



Crusaders and Commissars:

A Comparative Study of the Motivation of
Volunteers in the Popular and National Armies in
the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939

Christopher Bannister

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization
of the European University Institute

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Abstract

This thesis is a comparative analysis of the propaganda programmes employed in the motivation of volunteer soldiers in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939. It focuses on the successes and failures of each programme in convincing volunteers from various political backgrounds to fight for values that differed from those for which they took up arms. The programme of the Francoist National Army, known as ‘the Crusade’, presented the war as a conflict between the true, Christian Spain and a Muscovite invader, intent of destroying the nation and enslaving its people. The Popular Army’s programme was neither as singular nor as emotive and the message that was presented was a diffuse one. Evoking Spanish nationalism, proletarianism and antifascism, ‘Republicanism’, as this thesis shall refer to it, was designed to broadly appeal to all groups within the disparate Republic polity.

The thesis first establishes the content of both programmes clearly and the means by which they were disseminated, with special attention paid to the Political Commissariat of the Popular Army. Attention then turns to how each programme was presented to the volunteer soldiers of four distinct political affiliations across four case study chapters. On the Republican side the case studies chosen are those of the anarchist *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* and the Basque nationalist *Partido Nacionalista Vasco*, while the Francoist case studies are the fascist *Falange Española de las JONS* and the reactionary, parochial and Catholic *Comunión Tradicionalista*. Each case study examines how each programme was presented to politically motivated soldiers and what ideological questions were emphasised, answered, altered or ignored in order to ensure volunteers’ continued bellicosity. The thesis will highlight the innate advantages of having a coherent, singular motivational programme such as the Crusade over a more diffuse, all-encompassing programme, such as the one presented to the soldiery of the Popular Army. However, it will also highlight that, with a propaganda service as dedicated as the Republic’s Political Commissariat, the Republic was able to overcome some (although not all) of its inherent disadvantages.

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Table of Contents	ii
Acknowledgments	iii
Introduction	1
Chapter One: 'The Sacred Crusade to Save Spain' – The Martial-Political Discourse of the <i>Ejército Nacional</i>	15
Chapter Two: Defining ‘Republicanism’ – The Motivational Programme of the <i>Ejército Popular</i> , 1936-1939	61
Chapter Three: Revolution or Victory – <i>Cenetista</i> motivations in the Popular Army	95
Chapter Four: God, <i>Patria</i> and Freedom – Motivating the <i>gudaris</i> of the <i>Euzko Gudarostea</i>	149
Chapter Five: A ‘March on Madrid’ – <i>Requetés</i> and the Crusade	195
Chapter Six: ‘Rescuing the <i>Patria</i> from the clutches of beasts’ – Falange Volunteers and the Crusade	249
Appendix I	321
Appendix II	322
Appendix III	323
Bibliography	325

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Introduction

Seventy-five years after the conclusion of the Spanish Civil War this thesis will ask a question with a simple premise, what motivated men to fight in it? It is a question that has captivated scholars, many of whom have focused on the international aspect, looking at why soldiers from across the world chose to fight in the war.¹ This investigation will, rather than continue this approach, instead look at volunteers from Spain who were as equally motivated as their international brethren. Yet it will not merely examine their initial motivations for joining the conflict, but ask how and why they continued to do so, even after their original motives had been quashed. The exact question investigated by this thesis revolves around the success of overarching motivational frameworks in enthusing previously politically affiliated soldiers to fight in the Republic's Popular Army and Franco's National Army. The hope is to contribute an original study on the successes and failures of martial propaganda in the Spanish Civil War.

The Spanish Civil War began in Spanish-occupied Morocco on 17 July 1936 when the forces of the Army of Africa took control of the protectorate, exactly a day later the rebellion spread to the mainland as the military conspirators, aided by their civilian allies, rose across Spain. Yet the attempted *coup d'état* was not a unqualified success and by 19 July the Army had been repelled by the organised working class in most of Spain's major cities. The only cities of note to immediately fall to the rebels were Zaragoza and Seville. The immediate trigger for the war was the murder of the monarchist leader José Calvo Sotelo by members of the Assault Guard, the Republican urban police force, and socialist activists on 13 July. However, the arrangements for the uprising had been put into motion long before, with planning beginning in earnest following the victory of the left-wing alliance, the Popular Front, in the elections of the previous February. The roots of animosity were deeper still – with the five previous years of democracy under the Spanish Second Republic (1931-1936) being viewed as an aberration for many in the Army and on the Right in general.² Yet despite

¹ Richard Baxell, *British volunteers in the Spanish Civil War: the British Battalion in the International Brigades, 1936-1939*, (London: Routledge, 2004); Peter Carroll, *The odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade: Americans in the Spanish Civil War*, (California: Stanford University Press, 1994); Judith Keene, *Fighting for Franco – International Volunteers in Nationalist Spain during the Spanish Civil War*, (London: Continuum, 2007); Antonio Díez, *Brigadas Internacionales: Cartas desde España: Brigadistas del Gran Manchester en el Batallón Británico de la XV Brigada*, (Brenes: Manuel Moya, 2005).

² The Army, as shall be explained over the course of this thesis, was not a homogenous bloc and did not rise in its entirety with many of its ranks remaining loyal to the Republic. However, for the sake of brevity, in this brief *précis* of events, 'the Army' shall serve as shorthand for the conspirators. For more on those in the Army that remained loyal to the Republic see, Carlos Navajas Zubeldía, *Leales y Rebeldes – la tragedia de los militares republicanos*, (Madrid: Síntesis, 2011).

their indignation and planning, the rebellion of Army had failed and the die was set. Spain was gripped by war and it would take almost three years for the Republic to finally fall.

In the parts of Spain captured by the rebels, the Army became the immediate authority. Its power was unassailable and, despite the inclusion of political groups later in the war, this continued to be the case for the foreseeable future as Franco became the head of the State and Armed Forces on 1 October 1936. That is not to say that there was no political heterogeneity, as shall be explained in the following paragraphs and over the thesis, the rebel polity was not singular. However, following the years of perceived anarchy that the Republic had apparently overseen, law and order were the first priority and military rule was the guarantee of this. In the parts of the country where the rebellion failed this was not the case as the rebels' nightmares became a reality. The coup had led to the collapse of state authority and the summer of 1936 saw social revolution take hold in loyal Spain. In the part of loyal Spain not gripped by revolution, the Basque country, there were equally troubling developments for those of the Spanish Right as an autonomy statute was negotiated for the region.³ Led by the libertarian communist elements of the anarcho-syndicalist trade union, the *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (National Confederation of Labour, CNT) the Spanish revolution saw in parts of Catalonia and Aragon the creation of a collectivized rural economy and in the major cities, particularly Barcelona, a new social dynamic forged.⁴ There was also a darker side to this, as countless suspected rightists and members of the clergy were murdered in extra-judicial executions by 'uncontrollable' revolutionaries (*incontrolados*).⁵ However, the revolution was short lived as, through machinations of the Republican authorities aided by the Stalinist *Partido Comunista de España* (Spanish Communist Party), it was rolled back and by mid-1937 state authority had been completely restored.

While all of this upheaval took place in the rearguard there still remained the issue of the war at the front. In the spirit of the times, the armed forces which went to fend off the

³ The details of this will be expounded in Chapter Four.

⁴ The Spanish Revolution has been written about *ad nauseam*, with notable works from Pierre Broué, *La revolución española, 1931-1939*, (Barcelona: Peninsula, 1977); the various incarnations of Burnett Bolloten's *The Grand Camouflage. The Communist conspiracy in the Spanish Civil War*, (London: Hollis & Carter, 1961); the most recent being *La Guerra Civil española: revolución y contrarrevolución*, (Madrid: Alianza, 2004); For a more recent take and a compelling picture of revolutionary Barcelona see Chris Ealham, 'The myth of the maddened crowd: class, culture and space in the revolutionary urbanist project in Barcelona, 1936-7', in *The Splintering of Spain – Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War 1936-9*, ed. Chris Ealham and Michael Richards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 111-132.

⁵ Julius Ruiz, "'Incontrolados' en la España republicana durante la guerra civil: el caso de Luis Bonilla Echevarría", *Historia y Política*, No. 21, (January-June, 2009), pp. 191-218; Javier Cervera Gil, "Violencia en el Madrid de la Guerra Civil: los 'paseos' (Julio a Diciembre de 1936)", *Historia Contemporánea*, Vol. 13, (1995), pp. 63-82; Mary Vincent, "'The keys to the kingdom': religious violence in the Spanish civil war, July-August 1936", in *The Splintering of Spain – Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939*, Chris Ealham and Michael Richards, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp.68-89

advance of the Army were not soldiers of the military, but volunteers in popular militias. These militia columns spurned traditional military discipline, rank, uniforms and direct orders and were wholly voluntary, with militiamen allowed to come and go as they pleased. However, just as the revolution had been rolled back, the soldiers that went to ‘defend the revolution’ in the summer of 1936 were not the same as those which surrendered to Franco on 1 April 1939. By the end of the war these units had been integrated into the *Ejército Popular*, a monolithic military endeavour that numbered over a million men and employed all the military facets previously spurned by the militias.⁶ However, despite the military structures changing, the vast majority of the soldiers that went to the front in 1936 were counted within the ‘Mixed Brigades’ of the Popular Army, fighting for the state under military discipline. On the national side there was a similar transition, with the volunteer units which supplemented the Army’s forces immediately after the outbreak of war being integrated into the ranks of the army. These volunteers were also expected to accept the practices and motivational frameworks of the body that had integrated them. Consequently, the men that marched to the front alongside the Army were, in this sense, no different from their Republican counterparts. They too had begun as politically motivated volunteers and later became soldiers in Franco’s army, fighting, in no uncertain terms, a war whose objectives were defined by the *Generalísimo*. This thesis will be an examination of how the soldiers of each side were encouraged to continue fighting in face of political upheaval, in circumstances wholly different to ones they volunteered in.

Prior to the Civil War commentators had long employed a narrative of ‘the two Spains’, a nation wrought by an irreparable internal conflict, and it was assumed by some that the Civil War was the ultimate conflagration of this dichotomy.⁷ Catalan bishop Enrique Pla y Deniel would allude to this in his pastoral letter of the 30 September 1936, ‘*Las dos ciudades*’, in which he would describe the Civil War as one between ‘two concepts of life, two sentiments’.⁸ Yet a cursory examination of the myriad groups active in the summer of 1936 highlights the fallacy in this simplistic interpretation. The two sides of the Civil War were not two homogenous blocks that came to face one another but were instead comprised of various differing political affiliations and groups that often shared very little in common. They were united by the most tenuous of circumstances, a shared enemy, and often little

⁶ Michael Seidman, *Republic of Egos – A Social History of the Spanish Civil War*, (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), p. 40.

⁷ The phrase ‘*las dos Españas*’ was originally coined by the poet Antonio Machado in 1912, yet the concept of the nation split between liberal and an reactionary tendencies reached back much further. For a comprehensive overview of the concept see Santos Juliá, *Historias de las dos Españas*, (Madrid : Taurus, 2004).

⁸ *ABC Sevilla*, 23 September, p. 3

more. This was certainly the case on the Republican side, with the political spectrum ranging from the CNT on the left to the conservative Catholics of the *Partido Nacional Vasco*, (Basque National Party, PNV) on the right. Included within this spectrum there were the parliamentary socialists of the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE) and their affiliated union, the *Unión General de Trabajadores* (General Union of Workers, UGT), the leftist party of President Manuel Azaña, *Izquierda Republicana* (Republican Left, IR) and the aforementioned Stalinist PCE. There was less of a political variety on the rebel side, but alongside the Army there remained distinct ideological groups, most notably the reactionary and parochial Carlists of the *Comunión Tradicionalista* (Traditional Communion), the Alfonsine Monarchists of *Renovación Española* (Spanish Renovation) and the fascists of the *Falange Española de las J.O.N.S.* (Spanish Phalanx of the Unions of the National Syndicalist Offensive, FE de las JONS). Each of these various groups would in the early months of the war, jostle for political influence over the political direction of the conflict. The first two chapters of this thesis will outline the details of this, yet the result needs to be emphasised – by early 1937 each side a relatively well-defined sense of its political direction and what they were ‘fighting for’ and this was consequently translated into motivational programmes for their respective soldiery. Those who fought for Franco were engaged in a Christian ‘Crusade to save the *Patria*’ against an atheist, Muscovite invader while those on the side of the Republican fought in the struggle of the Spanish proletariat against the designs of international fascism.⁹

Aims and State of the Art

The initial aim of this thesis is the examination of these motivational programmes.¹⁰ The investigation will initially focus upon the content of each, how they defined the Francoist and Republican interpretations of the war while simultaneously encouraging soldiers to fight for them. Yet composing such a programme is easier said than done, given the variations in political affiliation that fought on each side, and, as we shall see, the result was a pair of motivational programmes that while broadly appealing, were not all-encompassing.

⁹ Throughout this thesis I will be referring to the *Patria*, best understood as a romantic conception of the nation and its land. The word has no direct English equivalent with ‘Homeland’ being perhaps the closest approximation although this does not convey the emotional weight that the term holds in Spanish.

¹⁰ The term ‘motivational programme’ will be employed as shorthand for the propaganda efforts made by each side to motivate their respective soldiery to fight. It is a relatively ungainly term, but in order for ease of reference, it has been employed.

Subsequently the thesis will, through case study chapters of CNT, Basque nationalist, Carlist and Falangist units, examine how each programme was presented to politically motivated soldiers and what ideological questions were emphasised, answered, altered or ignored in order to ensure their continued bellicosity. The ultimate objective is to understand how and why troops that went to war, fighting for a particular cause, were motivated to continue fighting for a different one.

The extent of historiography will only be briefly surmised here, the aim instead being to place the study in the context of recent work in the field. Each individual chapter will delve deeper into the relevant material. The most immediately relevant recent historiography is that which has sought to ‘de-politicise’ the conflict and focus instead on those for whom the war was not a political struggle, but a calamity into which they were unwillingly thrown, the most prominent examples of this school being Michael Seidman, Pedro Corral and James Matthews.¹¹ In regards to the military aspect the focus of these historians has broadly been on conscripted men, for whom the main concerns of the war were family and food rather than doctrine and ideology.¹² The motivation behind this new approach was a reaction against a perceived dominant trend in Spanish Civil War historiography, which was seen to have sought to present the conflict exclusively as an ideological war, ‘the last great cause’.¹³ According to Seidman this approach ‘maintains a political perspective which searches for the “decisive”, heroic, committed and the militant’ yet ignores what he sees as typical the rank-and-file.¹⁴ Each of the above historians offer exemplary works that shed new light on the conflict, rightly presenting it as one in which the majority of its combatants were not previously politically motivated. Matthews in particular looks at the propaganda used to motivate these soldiers – outlining the war as it was presented to conscripts.¹⁵ However, the aim of this thesis, as stated, is the examination of each motivational programme from the perspective of soldiers who went to war with political aims. In their haste to analyse the experience of apolitical participants, caught up in the cogs of total war, Seidman, Matthews

¹¹ Their most prominent works: Seidman, *Republic of Egos...*; *The Victorious Counterrevolution – The Nationalist Effort in the Spanish Civil War*, (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011); James Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors: Republican Popular Army and Nationalist Army conscripts in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939*, (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2012); Pedro Corral, *Desertores – La Guerra Civil que nadie quiere contar*, (Barcelona: Debate, 2006).

¹² This focus is not undeserved, as over one million men on each side were conscripted, the Republic alone calling up the conscription classes of twenty-seven separate years, from 1915-1941 and the insurgents calling up fifteen from 1927-1940; Michael Alpert, “Soldiers, Politics and War” in *Revolution and War in Spain, 1931-1939* ed. Paul Preston (New York: Methuen, 1984), pp. 217-218.

¹³ Tom Buchanan, *The Spanish Civil War and the British Labour Movement*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 3.

¹⁴ Seidman, *Republic of Egos...*, p. 9.

¹⁵ Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors...*, pp. 63-101.

and to a lesser extent Corral give insufficient weight to soldiers who were previously politically motivated, affected by the same processes. These soldiers may well have been part of the politically motivated minority and were, on the most part, participants from very early on in the war, yet that is not to say that the values of either Francoism or the Republic wholly, or even partially, reflected their ambitions. Consequently this thesis will offer a ‘re-politicised’ approach, understanding the contribution of the above historiography to the field, but returning the focus to those that have so captivated historians, namely the politicised.

One further difference that it would be remiss to neglect is that the above works are, by and large, social studies, focussing on day to day life. This thesis is a cultural study looking at the means by which soldiers were motivated and their efficacy. While the social studies offer an insight into the interpretation of events ‘from below’ this thesis aims to look at measures taken from ‘above’ to affect this interpretation. Therefore the chapters will, rather than focus entirely upon soldiers experiences, look at how propaganda affected their outlook and mindset. The sources analysed, detailed later in this section, will therefore range from newspapers and propaganda material found in archives to memoirs, diaries and soldiers letters.

There exists a long list of works that focus on the armed forces in the Spanish Civil War, ranging from overarching studies to smaller and more complex works on specific issues and events.¹⁶ In regards to the *Ejército Popular*, the works most referenced in this thesis are Michael Alpert’s various incarnations of his 1977 work, *El ejército republicano en la guerra civil*, which have served as good reference points, although not infallible in their analysis or scope of sources analysed.¹⁷ There was no similar set of works in the chapters regarding the *Ejército Nacional*, with the net cast wider, looking at a variety of different works. That said, the work of Sebastian Balfour and María Rosa de Madariaga was important in understanding the Spanish military mindset prior to the outbreak of war.¹⁸ In regards to the case studies the

¹⁶ It would be impossible to list all works here, however, examples of overarching studies that have not directly influenced this study include Ramón Salas Larrazábal’s four volume *Historia del ejército popular de la República*, (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1973); José Semprún, *Del Hacho al Pirineo: El ejército nacional en la guerra de España*, (Madrid: Actas, 2004) and the more introductory texts of Carlos Engel, *Historia de las brigadas mixtas del Ejército Popular de la República*, (Madrid: Almena, 1999) and *Historia de las divisiones del Ejército Nacional, 1936-1939*, (Madrid: Almena, 2010). A good example of a smaller study is Pedro Corral, *Sí me quieres Escribir: Gloria y Castigo de la 84ª Brigada Mixta*, (Barcelona: Debate, 2004).

¹⁷ Michael Alpert, *El ejército republicano en la guerra civil*, (Paris: Ruedo Ibérico, 1977); *El Ejército Popular de la República, 1936-1939*, (Barcelona: Crítica, 2007); *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

¹⁸ Sebastian Balfour, *Deadly Embrace – Morocco and the Road to the Spanish Civil War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); María Rosa de Madariaga, *Los moros que trajo Franco: La intervención de tropas coloniales en la guerra civil*, (Barcelona: Martínez Roca, 2002); María Rosa de Madariaga, *España y el Rif – Crónica de una historia casi olvidada*, (Melilla: UNED, 2000).

historiography examined was extensive as it was essential to provide the political background of the soldiers examined. Consequently they each had equally important guiding works. For example Chapter Five on the Carlist units owes a debt to Javier Ugarte Tellería's *La Nueva Covadonga Insurgente*, while Chapter Four, which looks at soldiers affiliated with the PNV, was influenced by the work of Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas.¹⁹

Given that the focus of this thesis is on motivational programmes, it is important to cite that the study of Spanish Civil War propaganda material is well established, with almost every book on the Civil War accommodating propaganda somewhere due to the richness of its content. There is also a vibrant body of work on the specific study of propaganda material, much of which will be referenced throughout this work, yet specific reference should be made to the work of Francisco Sevillano Calero and, once again, Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas who have offered some exemplary contributions in the field.²⁰ Moreover, the study of propaganda and motivational frameworks is not a new field in European military history in general, with there being a great deal of works that examine such sources. There have been general studies as well as works on newspapers, caricatures, posters, radio broadcasts and cinema as well as specialized studies of particular themes, such as nationalism and gender.²¹

Consequently it is clear that the field is a rich one with a variety of different approaches taken to the fertile source material, yet despite the extent of study already produced, I believe that there is more to be added to the study of martial propaganda. The aim of this thesis is to complement the existing body of work by offering an original insight into how certain overarching propaganda programmes are tailored to appeal to particular political sensibilities. The desire is to analyse the means by which soldiers were motivated to fight for a cause that they did not immediately identify with. Yet, in a departure from previous studies,

¹⁹ Javier Ugarte Tellería, *La Nueva Covadonga Insurgente – Orígenes sociales y culturales de la sublevación de 1936 en Navarra y el País Vasco*, (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1998); Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas, 'Los nacionalistas vascos durante la guerra civil (1936-1939): una cultura de guerra diferente', *Historia Contemporánea*, 35, 2007, pp. 559-599; "Las patrias de la república: la experiencia de los nacionalistas periféricos durante la guerra civil española (1936-1939)", *Historia Contemporánea* 38, 2010, pp. 13-47.

²⁰ Francisco Sevillano Calero, *Rojos: la representación del enemigo en la Guerra civil*, (Madrid: Alianza, Editorial, 2007); *Propaganda y medios de comunicación en el franquismo (1936-1951)*, (Murcia: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alicante, 1998); Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas, *¡Fuera el invasor! Nacionalismos y movilización bélica durante la guerra civil española (1936-1939)*, (Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2006).

²¹ S. P. Mackenzie, *Politics and Military Morale: Current-Affairs and Citizenship Education in the British Army 1914-1950*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 118-154. Robert L. Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers of the First World War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); James Taylor, "Your country needs you": the secret history of the propaganda poster, (Glasgow: Saraband, 2013); Eberhard Demm, "Propaganda and Caricature in the First World War", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 28, No. 163, (1993), pp. 163-192; Jesús Vivanco Sánchez, *Guerra Civil y Radio Nacional: Salamanca, 1936-1939*, (Madrid: Instituto Oficial de Radio y Televisión, 2006); Lisa M. Todd, "The Hun and the Home: Gender, Sexuality and Propaganda in First World War Europe", in *World War One and Propaganda*, ed. Troy R. E. Paddock, (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 136-154.

the thesis will look at soldiers that were unenthused not because of their political apathy but because of the very opposite. The result of this approach is a thesis that will examine a question that has not been asked before in Spanish Civil War historiography: how successful was each side in motivating previously politically affiliated troops to fight for an alternative cause?²² Could anarchists be asked to fight for the State, monarchist Carlists to fight for a military dictator or Basque nationalists to fight for Spain? The results are intriguing, as, in most cases, the propaganda was a modest success.

A Case for Case Studies – the Structure of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis will first establish the overarching motivational programmes of each side and the following case study chapters look at how each programme was presented to the soldiers of particular political persuasions. In assigning this work the title of a comparative analysis, it would consequently appear counter-intuitive to separate the work into various case studies; given the misgiving of historians such as Jürgen Kocka on the problems that arise with juggling too many examples.²³ However, the fact that one of the main points of this thesis is to emphasise the difference between various political affiliations, a series of case studies provides a clearer and more accessible structure. Moreover, the *Erkenntnisinteressen* (points of analysis, epistemological interests), that Kocka states are central to any such study, remain singular – limited to the overarching motivational frameworks with the case studies providing the necessary contexts through which to analyse each.²⁴ Nevertheless, an effort will be made throughout to provide a comparative analysis between each of the case studies and the overarching programmes. Consequently, the chapters, while they function as standalone studies, are best read as constituent parts of a singular study.

The title of this thesis comes from the two most important aspects of the motivational programmes of each side, which will be examined in the first two chapters. The rebel's motivational programme, referred to as the Crusade, presented the war as an apocalyptic struggle between Christian Spain and a foreign (more often than not Russian) invader. The

²² A related question has been asked in the work of James Matthews in regards to the motivation of soldiers who were previously affiliated with the other side, James Matthews, “Our Red Soldiers – The Nationalist Army's Management of Its Left-Wing Conscripts in the Spanish Civil War”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 45, No. 2, pp. 344-363.

²³ Jürgen Kocka, “Comparison and Beyond”, *History and Theory*, Vol. 42, No. 1, (Feb. 2003), p. 41.

²⁴ *Ibid.*..., pp. 41-42.

Crusade mentality would last into the *posguerra*, informing the attitudes of ‘victors and vanquished’ that defined the nation well after the end of the war.²⁵ The chapter, based in primary sources but referencing the voluminous historiography, will aim to surmise this idea as it was presented to the soldiery as well as its origins. It will, by its finish, offer a ‘generic’ model of the overarching Francoist presentation of the war as a crusade.²⁶ The Republican military programme has received less attention, partly because it was less historically influential and partly because it has proved harder to define, given its lack of equally emotive content. The second chapter of this thesis will consequently aim to define the overall values of ‘Republicanism’ and the approach that the Popular Army took in motivating its men to fight. It will focus on the content of the propaganda presented to the Republican soldiery and the values that the Popular Army was supposedly fighting for. However it will also look at the model manner in which this message was disseminated, through the Political Commissariat and its affiliates, as well as the efforts made to emphasise the exceptional nature of the Popular Army as a new, dignified, democratic military undertaking. The end of the chapter will, much like its predecessor, have defined the ‘generic’ idea of ‘Republicanism’, but also the new approach to propaganda dissemination, giving an overview of the rhetorical commitment of the *Ejército Popular* in convincing, as opposed to coercing, its soldiers to fight.

The third chapter, the first of the case studies, will be on the motivation of soldiers affiliated with the CNT. The chapter will begin by examining the initial outlook of *cenetistas* in the militia columns to militarization into the Popular Army and consequently how, through the work of CNT-affiliated Commissars, they were convinced to fight for the Republic. The aim of this chapter is to show the medium term success of the Republican programme. How the discourse presented managed to motivate soldiers that in 1936 went to the front to ‘defend the revolution’ to instead fight for the state that had rolled back the same revolution. The chapter will extensively examine the work of *cenetista* Commissars in creating a suitably motivational programme that not only supported the values of the Republic but also sufficiently appealed to the non-revolutionary values of the Confederation as well.

Chapter Four will focus on the soldiers of *Euzko Gudarostea*, known as *gudaris*; those affiliated with the PNV. The aim of this chapter is to show the limits of the Republican

²⁵ Juan Carlos Losada Malvárez, *Ideología del ejército franquista (1939-1959)*, (Madrid: Istmo, 1990); Michael Richards, *After the Civil War: Making Memory and Re-Making Spain since 1936*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

²⁶ The idea of establishing a ‘generic’ concept as means of a ‘control’ in a comparative study is borrowed from Aristotle Kallis, “To Expand or not to Expand? Territory, Generic Fascism and the Quest for an ‘Ideal Fatherland’ ”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 38, No. 2, pp. 237-260.

motivational programme, highlighting that despite its broad appeal, there remained parts of the Republican alliance that it could not motivate. The chapter will initially outline the root cause of this, examining the ideology of the Catholic, conservative PNV and the political machinations that led to it aligning itself the otherwise Leftist Republicans. These machinations mainly revolved around a single factor – that the Popular Front was willing to grant an autonomy statute to the Basque Country while those on the Right would not. It will consequently look at the propaganda presented to *gudaris* during the war. The programme espoused in the *peneuvista* wartime press was one that focused upon Basque nationalist sentiment and evoked very few of the same values as ‘Republicanism’, resulting in an insufficient connection being forged between the struggle for Basque independence and that of the Republic. The conclusion will be that the PNV was an anomaly in the polity of the Republic and that the motivations of its soldiers were, apart from the defeat of the same enemy, extraneous to those of the rest of the Republic. Moreover, due to the failure of the PNV to forge a meaningful relationship with its allies in propaganda, *gudaris* remained apathetic towards the fate of the Republic at large throughout the war.

Chapter Five will be an examination of the soldiers affiliated with the *Comuni3n Tradicionalista*, known as *requet3s*. This chapter will look at how successful the Crusade was in making the famously parochial and apparently superannuated Carlists fight alongside fascists for a military dictatorship, rather than the appointment of their favoured pretender to the Spanish throne, Don Alfonso Carlos. The chapter will look at the presentation of the Crusade to the *requet3s*, how it was altered to better fit with their values, which emphasised the ‘pure’ regions over the ‘corrupted’ capital, and how the political concerns of Carlists were assuaged or ignored. Throughout it will analyse the reception of this programme by *requet3s*, what parts of the programme enthused them and which other parts had to be altered in order to appeal to their sensibilities. It will conclude that although the Crusade suitably motivated *requet3s* to fight, they were not wholly seduced by its programme.

The final case study will be on soldiers affiliated with the fascist Falange, which would serve as the basis for Franco’s ruling party both during and after the war. Given the apparent similarities between the overarching Crusade and the ideas of the Falange this chapter will take a different approach from the other case studies, initially establishing the similarities but then looking into the differences between the Crusade and the minutiae of Falange ideology, finally examining Falange attitudes – looking at those which acquiesced to the programme and those that remained unmoved. The chapter will conclude that, despite

certain ideological disappointments, *falangista* soldiers were on the whole motivated by the Crusade concept as it was presented to them.

Methodology and Primary Material

In regards to the methodology of the thesis, this will vary from case study to case study, however there will be a particular approach adopted throughout. Rather than looking for evidence of the overarching propaganda project in the discourse of each political group, the aim of this thesis will be to see how the discourse presented to soldiers fit with the overarching programmes of the Crusade and ‘Republicanism’. Each side’s project was not merely a case of cultural hegemony imposing itself on other forms of ideology – the political systems both in the Republic and under Franco were too complicated for such heavy-handedness – but rather the exchange of symbols and ideological facets that went into creating a dominant consensus. In the Crusade and ‘Republicanism’ each side created an ideology that was could feasibly appeal to their constituent parts, yet was well-defined enough to potentially unite each of these groups singularly behind it. Each chapter, therefore, aims to recreate the discourse of each political group and assess their success in motivating soldiers towards the values of the overarching motivational programme. That is to say that the research for each chapter will not be merely reading the various sources and looking for mentions of ‘crusade’ and ‘republic’ but rather understanding how the ideas presented to *cenetista*, *peneuvista*, *carlista* and *falangista* soldiers correlated with both those of their own ideology and those of the Crusade and the Republic.

The primary material analysed in this thesis has been broad. Overall the majority of the sources analysed are newspapers, both those that were specifically created for the soldiery as well as certain civilian newspapers which were available at the front. Newspapers as a means of analysing propaganda are a bountiful source, with short, abrupt missives emphasising the most important parts of the overarching propaganda programme while long-form pieces offer a more in-depth explanation of certain standpoints. In a study that aims to look at the persuasion of soldiers to moderate their immediate ideology, the latter of these is fundamentally important and can only be sourced with any great range in the press. The newspapers cited in this study have been widely sourced from the Centro Documental de Memoria Histórica (CDMH) in Salamanca, the Hemeroteca Municipal and Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid, the Sabino Arana Fundazioa (SAF) in Bilbao and the International

Institute of Social History (IISG) in Amsterdam, and aim to provide a broad basis for investigation in each chapter. In total, over sixty individual publications have been consulted.²⁷ Furthermore, each chapter has also used archival material in its analysis, more often than not extensively, to supplement the newspaper material as well as providing a clearer picture of the motives behind the creation of propaganda. The primary archives consulted have been the CDMH and the Archivo General Militar (AGMAV) in Ávila, with supplementary material from the IISG and the SAF. Finally, a third set of sources has been consulted: the memoirs, personal accounts and collections of letters of participants in the conflict. Collected from various libraries and archives, these have been used in order to understand soldiers own motivations in fighting the war and offer an insight into the success of the motivational programmes analysed.

In regards to the examination of this primary material, each chapter has attempted to ‘follow’ the sources, focussing its analysis on the most fecund material available and drawing conclusions from this. For example, the chapter on *cenetista* soldiers will focus greatly on the papers of Miguel González Inestal, the general sub-commissar of the General Commissariat, found in the archives of the International Institute of Social History whereas the chapter on the motivation of Carlist troops looks at the myriad memoirs and epistolaries left by *requetés*. The aim was to provide the most comprehensive impression of each propaganda programme and its effects upon the various soldieries. There are, of course, problems with this, as adopting differing methodologies could result in difficulties in comparison; however, the hope is that the weight of empirical research means that a sufficiently comprehensive picture can be provided in each chapter to make a comparative study viable.

