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# Two Conflicting Irish Views of the Spanish Civil War

## ≈ Resumen

La Guerra Civil española desató un acalorado debate en el recién creado Estado Libre de Irlanda, como se llamaba entonces a la República de Irlanda. Un país que también había pasado por una guerra civil de once meses tras el Tratado Anglo-irlandés de 1921 volvió a dividirse entre los que apoyaban al gobierno español republicano de izquierdas elegido democráticamente y los que se ponían de parte de la “cruzada” de Franco contra los ateos y los marxistas. De hecho, algunos voluntarios irlandeses se unieron a las Brigadas Internacionales para luchar contra el fascismo junto a las fuerzas republicanas españolas, mientras que otros católicos irlandeses más conservadores se movilaron para luchar con el ejército franquista contra los rojos que los medios de comunicación afirmaban que eran responsables de matar sacerdotes y quemar iglesias. Ambas secciones se veían muy influenciadas por las noticias, los relatos y las interpretaciones de la guerra española que surgían por entonces. Siguiendo la aproximación de Lluís Albert Chillón a las relaciones entre el periodismo y la literatura (1999), este artículo pretende analizar los reportajes de guerra de dos escritores irlandeses que describen la Guerra Civil española desde los dos lados opuestos: Peadar O'Donnell (1893–1986), un destacado activista y novelista socialista irlandés que escribió *Salud! An Irishman in Spain* (1937), y Eoin O'Duffy (1892–1944), soldado, activista anticomunista y comisario de policía que organizó la Brigada Irlandesa para luchar con el ejército de Franco y que escribió *The Crusade in Spain* (1938). Ambos contribuyeron a la difusión de información e ideas sobre el conflicto español con sus relatos narrados desde el punto de vista de alguien que ha sido testigo de los hechos, y ambos plantean interesantes cuestiones sobre las relaciones entre realidad, ficción y verdad, utilizando estrategias narrativas y recursos retóricos similares para retratar diferentes versiones de una misma guerra.

Palabras clave:

Peadar O'Donnell; Eoin O'Duffy; Guerra Civil española; Irlanda; reportaje de guerra

## ≈ Abstract

The Spanish Civil War sparked a heated debate in the recently created Irish Free State, as the Republic of Ireland was then called. A country that had also gone through an eleven-month civil war after the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 was again divided between those who supported the left-wing democratic Spanish Republican government and those who favoured Franco's “crusade” against atheists and Marxists. In fact, some Irish volunteers joined the International Brigades to confront Fascism together with the Spanish Republican forces, while other more conservative Irish Catholics were mobilised to fight with Franco's army against those Reds that the media claimed to be responsible for killing priests and burning churches. Both sections were highly influenced by the news, accounts and interpretations of the Spanish war that emerged at that time. Following Lluís Albert Chillón's approach to the relations between journalism and literature (1999), this article aims to analyse the war reportages of two Irish writers who describe the Spanish Civil War from the two opposite sides: Peadar O'Donnell (1893–1986), a prominent Irish socialist activist and novelist who wrote *Salud! An Irishman in Spain* (1937), and Eoin O'Duffy (1892–1944), a soldier, anti-communist activist and police commissioner who raised the Irish Brigade to fight with Franco's army and wrote *The Crusade in Spain* (1938). Both contributed to the dissemination of information and ideas about the Spanish conflict with their eyewitness accounts, and both raise interesting questions about the relations between fact, fiction and the truth, using similar narrative strategies and rhetorical devices to portray different versions of the same war.

