



THE PAINTING OF THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR: SOFT CONSTRUCTION WITH BOILED BEANS

İSPANYA İÇ SAVAŞI'NIN RESMİ: HAŞLANMIŞ FASULYELİ YUMUŞAK İNŞA

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Abstract

Salvador Dalí, a key figure in 20th-century Surrealism, created *Soft Construction with Boiled Beans: Premonition of Civil War*, a significant work that uses Surrealist visual language to depict the destructive impact of the Spanish Civil War. The composition conveys social disintegration by depicting bodily fragmentation and internal conflict, serving as a metaphor for the collapse of a nation torn apart by civil strife. Rather than offering a literal representation of historical events, the work critically interprets the war through symbolic and metaphorical imagery. This research aims to analyze the interpretation of the social tragedy stemming from the Spanish Civil War by investigating the relationship between the artwork and its historical context. The primary focus of the study is to investigate the interaction between the artist's individual perspective and the social and historical realities of the period, to evaluate the role of Dalí's artistic stance in shaping the representation of the subject, and to analyze the metaphors employed in the work to reveal its multilayered meanings.

Keywords: Salvador Dalí, Spain Civil War, Surrealism.

Öz

20. yüzyıl sanatında Gerçeküstücülük akımının önemli temsilcilerinden biri olan Salvador Dalí'nin "Haşlanmış Fasulyeli Yumuşak İnşa: İç Savaşın Öngörüsü" adlı eseri, İspanya İç Savaşı'nın yıkıcı etkilerini gerçeküstü bir üslupla gözler önüne seren çarpıcı bir sanat yapıtıdır. Sanatçı, bu eserinde savaşın yıkımını, parçalanma ve çatışma üzerinden görselleştirerek toplumsal çöküşü güçlü bir şekilde yansıtmaktadır. Aynı zamanda, iç savaşın bir ülkeyi nasıl parçaladığını simgeleyen mecazi anlatımıyla tarihsel olaylara eleştirel bir bakış açısı sunmaktadır. Bu araştırma, eserin İspanya İç Savaşı'yla bağlantısını inceleyerek, savaşın yarattığı toplumsal trajedinin nasıl yorumlandığını analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, sanatçının bireysel bakışı ile dönemin toplumsal ve tarihsel gerçekleri arasındaki ilişkinin ortaya konulması, benimsediği sanatsal tavrın eserinde ele alınan konunun aktarımındaki belirleyici rolünün incelenmesi ve metaforlar yoluyla iletilen mesajın çözümlenerek eserin anlam katmanlarının açığa çıkarılması bu araştırmanın temel problemini oluşturmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Salvador Dalí, İspanya İç Savaşı, Gerçeküstücülük.

INTRODUCTION

Surrealism is an art and thought movement that challenges the boundaries of the subconscious and imagination, rejecting the rules of logic and reality. This movement, which took shape in the 1920s under the leadership of André Breton, aimed to reflect not reality, but the images that lie deep within the human mind, drawing inspiration particularly from Sigmund Freud's theories of dreams and the unconscious. "Soft Construction with Boiled Beans: Premonition of Civil War," a work by Salvador Dalí, one of the important representatives of this movement, completed in 1936 just before the Spanish Civil War began, is one of the striking examples of the Surrealism movement.

In this work, the artist centralizes the theme of fragmentation and conflict, visualizing war as a social devastation and conveying the dramatic effects of the Spanish Civil War onto the canvas through symbolic imagery. This work by Dalí is an impressive study that powerfully critiques how civil war tears a country apart while also offering a metaphorical look at historical events. It also reflects the artist's profound interest in the social and political realities of the time. In this context, the aim of the research is to examine the historical and social connection of the work to the Spanish Civil War, to determine how the artist interpreted the tragic events caused by the war, and to reveal how this interpretation was expressed through symbolic images and original visual narratives.

When evaluated in light of historical data, the fundamental importance of this research lies in understanding how the artist reconstructed reality through a surrealist lens, the symbolic and visual elements he used to depict the physical and psychological devastation caused by war, and how this narrative reflects the relationship between his individual perspective and the social realities of the era. At this point, the fact that the work is not only treated as a form of artistic expression but also as a visual narrative that serves as a powerful critique of the destructive effects of war and a historical document broadens the scope of the research.