Hypotheses

By entitling this thesis ‘a comparative study’ a conclusion over which side’s motivational framework was more effective is implicitly invited. A perfunctory appraisal of the Crusade in comparison to ‘Republicanism’ would show that the former, with its strong themes of religion and the redemption of the *Patria* as well as its historical longevity, would be stronger, especially given that both the Carlists and the Falange were much closer, ideologically speaking, to the Army than either of their counterparts were to the Republican

²⁷ A background of the most relevant papers will be provided in each chapter.

authorities. However, this would neglect the political complexities of each side as well as the efforts made within the Popular Army to ensure that its message was heard. Over the course of this thesis I aim to show that the Crusade was not as universally appealing as it first appeared and that through the commitment of the Popular Army to the motivation of its soldiery, the relatively tepid, disparate collection of values that ‘Republicanism’ represented could be used to effectively motivate soldiers. However, the inclusion of the PNV’s *gudaris* as a case study gives some indication to the direction of a conclusion; that the Crusade was, ultimately, the stronger programme as it managed to sufficiently motivate all its soldiers for the same cause, under the same leader. In regards to the question as to what motivated soldiers fight in the conflict, alluded to in this section’s opening paragraph, it is perhaps best to leave that until the final conclusion when each of the various case studies have been examined in detail.

Chapter One: 'The Sacred Crusade to Save Spain' – The Martial-Political Discourse of the *Ejército Nacional*

The view of the war as a 'sacred Crusade to save Spain' would define the Francoist conception of conflict both while it raged and well into the post-war period with the polarising values forged continuing to be maintained long after 1 April 1939 as the nation was split into 'victors and vanquished'.¹ It provided a singular Manichean conception of the war, presenting it as a struggle between brave Spaniards and the godless hordes of Moscow. Its origins were based in the militarist mentality of officers that had come of age in the brutal Moroccan campaigns of 1909-1927, but it was augmented by a broad range of rightist values that ostensibly appealed to all those fighting on the Francoist side. The aim of this chapter is to establish a model of the Crusade; to understand its content in order to create a comparison with its Republican equivalent. Furthermore, by creating a definition of what this 'generic' Crusade was, as defined by the military, it allows for study of how it was modified and presented to Carlist and Falangist soldiers and the success achieved in motivating them. Ultimately, this will provide the means for a comparison with its Republican equivalent, offering a study that examines the relative success of each side's martial political programme in motivating previously politically affiliated troops.

Manuel García Pelayo in one of the first studies of the concept articulated the idea of the Crusade as follows:

a set of mythic representations, not so much a manifestation of concepts in images and symbols, or systematically arranged, but confused and amalgamated into a whole and liable to change whilst retaining the core.²

This interpretation while to an extent correct – there was no singular, formalised programme created by the rebels by which they motivated their soldiery – overlooks the fact there were a series of well-established values that would define the Crusade and the presence of an identifiable motivational framework is unmistakable. As we shall see, the ideals of *la cruzada* were easily recognized: there was a deep antipathy towards all leftist and liberal politics, the importance of the military, the primacy of religion and the belief that the salvation of the *Patria* lay in a resurgence of the ideals of the past; namely those of the

¹ José Millán Astray, *Franco el Caudillo*, (Salamanca; M. Quero y Simon, 1939), p. 103; For a short introduction in English to the concepts of 'victors and vanquished' see Javier Tusell, *Spain: From Dictatorship to Democracy, 1939 to the Present*, (Oxford; Wiley, 2008), pp. 20-26.

² Manuel García Pelayo, *Los mitos políticos*, (Madrid: Alianza, 1981), p. 20.

Reconquest and the 'Golden Age' of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Franco saw the war as:

...the crowning of an historical process, it is the struggle of the *Patria* with the anti-*Patria*, of unity with secession, of the moral with the criminal, of the spirit against the materialist, and there being no other solution than the triumph of pure and eternal principles over bastards and anti-Spaniards.³

The strong definition of what constituted the *Patria* and anti-*Patria* led to the de-hispanification of the enemy in the Civil War. This distinction of the rebels as Spanish and the Republic as foreign was a key one that played on both the nationalist and religious beliefs of the insurgents and created a viciously negative conception of their Republican compatriots, allowing for a fundamental violation of the implicit respect between compatriots. However, Pelayo was correct in that the Crusade was an amalgamation of values that, with the correct presentation, could be altered whilst maintaining an essential message. Over the course of the thesis we shall see how this re-ordering of the values was managed in order to appeal to certain ideological groups.

The chapter will begin by first examining the political background of the officers who would lead the uprising and who were, under Franco, the ideological arbiters of the Crusade. These officers shall at times collectively be referred to as *africanistas*, the name given to officers that cut their teeth in the colonial conflicts of Morocco. While not all the officers that rose in July 1936 were veterans of the campaigns in North Africa, nor all North African veterans part of the rising, it was certainly the case that the dominant set of values and the political opinions that they shared were forged in the violent encounters in the Rif.⁴ These beliefs would, over the summer of 1936, integrate some of the practices, mores, imagery and values of the *africanistas*' civilian allies, most notably the Falange and the Carlists, to form the ideological basis of the Crusade, which would provide the motivational framework for the

³ Francisco Franco Bahamonde, *Pensamiento político de Franco – Tomo I*, (Madrid: Ediciones del Movimiento, 1975), p. 50.

⁴ This group of officers came to the fore when the Army of Africa adopted a far more aggressive, militarist form following the Anual disaster of 1921. Balfour, *Deadly Embrace...*, p. 83; Notable former members of the Army of Africa who remained loyal to the Republic were General José Riquelme y López-Bago and Sebastián Pozas Perea, A well respected veteran of the Rif, the Arabist Riquelme held the rank of major general at the outbreak of War and was appointed military governor of Barcelona during it. Pozas, who at one time was commander of both the Army of the Centre and of the East, believed in the absolute authority of civilian rule and prevented the Civil Guard from coming out against the Popular Front in February 1936. Geoffrey Jensen, "Military Memories, History, and the Myth of Hispano-Arabic Identity in the Spanish Civil War" in *Memory and Cultural History of the Spanish Civil War: Realms of Oblivion*, ed. Aurora G. Morsillo, (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 502-3; Michael Alpert, *The Republican Army...*, p. 348.

entire *Ejército Nacional*.⁵ The second section of the chapter will briefly detail this process, examining the events of the summer of 1936. The following section will then look at the means of dissemination of the Crusade in the Civil War and the more ‘traditional’ means of motivation adopted by the rebels. The remainder of the chapter will examine in detail the content of the programme in order to provide as clear a definition of the Crusade as possible. It will conclude with the importance of these ideals in relevance to the rest of the thesis.

⁵ This thesis, that the ideas of the Rif were the roots of Francoism is compellingly argued in de Madariaga, *Los moros que trajo Franco...*, pp. 46-50; Balfour, *Deadly Embrace...*, *passim*.

The Roots of the Crusade

In order to understand the ideology that guided the Army during the Civil War, a brief examination of its politics prior to July 1936 is necessary. As previously mentioned, these values were defined by the experiences of the Moroccan campaign of 1909-1927, in which the majority of the high-ranking conspiring officers had served.⁶ The ideas that were fostered by *africanistas* revolved around a fierce and exclusive conception of the *Patria* and the primacy of the Army in the affairs of the nation. The following section will examine *africanismo* in more detail, but a brief introduction would point towards the dual concepts of nationalism and the inviolability of the martial as fundamental. Yet *africanista* thought also remained loose enough to allow for certain high-ranking officers to maintain particular political allegiances and sympathies. This meant that at the outbreak of war there was a relatively broad political spectrum among the conspirators. Some, most notably Air Force director Alfredo Kindelán, were staunch monarchists, others such as Emilio Mola and Gonzalo Queipo de Llano were authoritarian Republicans, others like Juan Yagüe were closer to the Falange and there was even a Carlist general in José Enrique Varela, who had joined the *Comunión Tradicionalista* in 1934. However, despite this political spectrum, all of the above identified with the values forged in North Africa.

The first concept when looking at the fundamental basis of any army's political values, regardless of their place origin, is nationalism. As we shall see over the course of this thesis (and has been proven already in the study of the Spanish Civil War) the importance of the nation which the armed forces are charged to defend is vital to their identity.⁷ The colonial troops in Morocco were no different, as a fierce sense of patriotism was evident throughout the discourse of the officers of the Army of Africa. The immediate benefits of fighting a colonial war for barren desert, void of any strategic importance were difficult to see, so the conflicts in the Rif were understood in a more abstract, grandiose context. They were for the aggrandisement of the great Spanish nation, a new *Reconquista* against a heathen enemy. Playing off the myths of the Christian reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula, the war was painted as a renewal of these mediaeval conflicts that had defined the Spanish nation.⁸

⁶ A good overview of this conflict, covering the events as seen from the Rif, rather than the metropole is de Madariaga, *España y el Rif...*, *passim*.

⁷ The leading study on the importance of nationalism in the Spanish Civil War is Núñez Seixas, *¡Fuera el invasor!...*, *passim*.

⁸ These myths had a great deal of cultural capital with 'los moros' being viewed as an enemy of the Spain ever since their expulsion in 1492, Eloy Martín Corrales, "El "moro" decano de los enemigos exteriores de España: una larga enemistad (siglos VIII-XIX)", in *Los enemigos de España – imagen del otro, conflictos bélicos y*

The enemy was presented as a formidable other, the monthly review for the colonial troops, *África*, would in April 1926 state that ‘the tribesman is hateful to an inconceivable degree’, corrupted by a ‘hatred that sprouts from his soul’.⁹ An article from later that year would compound this impression, claiming that ‘a constant excitation to holy war as an infallible means to win... results in the Muslim people constituting a real and constant threat to our civilization’.¹⁰ This apocalyptic presentation of the enemy added to the portentous conception of the conflict in the minds of *africanistas*.

Yet while the conflict was a conquest, the Army was also bringing Western values to those who were willing to accept subjugation, those ‘at a distance from the thresholds of civilization’.¹¹ The concept of ‘civilization’ was not clearly defined, but was analogous with an authoritarian conception of Western Christianity, where the white Western European’s values were supreme. In an article entitled ‘Spanish America and our work in Morocco’, the conflict was portrayed as a mission that ‘Europe had entrusted to the Mother Country’ much like the one taken up by the *Patria* in the Sixteenth Century, when it had brought civilization to the New World.¹² As shall be detailed throughout this thesis, the idea of the Sixteenth Century, the so-called ‘Golden Age’ being the apotheosis of Spanish history, was a fundamental belief for all on the Right in Spain in the period this thesis examines. The Army was no exception. However, following the arrival of the Austrian Bourbon dynasty and its coterie, comprised of a ‘hungry plague of adventurers’, Spain was subjected to ‘the virus of corruption and death’. The result was that ‘the Spanish race went missing for three centuries, outside its historical path’ and ‘forgetfulness [and] pessimism took hold of it; it lost faith in itself and its destinations’.¹³ For *africanistas*, the Army of Africa now fought to return Spain to its years of glory, fighting for the nation in a ‘generous and painful struggle against mediocre and debasing prosaism that contents itself with a sickly Spain, resigned with its role as a great, bygone nation’.¹⁴

In this context of national glory, where pitched battles were non-existent, where a great deal of the conflict was irregular and where vicious, often brutal acts were

disputas nacionales (siglos XVI-XX), ed. Xosé M. Nuñez Seixas and Francisco Sevillano Calero, (Madrid: Centro Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales, 2010), pp. 166-172.

⁹ *África – Revista de Tropas Coloniales*, April 1926, p. 7. Initially entitled *Revista de Tropas Coloniales* and edited first from 1924 by Queipo de Llano and subsequently from 1926 to 1931 by Franco (under the new title, *África – Revista de Tropas Coloniales*) the magazine, which usually ran at around 30 pages, included not only ideological discussion but also book reviews, historical articles as well as articles on Moroccan culture.

¹⁰ *África...*, p. 11.

¹¹ *África...*, March 1926, p. 6.

¹² *África...*, April 1926, p. 12; Balfour, *Deadly Embrace...*, p. 117.

¹³ *África...*, June 1926, p. 19.

¹⁴ *África...*, March 1926, p. 4.

commonplace, the honour of the experience of violence itself took on a special meaning.¹⁵ The war was transformative and violence was not so much normalised, but celebrated. Alongside death in battle violence was extolled as a heroic, masculine act with redemptive qualities and its perpetrators were celebrated.¹⁶ While those on the peninsular stagnated, Africa became a crucible where great men were forged.¹⁷ Nowhere was this more evident than in Franco's division, the *Tercio de Extranjeros* (Foreign Legion), and no-one exemplified these ideas more than its founder, José Millán Astray, *el glorioso mutilado*. Millán Astray, whose moniker was well earned with him having lost an eye and an arm over the course of his military career, had an unbounding enthusiasm for the macabre. In the morality the division, better known as *La Legión*, an enthusiasm for violence was expected, it chose for its rallying cry '*¡Viva la muerte!*' (Long Live Death!) and adopted the sobriquet *Novios de Muerte* (Bridegrooms of Death).¹⁸ Brutal acts were the norm, exemplified when, prior to the visit of the King to inspect *el Tercio*, the regiment had to be ordered to dispose of the bouquet of severed Moors heads it has organised as a gift and troops instructed to remove more severed heads they had placed their bayonets.¹⁹ Franco would later succeed Millán Astray's as commander of *La Legión* and, during the Civil War, Millán Astray would be Franco's first co-ordinator of propaganda, giving public speeches that almost always featured shouts of '*¡Viva la muerte!*', '*Todos a morir*' or some variant.²⁰ During the conflict (and long after) bravery came to be valued over good tactical practise and the manner in which field promotions were handed out, for daring charges and acts of courage, only exacerbated this phenomenon.²¹ This would shape the view of the nation as bravery and glory were valued

¹⁵ Gabriel Cardona, *El poder militar en la España contemporánea hasta la Guerra Civil*, (Madrid: Siglo Veintiuno, 1983), pp. 32-33; The extent of the violent acts witnessed, experienced and carried out in Morocco by Spanish troops are detailed in Balfour, *Deadly Embrace...*, pp. 118-9.

¹⁶ Jensen, *Irrational Triumph – Cultural Despair, Military Nationalism and the Ideological Origins of Franco's Spain*, (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2002), pp. 146-155.

¹⁷ There was disdain from *africanistas* for their peninsular counterparts, seeing them as fastidious bureaucrats whose stripes were unearned. The merits of this view are limited, however it added to their belief that the true soul of the Army, that which would reform Spain, came from the Army of Africa. Carolyn P. Boyd, *Praetorian Politics in Liberal Spain*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), pp. 209-229; Balfour, *Deadly Embrace...*, p. 172.

¹⁸ José Luis Rodríguez Jiménez, *¡A mí la legión! de Millán Astray a las misiones de paz*, (Barcelona : Planeta, 2005), *passim*; John H. Galey, 'The Bridegrooms of Death: A Profile Study of the Spanish Foreign Legion' in *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 4, No. 2, (Apr., 1969), pp. 47-64; Geoffrey Jensen, "Jose Millán-Astray and the Nationalist 'Crusade' in Spain", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Jul., 1992), pp. 425-447.

¹⁹ Paul Preston, *¡Comrades! Portraits From The Spanish Civil War*, (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), p. 16.

²⁰ Antonio Bahamonde y Sánchez de Castro, *1 año con Queipo – memorias de un nacionalista*, (Barcelona: Ediciones Español, 1938), p. 39; Jensen, *Irrational Triumph...*, pp. 168-9.

²¹ Paul Preston, *The Politics of Revenge: Fascism and the Military in Twentieth Century Spain*, (London: Routledge, 1995), pp.133; Franco, following some legal wrangling, was the recipient of such a promotion

over all else. *África* would argue in March 1926 that ‘nations and peoples need a soul adorned with the same attributes and the same virtues as the souls of great men... nations need to be equipped with courage [and] dignity’.²² The Army of Africa, through its promotion policy, already had a clear understanding of what it believed to be a ‘great man’ and wished to transpose this concept of the brave and martial to the nation at large.

These beliefs, that the Army fought for the return of Spain to its years of glory after years of neglect and that war was somehow transcendent for its participants, would lead the officers to conclude that the Army was the guardian of the *Patria*. Those who had taken part in this violent conflict were not only doing so out of patriotic duty, but had become stronger men because of it, viewing themselves as those most worthy of the *Patria*. They that had shed their blood for Spain, who had provided the ‘enormous sacrifices’ of ‘exemplary selflessness’, were its greatest sons.²³ Franco, writing in his *Papeles de la guerra de Marruecos*, argued that those who died in battle, soldiers like himself, were ‘the ones who make the *Patria*’ and were somehow more Spanish than their civilian counterparts.²⁴ This mentality would eventually lead to *africanistas* coming to view the Army as above to the idea of politics and answerable solely to the *Patria*. They were the guardians of the nation and all others were inferior to them. General Miguel Primo de Rivera, although not an *africanista*, would say of his own military dictatorship that it ‘ought never be accountable for breaches of the law; this would contradict its very essence. It should be accountable for breaches of moral norms’.²⁵ *Africanistas* would hold a very similar opinion, maintaining that they should be the executors of the national will and reserved the right to intervene in national affairs as they saw fit.

Despite the aforementioned heterogeneity of political identity among the *africanista* officers, those that would go on to fight under Franco in the Civil War shared a mutual antipathy for the Republic in its post-February 1936 iteration. The ideological reasons for this are relatively clear, with the democratic nature of the Republic conflicting with the authoritarian instincts of the *africanistas*, but there was also a common feeling of victimization as the officers came to feel that the Republic was actively trying to diminish their prized political influence. This was undeniable, as, almost from the Republic’s inception, steps were taken by then Minister of War (and wartime Republican president)

having been shot in the stomach during an advance in 1916. He was promoted to Major in February 1917. Geoffrey Jensen, *Franco – Soldier, Commander, Dictator*, (Virginia: Potomac, 2005), p. 31.

²² *África*..., March 1926, p. 4.

²³ *África*, September 1929, p. 20.

²⁴ Cited in Geoffrey Jensen, *Irrational Triumph*..., p.147.

²⁵ Cited in Shlomo Ben-Ami, *Fascism From Above*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 145.

Manuel Azaña to modernise the Army. He set about a series of reforms that aimed to transform the bloated armed forces into a smaller, more professional force with less of a proclivity for political interference.²⁶ These reforms included the 1931 repeal of the *Ley de Jurisdicciones* (which had previously given the Army full power to court martial its critics), the creation of a ‘Responsibilities’ commission to investigate military excesses since 1919 and attempts to thin the ranks of the bloated officer corps, which had ballooned following years of indulgence under Alfonso XIII, through the offer of early retirement (on full pay) to officers.²⁷ Moreover, Franco’s beloved *Academia General Militar* in Zaragoza, of which he was the director, was shut in 1931, much to the General’s dismay. In the years since its formation in 1927 the Academy had immersed new recruits in the martial, violent values of *africanismo* leading to number of its alumni being closely involved in the uprising and subsequent repression.²⁸ These feeling of victimization, alongside the aforementioned disdain for democracy, allied with the offence caused to their martial sense of law and order by the civil strife and violent conflagrations that characterised the Republican period created a potent *mélange* of antipathy towards the Republic.²⁹ This antipathy would, after months of conspiracy, erupt on the 17-19 July 1936 with the military rising that would spark the Civil War.³⁰

²⁶ For a more detailed examination of Azaña’s fractious relationship with the Army in the Republican-Socialist government of 1931-33 see Michael Alpert, *La reforma militar de Azaña (1931-1933)*, (Madrid: Siglo Veintiuno, 1982), *passim*; Miguel Alonso Baquer, *D. Manuel Azaña y los militares*, (Madrid: Actas, 1997), *passim*.

²⁷ Rafael Núñez Florencio, *Militarismo y antimilitarismo en España (1888-1906)*, (Madrid: CSIC, 1990), pp. 369-374; Carolyn Boyd, ‘Violencia pretoriana: del Cu-Cut! Al 23-F’ in *Violencia política en la España del Siglo XX*, (Madrid: Taurus, 2000), ed. Santos Juliá, pp. 289-325; Carolyn P. Boyd, “ ‘Responsibilities’ and the Second Spanish Republic 1931-1936’, *European History Quarterly*, 14 (1984), pp. 151-82; Cardona, *El poder militar...*, pp. 138-144; Franz Borkenau, *Introduction* in José Martín Blázquez, *I Helped to Build an Army*, (London: Secker and Warburg, 1939), pp. i-vii.

²⁸ Carlos Blanco Escolá, *La Academia General Militar de Zaragoza (1928-1931)*, (Barcelona: Labor, 1989), p. 86; Paul Preston, *The Politics of Revenge...*, pp.133-134; Mariano Aguilar Olivencia, *El Ejército española durante la segunda república* (Madrid: Econorte, 1986), pp. 119-123.

²⁹ The Spanish army itself at the time was not wholly constituted of the kind of officer that would dominate discourse during the war, there were several who openly supported the Republic and its ideals such as Juan Hernández Saravia and Arturo Menéndez, so to argue that military reforms were the trigger for the radicalisation of the whole army against the Republic would be an oversight. Michael Alpert, *El Ejército Popular...*, p.9; José Martín Blázquez, *I Helped To Build An Army*, (London: Secker and Warburg, 1939), p. 283; Balfour, *Deadly Embrace...*, p. 271; Ramón Salas Larrazábal, *Historia general de la guerra civil* (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1976), pp. 60-4.

³⁰ It is not the place of this thesis to explain the details of the conspiracy. There exist already great number of scholarly works that deal with the events that led up to 17-19 July 1936. Balfour, *Deadly Embrace...*, pp. 259-267; Cardona, *El poder militar...*, pp. 220-247; Julio Busquets and Juan Carlos Losada, *Ruido de sables: las conspiraciones militares en la España del siglo XX*, (Barcelona: Crítica, 2003), pp. 49-67. Rafael Cruz, “Dos rebeliones militares en España, 1923 y 1936. La lógica de la guerra política”, *Historia y política*, No. 5, (January-June, 2001), pp. 29-53.

The Forging of the Crusade

The military uprising was supported by a great number of civilian political groups. The most notable of these groups were the Fascist *Falange Española de las J.O.N.S.*, the Carlists of the *Comunión Tradicionalista* and the Monarchists of the *Renovación Española*, the assassination of whose leader, José Calvo Sotelo, had precipitated the uprising. These groups shared some ideological ideals; they valued law and order, were opposed to Marxism and were, to varying degrees, supportive of the Church. Yet, the common theme that clearly united these groups and the *africanistas* who led the rebellion was a profound desire to overthrow the Republic and erase all trace of it. All sides were united by this common goal, a shared project into which to pool their efforts and a shared experience of the Republic's transgressions which fed into a common desire to never see it return to power. Moreover, the rebels would also count the Church amongst their allies as the traditionally conservative institution, in part due to anti-clerical violence in the Republican zone but more due to its own inclinations, sided with the rebels.³¹

Yet anti-Republican sentiment was not a coherent motivational project and was too diffuse to serve as a coherent cause behind which these disparate political groups and their military volunteers could unite. While it would be disingenuous to posit that the rebels had nothing in common, it cannot be denied that their alliance in July 1936 was based mainly in their mutual opposition to the Republic. This would change, however, as over the summer of 1936 the rebels would, through the adoption of rhetoric and symbols, create the motivational programme which would come to be known as *la cruzada*. The processes of how the rebellion became a Crusade are best outlined by Rafael Cruz in his chapter, 'Old symbols, new meanings: mobilising the rebellion in the summer of 1936'. Cruz proposes that through local and national political action from the political supporters of the uprising, a selection of political symbols was proffered to the rebellion from which emerged a religiously-tinged

³¹ Church support for the Rebels was not made official until the Collective Letter of the Spanish Bishops of 1 July 1937. Yet the action of the Church in the rebel zone, with its myriad masses in honour of the war effort and the presence of chaplains to the front, would signal their support much earlier. The letter itself was in fact the result of a request by Franco for the Church to clearly define its position internationally. Hilari Ragner, *Gunpowder and Incense – The Catholic Church and the Spanish Civil War*, (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 106; Alfonso Álvarez Bolado, *Para ganar la guerra, para ganar la paz – iglesia y guerra civil: 1936-1939*, (Madrid: OPCO, 1995), pp. 163-165. For more on the the Spanish Catholic Church and its reactionary history see Frances Lannon, *Privilege, Persecution, and Prophecy: the Catholic Church in Spain, 1875–1975* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), *passim*.

interpretation, the Crusade.³² For example, the uprising was not overtly religious from its inception; a ‘crusade’ had never been part of the conspirators’ plans nor were their motives religious. The central aim was to restore law and order and to save the *Patria* from the clutches of a foreign ideological invader, often articulated as ‘Russia’. In the few ideas that were outlined prior to the uprising, the generals’ plans were authoritarian, but secular. A military dictatorship would be put in place, the 1931 constitution abandoned and parliament dissolved, but the separation of Church and state would remain.³³ However, as has been alluded to, not least by its title, the Crusade was a profoundly religious endeavour where Christian discourse and imagery were employed so wantonly that one Irish observer referred to the War as a ‘religious revival’.³⁴ The reasons for this are cited by Cruz as being ‘the constant mass demonstrations, in which the relevance of religious symbols, spaces, rituals and officiants, along with the armed forces and civilians, was fundamental’ that ultimately resulted in ‘a sacred representation of the rebels’ war effort’.³⁵ The effect of this mass outpouring of religious fervour was for the *Patria*, which up until this point had been understood as separate to religion in military circles, to be recognised as now being rooted in the Catholic faith.³⁶ In terms of the motivational framework, the incorporation of religion is incredibly important, as the entire Nationalist programme would refer to religion at almost any given opportunity.

As well as the religious element, a number of other symbols were adopted over the summer of 1936. One such example is the bicolour flag of the monarchy, which became the symbol of the Nationalist war effort.³⁷ This meant that by the end of the summer the rebel’s discursive framework had taken shape; it had a name, a flag and a transcendental religious element to compliment the anti-Republican sentiment and military nationalism that *africanismo* already held. What must be emphasised is that the additions to *africanista* thought that were adopted over the summer of 1936 were not unnatural adjuncts to gain

³² Rafael Cruz, ‘Old symbols, new meanings: mobilising the rebellion in the summer of 1936’, in *The Splintering of Spain – Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War 1936-9*, ed. Chris Ealham and Michael Richards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 159-176. This is an updated version of a thesis first posited by T. Pérez Delgado and A. Fuentes Labrador, “De rebeldes a cruzados: pioneros del discurso legitimador del Movimiento Nacional. Salamanca, julio-octubre de 1936”, *Studia Histórica Historia Contemporánea*, No. 4, (1986), pp. 235-266.

³³ Cruz, ‘Old symbols, new meanings...’, p. 161; Balfour, *Deadly Embrace...*, p. 161.

³⁴ McCullagh, *In Franco’s Spain...*, p. 41.

³⁵ Cruz, ‘Old symbols, new meanings...’, pp. 172.

³⁶ *Ibid.*..., pp. 171-175.

³⁷ For a full history of the adoption of the bicolour flag see Javier Moreno Luzón and Xosé M. Núñez Seixas, “Rojigualda y sin letra. Los símbolos oficiales de la nación” in *Ser Españoles – Imaginarios nacionalistas en el siglo XX*, (Barcelona: RBA, 2013), pp. 76-81.

support. They were acquired through, in the parlance of the Falange, ‘organic’ processes.³⁸ That is to say that they came to be part of the Crusade not by design but by popular action synthesizing with pre-existing ideology. While many *africanistas* were not overtly religious types, the adoption of a religious element to the war effort, given their rightist, conservative credentials, was not unnatural. The enthusiastic adoption of the Crusade title by all who fought on the rebel side highlighted this compatibility.

However, despite the adoption of various symbols and rhetorical conceits, one thing it is absolutely vital to understand about the Crusade is that it was the *africanistas* that were the ultimate arbiters of its discourse and content and it remained rooted in the ideas forged in Africa. It was *africanistas* that had been responsible for the uprising and the expectation amongst all the groups that comprised the rebels was that political authority in the short to medium term would remain with them. Political subjugation to military authority had been almost immediate in the rebel zone with a state of war declared in the rebel zone as soon as war broke out.³⁹ Franco’s official promotion to head of state on 1 October 1936, as well as the Decree of Unification of 19 April 1937, only cemented this situation. The Unification saw the two main political groups in the rebel zone, the *Falange Española de las J.O.N.S* and the *Comunión Tradicionalista*, fused together to form the awkwardly titled *Falange Española Tradicionalista de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista*. Perhaps this ungainly combination was best surmised by its uniform that adopted the Falange’s *camisa azul* (blue shirt) with the Carlist *boína colorada* (red beret) to make a quite garish ensemble. The head of this new organisation was Franco and while the General was unassailable, the Falange did enjoy some political influence as the war progressed.⁴⁰ The new group took on the ideological programme of the Falange in the form of its 26 points and they were no doubt the senior partner in comparison to the Carlists.⁴¹ Furthermore, following the Unification there was a more explicit adoption of some Falangist ‘paraphernalia’ within military Crusade

³⁸ José Antonio Primo de Rivera discusses the concepts of ‘organic’ and ‘inorganic’ in regards to political ideology in the *Norma Programática de la Falange*. José Antonio Primo de Rivera, *Obras Completas de José Antonio Primo de Rivera*, (Madrid: Ediciones de la vicesecretaría de educación popular de F.E.T. de las J.O.N.S 1945), p. 520-522;

³⁹ Balfour, *Deadly Embrace...*, p. 271; Cruz, ‘Old symbols, new meanings...’, p. 161.

⁴⁰ Richards, *A Time of Silence – civil war and culture of repression in Franco's Spain, 1936-45*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 33; Ismael Saz, *España contra España, Los nacionalismos franquistas*, (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2003), pp. 267-308; Ismael Saz, ‘Fascism at War in Spain’ in “If You Tolerate This...” *The Spanish Civil War in the Age of Total War*, eds. Martin Baumeister and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum (New York: Campus, 2008), p. 93; Joan María Thomàs, *La Falange de Franco: El proyecto Fascista del Régimen*, (Barcelona: Plaza Janés, 2001), p. 33.

⁴¹ *Boletín del Movimiento de Falange Tradicionalista y de las J.O.N.S.*, 5 May 1937, p. iv; The political impacts of the Unification were far reaching, and their specific effects on both the Carlists and the Falange will be examined in Chapters Five and Six.

discourse, if not a wholehearted ideological conversion.⁴² Certain phrases, such as ‘revolution’ and ‘unity of destiny’ came to be used more often, as did the symbol of the Falange, the yoke and arrows as well as a propagandistic preoccupation with bread.⁴³ However, what must be explicitly understood is that there was little change to the basis of the Crusade as neither a motivational concept nor its fundamental content. On issues as sensitive as propaganda, particularly in the military, the programme was defined by the Army.⁴⁴ This was made fundamentally clear in the *Normas de Propaganda* (Propaganda Rules) that were standardised in 1938, but had been informally in place since the incorporation of the militias into the Army on 22 December 1936. They stated that any propaganda would be ‘developed under the general principle’ defined by the Generals of the Army and the military also reserved the right to ‘limit its execution’ if it deemed appropriate, as well as ‘suspend or modify’ any content it deemed ‘not tempered to the circumstances’.⁴⁵ What was adopted in the summer of 1936 would pass through the *africanista* lens and come out different, the language, concepts and even symbols adopted were subject to the influence of the Army and consequently were no longer exclusively the domain of the groups which had initially offered them. The best example for this would be the very title of Crusade itself. Originally a Carlist concept, the Crusade presented by the Army would differ greatly to that presented by the *Comunión Tradicionalista*. Yet this military dominion did not mean that all discourse presented to soldiers was homogenised, as we shall see Chapters Five and Six, the Carlists and the *falangistas* presented different interpretations of the Crusade to their soldiery. It did, however, mean that the military had both the first and final say on the discourse that soldiers were exposed to and that it was *africanistas* that defined the values of the Crusade.

Moreover, despite the political unification of the Falange and the Carlists, as well as their incorporation into the Army, the respective militias remained separate.⁴⁶ Each group wanted the situation to be this way, they remained distinct and so did their ideologies and means of consuming propaganda. In a 1937, a letter was sent by a Propaganda official

⁴² José Luis Rodríguez Jiménez, *Reaccionarios y golpistas – La extrema derecha en España del tardofranquismo a la consolidación de la democracia (1967-1982)*, (Madrid: CSIC, 1994), p. 62.

⁴³ Examples of the use of all these phrases can be found in various issues of *La Ametralladora...*, ‘revolution’ can be found in 2 May 1937, p. 3; 24 October 1937, p. 2; ‘Unity of Destiny’ in 19 June 1938, p. 4 and the yoke and arrows feature prominently in 5 September 1937, p. 5; 6 March 1938, p. 16. The obsession with bread came from the *falangista* slogan of *Por la Patria, el Pan y la Justicia* (For the *Patria*, bread and Justice).

