lack of hospitality, she suggested, changed the geopolitics of the relief efforts, allowing Russia—thinly disguised as a country "of impossible language, bitter climates and strange peoples"—to emerge as a major host country, which had agreed to evacuate thousands of Basque children. Mistral, unlike her fellow countryman Pablo Neruda, was not a member of the Communist Party, though this does not mean that she was inherently anti-Soviet. As a self-proclaimed socialist, environmentalist, and anti-capitalist, her political activism was epitomized by what the Chilean poet and critic Jaime Quezada defined as her three abiding preoccupations: "agrarian reform, indigenous rights, and social equality."[29] To be sure, in the early 1920s she contributed to the self-fashioned "anti-bourgeois," radicalizing leftist review *Revista de Oriente* (founded in Buenos Aires in 1925), the official organ of the "Argentine Friends of Russia Association." The October 1925 issue, for example, featured two odes by Mistral entitled "El agua" ("Water") and "El aceite" ("Oil"), which had been specifically written for the review, and where she praised their universality to convey her socialist-inflected solidarity and workers' unionism.[30] Rather, Mistral's animosity toward Russia was linked to press reports covering the disastrous expeditions the

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Basque children heading to the Soviet Union had experienced, where it was claimed they boarded dirty, crowded, and ill-equipped coal ships.[31] By alluding to the inadequacy of Russia, Mistral is obliquely pointing the finger of blame at Spanish America, especially to a historically prosperous country such as Argentina that shamefully kept its "brazos cruzados." The (pro-insurgent) rightist administration of Argentine President Agustín P. Justo responded to the pressing refugee "problem" by shamefully tightening the country's immigration laws, finally issuing a proclamation on July 28, 1938 that "further restricted entry by foreigners, whatever their origins,"[32] and, like neighboring Chile under Alessandri's administration, reinforced a zero-tolerance policy toward left-leaning ideologies.

Contrastingly, Mistral foregrounds the indefatigable humanitarian efforts of Victoria Ocampo, "la grande argentina" (*Tala* 240), who donated all sales from *Felling* to the refugee cause and was later involved in helping Republican artists, writers, and educators emigrate to Latin America, working alongside the newly founded Comisión Argentina de Ayuda a los Intelectuales Españoles (Argentine Commission for the Assistance of Spanish Intellectuals). Nora Pasternac stresses the importance of the Spanish Civil War in the historiography of Ocampo's modernist magazine *SUR* (founded in 1931), noting that, while not strictly a militant review, *SUR* provided a vital anti-fascist platform, allowing Ocampo and the so-called "Grupo SUR" (whose members included: Jorge Luis Borges, Silvina Ocampo, Adolfo Bioy Casares, José Bianco, and Alicia Jurado, amongst others) to respond intellectually to the looming threat of fascism in Europe and Latin America.[33] As Gayle Rogers points out: "Against her earlier inclination to keep her journal above politics, in 1937 Ocampo joined an international chorus and made *Sur* a vocal pro-Republican journal."[34] So, ideologically, during this period *SUR*'s task was to reposition itself as an anti-war, anti-fascist, and anti-totalitarian journal, fighting the rise of fascism (both at home and abroad) by providing a vital cultural platform for the dissemination of pacifist ideologies, publishing, for example, Aldous Huxley's *An Encyclopaedia of Pacifism* (1937), described by Patterson as the writer "most seriously involved in the [peace] movement,"[35] as well as pioneering Spanish translations of Woolf's *Three Guineas* and "Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid" (1940).[36]

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Woolf's and Mistral's Pacifist Politics