The main problem of this research is to reveal the relationship between the artist's individual perspective and the social and historical realities of the period, to examine the decisive role of the artistic approach adopted in conveying the subject matter addressed in the work, and to analyze the message conveyed through metaphors to uncover the layers of meaning in the artwork. In this context, the artist's approach to historical events, their use of symbolic narrative techniques, and their visual language will be evaluated; thus, the work's multifaceted relationship with the political and social dynamics of the period will be comprehensively analyzed. This approach aims to create a framework for understanding how the devastation caused by the Spanish Civil War at social and individual levels was reflected through art and to ground the artistic expression of this process within the context of the Surrealist movement. In this context, the research is limited to a detailed examination of Salvador Dalí's work, "Soft Construction with Boiled Beans: Premonition of Civil War."

METHODOLOGY

This research aims to understand the social repercussions of the Spanish Civil War and the artist's perspective on the political dynamics of the war and the era, using Salvador Dalí's work *Soft Construction with Boiled Beans: Premonition of Civil War* as a case study. The study was structured based on a qualitative research method; the descriptive and interpretive art analysis approach was used together in the data analysis process. In this direction, the work was first described in terms of its formal features, compositional structure, and visual elements; it was then interpreted through symbolic elements and conceptual structure.

In the first phase of the research, the historical, political, and social conditions that led to the Spanish Civil War, as well as the war process, were examined from a historical perspective within the scope of descriptive analysis, particularly in the context of the transformation and destruction it caused in the social structure. The data obtained at this stage was linked to Dalí's artistic production to reveal the position of the images and visual arrangements in the work within their historical and social context.

In the second stage, following the interpretive (hermeneutic) analysis approach, the socio-political dimensions of the Spanish Civil War were discussed through the symbols and visual metaphors used by Dalí in his work. The interaction between the artist's individual artistic language and the historical reality of the period has been evaluated through symbolic expression; it has been shown that the work, rather

than directly depicting historical events, reconstructs them within a critical and intellectual discourse.

In this context, the interdisciplinary approach adopted in the study, combined with the use of descriptive and interpretive analysis methods, has enabled the analysis of both the esthetic structure of the work and its layers of social and historical meaning, offering a multi-layered reading at the intersection of art history, sociology, and history disciplines.

FINDINGS

Spanish Civil War

From the beginning of the 16th century, Spain has figured prominently in history as a major power. Spain's Golden Age in the fields of philosophy, art, religious thought, and literature lasted until the mid-17th century (Akal, 1997, p. 23). From the mid-17th century onward, Spain's power began to decline, and England, France, and the Netherlands moved to the forefront (Potyemkin et al., 2009, p. 176). The political instability Spain experienced from the 19th century onward led to the uprisings of its colonies. After the war with the United States (US) in 1898, Spain also lost its last colonies. After the disaster of 1898, Spain retreated into itself and experienced severe trauma following its heavy defeat. Therefore, by the 20th century, Spain had entered a deep political and social crisis (Bonilla, 2000, p. 9; Kazancakis, 1973, pp. 78-79).

Due to the long-standing problems it was facing, Spain did not participate in World War I, which began in 1914, and remained among the neutral countries. During the war years, Spain's economy grew, but the Spanish tax system was not flexible enough to adapt to the new conditions, so the state did not benefit from the wealth created by the war. Some economic reforms were attempted but were unsuccessful. Economic difficulties led to a reaction from Spanish society, and strong social opposition emerged from 1917 onward. Compared to the years before the war, strikes doubled after it. As a result of the ongoing political crisis in Spain, in 1923 the Barcelona garrison under the command of Miguel Primo de Rivera, the Captain-General of Catalonia, revolted against the government. King Alfonso XIII was forced to dissolve parliament and bring General Miguel Primo de Rivera, the leader of the coup, to power. Thus, the Rivera dictatorship, which would last from 1923 to 1930, began in Spain (Martorell, 2011, pp. 20, 25-27, 32, 41; Caro, 2009, pp. 371-372).