⁴⁴ Javier Domínguez Arribas, *El enemigo judeo-masónico en la propaganda franquista, 1936-45*, (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2009), p. 162.

⁴⁵ From the foreword to, as well as points Six and Twelve of, the *Normas de Propaganda* of 12 September 1938, *Archivo General Militar de Ávila* (AGMAV), C.1772, 18/38-39.

⁴⁶ Rafael Casas de la Vega, *Las Milicias Nacionales en la guerra de España*, (Madrid: Editora Nacional 1974) p. 35; Anthony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain – the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939*, (London: Phoenix, 2006) p. 198.

despairing at the separate means of disseminating material employed by the Falange and the Carlists – he proposed a new policy that incorporated both, but this was never adopted and each remained separate.⁴⁷ This distinction between the groups is important to maintain as this thesis will examine how the overarching Crusade was tailored by each group to appeal to its soldiery; how the ideological programmes of both the Carlists and Falangists were themselves compromised to fit the Crusade framework and the success in motivating the troops under such constraints. As has been stated before, despite some additions from the Carlists and the Falange, the Crusade was the overarching motivational framework as defined by the *africanistas*. The rest of the chapter will detail how this came together to create a discursive programme that would define the rebel war effort with the aim of understanding its efficacy in motivating previously politically motivated troops.

⁴⁷ AGMAV, C.3131, 4/33-34.

The Crusade in Practice

Before we establish the content of the Crusade in detail, the means by which it was disseminated must be first established. Chapter Two will provide an overview of how the Popular Army managed to achieve this – through its most valuable asset, the Political Commissariat – yet the rebels had no such an institution and instead had to rely upon more traditional means of motivation for their troops. The rebels had a circuitous route in organizing its means of propaganda, and it took a relatively long time for an established body in charge of propaganda to emerge.⁴⁸ The position of chief of propaganda changed hands a number of times over 1936-7, being held for a period by José Millán Astray who relished the opportunity to harangue his staff and, eventually, radio listeners, with his nationalist diatribes.⁴⁹ Following Unification the new *Delegación de Prensa y Propaganda de FET y de las JONS* (National Delegation for Press and Propaganda of FET y de las JONS) was created with *falangista* Priest Fermín Yzurdiaga named its head, although he was eventually forced to resign and the majority of his duties handed to Dionisio Ridruejo who was ultimately appointed minister for Propaganda in 1938.⁵⁰

In military circles there was less confusion and less political wrangling, making it far simpler to understand the Crusade as it was defined within the Francoist armed forces. Output was still subject to the capricious appointments in the Delegation, but as we have seen, it was filtered through the armed forces own the means of dissemination meaning the channels through which the message was propagated to the soldiers were relatively ‘traditional’. There was a newspaper dedicated especially to troops (although members of the public could pay 20 *céntimos* for a copy), but in a remarkable oversight it took until six months into the conflict for it to appear. While the various groups of the Republic would be flooding the frontlines with periodicals written specifically for soldiers, it took until 25 January 1937 for the first number of *La Trinchera* (renamed *La Ametralladora* a week later) to reach its eponymous location and even that was littered with typesetting and spelling errors.⁵¹ Moreover, although there is evidence to suggest that the paper was widely read, many soldiers still went without as distribution remained patchy throughout the war.⁵² This may have been down to a paper

⁴⁸ Domínguez Arribas, *El enemigo judeo-masónico...*, pp. 161-168; Sevillano Calero, *Propaganda y medios de comunicación...*, pp. 98-103.

⁴⁹ Preston, *¡Comrades!...*, p. 32.

⁵⁰ Alejandro Pizarroso Quintero, “La Guerra Civil española, un hito en la historia de la propaganda”, *El argonauta español*, No. 2, (2005), pp. 6-10.

⁵¹ *La Trinchera*, 25 January 1937; *La Ametralladora*, 1 February 1937;

⁵² AGMAV, C.1220, 36/1.

shortage that greatly affected the Francoists' ability to produce propaganda, which led to limits even on its official use.⁵³ Edited by the *Delegación del Estado para Prensa y Propaganda* (State Delegation for Press and Propaganda, later subsumed by the National Delegation for Press and Propaganda of FET y de las JONS) in Salamanca, the content of the *La Ametralladora*, alongside the motivational rhetoric to be examined, included cartoons, jokes and letters from soldiers.

It took until October 1938, six months before the end of the conflict, for the rebels to create a press and propaganda section for each division.⁵⁴ While these organisations did endeavour to motivate the soldiery through speeches, pamphlets and radio broadcasts, they had more pressing concern, namely 'the relaxation of enemy morale' through counterpropaganda.⁵⁵ Given the late stage of the war these units used their position close to the enemy as a means to further erode the crumbling fighting spirit of Republican soldiers. Via *altavoces* (loudspeakers directed at the opposing lines) or *octavillas* (small pamphlets dropped by aeroplane over enemy positions), soldiers of the Popular Army were regularly informed of the futility of the Republican struggle and the inevitability of the Francoist victory.⁵⁶ Consequently and given the lack of an official propaganda service until late in the war, it fell to other officials to take on the auxiliary responsibility of motivation. Officers were required to not only instruct the soldiers in military affairs, but in ones concerning morale. They were expected to regularly give speeches to ensure that soldiers understood 'our Crusade [and] the Strong, happy, heroic and just Spain that our youth fights and dies for'.⁵⁷ Chaplains were also called upon to motivate troops, although their contribution has been overstated by some historians.⁵⁸ They were certainly devoted to the cause, their enthusiasm leading one observer to state that 'The priests in the firing line are the most convinced of all', yet to imply their contribution was analogous to that of commissars, as some have, would be an overstatement.⁵⁹ They gave speeches, celebrated mass and heard confession in all manner of places, but their ideological engagement and training was not at the same level as that of

⁵³ AGMAV, C.3131, 4/12.

⁵⁴ AGMAV, C.1327, 38/4.

⁵⁵ AGMAV, C.1223, 48/1.

⁵⁶ AGMAV, C.1328, 25/2-7.

⁵⁷ *Libro de Órdenes las Normas que el General de la División* cited in Sisinio Nevares Marcos and Rafael de Yturriaga González-Jurado, *La primera bandera de Castilla: Su historia. Una unidad de combate de la Falange Española, Tradicionalista y de las J.O.N.S.* (Madrid: Ediciones del Movimiento, 1968), p. 196.

⁵⁸ Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors...*, p. 12.

⁵⁹ McCullagh, *In Franco's Spain...*, p. 43.

commissars.⁶⁰ The following sections will be using *La Ametralladora* as well as archival and first-hand published sources to understand the values that constituted the ‘generic’ Crusade in the rebel armed forces, with the aim of subsequently comparing this with the Crusade as presented to soldiers of the Falange and Requeté.

⁶⁰ James Matthews, *Comisarios y Capellanes: Moral, Motivación y Disciplina en el Ejército Popular de la República y el Ejército Nacional en la Guerra Civil Española*, Working Paper, August 2012, pp. 4-8; J. Tovar Patrón, *Los curas de la última cruzada*, (Madrid: Fuerza Nueva, 2001), pp. 190-192. Nevertheless, some of the religious figures involved in military affairs were gifted orators, the magniloquence of one, Father Ramón Sarabia, being captured in his *Libro del Soldado – A los jóvenes, forjadores de la Nueva España*, (Palencia: Merino, 1938), *passim*.

*¡Echemos de nuestro suelo al enemigo!*⁶¹ – **The Enemies of the Crusade**

As previously mentioned, the major motivating factor for the uprising and the uniting factor for all those on the rebel side was the overthrow of the Republic. Once the war was underway a new conception of the enemy was developed that mirrored the Manichean attitudes of the Army of Africa and was further enhanced by a religious interpretation. This created a clear narrative of ‘Spaniards’ and ‘anti-Spaniards’, of defenders and invaders, that would continue well after the war (albeit in the slightly altered form of ‘victors and vanquished’).⁶² In 1937 General Mola stated: ‘this war has to end with the extermination of the enemies of Spain’.⁶³ The implication, aside from the violent one, of this statement is simple: that the enemy against whom the rebels fought was not Spanish, and the war was aimed at their expulsion from Spanish soil. It was, put simply, an invasion. This position was not new and had existed since before the conflict began, with many on the Right during the Republic viewing the Left as little more than the ‘servants of Moscow’.⁶⁴ However, once hostilities had been declared this concept was adopted in earnest as the enemy was now ‘a vile Marxist rabble, no longer of Spain’, comprised of either ‘foreign adventurers’ or ‘traitors’ committed to handing Spain over to Soviet power.⁶⁵ Franco made the distinction abundantly clear, stating ‘In Spain we are fighting, not a Spanish internal foe, but the Russian Communist International, which has its affiliations in every country’.⁶⁶

The Comintern, with its tool the Third International, was portrayed as the puppet-master of the invasion. From its seat in Moscow it had conspired to make Spain ‘a second Soviet country’, to subject its people to slavery and to plunder its wealth.⁶⁷ Stalin, like his ancestor Genghis Khan, had his eyes on a great *Patria* as his ‘dream Prey’.⁶⁸ The idea of a Muscovite conspiracy was not merely a superficial propagandistic construct, but a relatively pervasive belief in the Francoist state structure. The *Boletín de Información Antimarxista*, a secret periodical distributed to approved persons of the *Jefatura del Servicio Nacional de Seguridad* (National Security Service) would make great claims about the role of the

⁶¹ José Millán Astray, *Franco el Caudillo*, (Salamanca; M. Quero y Simon, 1939), p.57.

⁶² *La Ametralladora...*, 2 May 1937, p. 1.

⁶³ José María Iribarren, *Con el General Mola*, cited in Richards, *A Time of Silence...*, p.32

⁶⁴ Sid Lowe, *Catholicism, War and the Foundation of Francoism – The Juventud de Acción Popular in Spain, 1931-1939*, (Sussex: Sussex Academic Press, 2010), p. 34.

⁶⁵ *La Ametralladora...*, 26 December 1937, p. 4.

⁶⁶ Harold G. Cardozo, *March of a Nation – My Years of Spain’s Civil War*, (New York: Robert Mcbride, 1937), p. 151.

⁶⁷ Richards, *A Time of Silence...*, p. 27.

⁶⁸ *La Ametralladora...*, 16 May 1937, p. 1.

Comintern in the Civil War. In its fifth number, published in November 1938, it would state that the Russian ‘desire to sovietise Spain was brought with such constancy and thoroughness’ that when the Caudillo[±] ‘initiated the Holy Spanish Crusade’, he was met with ‘perfectly matched centres and organizations’ whose ‘method and practise’ were so expert ‘that it seemed as though its structure was ancient’.⁶⁹ This highlights the belief that the war had long been a Soviet conspiracy, as the structures for a Russian *coup d’état* were already in place prior to the outbreak of war. Moreover it also implies that the Civil War was the fault of the Republic, for they had permitted for the *Patria* to become so infiltrated by its enemies. It was this ‘criminal complicity of democratic liberalism’, led by the ‘scoundrels of the Popular Front’ who had ‘inoculated the virus of Cain into the unhappy masses’, that had, in the words of one Army officer, allowed ‘Marxist elements to come to control the country's politics’.⁷⁰ This portrayal of the Republic as complicit in the invasion allowed for the entire concept of democracy to be treated with equal disdain to Marxism, as it had allowed the latter to take root in Spain.⁷¹ It was weak and depraved and an unfitting political system. It was the reason, according to Franco, that ‘Spain had been dragged towards unbridled disorder’ and left the *Patria*, in the words of Mola, as a husk of ‘blood, mud and tears’.⁷²

It was in this context of democratic cravenness and foreign servitude that Republican leaders were portrayed as Russian lackeys. They were traitors, or ‘barbarians born in Spain by pure accident, but not Children of Spain’.⁷³ Negrín was the most prominent of those skewered, referred to as the ‘servile satellite of Moscow’ in the correspondence of the propaganda service.⁷⁴ Azaña, on the other hand, was shown to be in the correct company amongst the barbarous reds, with *La Ametralladora* somewhat implausibly claiming that of ‘the monsters catalogued over the centuries there are none that have the layers to sustain a rivalry with him’.⁷⁵ Occasionally the references were less pointed and merely insulting, with

[±] Caudillo, roughly translated into ‘warrior leader’ was Franco’s sobriquet, his *Duce* or *Führer*.

⁶⁹ *Boletín de Información Antimarxista (B.I.A.)*, No. 5, 30 November 1938, p. 90.

⁷⁰ *La Ametralladora...*, 14 February 1937, p. 4; Héctor Colmegna, *Diario de un médico argentino en la guerra de España, 1936-1939*, (Buenos Aires: Espasa Calpe, 1941), p. 56.

⁷¹ Alberto Reig Tapia, “La justificación ideológica del ‘alzamiento’ de 1936” in *La II República española – bienio rectificador y Frente Popular: IV Coloquio de Segovia sobre Historia Contemporánea de España*, ed. José Luis García Delgado, (Madrid: Siglo Veintiuno, 1988), pp. 211-237.

⁷² Francisco Franco, 10 October 1937, from *Le Figaro* cited in Francisco Franco Bahamonde, *Pensamiento político de Franco – Tomo I*, (Madrid: Ediciones del Movimiento, 1975), p. 49; Emilio Mola y Vidal, *Obras Completas*, (Valladolid: Librería Santaran, 1940), p. 1179.

⁷³ *La Ametralladora...*, 10 April 1938, p. 2.

⁷⁴ AGMAV, C. 2498, 1/8.

⁷⁵ *La Ametralladora...*, 25 April 1937, p. 5.

Queipo de Llano referring to the short in stature and corpulent Indalecio Prieto as a ‘Greasy Napoleon’.⁷⁶

In keeping with this theme of Russian dominion, the entire institution of the Popular Army was presented as a foreign undertaking from root to branch. A document from Franco’s General Staff to Emilio Díaz Ferrer, the director of *Radio Nacional de España*, outlined the official broadcast position regarding the composition of the *Ejército Popular*. According to this 12 April 1937 missive the real directors of the Popular Army were Russian and José Miaja, commander of the Central Army and most prominent Republican general, was merely ‘a decorative figure incapable of anything more than idiocy’, who was ‘despised even by the foreigners that he has at his side and that effectively order him’. The *lingua franca* of the Popular Army was French, with ‘hundreds of orders and bulletins in French in which a Spanish name never appears’. Commissars were at the whims of the Comintern and were of French, German, Italian and Russian extraction, while the high commanders in Vizcaya and Barcelona were a Belgian called ‘Christiain’ and a Russian called ‘Griaznoi’ respectively. Albacete, due to the number of International Brigadiers, was to all intents and purposes a foreign city.⁷⁷ *La Ametralladora* claimed in May 1937 that the Republic had, through its incompetence, ‘consumed for their vanguard all useful domestic men’, meaning that their ‘so-called Army of the people [is] nothing more an international army formed by unemployed workers from across Europe’.⁷⁸ In another missive, the Air Force was presented being made up completely of ‘Russians, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Jews [and] Dutchmen’.⁷⁹

In contrast, the presence of German and Italian troops alongside those of the rebels was downplayed and when cited their numbers were vastly underreported. A bulletin on ‘propaganda orientation’ sent out to the press and radio outlets of Burgos in September 1937 made this clear. It claimed that the National Army ‘are almost all Spaniards... only a score of battalions of volunteer fascist *legionarios* have the honour of defending Spain against the international communist hordes’.⁸⁰ The reasons for this obfuscation are obvious, as the reality of German and Italian involvement in the National war effort would have seriously undermined the authenticity of their claims of a war against an invader.

The enemy was not exclusively seen as Russian and Marxist as it also took the form of those other *bêtes noires* of the Spanish Right, Jews and Masons. The Republicans leaders

⁷⁶ From a speech on *Radio Sevilla* cited in *Proa – Diario Nacional sindicalista*, 2 July 1938, p. 8.

⁷⁷ AGMAV, C. 2497, 22/25.

⁷⁸ *La Ametralladora...*, 23 May 1937, p. 5.

⁷⁹ AGMAV, C.461, 3/41-42.

⁸⁰ AGMAV, C. 2497, 27/28.

were said to be in ‘masonic employ’ and through their machinations had made the *Patria*, ‘a plaything of the Jews’.⁸¹ In one of *La Ametralladora*’s ‘humorous’ pieces in which historical figures were ‘interviewed’, one of the supposed interviewees, Isabella la Católica, stated that the Republicans were nothing more than the ‘legitimate descendants of those Jews that Fernando and I expelled from Spain’.⁸² The conflation of these enemies of the *Patria* had been a popular conceit among some rightist outlets during the Republican period, with the ‘Judeo-Masonic-Bolshevik conspiracy’ becoming a theme of anti-Republican discourse in the five years preceding the conflict.⁸³ This continued during the war itself and formed an important part of the Crusade discourse as belief that Marxism, Judaism and Masonry were ideological kin, an ‘absurd and singular conglomerate’, who had united to invade the *Patria*, persisted in propaganda.⁸⁴ The *Boletín de Información Antimarxista* would even go so far as to state that Marx was not called Marx at all and that ‘the Jewish author of all the disturbance that the modern world has been suffering’ was in reality called ‘Haim Mardojai’ his moniker chosen ‘to avoid the flavour of its origins’ and to pass as German.⁸⁵ This anti-Masonic and anti-Jewish discourse contributed to the religious element of the conflict, as both Jews and Masons were presented as dedicated to the destruction of the Catholic Church. Moreover each was also viewed as foreign, as affiliation with each precluded an individual from being a ‘good Spaniard’.⁸⁶

Both the Jews and the Masons were portrayed as equal to the Russians in their propensity for Machiavellianism; with schemes against the *Patria* being concocted not only in the Kremlin but in Masonic lodges and synagogues as well. The Republican war effort, according to Millán Astray, was being determined ‘in secret Masonic lodges... that have

⁸¹ From a speech on *Radio Salamanca* cited in *Proa...*, 1 December 1936, p. 1; *La Ametralladora...*, 7 March 1937, p. 1.

⁸² *La Ametralladora...*, 7 March 1937, p. 2.

⁸³ Pablo Pérez López, “La Masonería en la Prensa Confesional en Castilla durante la Segunda República y Guerra Civil: Diario Regional de Valladolid, 1931-1939”, in *Masonería, revolución y reacción*, vol. 1, ed. José Antonio Ferrer Benimeli, (Alicante: Instituto de Cultura "Juan Gil-Albert", 1990), pp. 396-398.

⁸⁴ ‘the Russians, the Freemasons and Jews, come to steal your pastures, your mountains, your valleys, and your streams’, *La Ametralladora...*, 1 February 1937, p. 2; 2 May 1937, p. 12.

⁸⁵ *B.I.A...*, No. 5, 30 November 1938, pp. 77-78. For more on the role of *B.I.A...*, in the construction of anti-Masonic and anti-Jewish sentiment in Francoism see Pedro Víctor Fernández Fernández, “El Boletín de Información Antimarxista – aun ejemplo de espíritu antimasonico del franquismo” in *Masonería, revolución y reacción*, vol. 1, ed. José Antonio Ferrer Benimeli, (Alicante: Instituto de Cultura "Juan Gil-Albert", 1990), pp. 441-452.

⁸⁶ This attitude, towards masonry at least, continued long after the war as affiliation with the order was treated as a crime, Julius Ruiz, “Fighting the International Conspiracy: The Francoist Persecution of Freemasonry, 1936–1945”, *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, Vol. 12, No. 2, (2011), pp. 187-196; Francisco López Villarejo, “Represión antimasonica y control social en el Linares de la posguerra”, *Masonería, revolución y reacción*, vol. 1, ed. José Antonio Ferrer Benimeli, (Alicante: Instituto de Cultura "Juan Gil-Albert", 1990), pp. 531-555.

decreed the ruin of Spain'.⁸⁷ While *Octavillas* dropped over Republican lines stated that 'the Jews' dark and cowardly work' had 'ignited and stoked the war in Spain, the governments of Russia and France are in their hands and they manage at their whim Negrín and his followers', asking finally of the Republican soldiers 'do you not feel shame for being dominated by such entities?'.⁸⁸ The very fact that one was a Freemason was presented as sufficient evidence for treachery, with Sebastián Pozas and Manuel Azaña highlighted as examples of this trend.⁸⁹ The fact that one of the high ranking *africanista* generals, Miguel Cabanellas, was also a member of the order was ignored, steamrolled in the rush to create a cleavage of identity between the Republic and the rebels.⁹⁰

The adoption and promulgation of this concoction of the myriad anathemas of the Spanish Right is not difficult to understand. By portraying the Republic as under the influence of figures who had such a cache of negative cultural connotations, both religious and racial, the enemy was suitably denigrated.⁹¹ Moreover, this cultural cache, this deep-seeded opposition, was keenly held by all those who supported the rebels in regards to one of the three, whether that be the Falange opposing Marxism or Carlist hatred of Freemasonry.⁹² The result was that the disparate rebel groups were united in the same mission, to expel this 'detritus of the human race' – whether it was Jewish, Marxist, Masonic or all three – from the *Patria*.⁹³

Much like in Africa, the conflict and the defeat of the enemy was linked to myths of the past. *La Ametralladora* presented the end of the *Reconquista* in 1492 in terms that would just as easily have suited the contemporary climate, stating that it was the year that 'Spain landed the death blow on the degenerate Orientalist invaders and rid Spain of the last tyrants of Western civilization', going on to call the current war a 'Second *Reconquista*' ending by stating '1492: we could, 1937: we can also'.⁹⁴ With its themes of the expulsion of a foreign, uncivilized, non-Christian enemy from *Patria*, it was always likely to feature heavily in rebel discourse. Moreover, allied to the themes of an 'invasion', the *Reconquista* allowed for the

⁸⁷ From a speech on *Radio Salamanca* cited in *Proa...*, 22 November 1936, p. 1.

⁸⁸ AGMAV, C.1328, 25/7.

⁸⁹ AGMAV, C.2497, 27/28;

⁹⁰ Julián Casanova, *A Short History of the Spanish Civil War*, (London: IB Tauris, 2013), p. 24.

⁹¹ The racial element of Francoist anti-Semitism has not been explored here, with the focus in the sources examined being more concerned with the concept of 'the Jews' as international conspiracists rather than on their racial minutiae.

⁹² Domínguez Arribas, *El enemigo judeo-masónico...*, pp. 76-77; Isabel Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews, 1898-1945: Antisemitism and Opportunism*, (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2007), p. 32; Ruiz, "Fighting the International Conspiracy...", p. 184.

⁹³ *La Trinchera...*, 25 January 1937, p. 3.

⁹⁴ *La Ametralladora...*, 10 October 1937, p. 8.

rebels to present the Crusade as a means to save not only Spain, but all Western Civilization, as, much like in the Mediaeval age, Spain was ‘the shield, the wall of Europe... which invading barbarians from another mentality smash into’.⁹⁵ Other myths employed included the conquest of the Americas, the entire *Siglo de Oro* following 1492 (Golden Age, the Sixteenth Century) in fact, and the War of Independence.⁹⁶ The legacy of the American campaign was evoked over the contentious subject of the Republican sale of the national gold reserves. For the Nationalists, this was not merely a financial issue, with the Republicans selling off ‘the guarantee of national wealth’ to prolong the conflict, but also an historical crime.⁹⁷ The ‘reds’ were selling off the Imperial heritage of Cortes and Pizarro, the material legacy of Spain’s great past, in order to fight those who wished to recapture it.⁹⁸ This was, as far as rebel martial discourse was concerned, an absurdity that could not be tolerated and demanded retribution.

Amid the historical myths employed there was an undercurrent of Castilian supremacy. The history of Castile, the seat of Isabel *la Católica* and Philip II, was revered by the Nationalists, as it was all on the Spanish Right. It was portrayed as the epitome of the traditional concept of Spain, feudalist, pious, introverted and imperial, a world power, uncorrupted by foreign ideas.⁹⁹ The Castilian peasantry was subject to a particularly grandiloquent glorification. Stoic, reserved and hardworking, the honest Castilian, as opposed to his work-shy Aragonese or Andalusian counterpart, lived life at a ‘fair and normal pace’ and embodied ‘God, Christian civilization and humanity’.¹⁰⁰ He, speaker of the ‘divine language that God gave to Castile’, was portrayed as free from the corrupting influence of the city and its foreign ideas, a relic of a feudal age when Spain was great.¹⁰¹ This idea of Castile and its sons as the cradle of *Hispanidad* defined one of the most important ideas of Nationalist military culture, centralism, and it is therefore no great surprise that a movement whose rallying call was ‘Spain, one and indivisible’ would be hostile to peripheral nationalism.¹⁰² The concept of Spain in rebel eyes was one of a single nation with very

⁹⁵ *La Ametralladora...*, 4 July 1937, p. 7; 10 October 1937, p. 8.

⁹⁶ Núñez Seixas, *Nations in arms against the invader...*, p. 57.

⁹⁷ AGMAV, 2497, 21/21.

⁹⁸ Millán Astray in particular focused on this fact, mentioning it in several of his speeches.

⁹⁹ Núñez Seixas, *¡Fuera el invasor!...*, pp. 225-226; José Luis Abellán, “La guerra de Cuba y los Intelectuales”, *El desastre de 1898*, (Madrid: Cuadernos Historia 16, 1985), p. 28.

¹⁰⁰ Millán Astray, *Franco...*, p. 103.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*..., p. 77; Mola, *Obras...*, p. 1173; Richards, *A Time of Silence...*, p. 48.

¹⁰² All rebel attitudes towards regional expression were not quite as cut and dried as stated here, with differing attitudes expressed between the various groups. These attitudes will be explained later in the thesis, however, for now it is important to maintain that the Army held the belief that the nation should be, if not homogenous, a

characteristic regions, which, despite their differences, were integral to each other and could not be divided. The nation had, according to Mola, an ‘historic unity that repudiated separatism’, although not ‘the modal characteristics of [her] regions’.¹⁰³ Spain was a single nation under God, led by Castile, so to entertain ‘grotesque separatism’ was tantamount to heresy.¹⁰⁴ Yet regional differences were still celebrated and ‘cultural regionalism’ would become one of the facets of early Francoism.¹⁰⁵ Basque culture, for example, was seen as perfectly conducive to the *africanista* idea of what was ‘Spanish’. Millán Astray, following the capture of Bilbao in 1937 stated that the Basques were ‘a people who knew how to pray to God and sing to the *Patria*, a warrior people, a people of sacred traditions, of pure habits, of strong bodies and pure souls’.¹⁰⁶ Despite this tolerance for regional distinction, the war was still viewed as a Castilian *Reconquista* which served to conclusively define the regions relationship with the centre; they had a role to play in Spain, but only within Castilian constraints.¹⁰⁷

Consequently the actions of ‘the evil separatists’ that wished to break this national unity were met with opprobrium in Crusade discourse.¹⁰⁸ These ‘sterile efforts to dismember Spain’ were, according to *La Ametralladora*, the result of excesses of ‘stupid vanity [and] childish egotism’.¹⁰⁹ The autonomy statutes for Catalonia and the Basque country were seen as an abomination and yet another failing of the Republic, which had signed away swathes of the *Patria* in what Millán Astray described as ‘covenants of dismemberment’.¹¹⁰ The leaders of the peripheral nationalists were treated as absurdities, with José Antonio de Aguirre, the *lehendakari* (president) of the Basque Autonomous government coming in for special treatment. Alongside the obvious moniker of ‘traitor’, Aguirre was portrayed as a duplicitous coward, protesting to be Catholic while being ‘mixed into an illegal and disgusting and monstrous conspiracy with the scum of the earth, with those without God and without *Patria*’.¹¹¹ In broader, *ad hominem* attacks he was presented as a simpleton, whose idiocy was infinite and, while a failure at everything in life, ‘almost managed to fail the day of his birth’.

single entity and led by Castile. This concept is explained well in Núñez Seixas, *¡Fuera el invasor!...*, pp. 271-284.

¹⁰³ Mola, *Obras...*, p. 1195.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid...*, p. 1189.

¹⁰⁵ For more on the role of regionalism in Francoism see Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas and Maiken Umbach, “Hijacked Heimats: national appropriations of local and regional identities in Germany and Spain, 1930-1945”, *European Review of History*, Vol. 15, No. 3, June 2008, p. 301-303.

¹⁰⁶ Millán Astray, *Franco...*, p. 77.

¹⁰⁷ Núñez Seixas, *¡Fuera el invasor!...*, p. 271-2.

¹⁰⁸ AGMAV, C.2494, 4/147.

¹⁰⁹ *La Ametralladora...*, 2 May 1937, p. 6.

¹¹⁰ Millán Astray speech cited in *Proa...*, 1 December 1936, p. 1.

¹¹¹ *La Ametralladora...*, 2 May 1937, p. 6.

Moreover his ‘physical poverty’ was used as a means to imply a life of sexual failure in a Basque separatist culture which celebrated ‘cult of the burly’.¹¹² Given that he was a former professional footballer and graduate, the criticism of the physique and intellect of Aguirre was a puzzling one, yet it remained popular.¹¹³ Ultimately, peripheral nationalism was incompatible with the Crusade conception of the *Patria*. It conflicted with the idea of both a single nation and one led by Castile. Therefore, in the Crusade discourse, it was presented as degenerate and evil, the preserve of cowards and traitors.

The references to Spain’s glorious history also mimicked the discourse of the Moroccan War in that the conflict was portrayed as a war between ‘civilization’ and ‘barbarity’. The National troops were presented ‘volunteers’ who ‘in the face of horror fight for civilization’ against enemy units comprised of ‘foreign hordes’.¹¹⁴ Much like in Morocco, what ‘civilization’ entailed was not clearly defined, but it is clear what it was not: democratic, Marxist, Eastern and non-Catholic. *La Ametralladora* outlined the war in suitably vague yet apocalyptic terms as a conflict between ‘Cain and Abel... one represents hate, barbarism, Terror, Disorder. The other represents Civilization, Peace, Work, Order, Progress’.¹¹⁵ The conduct of the ‘reds’, unsurprisingly, was portrayed as in keeping with the thoroughly uncivilized ideology they followed. Their violent excesses were luridly detailed, José Millán Astray, in a speech from November 1936, would present an image of the ‘picture of horror that red barbarism has committed’:

It is a collection of all the most perverse crimes the spirit can imagine; the rape and murder of young girls; the killing of children; men, priests and the religious murdered; people burned alive; children shot in the arms of their parents; houses burned with people inside, in short, whatever human perversity can invent.¹¹⁶

This ‘red savagery’ was presented as endemic, employed not only against innocent civilians but also against their own men, as a supposed ‘anti-human, Asian, system’ was used to avoid mass desertions. One 1938 document from the General Staff to the National Delegation for Press and Propaganda, presented as ‘for publication’, outlined the details of this ‘system’. It

¹¹² *La Ametralladora...*, 16 May 1937, p. 7.

¹¹³ Aguirre had, as a youth, been on the books of Athletic Bilbao. Alejandro Quiroga, *Football and National Identities in Spain: The Strange Death of Don Quixote*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 29.

¹¹⁴ AGMAV, 2497, 21/49.

¹¹⁵ *La Ametralladora...*, 9 May 1937, p. 11.

¹¹⁶ From a speech on *Radio Salamanca* cited in *Proa...*, 22 November 1936, p. 4.

stated that not only machine guns, but tanks as well, were used by Popular Army against the troops of the XIII Mixed Brigade to keep them in position.¹¹⁷

Moreover, red barbarity was not only violent, but cultural. They not only profaned churches, as shall be detailed later, but also destroyed art. They, for no reason other than depravity, had left the House of Diego Velázquez in ruins.¹¹⁸ When not destroying art, the Republicans sold it on ‘Masonic and Jewish market’ to fund their war effort in ‘treason to the Artistic Spain and to History’.¹¹⁹ This further highlighted their degeneracy, as they even refused to accept defeat with honour, instead dragging out the conflict through the sale of Spain’s artistic heritage. Queipo de Llano called this a ‘crime’, with the Reds lacking ‘the scruples of conscience for either children or men, knowing that they lead them to death’.¹²⁰ *La Ametralladora* would even claim that the evacuation of infants was part of this drive, drawing up a list of items stolen by Russia in which, following gold, territory and art, were children; ‘the true reserve and hope of the Patria’ sent to ‘remote foreign countries’.¹²¹

The presentation of the Reds as uncivilized was taken to an interesting extreme through criticism of the Republican diet. For while the Nationalists enjoyed, as per the *falangista* promise, white bread, in Barcelona and Valencia they had nothing. In Vizcaya ‘they manufacture a thing that they call bread, a base of chickpeas, lentils or other beans, it has everything except wheat’.¹²² This conceit even went so far as for Radio Salamanca to proclaim that thirty Francoist planes, ‘dodging danger’, had dropped 178,000 loaves over Madrid. This fact was contested by Republican internal documents which claimed that ‘The planes that flew over Madrid were twelve in number and did not unload the quantity of ‘white bread’ they said they would’, dropping bombs instead.¹²³ The effect of this dietary criticism was two-fold. Firstly, it showed the ineptitude of the Republican government in its inability provide the populace with even the simplest of staples. Secondly, it highlighted the depravity that Marxism had led to; that people under Red rule would eat such an ersatz imitation showed the degenerate depths plumbed by those who identified with it.

