Abstract

A monument known as the Valley of the Fallen is located about fifty kilometers from Madrid. The complex was built by General Franco as a memorial to the victims of the Civil War. After his death, Franco himself was buried here in the basilica caved into the rock. The remains of the dictator situated at such a monumental site together with thousands of victims of the Civil War are, according to many, an unresolved issue for democratic Spain. As many meanings are assigned to the site, the debate about the Valley of the Fallen includes other topics as well. The thesis presents and analyzes the politics of memory and debate on the contested site of memory Valley of the Fallen from the beginning of the Zapatero government in 2004 until the end of the Rajoy government in May 2018. Based on the typology of mnemonic actors of M. Bernhard and J. Kubik, the thesis identifies and classifies national institutional actors participating in this debate. Transnational actors, as well as attitudes of the Spanish civil society, are also mentioned. Therefore, the thesis connects three areas of the collective memory studies: sites of memory, politics of memory and mnemonic actors.