Rivera made some regulations after the beginning of his dictatorship to prevent socialists from opposing him. It offered programs to improve workers' working hours and healthcare (Bookchin, 2014, pp. 141-142). In the early years of Miguel Primo de Rivera's dictatorship, the state-controlled economic policies were partially successful, and the issue in Morocco was resolved with France's support. However, his desire to implement a merit-based promotion system in the army and his dismissal of some high-ranking officers led to a loss of support from the military. The worsening of the economy due to the impact of the Great Depression in 1929 also reduced public support. Due to the loss of support, Alfonso XIII asked Rivera to step down in 1930, thus ending the dictatorship (Black, 2020, pp. 199-200). Following Rivera's fall from power, anti-monarchist republican political parties signed the Pact of San Sebastián in August 1930. With this pact, the aim was to establish a republic in Spain and implement significant innovations that would eliminate the country's social, economic, and regional problems (Horta, 2024, p. 455). The Republicans achieved a concrete result of their collaboration by gaining superiority, especially in large cities, in the municipal elections held on April 12, 1931. This defeat of the monarchists weakened Alfonso XIII's political position and led to his abdication. Thus, the Second Republic Period in Spain began in 1931 (Tusell, 2009, pp. 51-55).

The Second Republic Government implemented comprehensive reforms in the fields of military structure, agriculture, education, and local governance, granting autonomy to Catalonia in 1931 and lifting restrictions on the Catalan language. However, these innovations were met with resistance from certain segments of society, as well as from the church, the military, and the bourgeoisie; particularly, the regulations that aimed to reduce the number of officers in the military and regional power created significant discontent among soldiers toward the government (Gómez, Jover, and Fusi, 2001, pp. 679-682).

With the defeat of the Republican government in the 1933 elections, right-wing parties came to power, paving the way for a nationalist/fascist regime in Spain. The new government, while collaborating with

Italy under Benito Mussolini, faced strikes and uprisings led by the left, particularly the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT) and the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT). Francisco Franco's involvement in the brutal suppression of the uprising in Asturias heralded the impending Civil War (Arikli, 1975, pp. 345-347).

The uprisings in Asturias unsettled right-wing politicians, and in late 1934, the Bloque Nacional was formed to prevent a possible leftist revolution. This right-wing bloc, led by José Calvo Sotelo, aimed to unite against leftist movements. In response, leftist parties united to form the Frente Popular in January 1936 (Horta, 2024, pp. 493-494). The alliances formed have caused Spain to be ideologically divided. The election period's campaigns have also resulted in increased polarization. The Popular Front's overwhelming victory in the February 1936 general elections widened the gap between right-wing and left-wing views. Right-wing parties suffered an unexpected defeat due to their overconfidence (Moradiellos, 2017, pp. 1, 37-38; Caro, 1999-2000, pp. 341-344).

After the elections, the Nationalists attempted to seize power through undemocratic means. On the other hand, assassinations against bureaucrats, journalists, and other individuals took place prior to the start of the Spanish Civil War. Indeed, the right-wing murdered Lieutenant José del Castillo, a Republican, on July 12, 1936. In response, the leftists ended the life of José Calvo Sotelo, a prominent right-wing politician. These developments escalated the chaos in Spain and laid the groundwork for the eventual Spanish Civil War. Nationalists obtained the pretext they were waiting for to rebel with the assassination of Sotelo. On July 17, 1936, Spanish military units in Morocco revolted against the Republican government. The Spanish Civil War, which began on July 17, 1936, lasted until April 1, 1939. Francisco Franco, one of the generals who caused the Spanish Civil War, later became the leader of the rebellion (Arikli, 1975, pp. 352-355; Işık, 1991, p. 241; Beevor, 2022, pp. 236-238).

To prevent the Spanish Civil War from spreading throughout Europe, Britain and France pursued a policy of neutrality. This attitude was against the Republicans, who were the official government of Spain. The UK and France equated Republicans elected to office with nationalists seeking to revolt against them. On the other hand, Italy and Germany supported the Nationalists, while the Soviet Union supported the Republicans. The Nationalists, who received more foreign aid, increased the pressure on the Republicans. Therefore, the Republican government moved the capital from Madrid to Valencia in November 1936. In the autumn of 1937, the Nationalists' advance continued. Seeing the danger, the Republican Government was once again forced to change its center, and by the end of October 1937, Barcelona became the new capital (Gülsoy, 2024, pp. 295-296; Beevor, 2022, pp. 277-278; La Libertad, 1937, p. 1).