¹¹⁷ AGMAV, 2494, 1/11.

¹¹⁸ *La Ametralladora...*, 21 March 1937, p. 5.

¹¹⁹ AGMAV, 2497, 21/21; 40

¹²⁰ From a speech on *Radio Sevilla* cited in *Proa – Diario Nacional Sindicalista*, 2 July 1938, p. 8.

¹²¹ *La Ametralladora...*, 16 May 1937, p. 11. The mention of the evacuation of children was not a one-time occurrence, it was a part of rebel propaganda with both radio stations and newspapers encouraged to mention it; AGMAV, C. 1427, 7/12; AGMAV, C. 2497, 19/8-9. Children were evacuated from the Basque country to various countries across Europe including France, Britain, Belgium and the USSR. For more on the evacuation of children in the Spanish Civil War see Dorothy Legarreta, *The Guernica Generation: Basque refugee children of the Spanish Civil War*, (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1984), *passim*.

¹²² AGMAV, 2497, 21/19.

¹²³ AGMAV, C.461, 5/11.

All of the previously mentioned ideas were linked to a Manichean conception of the *Patria*, one where the above cited enemies could not be tolerated for the nation to be prosperous. Taking its lead from the Spanish intellectuals of the preceding decades, rebel discourse posited the idea of Spain as a body that had fallen ill and needed to be expunged of its external invaders.¹²⁴ In its natural state, Spain was a great nation, as proven by its exploits in the Sixteenth century when it had rid itself of the Moorish foreign contagion and conquered the Atlantic. Yet it had suffered a great decline since then, the accepted reasoning being that malignant foreign influence had returned to plague the nation under Bourbon rule.¹²⁵ Mola, in a Radio speech shortly before his death in 1937, described the proposed return to the ‘natural’ state in the form of an ‘allegoric Garden’, speaking of a ‘tree, full of life, straight as a cedar (*cedro*), stout as a holm oak (*encina*), strong as an oak (*roble*): the New Spain’.¹²⁶ The rebels were all that was good for Spain, civilized and Catholic, yet the *Patria* remained blighted by the ‘the communist microbe’, ‘the Asian disease’ and ‘the separatist germ’, each of which needed to be destroyed in order for it to prosper once more.¹²⁷ This concept, of Spain as strong and ‘virile’ but beset with parasites that prevented her from recapturing greatness, offered a simple, pseudo-scientific means to differentiate between Spain and its enemies and consequently a means to dehumanise and persecute these enemies. Those who agreed with the rebels were Spanish while those who did not were foreign and needed to be dealt with. The ultimate arbiters of this distinction were the *africanistas*, for it was they who, in Crusade discourse, were the best representation of the *Patria*. The following section will examine how this assertion manifested itself in both discourse and practice.

¹²⁴ Michael Richards, ‘Constructing the Nationalist State: Self-Sufficiency and Regeneration in the Early Franco Years’, in *Nationalism and the Nation in the Iberian Peninsula – Competing and Conflicting Identities*, eds., Clare Mar-Molinero and Ángel Smith, (Oxford: Berg, 1996), p. 149

¹²⁵ This is not to say that all thinkers felt all foreign influence was bad, simply that that which Spain had experienced had led to its decline. Joaquín Costa, *Crisis política de España*, (Madrid: Fortanet, 1901); José Ortega y Gasset, *España Invertebrada – bosquejo de algunos pensamientos históricos*, (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 2006); Ricardo Macías Picavea, *El problema nacional: hechos, causas, remedios*, (Madrid: Librería General de Victoriano Suárez, 1899); Miguel de Unamuno, *Artículos olvidados sobre España y la Primera Guerra Mundial*, (London: Tamesis Books, 1976).

¹²⁶ Mola, *Obras...*, p. 1195.

¹²⁷ *B.I.A...*, No. 3, 10 November 1938, p. 33; *La Trinchera...*, 25 January 1937, p. 6; *La Ametralladora...*, 11 April 1937, p.5.

*Una vez más el Ejército... se ve obligado a recoger el anhelo de la gran mayoría de los españoles*¹²⁸ – The Army as Crusaders

The officers that rebelled on 17-18 July 1936 saw themselves as the guardians of the *Patria*, as they that would not only deliver it from its enemies but also define its strongest characteristics. This had been an entrenched belief since the campaigns in the Rif, with various *africanistas* seeing the colonial forces as the only means to renovate a *Patria* which had grown decadent, flabby and corrupt.¹²⁹ This section of the chapter will outline the martial characteristics that would supposedly renew the nation and so defined the Crusade of ‘good Spaniards’, from the primacy of violence to a slavish devotion to discipline.

More or less from the outset of the war, the belief that the Army was the saviour of the nation was promulgated. Franco in late July 1936 would claim that:

In all civilized countries, when the Army had risen against a government as overbearing as this current one, proving right that reason is with us, the leaders have given in, through patriotism, so that the nation does not have to suffer the horrors of war. Those who insist on ruling do not want to be patriots [they are] moved by a foreign cause and all that can be by this achieved is bloodshed in Spain.¹³⁰

In this extract the uprising against the democratically elected government is not the crime, the transgression instead lies in the resistance to it. The explicit mention to the ‘foreign cause’ underlines not only the Republic's extra-Spanish allegiance, but also that the uprising was a specifically patriotic, Spanish action. Franco here believes himself and his allies to be doing little more than their duty in rising against the Republic. Almost exactly a year later his beliefs would remain unchanged, telling *ABC Sevilla* that the Army ‘has a duty to take up arms to defend the *Patria* when it is danger of death’.¹³¹ Mola would echo this *africanista* sentiment, arguing that the Army was representative of the people and understood their aspirations better than any other institution. In a Radio broadcast to mark the taking of San Sebastián he stated that the Army was at ‘the foundations’ of ‘this formidable undertaking’, and that there existed a ‘national yearning’ for the Army to occupy its rightful place as leader of the nation. Only now could begin the re-consolidation of ‘union of the Army and the people, distanced until the nineteenth of July [1936], by stupid intellectualism and suicidal

¹²⁸ Mola, *Obras*, p. 1172.

¹²⁹ Balfour, *Deadly Embrace...*, p. 172.

¹³⁰ *ABC Sevilla*, 29 July 1936, p. 1.

¹³¹ *ABC Sevilla*, 19 July 1937, p. 1.

politics'.¹³² Mola's reflections on the Republican period show not only his belief that the Army and the people were inseparable, but that it was the Army's duty to understand this:

As if we, the Military, were a caste apart, as if we had left the people, when they – *whether they know it or are unaware* – constitute and have always constituted our highest honour, our most coveted glory.¹³³

The point Mola is making is clear, that the Army understood the *Patria* best of all, even if its constituents did not themselves recognise this fact, and it was the duty of the armed forces to act in its interests (these interests, of course, would themselves be defined by the Army). Millán Astray articulated this belief in 1938, regarding the uprising a result of 'the Army, as the interpreter of the feelings of all honourable Spaniards, fulfilling its sacred duty to God and the *Patria*, and deciding to embark on their salvation'. Politically this had one conclusion; that the New State being created, 'cemented with the blood of [its] heroic soldiers', would be at the behest of the *Patria*, a *Patria* best understood and represented by the Military.¹³⁴

This attitude filtered through all martial discourse as the Army was portrayed as saving the *Patria* from 'dishonour and ruin'.¹³⁵ Republican soldiers who had been 'recycled' into the National Army were, in their mandatory 'moral and social education' informed, amongst other key values of the rebel martial-political programme, that 'the Army takes on the task of saving the *Patria*'.¹³⁶ Soldiers personified the best aspects of the *Patria*, they were 'brave', the 'spirit of this tough and immortal race', the 'blood and the heart of Spain'.¹³⁷ It was through them that the people of Spain could 'regain the healthy pride and great dignity of calling ourselves Spaniards'.¹³⁸ This self-image, of them being the nation's saviours, also played into the concepts of masculinity, as the rebels, in keeping with years of Spanish right-wing thought, came to view themselves as the 'saviours' of women in the conflict.¹³⁹ It was the role of the Army, in the words of Millán Astray, 'to preserve the lives of their mothers

¹³² Mola, *Obras Completas*, p. 1184.

¹³³ *Ibid.*..., p. 1184, italics my own.

¹³⁴ Millán Astray, *Franco...*, p. 179.

¹³⁵ *La Ametralladora...*, 24 October 1937, p. 3.

¹³⁶ AGMAV, C. 2494, 8/7. Other key themes included 'the errors of Marxism', 'the prevailing criminality before 18 July' and 'the aims of Judaism, Masonry and Marxism'.

¹³⁷ *La Ametralladora...*, 21 February 1937, p. 1; 11 April 1937, p. 15.

¹³⁸ *La Ametralladora...*, 24 October 1937, p. 5.

¹³⁹ Masculinity in the Crusade is dealt with expertly by Mary Vincent in "The Martyrs and the Saints: Masculinity and the Construction of the Francoist Crusade", *History Workshop*, Issue 47, (1999), pp. 69-98.

who are being murdered, to preserve the honour of their sisters and their future wives that is being tarnishing'.¹⁴⁰ The *africanistas*, although not mentioned specifically, were singled out for special praise with *La Ametralladora*, following a diatribe against the 'crimes' Republican period, stating:

Your flag..., dear Spain, was torn on April 14 [1931, the declaration of the Republic], but then there were some soldiers who were able to pick it up in the folds of their hearts. They had sworn to defend it to the death and now you see that our Army has honour...¹⁴¹

It was these soldiers (the 'some' added to imply a chosen few) that had bravely risen against the despotic Republic and it was they that were to define the New Spain. As was the belief since the Moroccan campaigns, there was a feeling that they had earned this right through their sacrifices for the *Patria* and this infatuation with violence, the link between it and patriotism would continue into the Civil War.

Violence played a key role in the rebel zone, both culturally and in practice, during the Civil War. War by its very nature is a violent undertaking and the military is the means by which violence is most often perpetrated and experienced. The insurgents would celebrate this fact, refusing to shy away from the brutality their task entailed – quite the reverse, in fact, as they celebrated the more visceral aspects of conflict. Mola saw warfare as 'a natural phenomenon... an ethical obligation and inexorable law of the universe', it was a force of nature, to be praised and held up as an example to all.¹⁴² For Millán Astray, inclined as he was to violent language, soldiers' acts of destruction in fact aided the *Patria*; with combatants painted as 'bloody victors [that] step by step opened the happy paths to the total liberation of Spain'.¹⁴³ *La Ametralladora* presented fighting in the war as carefree endeavour, to be enjoyed; soldiers supposedly 'killed and died singing for the freedom and the greatness of Spain'.¹⁴⁴ This celebration of the experience and perpetration of violence had been seen before in Morocco, with the Legion proving the most prominent example. These most violent

¹⁴⁰ From a speech cited in *Proa...*, 6 December 1937, p. 4.

¹⁴¹ *La Ametralladora...*, 1 February 1937, p. 7.

¹⁴² Mola, *Obras...*, p. 1133.

¹⁴³ From a speech cited in *Proa...*, 27 August 1937, p. 1.

¹⁴⁴ For a first-hand account of the excesses of *legionarios*, see Francesco Odetti de Marcorengi, *Trenti Mesi nel Tercio*, (Rome: M. Carra & C.), pp. 117-118; *La Ametralladora...*, 3 October 1937, p. 4.

of soldiers, who were responsible for some of the more excessive acts of the Civil War, continued to be praised for their ‘fierceness’ and bravery in the Nationalist press.¹⁴⁵

The celebration of violence created a climate in which violent acts were viewed as the duty of the soldier, something to be embraced, for it not only made them the best exponents of the *Patria*, but it improved the health of that *Patria*. The terminology for the destruction of the enemy was swathed in biological imagery. Communism was an ‘Asian disease’ that had infected Spain, the invaders constituting, according to one *octavilla* a ‘cancer that corrodes our nation’.¹⁴⁶ Mola, in a counterpoint of his allegorical garden, would state at the outbreak of war that it was a concerted effort to ‘wrench out by the roots, forever, all that represents the organisations and principles of Marxism’.¹⁴⁷ The message here was clear: in order for the *Patria* to return to ‘health’, to recapture the glory of its previous years, this metastasizing contagion needed to be extirpated.

This language was not employed in a vacuum and was the rhetorical accompaniment to the extreme violent action of nationalist repression. Following the outbreak of war the rebels embarked on a project of organised violence against the Republican enemy, not only as a means to cease the immediate menace of subversion behind the lines as the Army advanced, but also, through violent intimidation, to ensure against its resurgence. This was, unsurprisingly, a tactic with which *africanistas* had experienced some joy with in Morocco.¹⁴⁸ This process of systematic destruction of the political enemies was pithily summarised by one Civil Guard captain as ‘a march on Rome with more blood’.¹⁴⁹

A violent campaign to eliminate the enemy from captured territory began which by the end of the conflict would claim over 125,000 lives.¹⁵⁰ At the beginning of the war the enthusiasm for it was overwhelming; in Seville the bodies left in the streets were so numerous that they had to be piled up on the pavements to allow for trucks to pass.¹⁵¹ The culture of permissive violence became so excessive that the military governor of the city Queipo de Llano had to sign an order limiting the shooting of ‘reds’ to those aged fifteen and

¹⁴⁵ *La Ametralladora...*, 14 March 1937, p. 3. The concept of military structures being established so as to support men’s enjoyment of killing is explored in Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing – Face-to-Face Killing in Twentieth Century Warfare*, (London: Granta, 1999), pp. 12-43.

¹⁴⁶ *La Ametralladora...*, 11 April 1937, p. 5; AGMAV, C.3131, 6/19;

¹⁴⁷ *The Daily Mail*, 24 July 1936, p. 11.

¹⁴⁸ Richards, *A Time of Silence...*, pp. 34-5.

¹⁴⁹ Cited in Vicente Cacho Viu, “Los Escritos de José María Iribarren, secretario de Mola 1936”, *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna y Contemporánea*, Vol. 5, (1984), p. 249.

¹⁵⁰ Figure from Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust – Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth Century Spain*, (London: Harper, 2013), p. 665.

¹⁵¹ Bahamonde y Sánchez de Castro, *1 año con Queipo...*, p. 27.

over.¹⁵² A further example of this brutality was the massacre at Badajoz in October 1936 that saw the mass execution of 1,800 suspected Republicans. Such was the scale of the slaughter that blood was reported to have flowed ‘palm deep’ at the scene.¹⁵³ The events were subsequently justified in brutal terms by General Juan Yagüe in an interview with American journalist John T. Whitaker:

Of course we shot them... What do you expect? Was I supposed to take 4,000 reds with me as my column advanced, racing against time? Was I expected to turn them loose in my rear and let them make Badajoz red again?¹⁵⁴

Yagüe here betrays the political aspect of Nationalist repression, its role being not merely the removal of dangerous subversives but also to rid Spain, through violence, of the internal Red menace. These attitudes and measures had been seen on the peninsula before, as the use of the tactics of a ‘frontier war’ had been employed by Franco previously and to successful effect, in the repression of miners in Asturias during the October 1934 revolution.¹⁵⁵

There was an undoubted class element to this persecution, as most of these ‘enemies of the *Patria*’, were from the intelligentsia, peasantry or working class.¹⁵⁶ An example of this particularist persecution was seen in an initiative implemented in Seville during the first year of the war when Queipo de Llano demanded that citizens were required to give up their Sunday to ‘volunteer’ to build homes for wounded veterans. The only means of exemption was the payment of twelve pesetas, an amount the impoverished working class of the city, recently stripped of their right to collective bargaining, could not afford. Those that failed to attend were shot.¹⁵⁷ This initiative therefore served solely to provide for those the Army valued, injured soldiers, and punish those who the Army saw as an ‘enemy’, the organised

¹⁵² *Ibid...*, p. 89; Francisco Espinosa Maestre, *La justicia de Queipo – violencia selectiva y terror fascista en la II División en 1936: Sevilla, Huelva, Cádiz, Córdoba, Málaga y Badajoz*, (Córdoba: Bibliofilia Montillana, 2000), pp. 189-204.

¹⁵³ Francisco Espinosa Maestre, *La columna de la muerte. El avance del ejército franquista de Sevilla a Badajoz*, (Barcelona: Editorial, 2003) p. 491.

¹⁵⁴ Cited in Helen Graham, *The Spanish Republic at War – 1936-1939*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 112.

¹⁵⁵ Balfour, *Deadly Embrace...*, pp. 252-3; Sarah Sanchez, *Fact and fiction: representations of the Asturian Revolution (1934-1938)*, (Leeds: Maney, 2003), pp. 37-40.

¹⁵⁶ Perhaps the best known of the Nationalists victims in the Civil War repression was playwright Federico Garcia Lorca, executed in August 1936. His 'crimes' were myriad, ranging from his support of the Republic, his celebration of the cultural influence of the Moors in Spain and his admonishment of *la Reconquista* to his homosexuality.

¹⁵⁷ Bahamonde y Sánchez de Castro, *1 año con Queipo...*, p. 46.

working class of the Macarena and Triana districts that had attempted a strike when the city fell.¹⁵⁸

There was conception of '*limpieza*' (cleaning) whereby through the expunction of the enemy the *Patria* would become pure once again. Spain would be washed in blood, sourced from both from the sacrifice of brave Spaniards and from the elimination of the national cancer, mostly through the execution of those deemed unworthy of the *Patria*.¹⁵⁹ General Queipo de Llano would echo this mentality in practice, in reference to the capture of Malaga he called for the preceding and subsequent repression to be treated as an act of 'purification' and '*limpieza*'.¹⁶⁰ This concept of the enemy as 'unclean' has been seen throughout history, however it has mainly been the view of occupying soldiers, not of one's fighting in their home nation.¹⁶¹ That it was adopted so wholeheartedly by the rebels, as well as 'frontier war' tactics, gives weight to the argument that the ideas and attitudes of Morocco had been transposed to the peninsula.

The violence of 1936, coordinated by the Army but engaged in by every one of the rebel groups, was excessive and killing on such a scale would not be repeated, although a lower level of violent repression with less focus on mass executions would continue throughout the war and well into the *posguerra*. However, in regards to this thesis, the symbolic nature of the violence of the summer of 1936 is important as it set a tone for the rest of the conflict and the ensuing dictatorship; that lines between *Patria* and anti-*Patria* had been drawn and tolerance for subversion would be zero.¹⁶² José María Pemán, a *falangista* intellectual would surmise this transformation well, stating that 'War, with the light of gunfire, has opened our eyes to all. The idea of political shifts or games has been forever substituted by the idea of extermination and expulsion'.¹⁶³

The official Republican attitude to organised violence was markedly different. The outbreak of war and revolution in the Republic zone was greeted with an explosion of popular violence. Landowners, factory owners, known and suspected Francoist sympathisers

¹⁵⁸ Juan Ortiz Villalba, *Del golpe militar a la Guerra Civil – Sevilla 1936*, (Seville: RD Editores, 2006), pp.161-165.

¹⁵⁹ Rafael Cruz, "Las campañas rebeldes de aniquilación del enemigo", *Ayer*, Vol. 76, (2009), pp. 67-69.

¹⁶⁰ Bahamonde y Sánchez de Castro, *1 año con Queipo...*, pp. 90-1; *ABC Sevilla*, 7 February 1937, p. 5.

¹⁶¹ Gavin Daly, *The British Soldier in the Peninsular War – Encounters with Spain and Portugal, 1808-1814*, (London: Palgrave, 2013), p. 132. Stephen G. Fritz, *Frontsoldaten – The German soldier in World War II*, (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1994), pp. 202-3.

¹⁶² Gutmaro Gómez Bravo and Jorge Marco, *La obra del miedo – Violencia y sociedad en la España franquista (1936-1950)*, (Barcelona: Península, 2011), pp. 44-92; Julius Ruiz, *Franco's Justice – Repression in Madrid after the Spanish Civil War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 1-28; Eduardo González Calleja, "Experiencia en combate: Continuidad y cambios en la violencia represiva (1931-1939)", *Ayer*, Vol. 76, (2009), pp. 37-64.

¹⁶³ Cited in Alberto Reig Tapia, *La cruzada de 1936 – mito y memoria*, (Madrid: Editorial, 2006), p. 259.

along with the clergy were killed by revolutionaries, mostly Anarchists and revolutionary socialists, initially without trial and later by Popular Tribunal.¹⁶⁴ These killings were commonplace in the opening months of the conflict; however, as the war continued and the state reasserted its power, extra-judicial political executions ceased and by 1937 the majority of those persecuted for political sedition were dissident Communists and Anarchists.¹⁶⁵ The Republic never engaged in an organised campaign of violent political persecution against Rightists, in fact, future Prime Minister Juan Negrín and War Minister Indalecio Prieto would risk their lives in the early months of the war on nightly patrols aimed at curbing the violence.¹⁶⁶

The embrace of discipline was presented in martial discourse as further reason for the supremacy of the armed forces and their role as a model for the rest of the *Patria*. The problems of the Republic had come from their lack of discipline, of forgoing this vital military value in their civilian decadence. Officers were told to inform soldiers that the Republic had been such a disaster as it had abandoned what made a *Patria* great, that they had ‘no idea of God, or family, or country, or discipline’.¹⁶⁷ It had allowed for anarchy to reign and for law and order to crumble, something that all on the Right in Spain were horrified by. The Army, on the other hand, was a ‘perfect machine’ its discipline allowing its soldiers to suffer through hardship, to ‘suffer snow, ice, storms, hunger and misery without complaint’, giving them the strength to save the *Patria* in battle.¹⁶⁸ By adopting these qualities away from the frontlines the nation as a whole would be bestowed with the same fortitude and a promise was made to ‘impose the spirit of war in times of peace’; a promise that would come to fruition, as the *posguerra* pursuit of self-sufficient autarky saw the political manifestation of military abnegation.¹⁶⁹

As we shall see in the following chapter, discipline was not as much of a discursive pre-occupation as it was in Popular Army. The Army under Franco followed a traditional approach to military discipline, hierarchy and the inviolability of orders and consequently a

¹⁶⁴ For a recent overview of popular violence in the Republic in 1936 see J. Ruiz, *El Terror Rojo: Madrid 1936*, (Madrid: Espasa, 2012), *passim*.

¹⁶⁵ Julián Casanova, *Anarchism, the Republic and Civil War in Spain: 1931-1939*, (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 150.

¹⁶⁶ Graham, *The Spanish Republic...*, p.90; Manuel Tuñón de Lara, 'Introducción', in Alberto Reig Tapia, *Ideología e historia – sobre la represión franquista y la guerra civil*, (Madrid: AKAL, 1986), p. 9.

¹⁶⁷ AGMAV, C.1328, 5/2.

¹⁶⁸ AGMAV, C.2494, 4/52; *La Ametralladora...*, 14 March 1937, p. 2.

¹⁶⁹ *La Ametralladora...*, 12 June 1936, p. 4; Michael Richards, “Constructing the Nationalist State: Self-Sufficiency and Regeneration in the Early Franco Years”, in *Nationalism and the Nation in the Iberian Peninsula – Competing and Conflicting Identities*, eds., Clare Mar-Molinero and Ángel Smith, (Oxford: Berg, 1996), pp. 149-164.

relentless, coercive push for soldiers to obey orders and embrace disciplinary structures was not necessary.¹⁷⁰ It was referred to more as an example of the supremacy of *africanista* conception of society, as the military as the solution to civilian problems. Ultimately, discipline required sacrifice, of one's life for the cause and of one's liberty to authority. Both were expected by the Army and each would be part of the Crusade discourse, the former in relation to the religious concept of the Crusade and the latter once Franco had become the Caudillo.

The position of 'Caudillo' was, once established, fundamental to the discourse of the Crusade. The role was a relatively late addition to the Crusade framework, with Franco having been only appointed to the position of head of the State and Armed Forces on 1 October 1936. However, thanks in no short part to the work of his mentor José Millán Astray and his speeches in favour of the General, Franco as the Caudillo became a central theme of the rebel martial-political discourse.

As the war continued and Franco's position became unassailable the hagiography became more intense and by 1937 Franco was presented as the incomparable leader of the Crusade, leading it to glory. Officers were told to inform their soldiers that they followed 'the route marked gloriously by our Caudillo' and that they had 'the exceptional fortune to follow Franco'.¹⁷¹ He was portrayed as the saviour of Spain, the *Patria's* greatest son. *La Ametralladora* in March 1937 published an acrostic based around his full name and title, General Francisco Franco Bahamonde. The letters of his lesser used second *apellido* now describing him as an 'Audacious Battler; Heroic Leader; Modeller, Organiser; Leveller and Defender of Spain' (*Batallador Audaz; Heroico Adalid; Modelador, Organizador. Nivelador y Defensor de España*).¹⁷² By 1938 Franco was not merely gifted but almost superhuman. The 2 January issue of *La Ametralladora* trumpeted his omnipresence in the New Spain, the *años triunfales* being defined by him:

The synthesis of the old year is this: FRANCO
FRANCO is the prophecy of the year that is born.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ For more on the Army's disciplinary structures see Corral, *Desertores...*, pp. 318-321; Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors...*, pp. 198-201.

¹⁷¹ AGMAV, 1328, 25/2.

¹⁷² *La Ametralladora...*, 21 March 1937, p. 8.

¹⁷³ *La Ametralladora...*, 2 January 1938, p. 3.

February 1938 saw him presented as omniscient, the paper telling soldiers: ‘You know that Franco commands and Franco inspires, and his decisions deserve your blind faith, every hour of every day’.¹⁷⁴ The end of the conflict and well into the *posguerra* saw praise of him become so pervasive that his name was used almost as punctuation, with it ending official missives, shouted in rallies and adorning buildings.¹⁷⁵

Franco’s strong leadership played on the established reactionary concept of the ‘Iron Surgeon’; a leader charged with ridding the nation of the ‘disease’ that afflicted it. The medical connotations of surgeon implied an invasive and violent approach clearly alluding to the concepts of a ‘foreign’ contagion.¹⁷⁶ The role was one to be taken on by a hero who knew what was best for the *Patria* and therefore had to be sourced from its greatest reserve, the armed forces. Much like Primo de Rivera before him, Franco fit these criteria perfectly.¹⁷⁷ He would, according to Millán Astray, ‘bring down the enemy and implant social justice’ in the future.¹⁷⁸ Interestingly, when the discussion of the political future of Spain was broached it was almost always presented in the context of Franco’s leadership and only in the most general of terms. There were, in a nod to the adoption of the movement’s twenty six points, occasional references to the *falangista* concept of revolution, but they were cursory at best with no detail provided on the new corporatist restructuring of society that *falangistas* hoped for.¹⁷⁹ In the martial press, especially *La Ametralladora*, little attention was afforded to political machinations – General Franco was the arbiter of these and that was all that was necessary for soldiers to know.¹⁸⁰

Overall, it is important to remember, especially in regards to the subsequent chapters on the Carlist and Falangists (both of whom had their own designs on the leadership of the country at the outbreak of war) that, both politically and culturally, there were no alternatives to Franco. The Crusade sought to synthesize *Patria* and Franco, to ensure that all those

¹⁷⁴ *La Ametralladora...*, 20 February 1938, p. 3.

¹⁷⁵ AGMAV, C.3131, 5/8-9; Millán Astray, *Franco...*, p. 99; Stanley G. Payne, *The Franco Regime – 1936-1975*, (Wisconsin; University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), p. 193.

¹⁷⁶ Joaquín Costa, *Oligarquía y caciquismo como la forma actual de gobierno en España: Urgencia y modo de cambiarla* (Madrid: Revista de Trabajo, 1975), p. 16.

¹⁷⁷ For more on Primo as the Iron Surgeon see Alejandro Quiroga, “La construcción carismática del general Primo de Rivera”, *Ayer*, Vol. 91, (2013), pp. 147-168.

¹⁷⁸ Millán Astray, *Franco...*, pp. 67-8.

¹⁷⁹ An edition of *La Ametralladora* in reference to the Unification would describe the ‘National Revolution’ in the vaguest of terms, as a means ‘to redeem a Humanity downtrodden and poisoned by the farce of democracy and the tragedy of Marxism, incorporating to the totalitarian State which has given us welfare, power, justice, social order and the joy of a great and free *Patria* to bequeath to our descendants’. *La Ametralladora*, 2 May 1937, p. 1.

¹⁸⁰ This would be most apparent in a February edition of the paper which, on the discussion of Franco choosing government ministers informed soldiers: ‘you do not need to know who they are. You need only know the Caudillo has called them’. *La Ametralladora*, 27 February 1938, p. 3

fighting on the rebel side unequivocally understood the dialectic of 'Franco's heart is for the people: the people's heart is for Franco'.¹⁸¹

Overall we can see that in Crusade discourse the role of Army was paramount, they were the manifestation of its strongest characteristics, its brave and loyal servants and its General the saviour of Spain. It was they who had bravely saved it from the clutches of its enemies and they who were now engaged in expelling those enemies. The use of violent rhetoric highlights this martial supremacy, as the ideals and beliefs of Morocco were transported to the mainland. The Army was supreme, as were its values and practices in regards the treatment of the enemy. In the discursive arena it may have accepted and incorporated symbols and language from its allies to create the Crusade, but in terms of violent repression, it was their allies who were militarised, with both Requetés and *falangistas* embracing the military approach to violent practice in the summer of 1936. This violence may have abated following the summer of 1936, but its legacy did not, by making the discourse of an invading, non-Spanish plague a practical reality it set the tone for the conflict and beyond, allowing for them to be seen as nothing more than an obstacle in the *Patria's* return to health.

¹⁸¹ *La Ametralladora...*, 24 October 1937, p. 2.

El Movimiento Salvador – Religion as the fulcrum of the Crusade

Once the conception of the war as a religious as well as patriotic endeavour had been established in mid-August 1936, there was no turning back for the rebels.¹⁸² The religious interpretation of the conflict became one of the key pillars of the martial-political programme, one which gave the war a transcendental quality and further enhanced the concepts of Spain and anti-Spain. The various themes cannot be read separately and religion and nationalism were entwined in the language of the Crusade, it was, after all ‘*la santa cruzada para salvar a España*’.¹⁸³ With this in mind it is not sufficient to simply use this section to list the manifestations of the importance religion as a motivational factor in the discourse. That would constitute too simple a reading of its role. To that end, this section will therefore also look at how religion enhanced pre-existing martial themes; namely how enemies of the *Patria* became the enemies of God and how giving one’s life became both a patriotic and religious sacrifice.

As previously mentioned, the summer of 1936 saw a religious resurgence in which the Church contributed greatly to the rebel war effort. Pulpits became soapboxes from which the virtues of the uprising and the ills of the Republic were itemized.¹⁸⁴ Catholicism was consequently presented as the fulcrum of the Crusade and Christian faith became a key concept in the interpretation of the conflict. The war was now, according to a radio broadcast from 1937, ‘a criminal crusade of those without God against a crusade of Catholics’ and rebel soldiers were now ‘defenders of the faith’.¹⁸⁵ Most significantly, it rooted the *Patria* in an identity that was, as evidenced by the anti-clerical violence of 1936, exclusive to the rebels.¹⁸⁶ In the discourse of the Crusade, ‘all good Spaniards are Catholic’, with Franco himself emphasising the faith’s importance to national identity in 1938 stating that ‘In Spain,

¹⁸² There has been some historiographical debate over the sincerity of the *africanistas*’ adoption of a religious conception of the conflict, especially given their apathy towards religion before the outbreak of war, with certain historians portraying the Crusade as a post-war means of legitimation. Herbert Southworth, *El mito de la cruzada de Franco*, (Madrid: Debolsillo, 2008), *passim*. However, the enthusiasm that certain generals, including formerly anti-clerical Mola, highlights that the importance religious fervour in Crusade discourse – so much so that it could inspire such prolixity from a former critic.

¹⁸³ Millán Astray, *Franco...*, p. 103.

