Abstract

Bachelor thesis *To forget or to forgive? The process of reconciliation with the legacy of Francisco Franco in Spain through memory laws* describes the influence that history has on the current situation in Spain. The thesis analyses the definitions of reconciliation and describes the context of the Spanish democratic transition and the traumas resulting from the Spanish Civil War and forty years of dictatorship. Through an analysis of the Historical Memory Law 2007 and the Democratic Memory Law 2022, the author charts the changes in Spain's approach to transitional justice and reconciliation with the legacy of Francisco Franco. The next part examines the polarization in Spanish society and the rise of the extreme right, looking for its connection to the past. The thesis concludes by answering the research question, of whether memory laws lead to reconciliation in Spain. Although both memory laws have fulfilled several aspects of the implementation of transitional justice and contributed to the process of reconciliation, the reactions to these legislations have been quite critical, and Spanish society remains polarized on the issue of the Francoist past. Thus, the author concludes the thesis by pointing to the incompleteness of implementing transitional justice and the failure to end impunity, which acts as a major obstacle to the process of reconciliation. The democratic transition sought oblivion and forgiveness; however, the new century brought calls for embracing accountability for past crimes against humanity, repression, and injustice. This change has generated a great deal of disagreement and incomprehension, and so forgiveness is not yet on the horizon.