One of the most decisive moments of the Spanish Civil War occurred in the Battle of Teruel. To weaken the nationalists' power, the Republicans changed their strategy and went on the offensive, aiming to recapture the city of Teruel. In the early stages of the Battle of Teruel, which began in December 1937, the Republicans were successful. However, the Nationalists gained momentum from February 1938 onwards. The loss of the war caused enormous devastation among the Republicans and led to them completely losing psychological superiority to the Nationalists. At the end of the war, it became clear that the Republican soldiers were worn down and the Nationalist army had a superior advantage in weaponry (Castán, 2002, pp. 37-43; Beevor, 2022, pp. 475-484).

Following the Battle of Teruel, the Nationalists aimed to capture the last remaining areas held by the Republicans. In this context, a new conflict arose between the two sides in July 1938. The Battle of the Ebro, which began in July 1938, was the longest-lasting battle of the Spanish Civil War. As a result of the Ebro Battle, which ended in November 1938, the Republicans were forced to withdraw their damaged units. After the victory, Franco's forces wanted to capture Barcelona. In December 1938, the Nationalists' attacks on Barcelona began. In January 1939, the exhausted Republican forces left the city without much resistance against the Nationalists. After the fall of Barcelona, the Nationalists advanced on Madrid and captured the city in March 1939. The Spanish Civil War definitively ended on April 1, 1939, with the Republican forces accepting defeat (Gülsoy, 2024, pp. 296-297; Black, 2020, pp. 219-220). On the other hand, among the reasons why the Republicans lost the war is their internal division. Disagreements among left-wing groups prevented the Republicans from standing against the Nationalists as a single force. Following the Spanish Civil War, Franco's rule began, and he governed

the country with an iron fist for thirty-six years until his death (Orwell, 1985, pp. 67-68, 80, 189-191, 226; Yıldırım, 2018, p. 9).

On the other hand, the Spanish Civil War had not only political but also social consequences. When the war ended, two million prisoners were sent to camps and prisons, five hundred thousand homes were destroyed, and one hundred and eighty-three cities suffered major damage. By the end of three years, one million people had lost their lives due to the war, and five hundred thousand people had been forced into exile (Nenni, 1973, p. 226). One of the reasons for this social destruction is Germany and Italy's support for the Nationalists. Some believe Franco needed Hitler and Mussolini's help to win the war. Additionally, the policy of non-intervention by Britain and France facilitated the defeat of the Republicans. Their aim was first to eliminate the left in Spain and then to ensure that Germany and Italy attacked the USSR. However, these plans backfired on them and paved the way for World War II. After World War II, the United States provided military, financial, and diplomatic support to Franco due to the Cold War. Thus, the Franco regime ruled Spain for many years (Arıklı, 1975, pp. 375-378).

Artwork Analysis

Surrealism is an artistic and intellectual movement that reflects dreams and the subconscious in reality, enabling humans to explore their deepest desires. This movement, which took shape under the leadership of figures like André Breton, Paul Éluard, and Louis Aragon, and whose roots lie in Dadaism, aims to reveal the limitless power of the subconscious and the potential of dreams by rejecting logic and rational thought and was heavily influenced by Freud's theories of the subconscious and dreams (Criel, 1952, p. 133).

In this regard, the *Eczacıbaşı Art Encyclopedia* states that Breton was influenced by the theories developed by Freud on the subconscious and dreams while emphasizing that artists focused on painting images from the subconscious and worlds based on imagination rather than reflecting reality. This understanding asserts that surrealist art provides a creative process that defies logic and traditional aesthetic rules (Rona, 1997, p. 670).

In this context, automatism, a significant technique at the heart of the Surrealist movement, is a direct reflection of this mindset. Automatism, as an important method of expression in this movement, refers to the free flow of thoughts without any logical or moral constraints. In the first Surrealist Manifesto, André Breton defines this method as "psychic automatism," which means reflecting the natural functioning of thought verbally or in writing without any external influence or esthetic concern. He states that it is based on the method of free association in psychoanalysis (Antmen, 2008, pp. 135-136).