Within Britain, after complex deliberations, Westminster eventually agreed to help the Basque children refugees—despite the inescapable fact that, as Paul Preston notes, the country had hypocritically turned a blind eye to "Germany's open rearmament and to the Italian invasion of Abyssinia"[37]—deploying the British navy to help transport the young evacuees to the port of Southampton, although there were strings attached. Dorothy Legarreta observes that "three conditions were laid down: that no cost to the Treasury be entailed for their maintenance; that private funds be gathered for their education and care; and that only noncombatants of all political parties be allowed to come."[38] This explains the colossal relief efforts that were coordinated by civilian groups across Britain, such as the founding of the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief (NJCSR) in 1936. Woolf, and fellow Bloomsbury Group members, including her husband Leonard, Clive and Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, David Garnett, and E. M. Forster, amongst others, participated in and supported various pacifist and humanitarian causes, such as the Basque Refugee Children event that was held by the NJCSR at the Royal Albert Hall on June 24, 1937, with a program designed by Pablo Picasso, auction of pictures, and a concert by Basque children. Ian Patterson foregrounds the crucial role played by British writers in the "peace movements of the 1930s," when "pacifism was becoming a fully-fledged movement," at a time when Gandhi advocated his ethics of non-violence, and "growing fear of aerial attack, of bombs, germ canisters and gas dropped on civilian populations, provoked new anxieties."[39] Distressed by the atrocities committed in Spain, the loss of her nephew (who died in Madrid on July 18, 1937), and the plight of the refugee children, it is not surprising that the Spanish Civil War dominated Woolf's thoughts during this dark period in Europe's history. A day before the Euskadi aid event at the Royal Albert Hall, she wrote in her diary:[40]

> A long trail of fugitives—like a caravan in a desert—came through the square: Spaniards flying from Bilbao, which has fallen, I suppose. Somehow brought tears to my eyes, tho' no one seemed surprised. Children trudging along; women in London cheap jackets with gay handkerchiefs on their heads, young men, & all carrying either cheap cases, & bright blue enamel kettles, very large, & saucepans,

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> filled I suppose with gifts from some Charity—a shuffling trudging procession, flying—impelled by machine guns in Spanish fields to trudge through Tavistock Sqre, along Gordon Square, then where?—clasping their enamel kettles. A strange spectacle—they went on, knowing wh. Way: I suppose someone directed them. One boy was chatting—the others absorbed—like people on the trek. (*D5* 97)

Notice, for example, the attention she pays to the group's basic, yet striking, attire, distraught facial expressions, and bulky cookware; indicating that their rudimentary possessions were donated by charity—not the British government—and then simultaneously giving a glimpse of the horrors of total warfare ("machine guns in Spanish fields") that the "trail of fugitives" had painfully evoked in Tavistock Square. Note, too, the empathy she shows for the group ("brought tears to my eyes") contrasts with the casual attitude of the other onlookers. The vexed "children question" remains one of the main preoccupations of *Three Guineas*, evoked time and again throughout the text by the recurring phrases "the dead bodies" and "ruined houses" (*TG* 95; 96; 105; 173; 214). Examining the controversial role of photography in *Three Guineas*, Maggie Humm and Jessica Berman discuss the complex textual devices that Woolf utilized to "counter a masculine patriarchal world" by including five published photographs of men dressed in ritualistic costumes ("A General," "Heralds," "A University Procession," "A Judge," and "An Archbishop"), on one level, and by excluding five unpublished photographs of Spanish Republican propaganda depicting carefully choreographed images of children's mutilated bodies, on another.[41] Refusing to endorse propagandistic visual tactics, Woolf opts for an ekphrastic description of the Republican images of bombed women and children:

> Here then on the table before us are the photographs. The Spanish Government sends them with patient pertinacity about twice a week. They are not pleasant photographs to look upon. They are photographs of dead bodies for the most part. This morning's collection contains the photograph of what might be a man's body, or a woman's; it is so mutilated that it might, on the other hand, be the body of a pig. But those certainly are dead children, and that undoubtedly is the section of a house. (*TG* 95)