Keywords:

Peadar O'Donnell; Eoin O'Duffy; Spanish Civil War; Ireland; war reportage

**T**he Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) began as a military uprising, supported by some conservative elements such as the Catholic Church, most landowners and many businessmen, against the recently democratically elected left-wing Popular Front government. When the initial coup failed to win control of the entire country, a bloody civil war ensued, fought with great ferocity on both sides. Right from the start, this conflict aroused the interest of a considerable number of journalists, writers and intellectuals around the world who, aware of its potential world-historical importance, wanted to witness and write about the war at first-hand. The British journalist and biographer Anne Sebba, in her book *Battling for News: The Rise of the Woman Reporter* has described The Spanish Civil War as “the biggest world story” of its day (1994, 95) and it certainly was an extremely newsworthy event for English-speaking writers and journalists of the time, who produced a large number of texts from very different political perspectives. In particular, the Spanish Civil War sparked a heated debate in the recently created Irish Free State, as the Republic of Ireland was then called. A country that had also gone through an eleven-month civil war over the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 was again divided between those who supported the left-wing democratic Spanish Republican government and those who favoured Franco’s “crusade” against atheists and Marxists. In fact, some Irish volunteers joined the International Brigades to confront Fascism together with the Spanish Republican forces, while other more conservative Irish Catholics were mobilised to fight with Franco’s army against those Reds that the media, led by *The Irish Independent*, claimed to be responsible for killing priests and burning churches.<sup>1</sup> Both sections were highly influenced by the news, accounts and interpretations of the Spanish war that emerged at that time.

An Irish writer who showed great interest in the Spanish Civil War was Peadar O’Donnell (1893–1986), a prominent socialist activist and novelist. He came from a small farmer background and had left his job as a primary school teacher to become a trade union leader and champion of the radical left in Ireland. On the outbreak of the 1919–21 War of Independence he joined the Irish Republican Army and took part in the guerrilla campaign against British rule. However, he opposed the terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty signed in 1921 and fought on the Republican side. His political activism also inspired him to write several novels and short stories, which reveal an understanding of ordinary country people, their lives and struggles.<sup>2</sup> Despite his active political role in Irish affairs, when the Spanish conflict began, O’Donnell did not come to Spain as a volunteer in the International Brigades or some other militia but was simply an observer. In fact, he was already in Spain when the war broke out, staying at Sitges, a fishing village near Barcelona, where he had come with his wife Lile and some friends on a writing holiday early in July 1936. He was writing a booklet on the changed agrarian situation under the new Republican government. His plans were radically altered, however, by the beginning of the war. After the military uprising, O’Donnell remained in Barcelona, as an eyewitness of the first clashes of the war, the burning of a church in Sitges, the enthusiasm of the volunteers in the Durruti column heading to Zaragoza and the revolutionary spirit that took hold of the Catalan society. All this, together with many anecdotes and experiences, formed the basis for his book *Salud! An Irishman in Spain* (1937).

Another Irish writer who became attracted to the Spanish conflict, but from the opposite side, was Eoin O’Duffy (1892–1944). He had

begun working as an engineer and architect until he joined the Irish Volunteers in 1917, which later became the Irish Republican Army, and, like O’Donnell, took an active part in the Irish War of Independence. In fact, they were fighting together against the British. However, unlike O’Donnell, he did support the Anglo-Irish Treaty and served as a general in the National Army in the ensuing Irish Civil War. Then, as a police commissioner, he became a strong defender of the Irish Free State. Another difference with O’Donnell was his political stance. O’Duffy and many other conservative elements within the country began to embrace the fascist ideology, which was in vogue at that time. Therefore, when the Spanish Civil War broke out O’Duffy began recruiting volunteers, the so-called Irish Brigade, to go and fight on the Nationalist side of Franco. Supported by the Catholic Church in Ireland and by right-wing national newspapers, O’Duffy and the first of around 700 volunteers travelled to Spain in November 1936.<sup>3</sup> On his return to Ireland in 1938 O’Duffy published a book entitled *Crusade in Spain* (1938).