Paintings of Surrealism typically feature compositions that combine recognizable objects in surreal environments or illogical relationships. The subconscious influences these works, giving familiar objects new meanings. The work "Soft Construction with Boiled Beans: Premonition of Civil War" by Salvador Dalí, one of the important artists of Surrealism, and examined within the scope of this research in relation to the Spanish Civil War, is a typical example of Surrealist art (Figure 1). At the center of the painting is a deformed figure formed by the coming together of fragmented body parts. The size of the figure emphasizes the dramatic effect of the work, while the sky and the desolate lands in the background add depth to the composition and also increase the emphasis on the main figure. Light is distributed across the surface of the figure with soft transitions, highlighting the fragmented and twisted areas of the body with shadows and emphasizing the figure's sculptural effect.



Figure 1. Salvador Dalí, *Soft Construction with Boiled Beans: Premonition of Civil War*, 1936, Oil on canvas, 100x99 cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania, United States

Among the elements that make up the composition are bean seeds, excrement located next to the right leg, a chest of drawers that the figure is leaning on, and a figure depicted as considerably smaller than the main figure, which is behind the hand touching the ground. This figure, along with the same space, was also used in the artist's other work, the painting "The Pharmacist of Ampurdà, Not Seeking Anything" (Figure 2). In this simple and non-surrealist landscape painting, Dalí has combined the Empordà plain near Figueres with a figure taken from a scientific journal. It is known that Dalí took this figure from a magazine image, and it is believed that this person could be the Austrian doctor Victor Eisenmenger. When viewed through the lens of not searching for anything, as the title suggests, it can be said that the figure depicted in the work is used as an element that adds scale and movement to the landscape (Shanes, 2012, p. 164). Considering the same context, this figure may not have a special meaning in the work titled "Soft Construction with Boiled Beans: Premonition of the Civil War" and may have been used only as a scale tool. Thus, it becomes possible to compare the self-destructive figure to a normal human being, and this comparison shows that the giant pile of meat signifies much more than an ordinary person/situation.



Figure 2. Salvador Dalí, *The Ampurdanese Pharmacist, Nothing Seeking Nothing*, 1936

When looking at the painting as a whole, it is evident that in addition to the surrealist approach, the viewer is confronted with a terrifying scene. In this regard, art historian Gert Schiff stated that the entire painting echoes with a painful scream, which can be described as a true “primitive scream”. According to Schiff, this screaming, deformed head looks less like a human being and more like a mass of torn flesh, with the contractions caused by pain transforming it into a pile of ripped meat. The author states that on the right side of the head, a leg that has almost turned into a skeleton emerges from the shoulder, and on the left side, an inflamed chest is violently gripped by a fist rising from below; in the middle of these two sections, the upper half of which is female and the lower half male, and which are also at war with each other, there is a void (Schiff, 1978, pp. 120-121). Additionally, this void, reminiscent of a map of Spain, is interpreted in the painting as an area pointing to Spain (Figures 3 and 4).



Figure 3. Salvador Dalí, *Soft Construction with Boiled Beans: Premonition of Civil War* (Detail)



Figure 4. *Map of Spain, July 1936*

Evaluating the naming of the painting will help us understand Spain’s situation during the creation of the work and what exactly the artist was depicting. At this point, the following words from art historian Dawn Ades regarding the naming process of the painting are sufficient to illuminate the subject: Critics claim that Dalí renamed this painting after the event, viewing it as a prophecy of the Spanish Civil War, and that he chose this name for opportunistic reasons during his exhibition at the Julien Levy Gallery in December, which occurred after the war began in July 1936. However, the painting was made in the first half of 1936 and exhibited in London in June under the name *Soft Construction with Boiled Apricots* due to a translation error. In October 1936, the work was published in the magazine *Minotaure* under the title “Spain: Harbinger of Civil War”. This name change takes place immediately after the outbreak of the war. The claim that Dalí deliberately gave this name is as meaningless as saying he knew exactly when the war would begin (Ades, 2000, p. 120).