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By using the adjective "pertinacity" Woolf discloses her awareness of the "shock tactics," utilized by the manipulative Republican posters, which, as Stradling explains, issued photographs of "a child's mutilated body in order to convince a mass audience of the horrors of modern warfare; of the potential danger to their own families of remaining indifferent to such atrocities; and (above all) of the urgent need to support the Spanish Republican cause side in the Civil War."[42] For Humm and Berman, the unpublished photographs create a "dialectical tension"[43] with the published ones, showing that Woolf opted for a "narrative politics of hiatus, involution, and substitution."[44] This rhetorical strategy enabled her to expose the intersections between fascist violence in Spain and patriarchal oppression in Britain, dress and war, home and battle-front, asking: "What connection is there between the sartorial splendours of the educated man and the photograph of ruined houses and dead bodies? Obviously the connection between dress and war is not far to seek; your finest clothes are those that you wear as soldiers" (*TG* 105). By articulating the atrocities committed by Franco's insurgents—and executed by the German Air Force—through a rhetoric of omission that excludes the graphic war images, Woolf metonymically exposes the complicity between fascism and the oppression of women.

Just as Woolf transferred "the violence of war in Spain to the encrusted traditions of patriarchal culture at home,"[45] in her essay "Menos cóndor y más huemul" ("Less Condor and More Huemul," 1926) Mistral equates the animal symbolism engraved in the Chilean coat of arms with militarism and nationalist belligerence. Designed, rather ironically, by an Englishman, the artist Charles Wood Taylor in 1834, the crest's design is halved, depicting on the right hand-side the condor—the paradigmatic vulture of the Andes—and, on the left, the huemul—an almost extinct Andean deer. It bears the official, dualistic motto: "Por la razón o la fuerza" ("By reason or by force"), with *razón* denoting the huemul and *fuerza* the condor. Mistral argues that the Chilean nation has overwhelmingly favored the condor over the huemul, describing the former as a dangerous militaristic symbol that glorifies "una raza fuerte" ("a master race") and "divisas de guerra" ("war banners"), with its "pico ganchudo," "garra metálica," and "ojo sanguinoso que domina sólo desde arriba" ("hooked beak, metal claw, and bloody eye that dominates only from above"), whereas the latter—an antelope species related to the gazelle—epitomizes pacifism, with its "agilidad," and "finura de sus sentidos" ("agility" and "sensory finesse") survival without combat and coexistence with the natural

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world, "vive en la luz verde de los matorrales" ("it lives in the green light of the bushes").[46] Mistral believes the condor has done "mucho daño" ("much harm") to Chile, and urges the nation to revalorize the almost obliterated huemul as a symbol of peace.[47] Appropriately, Jason Wilson draws attention to the fact that the "Andean condor has lent its name to sinister organizations"[48] including Hitler's Condor Legion in civil-war Spain, which was responsible for the catastrophic destruction of the city of Guernica and the Madrid massacres. Thus, Mistral demystifies Chile's patriotic paradigm by complexly interlacing the condor with fascist ideologies, denouncing, like Woolf, oppressive sociopolitical systems deeply embedded in Britain's and Chile's national traditions, whether through patriotic paradigms glorifying aggressive animal mythology or through the inclusion of photographs of men dressed in ritualized uniform. By proposing to deconstruct the foundational heraldry underpinning the Republic of Chile, Mistral suggests the pacifist inversion of "less condor and more huemul" as an alternative symbolization to promote peace and societal renewal. Similarly, in *Three Guineas* Woolf utilizes striking animal imagery to evoke the threat of fascism: "And are we not all agreed that the dictator when we meet him abroad is a very dangerous as well as a very ugly animal? And he is here among us, raising his ugly head, spitting his poison, small still, curled up like a caterpillar on a leaf, but in the heart of England" (*TG* 135). So, both women correlate sexism and fascism with "ugly" and "dangerous" animals, whether that be a large, predatory bird such as the condor or a small, parasitic larva such as the caterpillar. Vara S. Neverow suggests that Woolf's "phallic caterpillar is a precise synecdoche for the dictator, the part that signifies the whole,"[49] an animal substitution operating at micro and macro levels, in the public sphere and in the private house.