¹⁸⁴ Cruz, “Old symbols, new meanings...”, pp. 172-4; The church, like any other institution, was not a homogenous mass and the clergy were not blind sheep to the ecclesiastical diktats. There was a notable amount of distress on behalf of some clergymen at how religion had been co-opted into the political discourse of the rebels. One priest bemoaning it represented ‘the loss of the Christian spirit in Spain’. Cited in Javier Cervera Gil, *Ya sabes mi paradero – La guerra civil a través de las cartas de los que vivieron*, (Barcelona: Planeta, 2005), p. 152.

¹⁸⁵ AGMAV, 2497, 19/5.

¹⁸⁶ Basque Catholicism, as briefly touched upon above, was deemed to be void, as they had sided with the enemies of the faith. This will be further elucidated in Chapter Four.

you are Catholic or you are nothing'.¹⁸⁷ The Caudillo would further articulate this idea in an interview in November 1937:

If our war is a war of religion we... are soldiers of God and we do not fight against men, but against atheism and materialism and against those that reduced human dignity, that which we want to raise, to purify and ennoble.¹⁸⁸

Franco's description of the Nationalists as 'soldiers of God' was part of a larger trend as the language of war became intermingled with the language of religion. This created, within the upper echelons of the Nationalist command, a genuine moral fervour as the religious became martial and vice-versa.¹⁸⁹ The Cross ceased to be solely the symbol of the sacrifice of Christ but the sacrifice of all his followers, a banner behind which the Army and its supporters would rally, encapsulating all Nationalist beliefs. The Cross was, in the words of General Mola:

...a sign of protection... pulled from the rubble that was Spain because it is the Cross, symbol of our religion and our faith, the only thing that remains intact in this maelstrom of madness, this maelstrom that tries to forever stain the waters of our rivers with the glorious crimson of valiant Spanish blood.¹⁹⁰

The key themes of the Nationalists' cultural programme are all united here behind the cross; the violent language, coloured by nationalist rhetoric is given an apocalyptic resonance in the 'maelstrom of violence' where 'the cross' is the only constant. Religion and God were eternal truths that the Crusade defended and the Army was the executor of this defence. This belief meant that the whole war effort was perceived as blessed, the 'crusaders' were the defenders of His faith and the martial became sacred. Mola described the Cross as a 'sign of protection', but those who protected were the army. This sanctification of the martial would result in the implicit and explicit definition of the Army's actions as the will of God, the Nationalists were

¹⁸⁷ *La Ametralladora*..., 11 April 1937, p. 16; Francisco Franco, *Palabras del Caudillo: 19 Abril 1937-7 diciembre 1942*, (Madrid: Vicesecretario de Educación Popular, 1943), p. 261.

¹⁸⁸ Franco, from an interview with *El Eco de Paris*, 16 November 1937, cited in Giuliana Di Febo, *La Santa de la Raza – un culto barroco en la España Franquista*, (Barcelona: Icaria, 1988), p. 30.

¹⁸⁹ Mary Vincent, "The Spanish Civil War as a War of Religion" in *If You Tolerate This...'* in *The Spanish Civil War in the Age of Total War*, eds. Martin Baumeister and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, (New York: Campus, 2008), p. 83.

¹⁹⁰ Mola, *Obras Completas*..., p. 1179.

‘fighting ... to restore the material sepulchre of Christ... to restore Spain for God’.¹⁹¹ Soldiers themselves were absolved, their eternal spirits were accounted for, as ‘all those who die for the *Patria*, shall come together to enjoy the eternal glory [of heaven]’.¹⁹²

The consequence of the belief that those fighting for the Nationalists were the ‘soldiers of God’ was that the enemies of the Crusade were, inevitably, perceived as direct opponents to this. This Manichean interpretation of the enemy suited the violent agenda and language of the military as it allowed for the enemy to be seen as the enemy of God himself, giving a divine weight to the idea of *Patria* and anti-*Patria*, Spain and anti-Spain. The Reds were ‘godless’, ‘heathen’, ‘sons of Cain’, unfit to be recognised as Spaniards.¹⁹³ While the rebels fought for the faith of God in a sacred Crusade, Republicans were vain materialists, with no concept of anything beyond the corporeal realm. Their conduct was a national affront, as they had, between 1931 and 1936 ‘made a mockery of Don Quixote, placing on a pedestal the materialistic Sancho Panza’.¹⁹⁴

Anti-clerical violence offered evidence of the physical manifestation of their enemies’ moral degeneracy.¹⁹⁵ Stories of the ‘killed ministers of the Lord’ were published in the pages of *La Ametralladora* as the ‘red savagery’ was laid bare, the extent of their barbarity purported to surpass even ‘the invention of the most shocking serial writers’.¹⁹⁶ One such story told the ordeal of Father Preciado, who was ‘arrested’ on his way to mass, driven to a secluded spot on the Cantabrian coastline where his captors tried to force him to write a letter in which he declared that he had committed suicide, the priest refused and was shot. He survived, as the ineptitude of his executors meant that they only managed to shoot him through the cheek; the scar which remained acting as ‘an indictment against red barbarism’.¹⁹⁷ The damage was not solely human, as the Reds also destroyed religious treasures. Following the capture of Malaga, a dispatch was sent to various press organisations which detailed the profanation of the city’s Cathedral as ‘the most horrible sight... its glories

¹⁹¹ Fray Justo de Urbel, “La Guerra como cruzada religiosa” cited in Raguier, *Gunpowder...*, p. 54.

¹⁹² Millán Astray, *Franco...*, p. 84.

¹⁹³ Di Febo, *La Santa de la Raza ...*, p. 25.

¹⁹⁴ AGMAV, 1328, 25/2.

¹⁹⁵ For studies on the realities of anti-clerical violence in the Summer and Autumn of 1936 see, Vincent, “The keys to the kingdom...”, pp. 68-89; Demetrio Castro Alfin, “Cultura, política y cultura política en la violencia anticlerical”, in Rafael Cruz and Manuel Pérez Ledesma (eds.), *Cultura y movilización en la España Contemporánea*, (Madrid: Alianza, 1997), pp. 69-87; Manuel Delgado, “Anticlericalismo, espacio y poder: la destrucción de los rituales católicos, 1931-9”, *Ayer*, Vol. 27, (1997), pp.149-180; Julio de la Cueva Merino, “El Asalto de los cielos: una perspectiva comparada para la violencia anticlerical española de 1936”, *Ayer*, Vol. 88, (2012), pp. 51-74.

¹⁹⁶ *La Ametralladora...*, 6 June 1937, p.13; 18 July 1937, p. 8.

¹⁹⁷ *La Ametralladora...*, 18 July 1937, p. 11.

destroyed'.¹⁹⁸ Although there was legitimate outrage at the treatment of the Catholic Church in the Republican zone, there was a pointed cynicism in its propagandistic potential. One internal memo of the National Delegation for Press and Propaganda wished for it to be emphasised more, given its fecundity, asking, in the face of the scarcity of resources: 'Could we not find paper or time to publish texts and photographs of the horrors committed in profanation and destruction of temples in the Red Zone?'¹⁹⁹

However, whilst the opportunity to describe the enemy as '*sin Dios*' was rarely passed up, religion was not the sole means to define enemies in the Crusade – they could be Marxists, Jews, Masons or Separatists.²⁰⁰ It is true that although all those who opposed the Crusade were perceived as enemies of the Church and it was faith that defined 'good' Spaniards, the actual definition of the enemy was defined by their Republican allegiance, with religion secondary to this. Rather, the exclusionist policy of specifically defining the 'good' as Catholic and the 'bad' as all else served to reinforce the villainy of the enemy in the rebel conception. They were bad to begin with, but their irreligion only served to exacerbate their reprobacy, widening a chasm of understanding between the Republic and the rebels. Ultimately, faith did not define the conception of the enemy, however, by assigning to each side the labels of religiously 'pure' and 'impure', the enemy became more than mere traitors and were now subject to the opprobrium reserved for heretics.²⁰¹

The presentation of the war as a Crusade leant itself well to the rebels' use of extreme violence, as now the biological conception of the enemy was provided with a religious weight to compliment the intellectual legitimacy it carried in rebel circles. The result was that the conception of a 'sick' nation was imbued with a religious righteousness that meant the two sides were now religiously, as well as organically, 'pure' and 'impure'. This was further complimented by the Nationalist belief that Spain was above other nations in God's favour, and therefore, in keeping with the Catholic teaching of suffering leading to retribution, was subject to harsher national trials.²⁰² This apparent necessity for violence was seen even when the Christian conception of forgiveness was being practised. The Nationalist conception of Catholic 'redemption' still almost always required a blood sacrifice. This was true of the

¹⁹⁸ AGMAV, 2497, 20/6.

¹⁹⁹ AGMAV, 2497, 21/41.

²⁰⁰ *La Ametralladora...*, 2 October 1937, p. 3.

²⁰¹ There were, of course, soldiers of other faiths in the National Army, namely the Muslim Moorish *regulares*. The transformation of these former barbarians of the Rif into fellow 'crusaders' rested in their presentation as fellow theists in the conflict against 'unbelievers'. Balfour, *Deadly Embrace...*, pp. 283-283; María Rosa de Madariaga, 'The Intervention of Moroccan Troops in the Spanish Civil War: A Reconsideration', *European History Quarterly*, Jan 1992, Vol. 22, No.1, pp. 67-97.

²⁰² Vincent, "The Spanish Civil War...", p. 81.

thousands of prisoners who, during and after the war, were baptised in order to guarantee the safety of their families, yet were still executed.²⁰³ The imposition of faith upon them, if solely for the sake of their immortal souls, was indicative of Nationalist thinking. Forgiveness lay with the recognition of God, but this could only be wholly recognised through sacrifice. The supposedly benign act of baptism took on the role of subjugation, stripping prisoners of their previously held beliefs.²⁰⁴ To the perpetrators, the death of these prisoners was seen as necessary for their immortal soul, removing any terrestrial emotion from the taking of life. ‘Forgiveness’ without death during the war could only be obtained in battle, with former leftists fleeing to the armed forces to shelter themselves from the repression or being co-opted into the Army following their capture.²⁰⁵ A violent price had to be paid for everything, even if it didn't mean certain death. However, the number of ‘red’ soldiers was well known in the Nationalist ranks, and those who did not show their complete conversion were subject to persecution, as exemplified by the punishment afforded those who attempted to cross the lines to the Republic: it was ‘extremely severe and exemplary’.²⁰⁶ The Nationalist concept of forgiveness therefore shared very little with its usual interpretation in the Catholic faith, with the notion of penance transforming from a personal act to a diktat from the blessed.

The concept of sacrifice was tied to both pre-existing *africanista* and religious rhetoric. The concept of laying down one's life for the *Patria* had been treated as the greatest honour since long before the war and consequently death was presented as nothing to fear. The Army of Africa was the home of such sentiment as the traditions of sacrifice were part of its cultural heritage.²⁰⁷ However, once the Crusade was underway this sentiment was enhanced by the incorporation of the spiritual, as giving up one's life for the *Patria* would be rewarded in heaven, as those who died now became ‘martyrs’. This is not to say that the role of religion was non-existent in the pre-war martial discourse of national sacrifice merely that once the Crusade began, the idea that one was giving up one's life for both the *Patria* and God came to the fore.²⁰⁸ Soldiers were told regularly of the glory in giving one's life in ‘great love for *Patria* and God’ and that their ‘effort, blood and sacrifice’ was the basis of the Crusade.²⁰⁹ One example of such sacrifice was the epic siege of the Alcázar de Toledo from

²⁰³ *ABC Sevilla*, 21 November 1939, p. 7; J.J. Calleja, *Yagiüe: Un corazón al rojo*, (Barcelona: Juventud, 1963), pp. 179-180.

²⁰⁴ Millán Astray, in a speech for Radio Salamanca in November 1936, would brag about the conversion of Leftists before their execution. *Proa...*, 22 November 1936, p. 1.

²⁰⁵ James Matthews, “Our Red Soldiers...”, pp. 345-6.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid...*, p. 352.

²⁰⁷ Preston, *¡Comrades!...*, pp. 15-16; Jensen, “Millán-Astray...”, p. 432-3.

²⁰⁸ This is covered expertly by Vincent in “The Martyrs and the Saints...”, pp. 69-98.

²⁰⁹ *La Ametralladora...*, 26 December 1937, p. 4; 24 October 1937, p. 5.

July to September 1936. This ‘mediaeval epic in the materialist century’ was held up as an example of Spanish brilliance, as an exemplar of the sacrifice expected of patriots and it became a key myth of Francoism before and after the war.²¹⁰ The great hero of this tale was Colonel Jose Moscardó Ituarte who did not lay down his own life, but that of his son. The story going that the besiegers, in a telephone call to the Colonel, threatened to execute his sixteen-year-old son Luis unless he surrendered the Alcázar, Moscardó listened to their demands and then asked to speak to his son. The phone was passed and, in the last words Moscardó would ever say to Luis, he told him to make his peace with God and to die for Spain to which his son replied: ‘that, I can do’.²¹¹ The Colonel subsequently continued to hold the Alcázar until it was relieved by on 27 September 1936 and, upon greeting his liberator, General Varela, he apparently uttered the stoic statement ‘nothing to report my general’ (*Mi general, sin novedad*).²¹² The story has been criticised across a number of sources as apocryphal, however its importance to the Crusade was such that this was irrelevant.²¹³ The siege came to represent what was expected of good Spaniards and Christians in the conflict, a stoic and unflinching reserve. The Crusade made the concept of dying in battle a worthwhile act, an important concept in a motivational framework that’s aim was to convince soldiers to fight.

The religious element of the Crusade, therefore, was not merely the presentation of the rebels as defenders of the faith. It gave all aspects of the Crusade a transcendental element and allowed for a deepening of the Manichean interpretation of the war where one side was not only politically iniquitous but also spiritually void. It provided a context in which the enemy could be presented as even more abhorrent and the values which the rebels held more virtuous, giving a spiritual legitimacy to their discourse and practice. Moreover it created a context in which death and sacrifice in battle were leant a spiritual legitimacy, dying in a Crusade becoming a far more worthy end than in a simple war or, as the Republic would put it, ‘struggle’.

²¹⁰ *La Ametralladora...*, 10 October 1937, p. 5. Alberto Reig Tapia, “El asedio del Alcázar: Mito y símbolo político del franquismo”, *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, No. 101, (July-September, 1998), pp. 101-103.

²¹¹ Keene, *Fighting for Franco...*, p. 36.

²¹² *La Ametralladora...*, 10 October 1937 p. 4.

²¹³ Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War – Reaction, Revolution and Revenge*, (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), p. 129.

A Model for the ‘Generic’ Interpretation of the Crusade

This chapter has attempted to establish a model of the overarching martial-political programme of the rebels, as defined by the *africanista* led Army, in order to provide both a comparison to the equivalent Republican model and offer a framework through which to analyse the discourse used to motivate Carlist and Falangist volunteers. The model established is that of the Crusade, a rightist interpretation of the conflict as between Spaniards and a non-Spanish invader. This was coloured by an intense religious element that gave the conflict a transcendental, vatical form, imbuing an already nationalist interpretation of ‘Spain’ and ‘anti-Spain’ with a Christian, moral element that exacerbated the already huge cleavage of identity between the two sides. It also incorporated further military concepts such as a fetishization of violence and death, the importance of discipline and the role of the Army as the bedrock of the *Patria*.

It has been claimed that the ‘African mentality’ had been exported to the peninsula at the beginning of the war.²¹⁴ This was to a large extent true, as the revolting officers had certainly brought the attitudes of a colonial force, as well as the personnel willing to apply them, to the mainland. Yet the mindset of the Rif did not remain unaltered following its journey across the straits of Gibraltar and had been supplemented with further ideological elements of the Army’s anti-Republican allies. Alongside the addition of a religious element there was also the use of *falangista*, Carlist and monarchist language and symbols of identity that had previously not been a part of *africanista* martial politics. The result of this incorporation of ideas was the creation of a model that would theoretically appeal to almost all those on the Right in Spain. From the outset of the conflict there were fewer political differences between the constituent rebel groups than their Republican equivalents but the Crusade created a singular programme that did not conspicuously alienate any of them. By incorporating a strong regard for the *Patria*, religion as well as law and order, alongside creating an emotive conception of the enemy, the Crusade theoretically offered a strong motivational framework for all those who fought for Franco. This could be argued to be well evidenced by the continuation of a ‘Crusade mentality’ following the Civil War, with the introduction of the ‘Law of Political Responsibilities’ just before the end of the war in

²¹⁴ Graham, *The Spanish Republic...*, p. 110.

February 1939 and the ideas of ‘victors and vanquished’ that so defined the Franco era.²¹⁵ The aim of this thesis is to gauge the level of success such a framework achieved in motivating previously politically affiliated soldiers. This will be achieved by analysing how the Crusade was presented to them and the success it had in convincing these soldiers to fight for the Francoist cause as opposed to simply that of the Falange or the Carlists. The hypothesis of this part of the project is that although it was effective, the Crusade cannot be viewed as a simple, homogenous, Rightist programme that appealed to all groups equally, with its various facets needing to be tailored to appeal each political group. The two case study chapters will investigate how the discourse presented to Carlist and Falange troops managed to incorporate the distinct political and cultural identities of each into the Crusade project and the success achieved in motivating the soldiery of each group. The ultimate aim of the thesis will be to compare the Crusade with the Republic’s own attempts to create an equivalent overarching martial-political discourse.

²¹⁵ Tusell, *Spain...*, p. 21; For a detailed study of the effects of this mentality see Claudio Hernández Burgos, *Granada Azul: la construcción de la “cultura de la victoria” en el primer franquismo*, (Granada: Comares, 2011), *passim*.

Chapter Two: Defining ‘Republicanism’ – The Motivational Programme of the *Ejército Popular*, 1936-1939

The values upon which the Popular Army was based were, unsurprisingly, very different to their Nationalist equivalent. Whereas the Nationalist Army was a continuation of a long tradition of pre-existing military culture, albeit supplemented by certain aspects of their allies’ ideology, the *Ejército Popular* was itself a completely new undertaking, forged from the popular militias formed in 1936 and the remnants of the old Army that had remained loyal to the Republic. Furthermore, whereas the overarching conception of the war was ultimately defined by the military, that had iron rule over the martial and the political, the programme of the Popular Army was defined by negotiation between its constituent groups due to the democratic commitment of the Republic. This chapter will outline how the Republic went about creating a motivational programme that could satisfy the ideological needs of the various groups of the Republic yet also prove to be sufficiently coherent to effectively motivate the soldiery towards a singular goal. The *Ejército Popular* had no African campaign, no shared experience to call upon, even the officers that had stayed loyal to the Republic were, in the main, *peninsulares* whose shared military experience was more of parade grounds than Moroccan desert.¹ Put simply, the motivational framework of the *Ejército Popular* was not based on a singular coherent mentality, created after years of refinement and supplemented with complimentary aspects. Much like the Army itself, it was constructed *ad hoc*, through negotiation and committee in order to appeal to the most soldiers possible. To paraphrase the analogy of Alec Issigonis; it was the camel to the rebels’ horse.

The chapter will consequently seek to examine how something resembling a coherent motivational framework was created for the *Ejército Popular* and how the Political Commissariat, the chief motivational force within the *Ejército Popular*, used themes and ideals that were universally appealing yet in possession of sufficient gravitas to motivate soldiers to fight. The topic of Republic martial discourse has rarely been broached by historiography and therefore the sources used are generally taken from the propaganda newspapers of the *Ejército Popular* and the Commissariat, the aim being to understand the cultural programme as it was given to the soldiers in print and how Commissars were expected to convey it to the men. There is, thankfully, no shortage of this material,

¹ The realities of which side officers sided with were more complicated than explained here, as geographical expediency often played a more decisive role than politics. Even in ideological terms there were certain prevalent exceptions to the *africanistas* against the Republic discourse, see Chapter One, page 2, n. 4. Cited in Navajas Zubeldía, *Leales y Rebeldes...*, pp. 127-128. However, for the purposes of this thesis it is important to maintain that in July 1936, the Republican armed forces had nothing comparable to the *africanista* mindset as described in Chapter One.

considering the huge output of propaganda by the Republic during the war, with almost every battalion having its own newspaper. Moreover, these newspapers were often of astonishingly high quality – often printed in colour with pictures and replete with well written, interesting content that was not solely limited to rhetoric. The extent to the quality and quantity of the propaganda created by the Republic in comparison to its enemy was astonishing and recognised by each side. Dionisio Ridruejo, following the fall of Barcelona in 1939 entered the office of his Catalan counterpart Jaume Miravittles and observed:

At first sight it became apparent that Republican propaganda had been very superior to our own and that their intellectual participation had been more extensive, valuable and better organized.²

This was also recognised in the Republic, with one commissar from the 42nd Mixed Brigade of the Army of the Centre charged with assessing rebel propaganda curtly stating ‘our propaganda continues to be more intense than that of the enemy, principally the written’.³

In regards to the thesis overall, this chapter will clarify what the central motivational programme of the *Ejército Popular* was and show that a programme analogous to the Crusade, a kind of ‘Republicanism’ or ‘Popular Frontism’, did exist. The ultimate aim being to identify what form a suitably coherent policy could take in the heterogeneous polity of the Republican zone and whether it could realistically motivate troops from backgrounds as diverse as the conservative Basque nationalists of the *Partido Nacionalista Vasco* (PNV), the socialists affiliated with the *Unión General de Trabajadores* (UGT) and the Anarchist *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (CNT). As we shall see over the course of this chapter such a plan did exist and relied on ideas that appealed to the broadly leftist Popular Front support base, namely proletarianism, anti-fascism and a leftist evocation of Spanish nationalism.

* * *

In order to understand the issues fully, the background to the creation of the *Ejército Popular* needs to be outlined. Following the revolt of the army the Republic was left without a standing army to defend itself. In simple numerical terms there was not a great disparity

² Cited in Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors...*, p. 68.

³ AGMAV, C.461, 3/5.

between each side in July 1936. The rebels had marginally more units under their command as 44 of 80 infantry battalions, 7 out of 10 cavalry regiments and 1 of the two tank regiments joined the rebellion. In total the combined number of men immediately available to each side, including Infantry, Artillery, Cavalry, Engineers, was 27,135 for the Republic and 30,387 for the rebels. However, the numbers only tell part of the story.⁴ Firstly, rebels counted among their number the Army of Africa, Spain's only truly professional force, whose military prowess has been established in historiography, with historians agreeing that one of the key moments of the conflict was their transportation to the peninsula. Moreover, regardless of the number of soldiers available to the Republic, attitudes towards the officer class that remained were, if not vituperative, certainly suspicious, given the recent conduct of their colleagues. These officers could not command the confidence of either the scant Republican authorities or the informal power-mongers of the syndicalists and as a result the army was left without leadership.⁵ In the simplest of terms, the armed forces available to the Republic in July 1936 were incapable of waging war.

Consequently, just as the informal structures of the social revolution of the summer of 1936 filled the vacuum left after the collapse of governmental authority, the working class groups of the Republic formed militias to defend the gains of the revolution and to repel the advancing rebels.⁶ For the revolutionary organisations of the CNT, the UGT and the *Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista* (The Workers' Party of Marxist Unification, POUM) the aim of these militia groups was twofold: to both defeat the enemy and to concurrently spread the revolution, as, in the words of the anarchist union's eponymous daily: 'war and revolution [were] to be made at the same time'.⁷ In a manner that complimented their revolutionary commitment the militias, with the notable exception of the Communist *V Regimiento*, eschewed military discipline and structure in favour of a voluntary system whereby militants had no lasting commitment to their columns nor were required to follow orders if they did not wish.⁸

⁴ Figures from Alpert, *The Republican Army...*, p. 19; for a proper analysis on the ability of the remaining forces to wage war, see *Ibid...*, pp. 17-28.

⁵ For more on the mistrust of loyal Spanish officers see Navajas Zubeldía, *Leales y Rebeldes...*, pp. 144-146.

⁶ The anarchists were the most enthusiastic, with their celebrated Durruti and Iron Columns being two of the first formed, the PCE was also represented by its *V Regimiento* and the *Unión General de Trabajadores* and the *Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista* (Workers' Party of Marxist Unification, POUM) also had their own militias, George Orwell famously serving in the latter.

⁷ *CNT*, 6 October 1936, p. 1.

⁸ Robert W. Kern, *Red Years/Black Years – A Political History of Spanish Anarchism 1911-1917*, (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1978), pp. 161-3.

As state authority began to be re-imposed in the autumn of 1936 the various non-revolutionary, pro-statist groups on the Republican side, led by the *Partido Comunista de España* (Communist Party of Spain, PCE), saw the revolutionary militias as no longer representing a viable military policy in the conflict.⁹ The reasons for this were myriad. From a practical perspective, a singular coherent military strategy was unworkable as it was impossible to direct the autonomous columns across various fronts nor reliably supply the rival groups without some form of formalized military structure. Moreover, the lack of formal training for militiamen meant that they could not feasibly hope to win a war against trained troops with soldiers that were known to flee from artillery fire and were constantly out-manoeuvred by experienced officers.¹⁰ Perhaps most importantly, a lack of official discipline meant that there was no way in ensuring that soldiers followed orders or even remained in position. Consequently, the militia columns were not fit for purpose and they suffered a series of demoralizing defeats in the first months of the war.¹¹ Furthermore, alongside the practical criticisms of the militia system, there was also an ideological opposition to each rival political group maintaining its own autonomous armed forces; forces that could be used, depending on one's political standpoint, to destabilize the Republican war effort by either 'defending revolutionary gains' or 'undermining political unity'.

The solution to these problems was the creation of the *Ejército Popular*, the Popular Army, a wholly new institution that would fight to defend the territory and values of the democratic Republic. This was formalised on the 29 October 1936 when a bill was passed mobilising all able bodied men between the ages of twenty and forty five, signalling in earnest the construction of the new modern Army of the Republic.¹² The Popular Army would take several months to take shape and it is not the concern of this chapter to discuss either the minutiae of militarisation or the defeat of the revolutionary forces in the Republican zone, for these have been discussed extensively in historiography already.¹³ Suffice to say

⁹ Helen Graham, *The Spanish Republic...*, pp. 138-141.

¹⁰ *Ibid...*, p. 115.

¹¹ Alpert, *The Republican Army...*, pp. 51-55. More detail on the anarchist militia experience will be provided in the following chapter.

¹² Burnett Bolloten, *The Spanish Civil War: Revolution and Counterrevolution*, (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, 1991), pp. 346-7.

¹³ In the following chapter on anarchist soldiers the thesis will deal with the issues raised by militarisation of the militias, but for the purposes of this thesis, we will only be viewing their effects. For works on militarisation and its controversies see: Alpert, *El Ejército Popular...*, pp. 67-92; Graham, *The Spanish Republic...*, pp. 254-315; Julián Casanova, *The Spanish Republic and Civil War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010), pp. 257-263; Juan Francisco Fuentes, *Largo Caballero – El Lenin Español*, (Madrid: Síntesis, 2005), pp. 282-288. For 'historical' works written by sympathisers to certain causes in the militarization debate see Santiago Álvarez, *Los comisarios políticos en el ejército popular de la república – Aportaciones a la historia de la Guerra Civil española (1936-1939) Testimonio y reflexión*, (A Coruña: Edicions do Castro, 1989), pp. 65-73, for

that by March 1937 the Popular Army was the sole military authority in the Republic; all armed forces were under central command, a strict hierarchical structure had been adopted as popular militias became formalised 'Mixed Brigades', militiamen became soldiers, uniforms became compulsory and following orders became obligatory.¹⁴ This chapter is an overview of Republican martial politics in the *Ejército Popular* and will address the motivational framework formed in the wake of the Republic's revolutionary period, looking at sources from early 1937 to the end of the war. The desire will be to detail the motivational framework created and how it proposed to maintain discipline within the politically diverse ranks of the Popular Army. The chapter will state that the *Ejército Popular's* propagandists in the Political Commissariat set about creating a martial political structure that appealed to broadly leftist values that, like the Rebels' Crusade, fed into and complimented one another. These values were to revolve around the victory of 'the people' and the necessity to defeat fascism, from these two beliefs, the Popular Army would derive its values.

a PCE account and Abel Paz, *Crónica de la columna de ferro*, (Barcelona: Hacer, D.L., 1984) for a pro-anarchist tale of events.

¹⁴ Mixed Brigades were the names given to the new units into which the militias were organised. Consisting of between 3,400 and 4,200 men, they included not only infantry, but artillery, supply and medical units. For a more detailed description see Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors...*, p. 25.

**‘Nosotros, los soldados del pueblo, debemos tener obediencia, disciplina y subordinación’¹⁵
– the Concept of Discipline in the *Ejército Popular***

The necessity of discipline was cited as one of the key reasons for the militarisation of the militias and creation of the *Ejército Popular*.¹⁶ Various described as ‘the word that characterises the basic point of our victory’, ‘the rigid standard that guides [a soldier’s] steps’ and ‘our most effective weapon’, it was to be a central theme for Republican military culture and underline the core counterrevolutionary belief that unity behind the central government was the only way to win the war.¹⁷ Discipline is obviously a primary concern for most armed forces, yet rarely is it a chief cultural concern. Instead training and the threat of reprisal offer the guarantees for its adherence.¹⁸ However, as shall be made clear, these tactics alone were not suitable for a Popular Army and a discursive element needed to be added to coercion. Throughout the Republic as a whole, the defeat of the revolution had itself been justified by a desire to instil a discipline that would end violence in the rearguard, unite the Republic’s various factions and foster a unity necessary to fight a winning war.¹⁹ From the point of view of the Republican parties, the moderate Socialists and the PCE, this was the fulcrum of the famous ‘war versus revolution’ debate; that the war could not be won without a centralised effort and this demanded the halting of the nascent revolution. That this position fit these groups’ extra-military political aims was secondary. However, for many who fought for against the rebels, the revolution was a central tenet of mobilisation, a shared transcendental belief equivalent to Catholicism on the Francoist side in its importance to its adherents. The effect was that as the *Ejército Popular* was created, the main cause for mobilisation of the militias was being dismantled and the creation of a formal Army was, for many revolutionaries, symbolic of the attack on the revolution. The result was a widespread animosity towards militarisation and the new Army.²⁰ As stated, the military history of the militias was far from imperious; they offered little resistance to the rebels in their march

¹⁵ *Leal – Órgano del Tercera Batallón, 29 Brigada, Segunda División*, 1 June 1937, p. 6.

¹⁶ Antonio Cerdón, *Trayectoria: memorias de un militar republicano*, (Barcelona: Crítica, 1977), pp. 70-1; Michael Alpert. “Soldiers, Politics and War ...”, p. 211.

¹⁷ *Unidad – Órgano de la 60 División*, 18 April 1938, p.1; *Ejército Popular*, 8 September 1938, p.4; *Centro*, 15 February 1939, p. 12.

¹⁸ Examples of this approach to discipline can be found in, G.D. Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches: Officer-Man Relations, Morale and Discipline in the British Army in the Era of the First World War*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), pp. 1-12.

¹⁹ Julián Casanova, *Anarchism, the Republic and Civil War in Spain: 1931-1939*, (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 99-115. For more on popular violence see the previous chapter’s references on anarchist anticlerical violence.

²⁰ Burnett Bolloten, *The Spanish Civil War – Revolution and Counterrevolution*, (Hemel Hempstead: Wheatsheaf, 1991), p. 420; Graham, *The Spanish Republic*, p. 178.

towards Madrid over the summer and autumn of 1936. Their ineptitude moved British Captain Tom Wintringham of the International Brigades to summarise them as having the ‘greatest ration of simple, undifferentiated gallantry... But they were the most useless European infantry since 1866.’²¹ The PCE, therefore, were vindicated in their analysis of the militias and their replacement was a necessity in order for the Republic to offer a sufficient resistance to the advancing *Ejército Nacional*. Yet the volunteers who fought in the militia were motivated to a sufficient enough level by the revolution to wage war upon a better trained and materially superior enemy in the face of relentless defeats, as Wintringham makes clear, they were unquestionably committed to the ideal.

It is important to understand that the idea of any standing Army was in itself unpopular; it was them, after all, that had started the war with their failed coup. Yet the enmity did not begin in July 1936 as years of disproportionate political and social influence, institutional sympathy for reaction and not least the draft had caused most in the working class to develop a deep contempt for the organised armed forces.²² The ultimate upshot of these facts was that the *Ejército Popular* was immediately faced with a proportion of its own troops having not only been robbed of their chief motivational cause but also harbouring an animosity to very notion of a regular army. The task at hand was to create a motivational programme that could convince the soldiery that the *Ejército Popular* was different to its predecessor and recapture some of the enthusiasm of the militias by presenting itself as a truly popular army.