Therefore, they are two authors with a similar Irish background and experiences during the Irish War of Independence who later developed very different political views. They both wrote two personal accounts or memoirs about the early moments of the Spanish Civil War, although each one focusing on different experiences and with a very different perspective, supporting a different side of the war. What is more, both contributed to the dissemination of information and ideas about the Spanish conflict in Ireland with their eyewitness accounts, *Salud! An Irishman in Spain* and *Crusade in Spain*, two books that nestle within the genre of literary reportage.<sup>4</sup> By definition, this kind of war reportage is a type of documentary narrative that blends factual events, personal experiences, anecdotal evidence and perceptions, in a non-fictional form of literature. That is to say, these reportage books are usually linked to informative and interpretative genres, in which news is presented to inform the reader, but this news comes together with the author’s opinions and interpretation of what he sees. We should not forget that it is an eyewitness genre of journalism, so the emphasis should be on providing an objective and accurate reflection of reality.

It is precisely this emphasis on the truthfulness and reflection of reality that has sometimes led to these texts being used as the source of the historiography of the time. Such is the case of Orwell’s *Homage to Catalonia* (1938), which appears several times in the well-known history of the recently deceased Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (1961).<sup>5</sup> It is not surprising that this type of chronicles are sometimes confused with historical narratives, which are nothing more than chronological narratives that provide details of certain real events of the past. At the same time, the way in which historical reality is created and represented in these chronicles of foreigners in Spain is also linked to travel writing, which for centuries had been written not only by journalists, but also by diplomats, soldiers or just travellers, who in turn were writers of renowned fame. In this way, this journalistic genre comes in contact with what is known as “travel literature”, whose works sometimes make use of strategies typical of fictional genres, such as novels and short stories.<sup>6</sup> Hence, the dividing line separating these journalistic genres from historical and literary genres is indeed very thin and difficult to establish. Fernando López Pan, in a paper he presented at the Reunión Científica de la Sociedad

Española de Periodística, published in 2005, states the following:

Periodismo, Historia y Literatura (en su faceta narrativa) son tres actividades profesionales muy similares, especialmente las dos primeras. La reflexión teórica sobre las actividades implica estar plenamente al tanto de la práctica profesional y en sintonía con tres ámbitos disciplinares que constituyen una especie de investigación básica para esa reflexión: Sociología, Filosofía y Lingüística; y todas sus ramificaciones y entrecruzamientos. (76)

Lluís Albert Chillón, Professor of Communication Theory at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, in his *Literatura y periodismo: una tradición de relaciones promiscuas* (1999), puts forward a new direction in the study of the relationship between journalism and literature when he denies the existence of any “truth” or “objective reality” and, instead, emphasises the degree to which fiction dominates all kinds of texts, from the highest degree of referentiality to the highest degree of fabulation. Thus, in chronicles and reportage books, a concern for veracity and historical accuracy dominates, but no matter how sober and truthful the information is, by shifting the facts to paper the writer has to select and arrange the facts, explain them and put them into perspective, that is to say he has to fictionalize his story substratum. At the other side of the spectrum, in the literary field, fiction, ambiguity and the fabulating creativity prevail.

In view of these considerations, the question arises as to the degree of referentiality or fabulation that the two books by O'Donnell and O'Duffy about the Spanish Civil War show. What features link their exploration of reality to either the journalistic or the literary genre? One wonders, then, to what extent the authors of these books are able to present an accurate and truthful picture of the Spanish war. What narrative strategies and rhetorical devices do O'Donnell and O'Duffy use to convey their experiences in Spain? Do they make use of novel-writing skills to create scenes, bring anecdotes alive, portray people and introduce dialogues? We should bear in mind that O'Donnell was already a fiction writer and he could draw on his previous experience as a novelist to craft scenes and make his account more “convincing” and “believable”, whereas O'Duffy never tried his hand at writing fiction.