The most critical point to emphasize is that the signs of the Civil War, which emerged from a gradual process, had been felt for quite some time; therefore, Dalí was not making a prophecy but rather designing a composition based on a historical event he had witnessed. To understand this process, the words of Jürgen Tesch and Eckhard Hollmann in their book “Icons of Art” (1997, p. 98) contribute to understanding the pre-war process. They state that the Spanish army did not suddenly launch General Franco’s uprising against the Popular Front on July 17, 1936; that the February 16, 1936, elections deepened the polarization between the right and left, leading to the complete disappearance of the political center; and that the atmosphere of confusion was further inflamed by arson and assassination attempts in the following months. In addition, art historian Paul Moorhouse expresses Dalí’s need to directly experience this chaotic environment with the following words: Although the war had not yet begun, the political turmoil in Spain was at a visible level. In October 1934, Dalí and Gala set off for a conference Dalí was giving in Barcelona. However, a general strike and an armed uprising by Catalan separatists forced them to flee immediately. They managed to reach Paris safely, but their escape was a close call; the driver who took them to the border was killed on the way back. Dalí expressed his feelings at the time with these words: “*I sensed the impending great cannibalism and civil war of our history*” (Moorhouse, 1999, p. 82).

Moorhouse’s words reveal a socially chaotic environment, which the artist personally witnessed. Therefore, it is clear that the painting does not contain a prophecy, nor is the artist pursuing opportunism by changing the painting’s title. Even when considered independently of its title, the painting contains profound clues about the destructive environment and the consequences of war, and it is understood that the composition of the painting was deliberately created within this context.

As can be seen, the origins of the artist’s depiction of a significant and painful event in Spanish history, and his portrayal of the destructive nature of war through metaphors such as cannibalism and self-destruction via a colossal and grotesque figure, can be found in some of the works of Francisco Goya, one of the most important figures in Spanish painting. For example, it is conceivable that the artist's painting titled “Giant” was an inspiration for Dalí’s colossal figure (Keevill and Eyres, 2006, p. 142) (Figure 5). In both studies, the giant figures emphasize the overwhelming and uncontrollable impact of war on individuals and society. Additionally, Goya’s painting “Saturn” depicts the mythological figure who eats his son out of a lust for power, while Dalí’s painting similarly features a giant figure consuming and destroying its body (Figure 6). This similarity brings both works together in a common point within the context of the civil war’s power struggle (Aldoğan, 2022, pp. 95-96). Finally, Dalí’s deformed and fragmented figures are reminiscent of the destruction inflicted on the human body and soul in Goya’s series of engravings titled “The Disasters of War” (Figure 7). In this context, it is possible to draw a connection between Dalí’s decaying bodies and chaotic scenes and Goya’s harsh and painful depictions of the social collapse of war.



Figure 5. Francisco Goya, *The Colossus*, after 1808, oil on canvas, 116x105 cm, Museo Del Prado, Madrid, Spain

Figure 6. Francisco Goya, *Saturn*, 1820-23, Oil on canvas, 143.5x81.4 cm, Museo Del Prado, Madrid, Spain

Figure 7. Francisco Goya, *From the Disasters of War Series*, 1810-20, Etching, wash, and drypoint on paper, 15.5x20.5 cm, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh, Scotland

War and that the origins of the images used in the metaphor conveyed are also drawn from Spanish art. However, the artist takes a step further by conveying a broad observation, thereby expanding the painting's context beyond Spain alone. The artist's subsequent statements reveal that Dali, who concentrated on the impact of civil war on social structures and based the painting's framework on this foundation, did not refer to a historically unique event; instead, he provided a significant insight into the common consequences that a civil war typically produces.

It is possible to predict immediately which side will win and which side will lose when a war, especially a civil war, breaks out. Those who are healthy from the start will win, while the others will get sicker. Those who win can eat anything and always have perfect digestion. On the other hand, others become deaf or are covered in boils, contract elephantiasis, and, in short, cannot benefit from anything they eat (Shanes, 2012, p. 42).

The artist's statements show that the effects of a civil war, especially on society, would be unsurprising. From this perspective, it's possible to observe not only the Spanish Civil War but also many civil wars throughout history with similar levels of destruction.