The *Ejército Popular* would resolve this problem by forging an unorthodox approach to discipline and motivation in a noticeable departure from the structures of the old Army. Military discipline in the rebel Army followed a traditional pattern and was a source of much pride for the officer class, if only for its strict adherence by the soldiery and harsh enforcement. Prior to the outbreak of war, Franco would articulate the logical root of his conception of discipline:

There is no merit in discipline... when the orders given are agreeable and easy to carry out. The true significance of discipline... is seen when our private judgement bids us to do the exact opposite of what we are ordered, and our heart struggles and secretly revolts against what seems to be the arbitrary exercise of mistaken authority.²³

²¹ Tom Wintringham, *English Captain*, (London: T&F 1939), p. 270.

²² Alpert, ‘Soldiers, Politics and War...’, p. 204; Blázquez, *I Helped To Build An Army...*, p. 170.

²³ *Ibid...*, p. 203.

Previous military discipline had been based in a stoic respect for the structures of the Army and a blind faith in ones superiors, backed up, as we have seen in the previous chapter, by a commitment to the use of violence and a zealous fanaticism in regards to the importance of the Army as an institution. Such tactics were known amongst the working class, with military service being treated as comparable to a jail sentence in leftist circles.²⁴ This led Juan Perea, a Republican general, to comment that the Republican Army would always face problems unless the Spanish working class shed its understandable ‘fear of the sword’.²⁵ Consequently, the Republic, in order to suitably motivate its men to fight, could not rely on such methods and adopted a new means of forging discipline amongst the men. The old way was admonished as undemocratic and demeaning to the men, it was and presented as ‘the discipline of the landowners and the bankers’, the old ‘tyrannical and absurd officers...before whom the soldier was an object for their service... for whom comradeship was humiliation and punishment was one of his favourite pastimes’.²⁶ The new military discipline was to be very different, based on a profound respect for the soldier and the education of the men as to why they were fighting, it was to be ‘voluntary and conscious’, ‘in reverse to the old Army where the threat is made with the lash’.²⁷ Soldiers, blessed with an understanding of the ultimate ideal, the defeat of fascism and the glory of the people, would supposedly ‘willingly abide’ the discipline and military structures that were committed to bringing about this aim.²⁸ In this new conception of the army, the officers ‘should be comrades that mix with us in leisure, who are lenient with our shortcomings and who instruct us in our mistakes’ they were expected, whenever possible, to ‘to know to place... fellowship above the military’ and the men would willingly reciprocate, as ‘no soldier, high or low, if he has any clear vision of reality and genuine antifascist emotion’ would oppose the final aim of the *Ejército Popular*.²⁹ Bearing in mind these attempts by the Republic to present an unconventional form of consensual discipline, it is also important to maintain that there still existed traditional means of coercion, namely the added bonus of pay and the punishment of court martial for desertion and insubordination, which the Republic pursued with as much vigour as the Nationalists.³⁰

²⁴ *Ibid...*, p. 170.

²⁵ Navajas Zubeldía, *Leales y Rebeldes...*, p. 132.

²⁶ *Por Que Luchamos*, 13 March 1937, p. 4; *Centro*, 15 January 1939, p. 12.

²⁷ *Disciplina – Órgano quincenal del Batallón Instructor*, 8 May 1937, p. 3; *Ejército Popular*, 24 June 1938, p. 7.

²⁸ *Por Que Luchamos*, 17 April 1937, p.6.

²⁹ *Por Que Luchamos*, 13 March 1937, p. 4;

³⁰ Corral, *Desertores...*, pp. 291-295; Seidman, “Quiet Fronts in the Spanish Civil War”, *The Historian*, Vol. 61, No. 4, (June 1999), pp. 830; Centro Documental de Memoria Histórica, Delegación Nacional de Servicios

However, the stated Republican aim was for soldiers to act independently within this system of command, to understand the situation and to avoid recourse to punitive threats to reinforce discipline. *Disciplina*, the periodical for battalion instructors at the Republican military school, described the form of discipline desired thusly:

[It] does not solely mean obedience to orders. Discipline means... fulfilling our military duties without the coercion of the superior hierarchy. Always obey, but fulfil your obligation without the need for you to be told.³¹

Furthermore, money and threats of punishment did not serve to motivate or mobilise in the same way as a positive cultural incentive did, the militias, for example, were unpaid and had no threat of reprisals if they abandoned their posts, but still fought with exceptional bravery.³²

Interestingly, the blueprint the new Popular Army lay in one the militias albeit the one that most resembled an organised military force, it was the Communist party's *V Regimiento*. The outfit was, unsurprisingly considering its Marxist revolutionary composition and strict ties with the politburo, rigidly structured and highly disciplined.³³ This discipline was borne from its soldiers' commitment to the cause and their education in the issues of the war, revolutionary Marxism and the diktats of the 7th International Congress of the Comintern. Many were previously familiar with the necessity for discipline even in the irregular military, having been members of the PCE's *Milicias Antifascistas Obreras y Campesinas* (Workers and Peasants Antifascist Militias, MOAC), which had been run by former NCO of the Moroccan campaign Juan Modesto since 1933.³⁴ Soldiers of the division respected the authority of the leadership and 'had blind faith in their leaders' due to their political education, which permitted them to understand the necessity of discipline and command to achieve an ultimate goal.³⁵ Throughout the militia period the Fifth Regiment's turnover of troops was exceedingly high, as the division became a means of training other battalions in the strict manner that the PCE and many others in the Republic saw as necessary to fight the

Documentales de la Presidencia del Gobierno, SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-GIJON-AGA, 54, 72; The former speaks of the imprisonment, the latter of the shooting of men for desertion and 'rebellion'.

³¹ *Disciplina*, 4 April 1937, p 3; 8 May 1937, p. 1.

³² James Matthews, 'Moral y motivación de los movilizados forzados del Ejército Popular de la República en la Guerra Civil Española, 1936-1939', *Studia Histórica. Historia Contemporánea*, 24, 2006, pp. 81-105; Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas, 'Fighting for Spain? Patriotism, War Mobilization and Soldiers' Motivations (1936-1939)' in "If You Tolerate This..." *The Spanish Civil War in the Age of Total War*, eds. Martin Baumeister and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, (New York: Campus, 2008), pp. 47-73; Michael Seidman, 'The Soldiers' Experiences of the Spanish Civil War' in *If You Tolerate This..." The Spanish Civil War in the Age of Total War*, eds. Martin Baumeister and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, (New York: Campus, 2008), pp.186-207.

³³ Álvarez, *Los comisarios...*, p. 45; 55-62.

³⁴ Graham, *The Spanish Republic...*, p. 148;

³⁵ *Ejército del Pueblo*, July 1937, p. 11.

war properly. Consequently, in its short life the *V Regimiento* was responsible for the training of approximately 25,000 troops.³⁶

The newly formed *Ejército Popular* would seek to emulate the Fifth Regiment's success on a larger scale. However, it faced the difficult reality of a soldiery that did not share the same zeal for discipline as the militants of the PCE. Consequently a means of educating the soldiery in the necessity for military discipline was needed. The inspiration for this also had a Marxist route as the Republic, much like the embattled Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War, created an institution that's aim was the political education of the soldiery.³⁷ Officially formed by Republican decree on 16 October 1936, the Political Commissariat of the Popular Army was, much like its Soviet inspiration, a means for the *Ejército Popular* to politically educate its soldiery, to raise morale and to articulate orders within the rationale of the Republic's 'new' martial politics. The ultimate aim of the Commissariat was the retention of discipline and morale through education rather than the traditional means, as it was seen on the Republican side, of intimidation. In the decree announcing its creation, Francisco Largo Caballero, the then Prime Minister and Minister for War, stated that its aims were 'establish a spiritual trend among the chiefs, officers and classes in the loyal Army and the soldiers and militiamen that comprise the total volume of this', 'to exercise a control of political-social nature over the soldiery' and to 'achieve a coordination between military commanders and the combatant masses'.³⁸ Two years later, the Commissariat had become integral to *Ejército Popular*, with each Company having its own. The General Sub-Commissar of War Enrique Castro, writing in the September 1938 edition of *Comisario*, the newspaper dedicated to political commissars, would describe aim of their work as:

...confront[ing] the enemy with a disciplined Army, familiar with its weapons and the modern methods of combat, all of its combatants, soldiers and leaders, instilled with a mutual confidence, educated to spiritually hate fascism [and] possess the immovable will to annihilate it in battle... Increasing the capacity of resistance of our Army, converting each foot of ground into an entrenched camp.³⁹

³⁶ Michael Alpert, *El ejército republicano en la guerra civil*, (Paris: Ruedo Ibérico, 1977), p.52; Álvarez, *Los comisarios...*, p. 61. For a detailed study of the *V Regimiento* see Juan Andrés Blanco Rodríguez, *El Quinto Regimiento en la política militar del PCE en la guerra civil*, (Madrid: UNED, 1993), *passim*.

³⁷ Francesco Benvenuti, *The Bolsheviks and the Red Army, 1918-1922*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 10; pp. 21-28. For a study of the Political Commissariat through the ages, see Fernando Castillo Cáceres, "El comisariado político, una forma especial de relación entre el poder civil y las fuerzas armadas a lo largo de la historia", *Revista de Historia Militar*, No. 94, 2003, pp. 10-48.

³⁸ *Gaceta de Madrid*, 16 October 1936, p. 355.

³⁹ *Comisario*, No.1, Year 1, September 1938, p. 12.

General Commissar of the Army Bibiano Fernández Osorio y Tafall, in the same paper, described the role of the commissar as a ‘propagandist and strict follower of the ways of war, [an] example of sacrifice, [a] model of austerity and abnegation’. He was to be ‘the proponent and the developer of the strong spirit of unity that nourishes our *Pueblo* and all our soldiers’, who in his teachings, instilled an important sense of hierarchy and who ‘always took into account the formation and composition of our Army and the motives and feelings that led it to fight it in the way that it is’.⁴⁰ This was echoed in its official material, with Commissars of the *Ejército del Norte*, being told in 1936 their ‘most important and difficult job’ was the ‘creation of military discipline’ through ‘raising confidence in Command’ and ‘creating a genuine camaraderie’ between officers and troops. Moreover he was expected to ‘take advantage of any opportunity’ in order to explain ‘the difference between our discipline and fascist discipline, and explain the advantages of a genuine military discipline’. This was achieved through commissars writing and editing newspapers for the troops serving at the front, organising regular speeches for the soldiers and chair political debates between soldiers. Moreover, commissars would be expected to ensure that morale among the soldiers remained as high as possible. The means by which he would fulfil this brief were myriad. Commissars could be expected to procure food, tobacco, munitions and clothing for soldiers, organise classes for the illiterate, resolve personal arguments between soldiers and ensure the press from soldiers’ localities was acquired.⁴¹

Commissars were well trained and subject to a thorough vetting process. The minimum requirements were that they had to have served in the Army for at least six months (with preference given to volunteers), have not been subject to any admonishment for their military character and have been an affiliate of a Popular Frontist organisation since before the 18 July 1936, with supporting documentation. They were also expected to be fully literate, display basic mathematical knowledge and provide information on their age, their parents, their profession and their marital status, all also with the relevant documentation.⁴² Moreover, from 1937 each commissar was required that to fulfil a questionnaire which determined their suitability for the role ensuring they were suitably verbose and well enough

⁴⁰ *Comisario*, No.1, Year 1, September 1938, pp. 8-9.

⁴¹ CDMH, Delegación Nacional de Servicios Documentales de la Presidencia del Gobierno, SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-SANTANDER, 544, 5, 2-4.

⁴² International Institute of Social History, Archivo de CNT (España), ARCHIVO DE MIGUEL GONZÁLEZ INESTAL, *Expedientes concernientes a comisarios. Contiene datos personales, correspondencia e informes. Con cuestionarios llenados por los militantes sobre sus experiencias y opiniones. 1937-1939*, 14B, *Las Escuelas de Comisarios*, 1.

versed in the ‘Republican’ understanding of the conflict.⁴³ Once accepted commissars were required to attend *Escuelas de Comisarios* (Commissar Schools), which were split into in two types, *Escuelas Elementales* (Basic Schools) and *Escuelas superiores* (Advanced Schools). Each *Cuerpo de Ejército* (Army Corps) would have its own *Escuela Elemental* ‘whose mission will be to prepare and train combatants that will go on to fulfil the role of Commissar’ while there were three *Escuelas Superiores*, found in Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia.⁴⁴ It was at the *Escuelas Elementales* where prospective commissars were subject to a month long course of education in the programme of the Republic. This was broken down into various sections in which commissars would be instructed for an hour a day: the ‘historical’, the ‘cultural’, the ‘political’, the ‘political-military’ and the ‘technical-military’.⁴⁵ If soldiers were deemed to be capable enough over their time at the *Escuela Elemental* they were sent to one of the three *Escuelas Superiores*. Here commissars were given a deeper and more thorough education in the various aspects of the conflict and how they were to be presented. Alongside prospective Company Commissars, Battalion, Brigade or Division Commissars destined for the Comissariat General were also required to attend the school.⁴⁶ Training at the *Escuelas Superiores* would last forty five days in which Commissars would be educated in both the political programme and the practical means of conveying that programme. The teaching would culminate in an examination in which each prospective Commissar would present the work he had conducted over his training period to a panel which would determine whether he would pass.⁴⁷ By the end of their training commissars would be expected to have a detailed knowledge of the programme they were expected to expound, a strong knowledge of the ‘technical-military’ side of warfare in order for them to better support and explain officers decisions and the practical skills to explain things clearly to the soldiery. Once they passed the Company Commissars were assigned to a unit, with commissars of particular ideological affiliation assigned to Mixed Brigades of the same affiliation, in order to ease their tailoring of the motivational programme.⁴⁸ The programme,

⁴³ Various versions of the questionnaire that prospective and serving Commissars were expected to complete appeared over the course of the war since the first half of 1937. The earliest example I have found dates from circa May 1937, in CDMH, Delegación Nacional de Servicios Documentales de la Presidencia del Gobierno, SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-SANTANDER, 544, 6, 1. The most full and comprehensive version of it can be found transcribed in Appendix I of this thesis, p. 323. The following chapter will examine *cenetista* Commissars’ responses in detail.

⁴⁴ INESTAL..., 14B, *Las Escuelas de Comisarios*, 1; INESTAL..., 14B, *Programa de las Escuelas Superiores*, 1-4.

⁴⁵ INESTAL..., 14B, *Las Escuelas de Comisarios*, 2-3.

⁴⁶ INESTAL..., 14B, *De las Escuelas Superiores*, 2-3.

⁴⁷ INESTAL..., 14B, *De las Escuelas Superiores*, 4.

⁴⁸ INESTAL..., 14B, *Programa de Enseñanza las Escuelas Superiores de Comisarios*, 1-4.

which will be articulated thoroughly in the remainder of the chapter, taught commissars to instruct soldiers to view the war as a struggle between the people and their oppressors which could only be won through sound and disciplined military practice.

The Commissariat's programme was determined by the Commissar General, the first of these being Julio Álvarez del Vayo, a parliamentary socialist of PSOE, who was replaced in November 1937 by Crescenciano Bilbao, another socialist. He was in turn succeeded by the aforementioned Osorio y Tafall, a member of *Izquierda Republicana* who took the position in 1938.⁴⁹ Consequently, it did not have a particularly 'revolutionary' agenda and, as we shall see, was an amalgam of the values of the various republican groups. However, there persisted the belief that the Commissariat was the preserve of the PCE, due to the party being well represented within its ranks. The PCE was to provide many of the commissars throughout the war, yet this can come as no surprise considering the *V Regimiento's* adoption of the idea and the PCE's leadership, having realised the importance of the institution had from the beginning of the conflict, sending many of its best educated men to serve in the Commissariat.⁵⁰ Yet the Communists, despite their vital role as an exemplar and an imposer of military discipline, were not viewed favourably by various Army officers and some republican politicians.⁵¹ One of their fiercest critics, moderate Socialist Indalecio Prieto was to view the Commissariat as too in thrall to the PCE and attempted, in his role as Largo's successor in role of Minister for War, to curb its influence upon the soldiery. This manifested itself with the institution of a series of reforms in late 1937 that would see a reduction of commissars at regimental level and an introduction of a quota upon which political factions commissars could be drawn from.⁵² This criticism was unfounded as the PCE was one of the chief supporters of Republican democratic values and showed a concerted commitment to the Popular Front, as did its supporters in the Commissariat.⁵³ Furthermore, Prieto's reforms did little to alter the day to day relations between the men and the commissars or the political content of their teaching, his interference only served to disrupt the work they were

⁴⁹ Gabriel Jackson, *Juan Negrín – Physiologist, Socialist and Spanish Republican War Leader*, (Eastbourne: Sussex Academic Press, 2010), p. 145.

⁵⁰ Graham, *The Spanish Republic...*, p. 147; Julio Álvarez del Vayo, *Freedom's Battle*, (London: Heineman, 1940), pp. 124-135.

⁵¹ In the Spanish Civil War The PCE would, following the diktats of the 7th International Congress of the Comintern, adhere to a programme that was very much in keeping with the 'Republican' wartime agenda.

⁵² Alpert, *El Ejército Popular...*, pp. 188-195; CDMH, Delegación Nacional de Servicios Documentales de la Presidencia del Gobierno, SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-MADRID,439,3-4.

⁵³ For individual accounts of PCE members and their (medium term) loyalty to the democratic cause, see Juan Modesto, *Soy de Quinto Regimiento – notas de la guerra española*, (Paris: éditions de la librairie du globe, 1969); Enrique Lister, *Nuestra Guerra – Aportaciones de la guerra nacional revolucionario del pueblo español, 1936-1939*, (Paris: éditions de la librairie du globe, 1966); Valentín González, *Comunista en España y antistalinista en U.R.S.S.*, (Madrid: Júcar, 1980).

undertaking.⁵⁴ In regards to this thesis, the Commissariat provides a key source in examining how the Republic's core message was adapted to incorporate the various constituent political values of the loyalists and how it differed from its rebel counterpart, which had not such comparable body in charge of morale and motivation.

The role of the Commissariat was the maintenance of discipline in the soldiery through education and retention of morale through the creation of an understanding of the war that they were being asked to fight. However, the triumphant pro-governmental elements of the Popular Front that was responsible for the motivational programme of the Commissariat now faced the problem of mobilising men who they had stripped of their previous effective means of mobilisation, the revolution. Furthermore, the efforts to roll back the gains of the revolution by the Republicans, moderate socialists and the PCE are evidence of a groundswell of opposition to the revolutionary groups, showing that although it proved to be an incredibly powerful means of mobilisation for certain factions of the anti-Francoists, it was not, as was the case with religion for the rebels, a universally unifying cause. The revolution, therefore, was as polarising in martial-political terms as it was in the rest of the Republic and the problems facing the *Ejército Popular* were the practical, military results of the much written about 'war versus revolution' debate. Consequently, the *Ejército Popular* and the Commissariat needed to adopt a motivational programme that could sufficiently motivate and mobilise the disparate elements of the Republic and overcome the disillusionment that was a result of the demise of the revolution, yet avoid returning to the now poisoned well of revolutionary rhetoric.⁵⁵ The Commissariat, in its role as the ideological mouthpiece of the Republic would present a programme that was rooted in antifascism, working class solidarity (albeit within the confines of social democratic politics), popular Spanish nationalism and, in keeping with the paramount importance of discipline, the subjugation of all in the name of unity behind the central government. The remainder of this chapter will examine these key themes as laid out by the Commissariat and articulated in the Republican military press. The inevitable question this this approach poses revolves around whether it led to a too broad and too all-encompassing a programme, one that would provide too diffuse a basis to motivate each of the Republic's various groups to a requisite level.

⁵⁴ Alpert, *El Ejército Popular...*, pp. 189-190.

⁵⁵ The term 'revolution' and 'revolutionary' would be used on occasion, but never with any of the verisimilitude that had been present in the rhetoric of the militias. It was instead used as a means to imply the proletarianism or the non-traditional nature of the Popular Army. An example of this is one paper referring to the role of the Commissariat in 1938 as 'the revolutionary organ that guarantees the revolutionary character of the new Army'. However, by 1938 neither the Army nor the Commissariat were 'revolutionary' in the 1936 interpretation of the word. *Boletín de Propaganda*, No. 2, 1938 date n/a, p. 1.

Ejército culto, disciplinado y heroico: El Ejército Popular – Unity of Purpose in the Popular Army⁵⁶

The Republic's democratic commitment meant that the central authority of the Madrid, Valencia and Barcelona Governments would never match the power exercised by the Burgos Junta.⁵⁷ The Republican government would be constituted of individuals from the Republic's myriad political interests and despite calls for unity from all quarters, there were inevitable disagreements as the pressures of fighting a losing war were felt.⁵⁸ In the ranks of the Commissariat, unity within and without the *Ejército Popular* was paramount; for them, the militias had proven that political independence was folly. This was unequivocally underlined to commissars in the publication *Comisario*:

A fundamental aspect of the activity of the commissar is strengthening unity in the ranks of the Army until it is made absolute and unbreakable, never forgetting, regardless of ideology, the Command of Unity... In the Army, there is no more policy than that of the Popular Front.⁵⁹

As this thesis propounds, the political make-up of the soldiery of the *Ejército Popular* was no less diverse than any other strata of Republican society. This was known to the Commissariat, yet for a successful war effort, a unity of sorts needed to be imposed and therefore particular political loyalties had to be subjugated to 'the cause'. Politically that cause was to be defined by the Republican government and the Popular Front. In the post-revolutionary Republic, The Popular Front was the most legitimate manifestation of the people's will, it had been democratically elected in elections of February 1936 and supported broadly by the working class, at least against its Right Wing opponent. It was, to the propagandists of the *Ejército Popular*, the 'authentic government of Spain'.⁶⁰ The Commissariat's iron explication of polity, that 'in the ranks of the Army and in war there is no more than one policy, that of the government' served to underline the Republic as both the legitimate government of Spain

⁵⁶ *Armas y Letras*, October 1938, p.4.

⁵⁷ The cabinet would move during the Civil War, initially from Madrid to Valencia in fear of the Capital's fall in November 1936 and then again from Valencia to Barcelona in October 1937 after losses in the Valencia region.

⁵⁸ Disunity was rife in the political sphere and neither the Negrín government nor the PCE were particularly popular and his premiership was eventually brought to an end by a coup d'état by General Segismundo Casado in March 1939. Helen Graham, *Socialism and War – The Spanish Socialist Party in Power and Crisis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 223-244; Segismundo Casado López, *Así Cayó Madrid: Último episodio de la guerra civil española*, (Madrid: Guadiana de Publicaciones, 1968).

⁵⁹ *Comisario*, Year 1, No.1, September 1938, p. 36.

⁶⁰ *Potencia – Órgano del Parque Automóvil del Ejército del Centro*, 1 January 1938, p. 1; *Ejército Popular*, 21 August 1938, p. 1.

ahead of the rebels and, furthermore, the sole root of power within the Republic itself.⁶¹ However, in keeping with its democratic roots, this exclusive form of government was presented in an open and inclusive manner; The Popular Front was championed as not solely a necessary union through which victory would be achieved, but also the only true, democratic, representation of all Spaniards, regardless of political colours. *La Voz del Combatiente*, a publication dedicated to the Commissariat and predecessor to *Comisario*, would argue in March 1937 that ‘the Popular Front is the guarantee of victory... [as it] represents all the people, from the Basque nationalists to the anarchists’.⁶² The same publication would later insist that the Popular Front was a ‘parliamentary and democratic Republic that symbolised the aspirations and desires of the immense majority of the Spanish people’ and was the protector of ‘all the liberties gained by dint of years and years of labour struggles’ it was ‘a Republic that has the glory of being born in the same consciousness of the people’.⁶³ However, this raises the question of whether a political system, especially one as inclusive and willingly diverse as democracy, as opposed to a well-defined set of values, can be suitably unifying.

The Popular Front was to be presented to all, due to its electoral support, as the democratic representation of ‘the people’. The reasons for this aggrandisement of the concept of ‘the people’ were both practical and ideological. The PCE, the largest single influence on Commissariat policy, despite its pro-government outlook, was still an overtly leftist organisation and was therefore committed to the eventual victory of the working class. The output of the Commissariat mirrored this. Moreover, this drew on Republican ideology that had been established since the early nineteenth century, which saw ‘the people’ as a nebulous mix of the lower social orders that were the reservoir of national virtue.⁶⁴ In practical terms celebrating *el pueblo* served to create an image of the Republic as a popular undertaking, a notion that, following the demise of the revolution, needed to be reiterated to galvanise the under-motivated and disenchanted elements within the Popular Army. The 1931 constitution, in its first article, declared the Second Republic to be ‘a republic of workers’, however, whereas during the Republican years there were some attempts at *rapprochement* between the various disparate social groups that constituted the Republic, leading to controversy over what ‘workers’ actually were, the outbreak of war and revolution and the treachery of certain

⁶¹ *Comisario*, Year 1, No.2, October 1938, p. 19.

⁶² *La Voz del Combatiente – Diario de los Comisarios de guerra del Ejército del Pueblo*, 13 March 1937, p. 3.

⁶³ *La Voz del Combatiente*, 24 June 1938, p. 1; *La Voz del Combatiente*, 29 May 1938, p. 3.

⁶⁴ Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas and José M. Faraldo, “The First Great Patriotic War: Spanish Communists and Nationalism”, *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 37, No. 4, July 2009, p. 402.

elements of society led to the Republic being presented as more overtly proletarian.⁶⁵ During the war, the Republic was an alliance that incorporated ‘thousands and thousands of workers, peasants and intellectuals,’ moreover and the idea of ‘the people’ was an integral one to the various groups of the Republic, whether Anarchist, Socialist, Communist or Republican, all these bodies had an affiliation with the working class and to three of them its historic ‘victory’ was the very basis of their ideology.⁶⁶

‘The people’ would be the basis of the government, and for them to prevail the Republican government, the only legitimate political structure, needed support. The co-operation of all was necessary for this end, and propagandist slogans would reflect this:

Comrades, bullets do not distinguish between the Communist, nor the Socialist nor the Anarchist, nor the Republican. We are all workers and all agree on the same desire: To win the war!⁶⁷

In keeping with this idea, the conflict was often presented to the soldiery as a social one, referred to as a ‘struggle’ as often as a war; a struggle in which the working class was once again pitted against an oppressor, in this case a ‘fascist invader’. The language used was that of the class war, one where ‘the people, with great foresight, stood up in defence of their liberties [against] the soldiers [*militares*]... that sought to trample and destroy them’.⁶⁸ The war was ‘not only a struggle of arms, it [was] a struggle of morals’.⁶⁹ In this context the idea of liberty and freedom were used to full effect, the war itself being presented as a new ‘War of Independence’, another conflict where ‘the people’ had arisen against an invader to fight ‘for the liberty of Spain’.⁷⁰ Freedom and liberty were themselves a fundamental value for the Spanish people who despite ‘having lived for centuries in a great social backwardness had always maintained a sense of liberty’ and now fought against an enemy to ‘shake off the dust of centuries of oppression’.⁷¹

Respect for the ‘peasant and his property’ was a key theme within the *Ejército Popular* in their endeavour to be representative of all the people.⁷² Republican soldiers, often

⁶⁵ Paul Preston, *The Coming of the Spanish Civil War – Reform, Reaction and Revolution in the Second Republic*, (New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 91.

⁶⁶ *Centro – Boletín de Orientación Político-Militar – 7a División*, 1 February 1939, p. 17.

⁶⁷ *Por Que Luchamos*, 17 April 1937, p.4; 13 March 1937, p. 2.

⁶⁸ *La Voz del Combatiente*, 18 July 1938, p. 2.

⁶⁹ *Comisario*, Year 1, No. 2, October 1938, p. 32.

⁷⁰ *Comisario*, Year 1, No. 1, September 1938, p. 32; *Centro*, 15 March 1939. 1.

⁷¹ *Por Que Luchamos*, 17 April 1937, p. 6; *La Voz del Combatiente*, 5 May 1937, p. 5.

⁷² *Disciplina*, 4 April 1937, p. 2; *¡En Marcha!*, 14 March 1937, p. 4.

recipients of substandard rations due to poor supply lines and production, were frequently guilty of stealing from peasant smallholdings.⁷³ Whilst propagandist attempts to curb this served a practical purpose – theft from the peasantry only served to strain relations between them and the state – it also served to undermine the Popular Army’s political ideal of a working class Republic rooted in mutual class respect. Theft from peasants meant theft from a fellow worker, ‘a fellow fighter in the working class’ struggle against fascism. Soldiers were implored to ‘be worthy of the people [they] represent and honour with help and protection the people with whom... we at all times maintain cordial relations’, to treat the peasant with ‘infinite kindness’ and show ‘deep respect to his interests and customs’.⁷⁴ Commissars were expected to help this relationship, educating their men in the ‘conduct of the peasant’, ‘the organization of local life’ and in, dire straits, the ‘correct’ procedure for ‘requisitioning foodstuffs’.⁷⁵ If the peasant were to be disrespected then the entire concept of equality within the Republic would be undermined. All had to be equal in the Republic and a profound solidarity was required between its disparate political groups and citizens to ensure that ‘the same cause is felt equally, from the President of the Republic to its most modest citizen’.⁷⁶ Without this, the egalitarian representation of the Popular Front would be severely undermined. This affected proletarianism stretched to the notably middle class politicians of the Popular Front, a government led by the academics Manuel Azaña and Juan Negrín. These distinctly unproletarian men were presented as part of the same struggle by the Republican military press, they were ‘men that were born of the *pueblo*, worked for the *pueblo* and continue to work to reconquer our *pueblo*’.⁷⁷ This ‘proletarianisation’ of the leadership of the Republic fit with the attempts to define the conflict as one based in class. Furthermore, by presenting all classes of the Republic as ‘workers’ of some sort, the aim was to create some form of class loyalty between the Republic’s various political groups. The success of this policy, however, would only be measured by the willingness of the previously revolutionary groups to abide the defeat of the revolution and to accept a new interpretation of the class struggle as the Republic versus the Insurgents. This will be the central focus of the following chapter.

The Popular Front and the Republic were therefore legitimised as the democratic manifestation of the political will of the people. The importance of the concept of ‘the

⁷³ Michael Seidman, *Republic of Egos...*, pp. 37-8.

⁷⁴ *Ejército Popular*, 13 November 1938, p. 2.

⁷⁵ CDMH..., SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-SANTANDER, 544, 5, 3.

⁷⁶ *Ejército Popular*, 21 August 1938, p. 1.

⁷⁷ *La Voz del Combatiente*, 24 March 1937, p. 3.

people' to all groups meant that the Popular Front was presented as the representation of a value that was universal to all within the Republic, forging a unity based on a common ideal. In military terms, this would be emphasised by the forging of a rhetorical connection between the *Ejército Popular*, the Popular Front and 'the people'. As we have seen, the Republican model for discipline was based on a respect for the orders given and an understanding of the ends that they were in service of. Unity and discipline had to therefore derive from a source that commanded sufficient profundity so that abnegation and submission to authority were not proven to come at too high a price. The idea of the army as the will of the people provided this. The *Ejército Popular* was presented as 'the people in arms',⁷⁸ an extension of the proletariat:

Our army, that emerged from the people, oppressed, ridiculed and mocked, is perfected each day more, strengthening its discipline, to give its blood and life for the people. Our Army and our people – the true people – are not two distinct bodies, they are on the contrary pieces of the same social machine.... Our Army is the faithful servant of the Spanish people; founded with the same people and walking very closely the same painful road of this damn Civil War.⁷⁹

The Republican army was the military embodiment of the People, as the Popular Front was its legitimate political embodiment. This had been the aim of Manuel Azaña as far back as March 1932, when he gave a speech to the *Cortes* in which he stated that he hoped that his reforms were aimed at turning the Army into 'The nation *en masse* under arms' and this was essentially the aim of the Popular Army, albeit with a more proletarian bent to its rhetoric.⁸⁰ It was designed to be capable of matching its fascist counterpart in modernity and discipline, but exceeding it through force of will, it was 'invincible... demonstrating the reason for its fight was the reason of all the people of Spain'.⁸¹ Furthermore, the ultimate victory of the Popular Army would be presented as the ultimate victory of the people. Military propaganda often focusses on the eventual victory of its forces and the *Ejército Popular* was presented no differently, several brigades' newspapers carried the name *Venceremos* (We Shall Overcome) and articles were often ended with a statement about confidence in winning the war.⁸²

⁷⁸ *La Voz del Combatiente*, 1 June 1938, p. 1.