Interestingly enough, they both warn the reader about their intentions and aims at the beginning of their books. From the first pages of his memoir, O'Donnell acknowledges the difficulty of providing a fair and complete view of the Spanish Civil War. He states that no eyewitness account can ever claim to cover “the whole field of the Spanish Civil War” and, what is more, he is well aware of how easily the written word can be turned into propaganda: “all wars are fought between devils and angels; war propaganda remains the most monotonous of all human cries. Pens-of-war sprinkle soot or haloes” (1937, 9). Similarly, in his foreword, O'Duffy issues the following warning: “My hand is unused to weaving the words that make literature, and I ask forbearance of my readers while I try to tell this story of Franco's Crusade in Spain. The full account of the war, the gathering and sifting of all the facts, must of course be left to the historians” (1937, v). As mentioned before, O'Duffy is not a novel writer, he is not used to writing books, but he uses the word “story”. However, he adds that his “story claims to be no more than a plain and simple account of experience and observations” (v), that is to say that it is the fair and straightforward narrative of an eyewitness.

In both cases, we nevertheless wonder how accurate and truthful their reportage might be.

One of the first stylistic traits that are obvious in both works is the precision and accuracy with which they are written. O'Donnell and O'Duffy include a lot of descriptions full of details, references to real places and familiar characters of the political and military sphere. The reader can appreciate the temporal accuracy and precision in the details of the many descriptions in the narratives. All this adds realism and verisimilitude to the story narrated. Let's see an example in O'Donnell's text of how the narration of an event is endowed with apparent objectivity and a great dose of realism. In particular, it is the description of the destruction of the church in Sitges, two days after the military coup. Apart from the ironic reference to St. Patrick's laughing for not being damaged, the rest of the description offers a very accurate view, detailing the number of people involved, what is heard, what happens to objects being destroyed, etc.:

No more than twenty people took part in the sacking of the church. The first sound from the crowd came when the priest's vestments fluttered through the air. There was a cheer, it was mainly women's voices. Statues came crashing onto the strand. St Patrick raised a chuckle for his statue landed snugly in a pile of shavings, and then there was silence as the Monstrance crashed on a flag. Church seats came tumbling over the wall and a man delayed to call down angrily to the crowd for help but nobody responded. (1937, 71-2)

O'Duffy in his testimony about his experiences in Spain also relies on details, which serves to accentuate its credibility. Like O'Donnell's *Salud!*, this type of writing is closely linked with the journalistic aspect of the reportage text.

I left for Toledo at 5 a.m. to report the arrival of the bandera to the Military Governor there, and to make arrangements for transport and communications. Returning to Valdemora [sic. Valdemoro] at 11 a.m. I found that the *bandera*<sup>7</sup> had already moved off towards Ciempozuelos. I followed.

About a mile from the town I learned that there had been an engagement in which Lieutenant Tom Hyde, Lieutenant Bove, Sergeant Calvo and Legionary Dan Chute had been killed. (1937, 137)

Another characteristic of the reportage text is that it uses first-person narrators. These authors have been eyewitnesses to the events they narrate and, therefore, they tend to write about what they saw, heard or felt. However, this is not always so; not everything that the reader encounters in O'Donnell's and O'Duffy's books is a direct testimony of what they have witnessed, with facts being narrated as the authors saw them. Sometimes, there are passages that do not come from their own experience but from other people that told them some stories, anecdotes or information. This is called second-hand narrative or hearsay, a common narrative strategy in the old stories of early

travellers. They very often reported the existence of exotic worlds on the basis of hearsay. Examples of these can be phrases such as “a Spanish captain told me he had seen [...]” or “a Portuguese marine told me he has visited [...]”. In this case, the writer is only reporter of what someone else has seen but he was not able to witness himself, and is, therefore, not committed to the truth of his message, which actually belongs to someone else. Anyway, if the sources are reliable, the story is told in a context of truth and other trustworthy eyewitness descriptions. O'Donnell often uses this strategy, referring to other people telling him anecdotes, such as a Scot who lives in Sitges, militiamen, an old carpenter, somebody who works for the British Red Cross Unit, etc. O'Duffy does something similar, referring, for example, to a story “widely told” when he recounts what happened during the siege of the Alcázar of Toledo and the heroism of Colonel Moscardó.