David Bradshaw and Anna Snaith have documented Woolf's engagement with anti-fascist organizations in the 1930s, particularly her involvement with For Intellectual Liberty (FIL) and the International Association of Writers in Defence of Culture (IAWDC), both of which were founded by leading intellectual figures in "defense of peace, liberty and culture."[50] Both critics stress, however, that Woolf's involvement with these organizations was ambivalent and intermittent, as after July 1936 "Woolf turned her back on FIL as well as the IAWDC"[51] and, consequently, "this period saw Woolf battling with her 'repulsion from societies' and yet her abhorrence of political developments abroad."[52] Instead, Woolf decided to fight fascism in her own terms as an "Outsider," using *Three Guineas* as "both a record of this battle and an

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enactment of her preferred form of resistance: the text."[53] Most prominently, Woolf refused to sign "Authors Take Sides on the Spanish War," the political questionnaire that was sent to European writers, which asked: "Are you for, or against, the legal Government and the people of Republican Spain? Are you for, or against, Franco and Fascism?"[54] Issued by Nancy Cunard—together with signatories by Pablo Neruda, Heinrich Mann, Tristan Tzara et al—and published in *Left Review* in June 1937, the pamphlet featured 127 statements in support of the Second Spanish Republic (from W. H. Auden, Samuel Beckett, Kay Boyle, C. Day Lewis, David Garnett, Aldous Huxley, Stephen Spender, Rebecca West, and Leonard Woolf, to name only a few), 16 declared politically "neutral," such as T. S. Eliot, who recommended that "it is best that at least men of letters should remain isolated, and take no part in these collective activities,"[55] as well as a handful against the Republican government, featuring Evelyn Waugh's pro-Franco statement. For Gayle Rogers, Woolf's decision not to respond to Cunard's survey—despite her husband's vocipherous support of the Republic and, four years later, publishing the oxymoronically titled *The War for Peace*—was part of her "pacifist commitment [that] outweighed taking sides in a war."[56] While Woolf's political sympathies clearly lay with the democratic principles of the Republic, her rejection of any form of armed violence, as well as what she called in *Three Guineas* the "adulterated" facts of political propaganda (*TG* 175)—whether left or right, Republican or Francoist—meant that she was overly suspicious of public causes and media campaigns during the war: "Aldous [Huxley] refuses to sign the latest manifesto [League of Nations] because it approves sanctions. He's a pacifist. So am I" (*D5* 17). Moreover, the Spanish Civil War and, later, the Second World War, would further polarize British writers. Patterson writes that the crises in Abyssinia/Ethiopia, the Rhineland and Spain "proved to be a turning point in the fortunes of the pacifist movement [as] many formerly absolute pacifists lost faith in the prospect of peaceful international regulation, especially as they watched the Civil War unfold in Spain, former pacifists like David Garnett, E. M. Forster and Leonard Woolf supported the war against Hitler."[57] In short, the heated debate over the peace movement, as Hermione Lee notes, "split the left, split the peace movement—and split 'Bloomsbury.'"[58]

Woolf's "Outsider" position, "What does 'our country' mean to me an outsider?" (*TG* 184), proposes a feminist universalism imagined through a cosmopolitan ethics of community: "As a woman, I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world"