⁷⁹ *Disciplina*, 8 May 1937, p.3.

⁸⁰ Santos Juliá, *Manuel Azaña. Una biografía política*, (Madrid, Alianza, 1990), pp. 98-9.

⁸¹ *Maniobras*, 7 June 1938, p. 3.

⁸² 'We will soon win the final battle' *Avanzar*, 10 September 1938, p. 1, is an examples of this trend; Examples of newspapers entitled *Venceremos* include that of the Polish 'Dumbrowski' brigade, the 16th Division, the 90th Mixed Brigade and the 20th Mixed Brigade.

However, the *Ejército Popular*'s eventual victory would be attributed to its popular nature and the fact that the people it embodied could not be subdued; that they would 'not relent one moment from [their] great historical destiny, until climbing to the cusp of [their] victory'.⁸³ The victory of the people rested with the victory of the *Ejército Popular*, due to their symbiosis. To this end it was imperative once again for those who fought to understand the nature of their struggle: that the people could only be victorious if the soldiers themselves understood that they did not fight for a simple government, but a government that representing that same people. It was 'this political quality of our army' *Ejército Popular* argued, 'that has made it possible to maintain and enhance the confidence in victory'.⁸⁴

However, a political army did not necessarily equal political debate and consequently political affiliation needed to be subjugated to the greater good:

...no soldier, high or low, if he possesses clear vision of the reality and sincere antifascist sentiment, may subordinate the general interests of the *Patria* to the private ones of his party or organisation.⁸⁵

The point was clear, the Republic was a democratic organisation that respected a heterogeneous polity, but this could only be accepted in its martial embodiment. Soldiers therefore had to accept that the future existence of all freedom of political expression rested in their willingness to temporarily sacrifice their own. The army was presented as an '*Ejército político, sin políticas*', one with a political understanding, but without divisive political discussion.⁸⁶ It defended the Republic and the values it represented, but could not tolerate a similar factionalism as all its constituent parts needed to be focused on the same goals.

Nevertheless, despite this sacrifice of political debate, according to Republican logic the discipline instilled in the men through their education made them superior, more fortunate, than their nationalist counterparts. These poor souls, subject to traditional, draconian discipline, were 'blind and dumb' and had 'imposed upon [them] the ultimate sacrifice of life'.⁸⁷ Republican soldiers, on the other hand, understood their discipline and

⁸³ *La Voz del Combatiente*, 21 April 1938, p. 2.

⁸⁴ *Ejército Popular*, 10 November 1938, p. 1.

⁸⁵ *La Voz del Combatiente*, 24 June 1938, p. 2.

⁸⁶ *La Voz del Combatiente*, 24 November 1938, p. 1.

⁸⁷ *La Voz del Combatiente*, 15 April 1938, p. 2; 13 November 1938, p. 3.

respected it in the knowledge of ‘the faith in the great victory of our people’ and that though ‘the war is very hard, harder still is slavery’.⁸⁸

Following analysis we can observe that despite their very different political values, the *Ejército Popular* and the *Ejército Nacional* did not differ in the basis of their individual self-conceptions. Both would present themselves as the manifestation of the most important part of the shared ideology of their zone, whether that be the people or the *Patria*. Furthermore both would declare that their victory was guaranteed by a higher force, in the case of the rebels, religion, the Republicans, the inevitability of history. However, whilst the Francoist Army saw itself as an interpreter of the will of the *Patria* and an instrument of God, the *Ejército Popular*, through its definition as the Popular Front – ‘the people’ – in arms, defined itself as the tool of the *Patria*, an extension of it, not an independent body acting in its interests.⁸⁹ This conceit permitted for discipline to be viewed in a framework where it was dictated not by officers of a regular army, but officers that were, through the Army’s popular nature, representatives of the people. The leftist concept of the people, therefore, would underpin the Republican wish for discipline and unity

⁸⁸ *La Voz del Combatiente*, 13 November 1938, p. 3; *Maniobras*, 7 June 1938, p. 11.

⁸⁹ Although the proletarian edge may not have been part of Azaña’s intent, the Popular Army was the ultimate manifestation of his reforms of the early Second Republic. The Republic now had a professional army (albeit much larger than he had envisaged) that was committed to defeating enemies from without and had no further political ambitions.

¡Fuera de España los invasores! – The Nation Under Threat from the Fascist Invader⁹⁰

As has been made clear in almost all historiography of the Spanish Civil War, a common enemy was not enough to unite the disparate groups of the Republic. However this does not discount the theme as an important part of the wider martial-political project that was created during the Civil War. It was after all, the sole reason for the existence of the uneasy political alliance that was the Republic at war. The *Ejército Popular* and the Commissariat therefore defined the enemy as one that was fundamentally opposed to all the values held by all those who fought for the Republic. Just as the rebel portrayal of the Republicans was that of Marxist hordes, under the influence of the Kremlin, the Insurgents became ‘fascist invaders’ directed from Rome and Berlin.⁹¹ The theme of the Francoists as fascist was the central conceit of Republican definition of the enemy. They had been referred to as such since the outbreak of the war and a dynamic that lasted the entire conflict was created; the uprising was committed by ‘the fascist generals’ and their Italian and German co-conspirators.⁹² It was a simple label to apply to an enemy that was supported by two fascist states and had adopted the ideological paraphernalia, if not the entire ideology, of the Falange. The actual ideological wrangles that affected the Francoists were of little concern to the propagandists of the Commissariat. The war would be referred to as ‘the antifascist cause’ in every sphere; the press, private memorandums between Commissars, court martial minutes and even letters to wounded combatants.⁹³ From the *Escuelas Elementales* Commissars were instructed to portray the war as one against fascism.⁹⁴ As the long-established enemy of the left, fascism was a name that could be easily applied to the militarist enemy and would be instantly recognisable as antithetical to all the values of the Republic’s different factions, whether democratic, proletarian or revolutionary. Furthermore, the defeat of fascism was always presented as the ultimate aim of the war, and many of the sacrifices that were demanded, such as unity and discipline, were weighed against the necessity of victory ‘‘against the fascist criminal’.⁹⁵ Fascism was taught by the Commissariat as something that should be genuinely

⁹⁰ *Ejército Popular*, 29 September 1938, p. 1.

⁹¹ Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas, ‘Nations in arms against the invader: on nationalist discourses during the civil war’, in, in *The Splintering of Spain – Cultural History in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939*, Chris Ealham and Michael Richards (eds.), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), *Ejército Popular*, 28 August 1938; *Maniobras*, 30 April 1938, p. 3.

⁹² *Ejército del Pueblo*, April 1937, p. 13.

⁹³ CDMH..., SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-SANTANDER_L,282,18; PS-SANTANDER_A, 188, 3; PS-BARCELONA, 566,10; PS-MADRID, 482, 49.

⁹⁴ INESTAL..., 14B, *Las Escuelas de Comisarios*, 3.

⁹⁵ Taken from a letter from a Catalan Commissar to a Basque colleague in 1937, CDMH..., SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-MADRID, 482, 49.

hated; its crimes were against the people and in support of the privileged classes. Commissars were implored to instil in their soldiers a ‘spirit of hatred towards fascism, with the immovable will to annihilate it battle’ and teach the men that the Spanish people felt ‘in [their] hearts a blaze of hatred and anger towards the bastards that wished to drag us... into the chaos of fascism’.⁹⁶ It was an ideology that celebrated warfare and had inflicted war upon the people of Spain, it represented ‘oppression, death, ruin, the eternal hunger of our children’ and it was the duty of the Spanish people to destroy it.⁹⁷ Furthermore it was opposed to the freedom of the people as within fascist ideology there was an ‘incomprehension of the will to live freely and independently... recognising only slaves and masters, inferior men and the master race... fascism can never understand the character and the spirit of the people’.⁹⁸ It was, in short, the ‘political and cultural opposite of the Republic’.⁹⁹ Antifascism and ‘Republicanism’ were presented as one and the same and while this was insufficient as a singular basis for a coherent motivational programme, it formalised the idea of all those of the Republic as against these invaders and on the side of the people.

As stated above, fascism as a concept was presented as a foreign ideology, an invader that needed to be expelled. However, this was not as figurative as the biological conception of the enemy of the rebels and carried none of the connotations of extermination although there were some similarities. In Republican martial discourse the fascist invader was foreign, German and Italian specifically, and committed to the destruction of all things Spanish:-

Under the sign of the swastika, barbarous, under the sign of the cruel and savage *fascio*; they plan death and pain and desolation over the myth of Spain. The foreigner treads on and destroys the fields, demolishes cities, he burns the harvests, he devastates and sacks villages.¹⁰⁰

The conflict was presented as being overseen by Berlin and Rome in its entirety; they ‘directed the fight and the economic life in the other zone, seeking to turn our *Patria* into a colony’.¹⁰¹ A colony from which they could prosper: ‘Fascists threaten peace, they declare war... They had already declared long before invading Spain to divide it, destroy it, rob it of its riches and annex it’.¹⁰² German involvement in particular would be presented as covetous,

⁹⁶ *Comisario*, Year 1, No. 1, September 1938, p. 12; *Por Que Luchamos*, 13 March 1937, p. 4.

⁹⁷ *Por Que Luchamos*, 13 March 1937, p. 4.

⁹⁸ *Avanzar*, 10 September 1938, p. 16.

⁹⁹ *Avanzar*, 10 December 1938, p. 18.

¹⁰⁰ *Ejército del Pueblo*, April 1937, p.18.

¹⁰¹ *Adelante – boletín de orientación político-militar de la IV División*, 8 December 1938, p. 4.

¹⁰² *Ejército del Pueblo*, April 1937, p. 16.

with articles given over the ‘true motives of the German intervention’, which described its desire to obtain access to the ‘treasure in [Spain’s] soil’ to fund an eventual invasion of its ‘archenemy France’.¹⁰³ The Italians on the other hand would be shown to be interested in disenfranchising the Spanish people, robbing the nation of its sovereignty; their intervention had turned ‘the unfortunate Spaniards in the invaded zone into slaves of Italy, servants of... their master Mussolini’.¹⁰⁴ The conflict was therefore defined as ‘against the traitors of the perjured military and against the predatory conquest of the foreign invaders’.¹⁰⁵ The Republic and the people were engaged in the defence of the *Patria*, fighting for its independence, for future of the Spanish people depended on it, given that the rebels had already surrendered half the nation to the slavery of fascism. *Comisario* instructed commissars to laud the struggle and to tell the men that ‘our people are on foot, bayonets shining, with iron picks and shovels, they are going to fortify our land and dig the graves of the invader’ whilst *Adelante* would state that for the Republican people ‘our task is saving national independence’.¹⁰⁶ The presentation of the people and the soldiers of the *Ejército Popular* fighting as one to protect the nation not only echoes the idea of the Army as an extension of the *pueblo* but also evoked a powerful nationalist myths of the past – the War of Independence – where, in the leftist interpretation of the conflict, ‘the people rose magnificently against the invader Napoleon’.¹⁰⁷ Fascism was an invader and the Republic and the *pueblo* the defender of the Spanish *Patria*.

In a similar manner to the propaganda of the rebels, there was an effort made within the martial discourse of the *Ejército Popular* to ‘de-hispanify’ the enemy. The result was that the *Patria* was conceptualised as solely Republican and, within the Commissariat and the military press, nationalism became a means to strengthen the Republican message. It was a powerful unifying force, its deep emotional resonance and universal appeal allowed for it to disguise internal divisions and political schism within the ideologically diverse Republic.¹⁰⁸ To this end various ideas of the Republic were regularly referenced in the context of the necessity to save the nation. Democracy was portrayed as a true Spanish value, it was, according to *Comisario*, ‘the politics of the independence of Spain’.¹⁰⁹ *Ejército Popular* would echo this, dictating that ‘the ideals of democracy were the ideals of antifascism’ and

¹⁰³ *Ejército del Pueblo*, July 1937, p. 11.

¹⁰⁴ *Avanzar*, 10 September 1938, p. 19.

¹⁰⁵ *Disciplina*, 4 April 1937, p. 3.

¹⁰⁶ *Comisario*, Year 1, No. 2, October 1938, p. 20. *Adelante*, 14 November 1938, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ *Ejército del Pueblo*, 19 July 1937, p. 11.

¹⁰⁸ Núñez Seixas, ‘Nations in arms against the invader...’, p.46; Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas, *¡Fuera el invasor!...*, pp. 31-40.

¹⁰⁹ *Comisario*, Year 1, No. 4, December 1938, p. 4.

that the war was being fought for its egalitarian values that would guarantee future ‘fraternal relations between all men and all the Spanish people’.¹¹⁰ Yet alongside this, unity and discipline were also portrayed as necessary for this democratic Spain to exist, a soldier who could ‘break away from selfishness and [was] willing to fight for the *Patria*’ would ‘earn the love of Spain and the respect for its future’, and victory was only possible if he could ‘subordinate all requirements, all actions and all thoughts to the defence of our country’.¹¹¹ This nationalist abnegation would add further weight to the Republican idea of sacrifice in the name of the people, instilling the necessity to subjugate one’s beliefs with a nationalist as well as proletarian character.

The military Republican conception of the nation and its conception of the people were linked, it was the ‘Republic of all the workers’, the home of the people, making it the ‘true Spain’, not the one of traitors and invaders.¹¹² This was aided by longstanding progressive Spanish understanding, in a strong contrast to the belief of the Army, that the best exemplar of *Patria* was found not in the Army but in the Spanish working classes and peasantry.¹¹³ The *Patria* was, lest we forget, also a tangible place, where the Spanish people had made their homes and worked, the number of references to ‘our soil’ indicate the sense of ownership felt towards the land itself.¹¹⁴ The riches for the people of Spain lay within its soil, not under it. As the war wore on and more territory fell to the Nationalists, the references to the nation and the invader became more and more prevalent in the press of the *Ejército Popular*, relentlessly advancing the conception of the rebels were invaders on Spanish, read as Republican, territory. The reading of ‘the people’ as the best advocates of the *Patria* allowed for the various impressions of the word to be represented in Republican martial-discourse. The notion of ‘the people’ appealed to political aspirations and ideas whereas discussion of ‘our soil’, a homeland, could appeal to what was already in possession. To fight for *el pueblo* was to achieve, to fight for the soil was to protect what one already had.

¹¹⁰ *Ejército Popular*, 21 August 1938, p. 1; p.1.

¹¹¹ *Orientacion del Comisario – Sección de Propaganda del Comisariado del II Cuerpo de Ejército*, 2 March 1939, p. 1; *Comisario*, Year 1, No. 4, December 1938, p. 20.

¹¹² Nuñez Seixas, ‘Nations in arms against the invader...’, p. 54.

¹¹³ Nuñez Seixas and José M. Faraldo, ‘The First Great Patriotic War...’, p. 402. Although this correlation did not preclude the presentation of the Spanish people as fighting fascism for the ‘proletarian masses of the countries that suffer the yoke of fascism’ and ‘triumph of the Spanish proletariat [would be] the triumph of the world proletariat’, *Maniobras*, 20 April 1938; *El Combatiente*, 9 January 1937, p. 3.

¹¹⁴ Soil is mentioned in *Ejército Popular*, 29 May 1938, p. 1; 29 September 1938; *Comisariado*, Year 1, No. 4, December 1938, p. 20; Franz Borkenau would also state that the threat to people’s homes was an important means of motivation, he argued ‘they will defend their towns and villages... they hate foreign intrusion’. Franz Borkenau, Introduction to José Martín Blázquez, *I Helped To Build An Army...*, p. xxi.

In addition to its Spanish focus, the discourse of the *Ejército Popular* was also an enthusiastic supporter of peripheral nationalism. According to *La Voz del Combatiente* Spain was a nation that had ‘respect for regional liberties, without undermining unity’.¹¹⁵ Similar to the rebels, the Republic respected ‘the personality and particularities of the distinct peoples who formed Spain’ yet wished for the nation to remain as one.¹¹⁶ However its approach was different to that of the rebels in that Republican discourse actively encouraged national expression as it was said that celebrating the diversity of the people would only serve to strengthen the *Patria*.¹¹⁷ Given that the Popular Army contained units from the Basque country and Catalonia that would have identified with each peripheral identity; this can come as no surprise. However it is important to understand the genuine attempts to create a climate of understanding and enthusiasm for Spain’s various nations – even going so far as to encourage a dual national identity for soldiers from Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque country.¹¹⁸

Despite the *Ejército Popular*’s efforts to define the enemy as fascist their representation of the enemy never reached the furious heights of their rebel counterparts. Included alongside the antifascist rhetoric there were also attempts to humanise the enemy soldier and any talk of the post-war period would always focus on the idea of reconciliation.¹¹⁹ Negrín would state in April 1938 that he wished for ‘an amnesty of all Spaniards’ and that ‘after the cruel struggle... it would be an act of treason to the country’s destiny not to yield up all thought of vengeance and reprisals... in the interests of Spain’s future’.¹²⁰ This reconciliatory spirit complimented the idea of the enemy being foreign and the uprising as the fault of the treacherous army, not the Spanish people. If the people were to be disparaged and presented as capable of opposing the democratic ideal presented, then the notion of the Republic as the popular representation of the Spanish people would have been undermined.

The presentation of the Nationalists as ‘traitors to the *Patria* backed by... Hitler and Mussolini’ as invaders of the Spain suited the practical situation that the Republic faced at the time.¹²¹ The adverse international conditions meant that the Republic’s limited resources dictated that the war could only be fought defensively, in the hope that diplomatic conditions

¹¹⁵ *La Voz del Combatiente*, 6 May 1938, p. 3.

¹¹⁶ *Ejército Popular*, 5 May 1938, p. 2.

¹¹⁷ Núñez Seixas, *¡Fuera el Invasor!...*, p. 98.

¹¹⁸ These attempts were led by the PCE and its regional affiliates *Ibid.*..., pp. 96-110.

¹¹⁹ *Ejército Popular*, 5 May 1938, p. 2.

¹²⁰ *Parliamentary Committee for Spain*, 1 May 1938, p. 1.

¹²¹ *Avanzar*, 19 July 1938, p. 7.

would change, allowing the Republic to match the Nationalists materially.¹²² This was encapsulated by Juan Negrín in his slogan – ‘resisting is winning’ and repeated in various guises across the Republican press.¹²³ Its first widespread use came in the final weeks of the campaign in the North, where commissars were instructed that ‘it is necessary to adjure out troops to resist at all costs’, the attitude instilled needed to be ‘the first in FORTIFICATION; the first in RESISTING; the first to DIE IF NECESSARY’.¹²⁴ Even though the North fell, the language of victorious resistance persisted and the *Ejército Popular* presented wartime survival as paramount. Soldiers were informed that ‘it [was] heroic to conquer enemy territory, but it is a sacred obligation knowing how to keep territory’, Commissars were ordered to instruct their men ‘in the high spirit of abnegation and sacrifice and the firm decision to not abandon their arms nor territory’.¹²⁵ The building of defences was imperative to all:

He that did not fortify is two times the Traitor: to his Patria, that he does not defend as an antifascist combatant and to his person... For your liberty, break the claw of the foreign invaders that want to colonise Spain, defend the land inch by inch, by dint of fortifications and serenity.¹²⁶

The Nationalists, on the other hand, fought an aggressive *Reconquista* with rhetoric that was based on the idea of the reclamation a territory seen as rightfully ‘Spanish’ but held by the enemy. This idea was complimented by the biological conception of a Spain that had been ‘infected’ with foreign ideas and the assertion that now was the historic moment in which the nation would not only be recaptured, but cleansed. The Nationalist war effort was an aggressive one, set on creating, through violence, a New Spain that was free of the decadent vices that had let her fall into enemy hands. The Republicans faced a war where they were the victims of aggression, Manuel Azaña stating as much in January 1937: ‘we are waging war

¹²² For studies on the discrepancy of arms that each enjoyed from the largesse of their foreign backers see Gerald Howson, *Arms for Spain – The Untold Story of the Spanish Civil War*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), p. 114-123; Christian Leitz, *Economic Relations Between Nazi Germany and Franco’s Spain, 1936-1945*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 8-52.

¹²³ ‘Resistance has been and will continue to be the path to victory’, *Ejército Popular*, 28 June 1938, p. 1; ‘An unwavering imperative: resistance until death’, *La Voz del Combatiente*, 14 April 1938, p. 1.

¹²⁴ CDMH..., SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-SANTANDER, M_2, 39, 2.

¹²⁵ *Ejército Popular*, 29 May 1938, p. 1; *Comisario*, Year 1, No. 1, September 1938.

¹²⁶ *Maniobras*, 7 June 1938, p. 6.

because it is being waged on us'.¹²⁷ This complimented the Republican interpretation of fascism as a foreign ideology intent on destruction, *Ejército del Pueblo* would describe 'the fascism of both Mussolini and Hitler [as] war, it means war of aggression, of barbarity, of savagery'.¹²⁸ General José Miaja, director of the defence of Madrid, would state that Republic had not asked for this war, for 'war ruins people' yet 'it accepted the struggle that was offered with only this end: to prevent out *Patria* becoming a colony of the fascist countries'.¹²⁹ The superior material strength of the rebels meant that there was little that the Republic could do militarily but to defend itself, but the nature of the 'fascists' as foreign invaders and fascism as something to be hated legitimised this negative form of warfare, bereft of victories, transforming a turgid losing battle into a heroic defence. Moreover it fostered a siege mentality that was used to strengthen the idea of unity within the Republic.

This was best exemplified in the evocation of the defence of Madrid, an event that saw the people and the militias defend the city from the Nationalist advance. Much like the rebels and their mythologised military endeavour, the Siege of the Alcázar de Toledo, the military achievement of the defence of Madrid was undeniable. The defenders had seen off a better equipped and better trained force, they had not gained any ground, but they had saved the Republic.¹³⁰ The entire defence was presented in the terms of the Popular Army's motivational programme; the government's retreat to Valencia in fear of Madrid's fall became it trusting the people's Army as 'the government gave the supreme command of the forces that defended and will defend the Republican Capital to the heroic Generals'.¹³¹ The people themselves were committed to the cause of the Republic, 'spontaneously they had understood that liberty was being threatened and they had placed themselves immovable before the enemy'.¹³² The defence of Madrid was the heroic culmination of the co-operation of all the forces involved, the Army the people and the government, a mutual understanding of the cause without political wrangling. The daily of the *Parti Communiste Français* (French Communist Party, PCF), *L'Humanité* would on 11 November 1936 describe the city's defence as the 'Verdun of liberty' and this would set the tone of its presentation.¹³³ The

¹²⁷ Manuel Azaña, *Los Españoles en guerra*, (Barcelona: Crítica, 1982), p. 19, cited in Casanova, *The Spanish Republic...* p. 236.

¹²⁸ *Ejército del Pueblo*, April 1937, p. 16.

¹²⁹ *Comisario*, Year 1, No. 1, September 1938.

¹³⁰ For a comprehensive account of the defence of Madrid see Robert G. Colodny, *The Struggle for Madrid – The Central Epic of the Spanish Conflict 1936-37*, (New York: Paine-Whitman, 1958); Anthony Beevor, *The Spanish Civil War*, (London: Orbis, 1982), pp.129-140.

¹³¹ *Por Que Luchamos*, 17 April 1937, p. 4.

¹³² *Ejército del Pueblo*, 31 July 1937, p. 8.

¹³³ *L'Humanité*, 11 November 1936., p. 1.

phraseology of Verdun would be famously adopted with *On ne passé pas* becoming Dolores Ibaruri's *¡No Pasaran!*, a phrase that would become synonymous with the Spanish Republic. In the military press Madrid would be presented in much the same way, as the fulcrum of the war effort of the common struggle, where 'all antifascists shed their blood together, and together formed the bastions of iron where the attempts of the enemy to siege Madrid were shattered'.¹³⁴

The discourse presented to the soldiers of the *Ejército Popular* would therefore present a programme where fascism acted as a paragon of all that needed to be opposed. Whilst its presence was not enough to unite the various strands of the Republic, by presenting it as the antithesis of ideas that were important to the Republic, namely the people, 'freedom and liberty' and the Spanish *Patria*, the Popular Front was presented as a legitimate means to defend against this enemy. The advantage of this was that, in military propaganda and the teachings of the Commissariat, the true representation of the people and the best opposition to the invader, legitimising the project of unity and discipline.

¹³⁴ *El Combatiente*. 11 February 1937, p. 2.

*La cultura es imprescindible porque ella es la base de progreso de todo un pueblo*¹³⁵ –

Education and Culture in the *Ejército Popular*

The *Ejército Popular*, alongside its more understandable attempts to create a climate of proletarianism and nationalism also maintained a strong relationship with the concept of ‘culture’ and the education of the people. The war did not, as Robert Stradling has described, follow a ‘meta-narrative’ in which philosophy was pitted against law but, as shown by the respect for ‘intellectuals’ in the ‘Republic of all the workers’, education and intellectualism had their place within the Popular Army.¹³⁶ This formed an interesting comparison with the rebels, where high profile members of their military would publicly shout ‘death to the intelligentsia’ and signified a profound progressive commitment by the *Ejército Popular*.¹³⁷ Jesús Hernández, minister for public education and the fine arts, became on his appointment in 1936 responsible for the policy of the education of the soldiery, his chief means of achieving this was to be the *Milicias de la Cultura*. A brigade composed of intellectuals, teachers and artists, the *Milicias de la Cultura* travelled to the front to give lessons to troops hereto denied access to education and ‘culture’.¹³⁸ The express aim was to ‘eliminate, totally, illiteracy in the Army’, whilst further lessons in maths, geography and history were also taught.¹³⁹ The *Milicias de la Cultura* and the education of the soldiery in general were presented as a source of great pride for the *Ejército Popular*, it was ‘one of the first and principle preoccupations of the Spanish people since the advent of the Republic’ and there existed a profound egalitarian belief in that ‘superior education was not privilege saved for the minority’.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, anarchist and socialist initiatives before the war are testament to practical and even cultural education being a value cherished by the various groups of the Republican political spectrum.¹⁴¹ The rebel attitude towards the education of soldiers and the people was held up as a comparison of the civility of each side, ‘fascist’ cultural

¹³⁵ *¡Venceremos! – Órgano de la Brigada ‘Dumbrowski’*, 27 November 1937, p. 3.

¹³⁶ Robert Stradling, *History and Legend – Writing the International Brigades*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), p. 7.

¹³⁷ This phrase would be uttered by José Millán Astray in an argument with Miguel de Unamuno in Salamanca on 12 October 1936, Preston, *¡Comrades!...*, pp. 29-31; Carlos Rojas, *¡Muera la inteligencia! ¡Viva la muerte! Salamanca 1936. Unamuno y Millán Astray frente a frente*, (Barcelona: Planeta, 2005), pp. 134-139.

¹³⁸ Sandie Holguín, *Creating Spaniards – Culture and National Identity in Republican Spain*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), pp. 173-4. Juan Manuel Fernández Soria, *Educación y cultura en la guerra civil (España, 1936-1939)*, (Valencia: Nau Llibres, 1984).

¹³⁹ *Armas y Letras*, November & December 1937, p. 3; *Ibid*, pp. 173-4.

¹⁴⁰ *Ejército Popular*, 28 November 1938, p. 3.

¹⁴¹ Stanley G. Payne, *Spain’s First Democracy – The Second Republic 1931-36*, (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), pp. 86-90; Richard Cleminson, ‘Beyond Tradition and Modernity: The Cultural and Sexual Politics of Spanish Anarchism’ *Spanish Cultural Studies – An Introduction: the struggle for modernity*, (eds.) Helen Graham and Joan Labanyi, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 116-123.

understanding was typified by ‘incessant and bloody persecution of the educators’ and ‘the tragedy of Lorca’.¹⁴² This was an unfair representation, as rebel soldiers were encouraged to read, with *La Ametralladora* on 3 April 1938 asking for books to be sent to the front as ‘In the brief ceasefires of rest – small coordinating conjunctions between fights – our soldier waters his spirit in reading’.¹⁴³ Moreover, books reached them. Hector Colmegna, an Argentine medical volunteer with a Falangist *Bandera*, recalled that his unit had a small, high-brow library boasting ‘the Spanish classics’ as well as more contemporary works by Palacio Valdes, Valle Inclán, Azorín, the Quintero brothers, Muñoz Seca, Jacinto Benavente as well as translations of Kipling, Byron, Shelley.¹⁴⁴ However, this paled in comparison with what was available to soldiers of the *Ejército Popular*. For example, soldiers of the 121 Mixed Brigade had access to over 400 titles from their library, with the expected ideological tomes of Marx and Lenin being complimented by collections of Shakespeare, Tolstoy and Goethe amongst others.¹⁴⁵

Despite its ideological basis, pedagogy still served a practical purpose, as the education of troops in the very real sense of helping them to read and write, aided their political education and permitted for the *Ejército Popular*’s motivational programme to be more easily received. *Armas y Letras*, the publication of the *Milicias de la Cultura* would argue that ‘the soldier that has culture it is easier to acquire discipline and courage’ and that ‘an army with culture is never without command whilst two men have respect for one another’.¹⁴⁶ An example of this in practice can be found in the textbook used by the *Milicias de la Cultura* to teach literacy. The book, entitled *Cartilla Escolar Antifascista* (Antifascist School Book), included a preface by the author, Fernando Sáinz, of ‘Explanations and Instructions’ for teachers to use, which stated that:

The fight for the culture of the Spanish people, that reaction has kept in ignorance and illiteracy, is inseparably linked to the ideological and political struggle against fascism. The Spanish people are defeating fascism with arms in hand. The teachers and all the cultural workers must honour this example, also defeating fascism with books and the pen.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² *Avanzar*, 10 December 1938, p. 18.

¹⁴³ *La Ametralladora...*, 3 April 1938, p. 15

¹⁴⁴ Colmegna, *Diario de un médico...*, p. 59.

¹⁴⁵ Matthews, *Comisarios y Capellanes...*, p. 10.

¹⁴⁶ *Armas y Letras*, 1 October 1937, p. 11.

¹⁴⁷ Fernando Sáinz, *Cartilla Escolar Antifascista*, (Madrid: Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, 1937), p. 1.

The book itself put this into practice as alongside the exercises learning the letters of the alphabet and their pronunciation, there were various slogans for troops to practice reading and writing. These slogans reflected the cultural programme of the *Ejército Popular*, examples included ‘the government of the Republic is the government of the people’, ‘war of national independence’, ‘long live heroic Madrid!’, ‘we shall overcome fascism’ and ‘victory requires discipline’.¹⁴⁸ A commitment to improving the culture and education of soldiers, in both the discourse and practice of the *Ejército Popular*, comprised a fulfilment of an ideological commitment of several of the Republic’s constituent political groups, that commitment being the education and progression of the working class, in this case its armed form. However, education also served a practical use, as it allowed for a better, more efficient delivery of the other parts of the Republican military message, namely that of discipline, antifascism and respect for the government.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 7; p.13; p. 27; p. 23; p. 33.

The 'Republicanism' of the *Ejército Popular*

The programme presented to the troops of the *Ejército Popular* was relatively clear, it implored for discipline to be adhered to as it was the best means for the Spanish and proletarian Republic to expel the fascist invader from its land. This was supplemented by an ideological and practical commitment to the education of the soldiery as members of the working class and although the work of the *Milicias de la Cultura* did allow for the rhetoric of the commissariat to be more easily consumed, it also in actuality served to educate the men of the Popular Army. The impetus behind the creation of this motivational programme was the necessity to build a coherent programme that could motivate as many of the Popular Army's diverse political affiliates as possible. Moreover, it needed to appeal to former members of the militias that had been stripped of their initial reason for fighting in the conflict in the first place, the revolution.

The key tool in this effort was the Commissariat, with its men thoroughly trained to understand the Republican war effort. As has been previously stated, there have been some attempts to compare the roles of commissars with those of chaplains. However, while each shared some of the same duties, the level of rigour with which commissars were expected to complete these duties as well as the relative importance of each position to their side's requisite military operation makes the comparison a misleading one. Commissars were integral to the functionality of the *Ejército Popular* on both a practical and philosophical level and they were trained accordingly. Chaplains, on the other hand, although a welcome adjunct to the Francoist military machine, did not have anywhere near as pivotal a role. In terms of the above mentioned practical importance of commissars, their presence within the Popular Army was a necessity as the values that the Republic motivational programme espoused were less coherent and lacked something as deeply resonant yet universally appealing as the Crusade's religious component. However, that is not to say that the programme was wholly without merit and the ideas that the Popular Army was said to be fighting for, when considered together, offered a convincing agenda for those with leftist sympathies. The concept of a disciplined 'people', especially when linked to the *Patria* in a national struggle to expel a fascist invader made for a compelling narrative. When put forth by the more skilled members of the well trained Commissariat this programme was, rhetorically at least, very convincing.