Nevertheless, O'Donnell even takes a further step and sometimes uses the omniscient narrative voice; that is to say, he has full access to events and dialogues occurring in different places. This narrator is all knowing, almost like a god within the story being told. In chapter four, for instance, O'Donnell tells a story about the behaviour of some priests and this time there is no reference to a particular person who might have told the author the story:

Priests do weird things in Catholic countries. A missionary and four other priests broke into a garage where young republicans were holding a conference and cuffed three of them to the church where a mission was in progress, walking them up the aisle in full view of the congregation with as much arrogance as ever Roman conqueror paraded his captives, and, not content with that, the missionary boasted from the altar that he had smashed this particular republican group in the parish. (1937, 68–9)

This story helps O'Donnell to justify the anticlerical feelings among the republicans, as can be seen when, immediately after the story of this missionary, he adds the following comment: “It is such mad acts that set the villagers muttering that the priest must go. Besides, he would be the one best able to gather evidence later” (1937, 69). A similar type of omniscient narration is used by O'Duffy several times. An illustration of this would be the description of how a Franciscan monastery was attacked by the Republican forces and protected by the local people, again without the introductory phrase identifying the source:

A determined drive was made in August, 1936, by eight thousand Red militia to capture the monastery and its treasurers. The people of Guadalupe and the neighbouring villages gathered in the monastery to the number of six thousand, and with few arms and little food held the fortress until they were relieved by Franco's forces after three weeks' siege. (1938, 121)

This episode took place in August 1936 but O'Duffy had arrived in Spain in November that year. How did he know about it? Who told him the people inside the monastery had “few arms and little food”?

With this type of narrative our authors move towards a more interpretative and subjective type of writing. They provide less impartial descriptions of experiences, including judgments of a political and personal nature about the war and its contenders. What is more, this type of writing includes several stylistic features that are commonly found in literature, particularly in fiction. This is mainly the case of O'Donnell's book. In his eagerness to show the worst side of the enemy and win over the Irish public opinion, O'Donnell tends to use some rhetorical strategies that are characteristic of satire, such as simplification, exaggeration and burlesque comparisons. These satiric strategies are clearly seen in the description of some characters, who have an almost cartoonish quality, in which the most negative traits are accentuated mercilessly, seeking to ridicule them. We could go back to the story O'Donnell tells about those priests who broke into a garage where some republicans had gathered and took some of them to a church; they were “walking them up the aisle in full view of the congregation with as much arrogance as ever Roman conqueror paraded his captives” (1937, 68–9). This is a clear example of a caricaturesque comparison. Similarly, in O'Duffy's text the reader can appreciate the literary quality and poetic texture in his description of the end of the Siege of the Alcazar, when Colonel Moscardó triumphantly meets his fellow men and saviours after 68 days of heroic defence:

At last, on a brilliant morning in September, when the sunrise was reflected on the bayonets of the relieving force, Colonel Moscardo (sic) stumbled out of the ruins of the fortress, followed by a procession of spectres. Slowly approaching the General in command of the relief column, General Valera, he came to attention and saluted, saying: “Nothing to report from the Alcazar, sir.” (1938, 23)

We cannot know, however, to what extent the whole episode of the Siege of the Alcázar, including the phone conversation between Colonel Moscardó and his son, was the product of O'Duffy's own creative writing or had been taken from some published source of the time.

Apart from some satirical and poetic strategies that link these war reportages with literature, both authors also go away from realism and employ fictional techniques when they recur to some exacerbated idealism. As the reader might expect from this type of texts, O'Donnell and O'Duffy tend to idealise their fellow trench fighters. Both dedicate their books to Irish volunteers who died fighting in Spain. O'Donnell wrote a first page with the following lines:

To  
A BOY FROM ACHILL  
who died fighting in Spain  
and  
HIS COMRADES  
who went the same proud way

This boy from Achill is identified at the end of the book as Thomas Patten (1910–1936), a young Irish man who, when the Spanish Civil War broke out, at the age of 26, went to Spain and joined

the International Brigades in October 1936. Three months later he was killed in Boadilla del Monte, outside Madrid. Patten is considered to be the first volunteer from an English-speaking country killed in the conflict.<sup>8</sup> Despite this dedication and frequent positive comments on the courage and good disposition of the militia men O'Donnell meets, sometimes he also includes some critical views on the Republican government and the people who destroy churches and carry out looting and violence on their neighbours. On the other hand, O'Duffy dedicates his book to the members of the Irish Brigade, particularly to "the gallant dead".