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(*TG* 185). Kathryn Harvey points out that Woolf's globalist dictum "provides an uncanny restatement of Mary Sargant Florence and C. K. Ogden's 1915 plea for the principle of internationalism: 'Women of all nations unite!'"[59] and Peter Kalliney interprets Woolf's cosmopolitan outlook as both "ethical" and "pragmatic" responses to "nationalisms that would subordinate the claims of women."[60] Naomi Black affirms that Woolf was highly attuned to the work undertaken by feminist organizations actively fighting for women's rights, in the belief that "women would, as voters and activists, be able to make the world better and more peaceful."[61] As the first woman to be awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1945, as well as one of the first women to serve in the male-centered career of diplomacy, Mistral may be regarded as a radical pioneer, a historic figure in the professionalization of women who had the power to effect social change and "make the world better." Indeed, Mistral's position in the Chilean diplomatic corps enabled her to fight tyrannies and dictatorships much more effectively than, arguably, any of Woolf's "daughters of educated men." Christine Froula's assertion that "*Three Guineas* pays too little attention to differences among women, whether of race, class, or nation, against its striving toward communication and community across barriers and differences"[62] is pointedly pertinent to a *mestizo* woman such as Mistral, the "uneducated daughter of an uneducated man." The example of Agnes Smith, a Yorkshire working-class woman who strongly objected that Woolf "wrote only of and for the 'daughters of educated men,' when the problems with which you deal are those of the working woman also," is a well-documented case in point.[63] On the other hand, while not erasing Woolf's elitism and class-consciousness, Froula recognizes the social and political potential of her "Society of Outsiders" vision, admitting that "although Woolf declines to speak for working-class women and conceives Outsiders as educated men's daughters, *Three Guineas* envisions all women as an emerging economically independent collective that might conceivably exert diffuse social power against barbarism, tyranny, and war."[64]

Froula's argument that Woolf envisages the emergence of an economically independent collective of women forging peaceful values against war and tyranny is best exemplified by Victoria Ocampo's transnational feminist orientation. At the acceptance speech she delivered at the Argentine Academy of Letters in June 1977, when she became the first female member to be appointed in its nearly five-decade existence (it was founded in 1931),[65] Ocampo protested against a male-centered academy that had for decades

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excluded women from participating in what Pierre Bourdieu regards as "legitimizing institutions par excellence" fashioned in the model of the Académie Française and the Real Academia Española.[66] Recognizing Mistral and Woolf as her preeminent role models, referring to them as *reinas* ("queens")—an allusion to the title of Mistral's poem "Todas íbamos a ser reinas" ("We were all going to be queens"), which celebrates female friendship and the hope that all women, if given the opportunity, will fulfill their true potential (*Tala* 180)—Ocampo articulates her own version of a female literary tradition in which Mistral and Woolf "reign" supremely.[67] As John King notes, Ocampo saw Woolf as "the ideal European writer" and Gabriela Mistral as her "South American equivalent."[68] However, aware of crucial differences of race, ethnicity, and class, Ocampo tactfully employed the metaphor of a comb to address such distinctions:

> Siendo dos escritoras y dos personalidades totalmente distintas, casi opuestas, su dominio del idioma les permitía usarlo como les venía en ganas. Quiero decir que usaban las palabras como usaban su peine. A veces el peine era de hueso, a veces de carey, pero ante todo era lo que tenía que ser: peine.[69]

> Being two writers and two totally different, almost opposite personalities, their command of the language enabled them to use it however they pleased. I mean to say that they used words like they used a comb. Sometimes the comb was made of bone, other times of tortoiseshell, but above all it was what it had to be: a comb.[70]

The type of "mouvement des femmes" that Ocampo delineates here complexly intersects with the Anglophone literary communities that modernist feminist critics (Jane Marcus, Bonnie Kime Scott, Jane Garrity) have mapped out, where Woolf prominently becomes, as Marcus points out, "part of a cluster (or heading a roster) of women writers, including Dorothy Richardson, Katherine Mansfield, May Sinclair, H. D., Djuna Barnes, Mina Loy and Gertrude Stein."[71] If, as David Damrosch suggests, "world literature is a mode of reading,"[72] this Anglophone tradition may be placed in productive conversation with the group of women writers who gravitated around the magazine *SUR* and included such figures as Mistral, the Ocampo sisters (Victoria and Silvina), Norah Lange, Alicia Jurado, Estela Canto, María

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Rosa Oliver, and María Luisa Bombal.[73] By going beyond center–periphery models—albeit without eliding asymmetrical relations—it is possible to map out cross-cultural encounters based on shared aesthetic, cultural, and political preoccupations, whether female modernists were writing from imperial capitals such as London and Paris or formerly colonized countries such as Chile and Argentina.