Finally, it is quite difficult to speculate on the meaning of the beans, which can be considered an important element mentioned in the work's title, and the depicted excrement, which, although seemingly ordinary within the surrealist narrative, adds to the painting. At this point, Dali's statement that the mass of flesh in the painting could not be eaten without a vegetable like boiled beans, and his reference to the excrement on the leg on the right side as a result of eating beans, explain the questions surrounding this issue (Shanes, 2012, p. 167). Tesch and Hollman's statement that the white bean and excrement symbols, along with the satirical expressions of the subsequent process, were Dali's words also aligns with Dali's own statements (1997, p. 98). By using these elements, the artist has both strengthened the surrealist narrative and facilitated the establishment of connections that support the content of the work.

When viewed holistically, this work depicts the devastating effects of the Spanish Civil War in surreal language, symbolizing how it divided and destroyed a nation. At this point, author Pietro Nenni (1973, p. 226) states that five hundred thousand homes were destroyed as a result of this war, approximately two hundred cities were largely damaged, two million prisoners were held, five hundred thousand people were exiled, and one million people lost their lives. This situation not only demonstrates the severity of the war but also forms the roots of the critical perspective of the artist's work, which he shaped through the metaphor of self-eating.

CONCLUSION

The United Kingdom and France, along with other European states, share responsibility for the political and social devastation that resulted from the Spanish Civil War. The Republicans, who won the 1936 elections, were equated with the Nationalists who staged a coup to seize power. The policy of nonintervention backfired on the Republicans and led to a major disaster during the Civil War, as it allowed the Nationalists to gain strength and ultimately win the conflict, resulting in severe repercussions for the Spanish population. On the other hand, the Spanish Civil War had social as well as political consequences. With the end of the war, millions of people were sent to camps and prisons; hundreds of thousands of homes were destroyed, and cities were heavily damaged. As a result of this devastating process, approximately one million people lost their lives, and hundreds of thousands were forced into exile. This enormous destruction also deeply affected the social structure and the lives of individuals. One of the main reasons for the social destruction was the support given to the Nationalists by Germany and Italy, which strengthened Franco's power; the non-intervention policy of England and France, on the other hand, accelerated the defeat of the Republicans. The strategies of Western states, contrary to expectations, triggered the process leading to World War II, and later, the support given to Franco by the USA under Cold War conditions ensured the regime's prolonged continuation.

These results have particularly influenced the artistic production of many artists of the period, especially in terms of content. When viewed within this framework, Salvador Dalí's work "Soft Construction with Boiled Beans: Premonition of Civil War" strikingly reflects the devastating impact of the Spanish Civil War, which began in 1936, on society through a fragmented and deformed figure. In this work, Dalí reveals that war is not merely a physical conflict but a destructive process that has lasting effects, especially on society. The figure's deformed, grotesquely twisted body parts represent the spiritual and physical destruction of war, and the figure's self-destructive nature represents the social division that civil war causes.

The ominous atmosphere seen in the background of the work reinforces the chaos and uncertainty brought by war, while the unsettling feeling dominating the overall composition forces the viewer to confront the horrific consequences of civil war. The deformed structures of the figures and the ambiguity of the space not only make physical destruction visible but also the fragmentation occurring in the human inner world. The dissolution of the perception of time and space pulls the viewer away from familiar reality, drawing them into the dark realms of the unconscious.

Dalí's surrealist style reveals the irrationality of war while also visualizing the fear, paranoia, and unease that lie deep within the unconscious. The artist transcends the boundaries of rational reality, bringing the viewer out of their usual perception through unexpected form combinations, fragmented bodies, and illogical spatial constructs. Adorned with surreal images, this scene opens up to a world where dreams and nightmares intertwine, and time and space dissolve, making both the concrete and psychological dimensions of the collapse caused by war visible.

Through this visual language, the artist conveys that war is not merely an external conflict but also inflicts deep wounds on the individual's mind and soul. The rupture between the image and its meaning creates a sense of alienation in the viewer, while simultaneously bringing the repressed contents of the unconscious to the surface. Thus, the work transforms into a universal inquiry into the fragility of human nature in the face of violence, starting from a historical event, and invites the viewer not only to contemplate a tragedy that occurred in the past but also to reconsider the continuity of violence.

As an extension of this universal inquiry, Dalí's work not only points to the Spanish Civil War but also to the internal conflicts and the shared tragedies created by wars throughout human history. In this respect, it transcends a specific historical context, creating a timeless narrative and making the devastating effects of war strikingly visible through the possibilities of surrealist language.

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