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK TO ALL MY  
COMRADES OF THE IRISH BRIGADE,  
WITH SPECIAL REMEMBRANCE OF  
OUR GALLANT DEAD.

Within the text, O'Duffy also pays tribute to an Irish volunteer who died in Ciempozuelos called Tom Hyde (1938, 140). This volunteer was one of the first casualties of the Spanish Civil War who died as a result of what it is usually called friendly fire. His group opened fire on what they later learnt was a Falangist unit from the Canary Islands that has just arrived; in turn, the Falangists thought that the Irish volunteers were Republican militiamen. Many other Irish volunteers of the Irish Brigade who were killed in action or died at home as a result of the Spanish campaign are mentioned in O'Duffy's text, usually with high commendation and praise, such as "[he was] a brave and fearless soldier and very popular" (1938, 167). One whole chapter of *Crusade in Spain* is dedicated to the memory of the outstanding people of the Irish Brigade and is entitled "Honour to Our Dead".

Together with this idealism, O'Donnell and O'Duffy also introduce dialogues that create a dramatic texture. As if they were novels, these reportage books include dialogues which sometimes serve as a source of information and explanation of facts, and other times they are used to delineate the personality or the language of the characters presented. O'Donnell, for example, uses dialogues to introduce the personality of a character called The Scot, an old man who had been living in Sitges for some time. O'Donnell transcribes long speeches of this character. Here is a sample:

On the promenade outside we met The Scot. "Now, what did I think of the mob? Could any food ever come of letting the underworld loose? The tempo would always be set by the most headless, and that section of the workers with the highest sensitiveness would count least. Good God, man, listen to that." A scurry of cars went screeching past. A neglected loudspeaker blared deafeningly. "Madness, madness," The Scot Groaned and walked on, a splash of fastidious brightness in the milling throng. You could not hold back a chuckle. (1937, 74)

The reproduction of the exact words of The Scot, his reaction and the way this anecdote is narrated, reminds us of a typical passage in a novel, something that we often see in any of the seven novels O'Donnell wrote. In O'Duffy's text, one can also find several of these fabricated dialogues, though he prefers to quote from letters,

articles, messages and speeches that could have been recorded and taken from different sources. One good example of an interesting dialogue inserted in the rhythm of the account can be found in the scene after the Irish volunteers were attacked and the enemy thought that they had been completely annihilated. In fact, in a broadcast from Madrid it was announced that the Irish had been wiped out. To show how the enemy used propaganda, O'Duffy narrates how "the leader of a party of Red soldiers" deserted the following week and went to them to surrender his arms. An Irish volunteer, Lieutenant Nangle, received him

He announced that he was an officer of the 15<sup>th</sup> (Irish) bandera.

Said the leader of the Red party: "Oh, no señor, you cannot be. The Irish bandera was put out of existence last Saturday. Not a man survived. There was no life left on the plain".

They were astonished to see our troops fresh and well, and could not understand how our casualties had been so few. (1938, 158)

Was O'Duffy present in the scene? Did somebody tell him about this scene? How could O'Duffy remember the exact words of the deserter? Did he keep a diary? Moreover, the conversation was in Spanish, because we are told that Lieutenant Nangle "spoke Spanish fluently" (1938, 158).