As the sole female founder and financial backer of *SUR*, Ocampo prioritized the transatlantic circulation of Woolf's œuvre, producing historic translations of her major works, while at the same time resituating Buenos Aires as a thriving publishing center, not unlike, as Rogers points out, "her better-known Anglophone peers Margaret Anderson or Harriet Monroe."[74] For example, *A Room of One's Own* (1929; *Un cuarto propio*, translated by Borges), was serialized in four installments in *SUR* (between December 1935 and March 1936) and shortly thereafter released in book form by the SUR press in 1936.[75] The book was widely advertised—together with Ocampo's 1935 feminist essay "La mujer y su expression" ("Woman and her Expression")—in the miscellaneous publicity spaces featured in *SUR*, and sold at the affordable price of two Argentine pesos (five pesetas in Spain).[76] Shortly after *A Room* was published, Ocampo sent Mistral a courtesy copy. In an August 21, 1936 letter written from Lisbon, Mistral thanked Ocampo effusively:

> Vino la colección de SUR, que me ha parecido magnífica, así magnífica, digna de usted. La primera vez que a mí *me llega* un alegato feminista es en la lectura de ese trabajo de V. Woolf. Habrá mucho que decirle a este respecto. Otro día. Le agradezco, *como un servicio personal*, el que usted lo haya hecho traducir y me lo haya hecho llegar (original emphasis).[77]
>
> The SUR collection came, and it struck me as magnificent, just magnificent, worthy of you. The first time that a feminist argument has really *hit home for me* is in the work of V. Woolf. I have a lot to tell you in this regard. Next time. I thank you, *as a personal service* for having it translated and for having it sent to me.[78]

Praising Ocampo's "magnificent" efforts in spreading Woolf's landmark feminist pamphlet to Latin American readerships, Mistral admits that her argument resonated with her, "a mí *me llega*," acknowledging it was the first time she had

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found a feminist thesis thoroughly convincing. Again, while not necessarily belonging to Woolf's exclusionary category of "daughters of educated men," Mistral shared the materialist and cultural dimension of Woolf's argument: "A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction."[79] Though Mistral generally "avoided the 'feminist' label"[80] and did not consider herself a feminist in a strict sense, her implicit understanding of feminism was economic, as she stated in a December 1936 interview that was published in the Chilean daily *El Mercurio*: "Equal wages for both sexes."[81] Undeniably, Mistral was highly receptive to Woolf's message, as shown in a July 1938 letter written from Valparaíso (Chile), where she urged Ocampo to write a book of literary criticism on Woolf, adding: "póngase a esto pronto"[82] ("set yourself to that, right away").[83] As a tireless activist, Mistral wanted to get Woolf's message to Latin American readers as quickly as possible.

By examining Mistral's and Woolf's responses to the Spanish Civil War as part of a transnational movement of modernist women writers committed to the prevention of war, this chapter has delineated the emergence of a pacifist, internationalist cultural space committed to fighting the rise of fascism in Europe through writing and activism. Distressed by the "death of youth" and the refugee children question—while at the same time fiercely critiquing the correlation between war, fascism, and patriarchy through the destabilizing techniques of substitution and juxtaposition—Mistral and Woolf engaged with complex and, at times, inherently contradictory political questions as countries worldwide issued different domestic policies to the Spanish crisis. Both women's responses to the Spanish Civil War may be best understood by what Mariano Siskind defines as "universalist imaginaries of a world-historical crisis of modernity," particularly "the way in which modernists from different latitudes displaced and resignified the war."[84] These "different latitudes" revise and reconfigure spatial boundaries, enabling us to recuperate insufficiently studied responses to the war such as Mistral's, not least considering the weight of her social activism and her diplomatic involvement from her consular posting in Lisbon. Finally, the centrality of translation and the establishment of print cultures were instrumental in women's campaigns for world peace, epitomized by Victoria Ocampo's *SUR* cultural project. A center in the periphery, a cultural horizon in the global South, *SUR* pioneered Woolf's Hispanic circulation and contributed toward the historical conjuncture between Gabriela Mistral and Virginia Woolf.