In conclusion, we have seen how these two books on the Spanish Civil War by O'Donnell and O'Duffy, written from a very different perspective, serve to show the complex mix of reality and fiction existing in this type of reportage books. Although both texts are written in a precise style, with detailed and realistic descriptions, which provide an impression of objectivity and plausibility of the narrated event, we cannot forget that when writing reportage the authors introduce personal interpretation, critical thinking and creative language. The eyewitness protagonists of these first-person narratives appear convincing and factual, but they colour and shape the presentation of events. In this way, the door is opened to a discourse with strategies and devices commonly used in literature. Given the political context surrounding the all these works, it is only logical that they recur to such literary elements. O'Donnell used his pen as a weapon to counter the effective pro-Franco propaganda that dominated the Irish media. His concern was as much to provide observations on the situation in Spain as to elicit the right response from the Irish community that was being bombarded with accounts of horrible attacks on priests, nuns and churches. As O'Donnell states in his last chapter of *Salud!*, when he returned to Ireland from his trip and experiences in Spain, "[t]he Spanish Civil War was being fought out in Ireland in a more ordered way now, although it was indeed a rather one-sided fight" (1937, 239), alluding to the weight of propaganda from the Irish establishment and conservative forces, which supported Franco's uprising. Similarly, O'Duffy's aim, as he states in his foreword, is to counterbalance the information given in Ireland on the Spanish War, which comes "from tainted sources" (1938, v). One can easily guess that these sources O'Duffy thinks contaminate the information come from those left-wing groups that support the Spanish Republican government.

We therefore understand that the first-person narrative voice that describes the experiences of O'Donnell and O'Duffy in Spain is not totally impartial and impersonal. Of course, that lack of impartiality should not constitute a waiver of the principles and strategies of professional journalism. One has to remember the well-known aphorism by C. P. Scott about the nature of good journalism: "Comment is free, but facts are sacred".<sup>9</sup> However, the veracity of facts narrated by these two writers can be damaged by the inclusion in the text of testimonies from other sources whose origin is not the direct observation of the authors; what we called second-hand narrative or hearsay. It is difficult, however, to decide which of these two authors shows more referentiality and which tends to use fabulation. Although O'Duffy might use less fabricated dialogues and satiric rhetorical, which are more frequent in O'Donnell's prose, his *Crusade in Spain* is full of exacerbated idealism towards the Nationalist side, whereas O'Donnell does not avoid introducing some negative criticism against the Republican side and the militias he supports. Being an experienced novelist and short story writer, O'Donnell simply incorporates the strategies and techniques he often uses in other fictional texts. O'Duffy's message, whether authentic or otherwise, is blunter and to the point, less decorated with literary devices. All in all, it is the astute reader who should be aware of the significance of some narrative strategies and rhetorical devices used by O'Donnell and O'Duffy and ultimately decide on the degree of accuracy and validity of the data collected in this type of reportage books.

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## Notes

1 On the responses of the Irish press to the Spanish Civil War, see Ute Anna Mittermaier (2012).

2 For more details about O'Donnell see Donal Ó Drisceoil's biography (2001). Alexander Gonzalez also wrote a comprehensive study of O'Donnell's novels and autobiographies (1997).

3 An interesting biography of O'Duffy was written by Fearghal McGarry (2005)

4 Much has been written about the characteristics of war reportage and literary journalism. Two good studies on these issues are Mark Connelly and David Welch's study *War and the Media* (2005), and John Bak, and Bill Reynolds's *Literary Journalism Across the Globe* (2011).

5 On the relations between this type of narrative and the representation of history, see White (1987), Gossman (1990) or Holton (1994).

6 On the relations between journalism and literature, see Fisher (1985), Noortwijk (1998) and Blanco Alfonso (2011).

7 The Irish volunteers were attached to the Spanish Foreign Legion as its "XV Bandera" (roughly, "fifteenth battalion"), divided in four companies.

8 For further details about the life of this volunteer, see John Healy's article "Spanish Soldier" in *The Mayo News* (2008).

9 This phrase is included in an article Scott published in his newspaper *The Manchester Guardian* on 5 May 1921 to mark the centenary of its founding.

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