In regards to their philosophical importance, this rested with the Popular Army being, on first inspection, a paradoxical institution – a disciplined military organization that

attempted to instil itself with the popular enthusiasm of the informal militias under the pretence of being the ‘army of the people’. At times it would even call itself revolutionary, when in reality it was a symbol of the very failure of such a cause. Commissars consequently acted as a necessary figurative buffer between the punitive military discipline that was re-introduced following militarisation and the identification of the *Ejército Popular* as simply another iteration of the previously hated military. While this chapter has focused on the practical significance of the Commissariat, given the wealth of sources available, it is nevertheless important to recognise the philosophical significance of political commissars to the identity of the Popular Army. Their very presence as a coercive, rather than overtly threatening, force for discipline, when considered alongside the educational efforts of the *Milicias de la Cultura*, gave the impression that the Popular Army was committed to an alternative approach to military affairs. The commissars’ own output would reinforce this impression as the idea of a voluntary acceptance of a new form of discipline was put forth as the principal facet of the martial politics of the *Ejército Popular*. This created a situation where the apparent paradox of the Popular Army was circumvented by the very existence and the weight of rhetoric created by the Commissariat. The army did not need to *rely* on the ‘old forms’ of discipline, even though they were present, as it had a new means of convincing its troops to participate. The following chapter will examine how effective the Commissariat was in convincing the soldiers of the CNT, some of the fiercest critics of traditional militarism, that the new Army and its values were worth fighting for.

Chapter Three: Revolution or Victory – *Cenetista* motivations in the Popular Army

This chapter is a study of the political development of propaganda aimed at soldiers affiliated to the *Confederación Nacional de Trabajo* (National Confederation of Labour, CNT), the largest trade union in Republican Spain and the largest anarchist movement in history. The initial focus of the chapter is on the transformation of the militia columns of 1936 into units of the Popular Army and the political controversy that this militarization incited. The columns were, lest we forget, comprised of men that stormed barracks to prevent the *coup d'état* and followed no established military protocol, voting on whether or not to follow orders and eschewing all forms of military authority and hierarchy.¹ This question, of how *cenetista* militants became willing and celebrated soldiers in the disciplined and firmly statist *Ejército Popular* will be dealt with in the first section of the chapter. The chapter will subsequently examine this transition's effects on the *cenetista* motivational programme, namely the propaganda efforts made to present the Popular Army as something other than a new tool of state oppression and the relative success in creating such a programme. The main focus of the chapter will therefore be the work of the commissars affiliated with the CNT following the 'May Days' of 1937 (generally regarded as the moment that the revolution of the previous year was ultimately defeated) and their reaction to the ideological challenges that faced the anarchist movement in the epoch of the Popular Army, 1937-1939. The ultimate aim, in keeping with the main *problematique* of the thesis, is to explain how the 'Republicanism' of the *Ejército Popular* was, through propaganda and the work of the Commissariat, made palatable to the CNT's soldiers.

Historiography of Spanish anarchism is voluminous, with a large number of studies tracking its origins and development up to the Civil War.² In regards to the war itself, the anarchist led Spanish Revolution is arguably the most famous aspect of the entire Civil War, immortalised as it was by the works of Franz Borkenau and George Orwell.³ This is not without reason, it was the first (and only) successful anarchist revolution in Western Europe,

¹ For a full account of the storming of military barracks by anarchists in the early days of the Civil War see Diego Abad de Santillán, *Por qué perdimos la Guerra: una contribución a la historia de la tragedia española*, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Iman, 1940), pp. 46-48.

² Some good recent works on Spanish anarchism include, Jacques Maurice, *El anarquismo andaluz, una vez más*, (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2007), *passim*; Anna Monjo, *Militants: participació i democràcia a la CNT als anys trenta*, (Barcelona: Laertes, 2003), *passim*; A good overview of recent historiography can be found in Óscar Freán Hernández, "El anarquismo española: luces y sombras en la historiografía reciente sobre el movimiento libertario", *Ayer*, Vol. 84, 2011, pp. 209-223.

³ Franz Borkenau, *The Spanish Cockpit: an eye-witness account of the political and social conflicts of the Spanish civil war*, (London: Faber & Faber, 1937), *passim*; George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia*, (London: Viking, 2013), *passim*.

saw the creation of a collectivized rural economy and social dynamic and, in Barcelona, had one of the most exciting revolutionary cities in world history at its epicentre. The Spanish Revolution was to burn brightly but briefly, facing opposition from within loyalist Spain almost as soon as it came into being. As the heady revolutionary summer of 1936 gave way to the grim wartime realities of Autumn, it was in retreat, the infamous ‘May Days’ constituting a last attempt by the more militant members of the CNT to protect their revolutionary gains. Yet these attempts were doomed and by the end of 1937 the revolution and its achievements had been rolled back and state authority restored. Historiography of the CNT sadly mirrors this decline, as, following the May Days and their subsequent repression, the CNT becomes an appendix to the study of the conflict, not an irrelevance but certainly no longer a major participant. In the eyes of many scholars of the conflict, the Spanish anarchist movement, having reached and passed its apotheosis of historical achievement and soon be extinct following Franco’s victory, warrants little further investigation.⁴ This raises the question as to why it warrants such little regard, and while it is not the place of this chapter (or thesis) to offer a full answer to this question, in its attempts to offer context to the main focus of the chapter, especially considering that the majority of this chapter’s focus will be on anarchist ideology and discourse following the May Days, hopefully a suggestion as to why can be offered.

⁴ Most contemporary academic works of the Civil War approach the examination of the CNT in this manner, most notably Julián Casanova in his otherwise exemplary work, *De la calle al frente: El anarcosindicalismo en España (1931-1939)*, (Crítica: Barcelona, 1997), p. 96.

From Militia Columns to Popular Army – Changing Anarchist Attitudes

In order to understand the transformation of the attitudes of the CNT and those of the soldiers who identified with it in the post-revolutionary period, it is important to provide detail of the movement during the Spanish revolution itself, the ideas and ideology that would later come to be rejected by ‘Republicanism’ and the movement that fostered them. The following section will attempt to outline these ideas, in the context of the military situation, namely the transition of the militia columns to Mixed Brigades of the *Ejército Popular*.

The anarchist military columns were thrown together at the beginning of the war, in Barcelona a plan for their creation was agreed upon on 20 July and their march to the front commenced three days later. The anarchists had several columns, the first to leave for the front being the Durruti Column, led by famed anarchist Buenaventura Durruti himself. Further support was provided in August by the *Ascaso* column, named after Durruti’s comrade-in-arms Francisco, who had died in the capture of the Atarazanas Barracks on the 19th July, and led by his brother, Domingo, and *Los Aguiluchos* (the Young Eagles), led by Juan García Oliver. The other frontline anarchist units were the *Ortiz* and *Carod* columns in Aragon as well as the famously ‘uncontrollable’ Iron Column from the Valencia region, who counted amongst its men several hundred former detainees of the *San Miguel de los Reyes* prison.⁵ Reports of the size of the columns vary in number; contemporary estimates were as high as 30,000, but more sober modern totals give the total number of recruits as in the high single figures of thousands.⁶ Regardless of their exact size, the haste with which the militia columns were organised resulted in military units in which soldiers left for the front on a wave of enthusiasm but decidedly unprepared for the rigours of modern combat, and, perhaps most damagingly, doctrinally unwilling to address these issues.⁷ Ideologically speaking, the militia system of the early period of the Civil War represented libertarian communism put into military practice; traditional military hierarchy was abolished, orders were voted upon and pay was equal regardless of one’s standing in the column.⁸ It was tantamount to an

⁵ Juan Garcia Oliver, *El eco de los pasos*, (Paris: Ruedo Ibérico, 1978), 198-9; The Iron Column themselves saw the release of prisoners as a revolutionary necessity – ‘It is true that within our column we had prisoners from the San Miguel de los Reyes penitentiary, but it has to be admitted that they had to be released and someone had to face the responsibility of taking them to the fronts... if they had been sent to jail deserving the contempt of society, we gave them the freedom and opportunity of rehabilitation’. *Línea de Fuego*, 30 January 1937, p.1.

⁶ Julián Casanova, *Anarchism, the Republic and Civil War in Spain: 1931-1939*, (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 113.

⁷ Abad de Santillán, *Por que perdimos la guerra...*, p. 146.

⁸ Burnett Bolloten, *The Spanish revolution: the Left and the struggle for power during the Civil War*, (Chapel Hill: University Of North Carolina Press, 1978), pp. 302-304.

entirely different way of waging a modern war, comparable only to Nestor Makhno's militias in the Russian Civil War and, of fundamental importance to the Spanish anarchist movement, the antithesis of the hated *ancien régime* military against whom they were fighting. One militant of the ferociously individualist Iron Column described the system in fulsome terms:

There is no hierarchy, there are no superiors, there are no harsh orders, but rather camaraderie, goodness and friendship among comrades, a joyful life amidst the disasters of war. And so, surrounded by comrades who believe that the struggle is for and about something, war seems gratifying and even death is accepted with pleasure.⁹

Despite this enthusiasm for the struggle and devotion to the militia system, the result was that the first months of the war were, in military terms, a complete disaster for the Republic and the anarchist columns in particular. Aragon, where the majority of the anarchist militia found itself, quickly became a stalemate as the numerically fewer but better equipped and trained Nationalists held off any meaningful assault.¹⁰ In the south, Franco's march towards Madrid appeared unstoppable as his experienced and well equipped Army of Africa overcame the militia at every turn. That is not to say that the militia columns wholly incompetent, the same bravery that saw the people of Barcelona overcome the military uprising was still present on the battlefield, with the columns even registering a few minor victories throughout Aragon in August.¹¹ However, this bravery could not forever compensate for better equipment and strict discipline and the militias became notorious for their inability to remain in position when under heavy fire, the untrained men understandably daunted by Nationalist artillery and aerial bombardment.¹² Furthermore, the militia columns were inefficient with the Republic's scant supplies which led to them to being accused of theft, laziness and hoarding by their allies.¹³ Even more worryingly, their insistence on putting military orders to a vote was both

⁹ Anonymous, cited as 'an "uncontrollable" from the Iron Column', *A Day Mournful and Overcast*, (London: Kate Sharpley Library, 2003), pp. 16-17, originally printed in *Nosotros*, March 1937.

¹⁰ Ramón Salas Larrazábal, *Historia del ejército popular de la República*, vol. 1., (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1973) pp. 330-2.

¹¹ Robert W. Kern, *Red Years/Black Years...*, p. 162

¹² One first-hand account, provided by the former sub-secretary of the Catalan Militia and Army officer since 1911, Colonel Jesús Pérez Salas states in his work, *Guerra en España(1936-1939) – Bosquejo del problema militar español: de las causas de la guerra y del desarrollo de la misma*, (Mexico City: Imprimos Gráficos, 1947), 'Franco was not provided with masses of heroic and enthusiastic fighters, but was given instead, of course by force, disciplined soldiers, which is much more practical... Of the two things, what might have been predictable were disciplined soldiers', pp. 111-112.

¹³ Blázquez, *I Helped To Build An Army...*, pp. 209-10; Pérez Salas, *Guerra en España...*, p. 112.

exasperating and dangerous for their allies, who never knew when or if their anarchist brothers in arms would appear for an advance.¹⁴

Needless to say, the militia system was seen by many in the Republic as not fit for purpose and, as the state began to re-impose its authority in the autumn of 1936, steps were taken by the Madrid Government to replace the militia system with a more traditional alternative. As ever, the subject of arms and supplies was acute, and, given the monopoly that the Soviet backed PCE had on the matter, it was clear that only units that fit with the new, Fifth Regiment-inspired military system would be permitted arms. As soon as Soviet Arms were secured, the CNT's hopes of having a meaningful influence on the future organisation of the Republic's armed forces were over.¹⁵

It soon became clear that a new Popular Army, based upon the Fifth Regiment's model, was the future of Republican military policy and that its architects were not to be the CNT. The decree of 30 September 1936 began the process of militarisation that would eventually lead to the creation of the *Ejército Popular* and the first tentative steps were taken by the anarchist movement in November 1936, when its columns (excluding the Iron Column) adopted military nomenclature, appointed officers and NCOs as well as introducing differential rates of pay.¹⁶ The anarchist movement, was, however, never subjected to the full extent of the decree; their units were never disbanded and although they would later acquiesce to full militarisation into the *Ejército Popular*, the core personnel of the anarchist militias remained intact throughout the entire war and the CNT remained in charge of its recruitment.¹⁷ The process of militarization was an arduous one, but by April 1937 all anarchist militia columns had been incorporated into the nascent Popular Army, with the 25th, 25th and 28th Divisions comprising the CNT controlled portion of the Republic's armed forces.¹⁸

¹⁴ Federica Montseny at a public meeting declared: 'Five, six, seven hours were lost in deliberation, and when the operation was finally launched the enemy had already attained his objective. Such things make one laugh, and they also make one weep' *Solidaridad Obrera*, 1 December 1936, cited in Bollothen, *The Spanish Revolution...*, p. 307. James Matthews offers further accounts of anarchist contumacy, Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors...*, p. 24.

¹⁵ Ronald Fraser, *Blood of Spain – An Oral History of the Spanish Civil War*, (New York: Pantheon, 1979), p. 337.

¹⁶ Bollothen, *The Spanish Revolution...*, p. 206; Michael Alpert, *El ejército republicano en la guerra civil*, (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1989), pp. 72-4.

¹⁷ *Ibid...*, p. 311-312; The CNT had its own 'casas de reclutamiento' where special *cenetista* officers would enrol anarchists to specifically join CNT brigades. CDMH..., PS-BARCELONA, 344.

¹⁸ Casanova, *Anarchism...*, p. 125.

The failure of the militia columns has been discussed at great length in historiography and it is not the role of this section to assess this any more than superficially. Its aim is rather to examine anarchist attitudes towards the militia columns, their perceived failings and their ultimate militarization into brigades of the *Ejército Popular* in order to better understand anarchist attitudes to the Popular Army as a whole.¹⁹

At the outbreak of the war, the columns were feted as a new way to wage war and old ideas of militarism were abandoned. Gone were the days of ‘soldiers’, those ‘individuals who have always been chained to the slogans of death and destruction’, ‘animals of robbery’ in service of capitalism, now were the days of ‘*guerrilleros*’ those that ‘fought for liberty and the liberties of a nation’.²⁰ *Cenetista* mistrust of standing armies was deep and longstanding, rooted in a decades-long contemptuous relationship borne out of the inevitable conflict that arose between reactionary Army of the monarchy and libertarian communists of the CNT. *Cenetista* commissar Carlos Calpe Pastor, gave a clear *précis* of the reasons why the Army was so hated:

Leafing through the history of Spain it is seen with astonishing frequency that the Spanish Army, rather than an institution of defense against external enemies and abroad, is an instrument of political action and party, hence the numerous *pronunciamientos* [military uprisings] recorded in the history of our country... Moreover the military of Spain [is hated by] the Spanish people for its long political dominance full of despotism and cruelty.²¹

One early flashpoint of this ‘despotism and cruelty’ was the 1909 *Semana Trágica*, where riots against conscription for the Moroccan War saw the deaths of eight, the injury of one hundred and twenty four more and the sentencing of five to death, including high-profile anarchist Francisco Ferrer.²² The dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera served only to entrench antipathy towards the military as the CNT was suppressed and the Confederation’s

¹⁹ Julián Casanova, *Anarquismo y revolución en la sociedad rural aragonesa, 1936– 1938* (Madrid, Siglo XXI, 1985), pp. 111-113.

²⁰ *El Frente*, 7 September 1937, p. 2.

²¹ International Institute of Social History, Archivo de CNT (España), ARCHIVO DE MIGUEL GONZÁLEZ INESTAL, *Expedientes concernientes a comisarios. Contiene datos personales, correspondencia e informes. Con cuestionarios llenados por los militantes sobre sus experiencias y opiniones. 1937-1939*, 17C, Carlos Calpe Pastor.

²² Joan Connelly Ullman, *The Tragic Week: a study of anti-clericalism in Spain 1875-1912*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), *passim*; Juan Avilés Farré, *Francisco Ferrer y Guardia – Pedagogo, anarquista y mártir*, (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2006), pp. 215-246.

activists were forced underground or into exile.²³ The Republican period did little to heal these wounds, as the attempted *Sanjurjada* coup of 1932 and the eventual uprising that sparked the Civil War served to highlight.²⁴ The organized military therefore continued to be a source of ire following the outbreak of war, as antimilitarism remained ‘one of the basic principles of all revolutionary ideas and works’, cited as ‘being one of many reasons why the Spanish proletariat took up arms against the fascist uprising’.²⁵ To the majority of anarchists, armies were, at root, fundamentally counter-revolutionary:

Armies have as a starting point, the horde, vandalism, pillaging, and the chiefs of these hordes of outlaws are ruffians of slums without soul or dignity, that sell their arms to the highest bidder... chiefs that came to crime and raids or blue-blooded feudal lords of the gallows.²⁶

Yet within months of the war beginning, as the limits of the militia system began to tell on the battlefield, the aforementioned questions of discipline and regular militarization arose. Initially these were met with derision and a belief that ‘auto-discipline’ could replace the ‘infantile and simplistic’ discipline of regular armies.²⁷ *El Frente*, the newspaper of the Durruti Column wrote in September 1936 that ‘Discipline, for us who hate the tawdry and parasitic militarism, is not blind obedience, like automatons, a bugle call nor the authoritative voice of any decorated puppet, but having a sense of responsibility and reason for our actions’.²⁸

However, as the harsh realities of war set in over the winter of 1936-7, schisms within the anarchist movement came to be apparent; these were generally revolved around the connected issues of militarization and anarchist government participation. The more pragmatic elements of the CNT, including the former revolutionaries Juan Garcia Oliver and Federica Montseny, came to accept militarization as an inevitability, while their radical counterparts opposed both vehemently. Consequently, following anarchist entry into government in November 1936, there was a distinct withdrawal of support for the militia

²³ José Peirats, *Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution*, (London: Freedom Press, 1998), p. 158.

²⁴ For more on the *Sanjurjada* Francisco Márquez Hidalgo, *Las sublevaciones contra la Segunda República: La Sanjurjada, octubre de 1934, julio de 1936 y el Golpe de Casado*, (Madrid: Síntesis, 2010), pp. 11-32.

²⁵ *Durruti*, 13 February 1937, p. 4.

²⁶ *Durruti*, 13 February 1937, p. 1.

²⁷ *El Frente*, 2 September 1937, p. 1.

²⁸ *El Frente*, 2 September 1937, p. 1.

system by the CNT leadership and a move towards rationalising this ‘necessity imposed by the war’.²⁹

While many Column leaders were full supporters of militarisation for practical, military reasons, the fundamental motivation for the ready acceptance by the CNT hierarchy was a wish to secure a stake in the control of the Popular Army before it was imposed from above.³⁰ This did not prove to be a wholly popular decision with all CNT-affiliated soldiers as the more militant elements of the militia columns, the most prominent example being the Iron Column, became recalcitrant in their opposition to militarization.

By January 1937 the situation was much starker as each column’s leadership came to acknowledge, whether by their own volition or not, that the need to acquiesce to militarization was no longer an autonomous decision, but one that was an inevitable necessity for the war effort.³¹ The response in rhetoric was a distinct change in approach, as militarization came to be framed as, first and foremost, a better way of waging war. The reasons for this were made clear; it represented a new military system, providing a clear and organised command structure that was necessary to fight a better supplied enemy.

Fascism has been hard and continually punished, but in the future of the war we have observed that the stubborn resistance of the fascists (helped by the nations tyrannized by fascism) was due to the quality of arms and the iron discipline imposed by their labor.

With general mobilisation, the obligatory militarization and the creation of the Popular Army, we have taken a great step forward in military tactics.

We accept militarization and discipline for the benefit of the people (for we are them) and we the workers of all classes go to finish this war without quarter, exterminating the fascist races and uniting antifascists of all tendencies in a fraternal embrace.³²

²⁹ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 23 December 1936, p. 1.

³⁰ For changed opinions on the militia columns see Cipriano Mera, *Guerra, Exilio y cárcel de un anarcosindicalista*, (Châtillon-sous-Bagneux: Ruedo Ibérico, 1976), pp. 30-32; Miguel González Inestal in Fraser, *Blood of Spain...*, pp. 337-338; Casanova, *Anarchism...*, p. 124.

³¹ One of the most interesting changes that the pressures of war forced upon the CNT was its metamorphosis from a highly disorganised confederation of various unions into a more efficient, if more authoritarian union. The leadership of the union became just that, a source of authority and direction. For a good exposition of the CNT’s organisational weakness before the Civil War, see C. M. Lorenzo, *Los anarquistas españoles y el poder 1868-1939*, (Paris: Ruedo Ibérico, 1972), pp. 192-3. For details of its transformation, see Casanova, *Anarchism...*, p.124.

³² *El Combate – Cartela de Guerra – Division Luis Jubert*, 24 February 1937, p.1,

This quote, from *El Combate* the newspaper of the Luis Jubert Division, which later became the 116th Mixed Brigade of the 25th Division, highlights the public anarchist attitude towards militarization – a necessity for the benefit of the people.³³ This was taken to its logical (anarchist) conclusion by many articles, as militarization came to be presented as a necessary duty to protect the revolution:

In our independent media, the word ‘Army’, not to mention the term ‘militarization’, horrifies our ears. However, in the moments that we live we inevitably have to bypass many of our cherished illusions. We have to win the war... Common sense suggests this: be prepared. That is, to face a war and *to protect against all possible and potential danger to our victorious Revolution*, we need an army, which has to be the Republican army, with its cohesion and military-style organization... but of course with a very different concept of discipline and entitled hierarchies.³⁴

Furthermore, the emphasis on the new army having ‘cohesion and military-style organization’ but with ‘a very different concept of discipline and entitled hierarchies’ was a regular staple in the anarchist military press, and every opportunity was taken to assuage fears of a return to the hated military of old. *El Combate*, in an editorial entitled ‘Our Army’, made clear the attitude of the new military towards traditional military practices:

...the "distribution" of stars and ribbons is a sport without rhyme or reason, the result of favouritism and political intrigues... Let us avoid from the outset following the routines of the old army, where graduation was nothing more than nepotism or the exchange of pesetas that organized orgies... while we fight for the destruction of stars, let us all be “starred”³⁵

This attitude, of the Popular Army’s exception to the rule of armies, was to be maintained throughout the war as the *cenetista* commissars embraced this exceptionalist attitude and it became a core part of the propaganda effort aimed at the soldiery.

Following the decree of 30 September 1936 and the CNT’s entry into government the following November, signalling the leaderships acquiescence to militarization, this was the only functional rationale that a *cenetista* who had harboured a revolutionary ambition could adopt. The militia system’s days were numbered, so the only way to protect the revolutionary

³³ Luis Jubert was a captain of the Ortiz column killed in action in 1936. Alpert, *The Republican Army...*, p. 338.

³⁴ *El Frente*, 10 January 1937, p. 1. Italics my own.

³⁵ *El Combate*, 3 March 1937, p. 1.

gains was to accept militarization as a necessary sacrifice. This acceptance is perhaps best articulated by Aragonese *cenetista* Macario Royo in Ronald Fraser's *Blood of Spain*:

We knew... that if the War were lost everything would be lost... On the other hand, if we of the CNT came out and said that making the revolution was not our concern, the enthusiasm of libertarians in fighting war would have entirely dissipated. Why? Because, ideologically, all libertarians were convinced anti-militarists. To have to serve in an army was the biggest contradiction they could face. Their only hope, therefore, was that if the war were won thanks to their sacrifice, society would be transformed. Every one of us held these two images simultaneously in his mind.³⁶

In due course, even the revolution, as it was understood in 1936 and early 1937, was to be lost, and it is here, in the stoic acceptance of militarization for a greater need, that the seeds for the anarchist movement's post-May 1937 attitudes were rooted.

There was, however, dissent to this narrative of inevitability and stoic sacrifice and to the more dogmatic revolutionary caste of the CNT militarization remained a betrayal of the movement's ideals. The military was, fundamentally, an evil of the past and to committed revolutionary anarchists any form of militarisation, regardless of its intentions, was a step towards not only the reimposition of state power, but the old regime.³⁷ The majority of examples of anti-authoritarian sentiment came from, but were not limited to, the Iron Column, whose virulent opposition to any form of authority was clearly articulated in their organ, *Línea del Fuego*:

The authoritarian man is the antithesis of [freedom]. He is rancorous, vengeful and cowardly. And cowardice has always been the enemy of justice, of kindness and of liberty. Today, in this deadly battle we are waging in the Iberian sun, no more than two terms involved: freedom and authority.³⁸

In response to criticism of the militia system Iron Column maintained its support for self-discipline and education – ‘a million times more effective and useful than the routine and

³⁶ Fraser, *Blood of Spain...*, p. 337.

³⁷ ‘The Iron column refused militarisation, its view being that this was a counter-revolutionary ploy designed to reduce an entire people to slavery again’, Elías Manzanera, *The Iron Column: Testament of a Revolutionary*, (London: Kate Sharpley Library, 2006), p. 24.

³⁸ *Línea del Fuego*, 7 November 1936, p.1.

cruel discipline of bourgeois power³⁹ *Línea del Fuego* made the stance of the Iron column on this matter clear, arguing:

Discipline is not blind obedience to a Committee that orders and commands. This is *borregismo*, herding men like sheep and nothing more. Discipline, for the anarchists, cannot be anything other than management, regulation and rational articulation of the energy emerging from a collective organization.⁴⁰

Whereas the other anarchist columns would eventually accept militarisation as either a necessity or an inevitability, this was to remain the attitude of the Iron Column up until it disbanded its militia form on 30 January 1937.

Fundamental to the Iron column's criticism of the *Ejército Popular* was the assertion that it would mark a return to the hated army of the *ancien régime*. All arguments that the new Popular Army was different, 'proletarian', were ignored by the revolutionary anarchists, leading to their attitude being dubbed by one Republican observer as 'stupid antimilitaristic phobia'.⁴¹ For the militants of the Iron Column the military, in whatever form, remained a means to stifle the will of the people:

The government... now have an army, in that way that armies are, in the service of state, and with coercive bodies in the old style... The people's militias have disappeared and in one word: it has strangled the social revolution.⁴²

Everything about the Popular Army was seen as a means to limit freedom. The famous critique of militarization penned by an 'uncontrollable of the Iron Column' and published in *Nosotros*, the Valencian CNT's daily, in March 1937, listed the revolutionary criticisms of a return to traditional military discipline in reference to his experience in the army of the Monarchy. Barracks and the limits on the individual they represented, were 'a place [to learn] to hate', where one risked 'losing [his] personality so severe was the treatment and the stupid discipline they tried to impose'. To the 'uncontrollable', 'prisons and barracks mean the same thing: tyranny and free rein for the evil instincts of a few and suffering to everyone else.

³⁹ *Línea del Fuego*, 26 October 1936, p.1.

⁴⁰ *Línea del Fuego*, 2 October 1936, p.1.

⁴¹ Pérez Salas, *Guerra en España...*, p.115; all references in *Línea del Fuego* and other revolutionary newspapers to the proletarian nature of the Popular Army were placed in inverted commas, examples include *Nosotros*, 14 March 1937, p. 3; *Línea del Fuego*, 13 January 1937, p. 2.

⁴² *Línea del Fuego*, 30 January 1937, p. 1.

Barracks no more teach what is not injurious to bodily and mental health than prisons correct their inmates'.⁴³ Criticism was also levelled at the officer class:

Professional officers form, now and for all time... a caste. They are the ones giving orders, while the rest of us are left with nothing but an obligation to obey, they hate with all their might anything connected with civilian life, which they consider inferior.⁴⁴

To the 'uncontrollable', the self-styled voice of the revolutionary anarchist movement, the Popular Army had already adopted the unjust mores of its predecessor. Hierarchy, orders, and differential pay were sharply criticised; soldiers' pay was 'wretched' and gave 'life a bitter taste' and officers, obsessed with rank, would 'tremble with rage or disgust when he spoke to him familiarly' and threatened 'terrible punishment' for using the familiar 'tú' instead of the formal 'usted' when addressing them.⁴⁵

These criticisms were not wholly unfounded, pay was differential and discipline in and out of the barracks did return to a more recognisably military hue following the creation of the Popular Army, however, as we shall later see, great measures were taken to ensure that soldiers understood that they were not, as asserted by the 'uncontrollable', 'domestic animals' and that militarization was presented as a means to protect the proletariat against a far greater foe.⁴⁶

The Column and its rhetoric provide a clear example of Spanish anarchism at its most intractable; the rejection of militarization was based partly on a belief, in contradiction to all available evidence, that the columns were a viable military option but equally on a commitment to a fundamentally proletarian and revolutionary interpretation of waging war.

⁴⁷In reference to this, the Column's leadership outlined its stance:

⁴³ Anonymous, *A Day Mournful...*, pp. 12-13.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*..., p. 15.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*..., p. 15; p. 17.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*..., p. 17.

⁴⁷ Although many radicals attempted to argue that the militia columns could be just as effective as a regular army if as well equipped, experience had shown differently as the Republicans failed to register a single meaningful military victory until the communist-led defence of Madrid. Up until its looming militarization, the Iron Column maintained the viability of the militia system, blaming its downfall solely on governmental ideological opposition. 'Had we had abundant arms and munitions, it is a certainty that we would have taken Teruel', Elías Manzanera, *The Iron Column...*, p. 23, 'Not militarizing left us alone in opposition to the agreements of the CNT, we are not merely displaced from government assistance but from the organization's as well. Our column, with the aid due, could maintain the intrinsic revolutionary principles that are consistent with our character, [however due to] the lack, the absence, of such support we must acknowledge our system of war

Yes, the Iron Column is strong, hard, inflexible because it never compromises with prejudice or weaknesses and stands erect in the midst of the agitated proletarian camp marking the true path.

Our Column is Iron and cannot bow. It has to remain permanently erect. The righteous workers, the sincere revolutionaries fervently look to it. Hated by false leaders and by the ambushers – those who fear that one day you can hold them accountable – is beloved, however, dearly by the workers and peasants.⁴⁸

It is clear then, that the Iron Column was unwilling to compromise on any issue, for it felt every compromise was a betrayal of the revolution for which it fought. This attitude however, was impractical and unfeasible and ultimately the inevitability of militarization made all but the most fundamentally committed anarchists acquiesce to its imposition. By January 1937 the Iron Column had come to accept that it had lost the ideological battle and it had only one course of action:

We know the inconveniences that militarization entails. This system does not fit with our temperament as it does not fit with any of us who has a proper understanding of liberty. But also we know the inconveniences that come with not following the orbit of the Ministry of War. Sad as it is to recognise, there remain only two ways: Dissolution of the column or Militarization. All else is useless.⁴⁹

Following this statement the column disbanded to deliberate its future. The choice faced was not, for most members of the column, a difficult one; accept militarization and all the ideological sacrifices that it entailed yet remain as a unit, or disband the column and face being redrafted to a different, non-anarchist brigade. The decision was made in March 1937, when the Iron Column became the 83rd Mixed Brigade of the Popular Army, some 400 militiamen permanently abandoned the column, but the rest remained and the military part of the ‘war versus revolution’ debate that so defines the historiography of the first year of the Spanish Civil War came to a close.⁵⁰

has failed... it is not possible to organise anything against [the state], against its partialities’, *Línea del Fuego*, 30 January 1937, p.3.

⁴⁸ *Línea del Fuego*, 26 December 1936, p. 1.

⁴⁹ *Línea del Fuego*, 30 January 1937, p. 3.

⁵⁰ The ‘War versus Revolution’ debate is best defined as the ideological conflict between those who wished to wage war and revolution at the same time and those who saw it fit to win the war before any drastic

In studying the militarization debate it is important to understand, as stated above, that those in the *cenetista* leadership who supported militarization saw it as an inevitability, and, amongst certain military leaders of the CNT, a practical necessity. This ultimately became the dominant narrative within the anarchist military press, as the dogmatic militiamen who opposed militarization came to be portrayed to their fellow soldiers as obdurate and contumacious, blinded by ideology and unwilling to adapt for the people's best interests:

It is painful to think that there are comrades, who, after the five months of fighting in which they have maintained self-discipline and morale, attentive to the instructions of the responsible leaders and their respective centuries and columns, rebel against the regular organization of the army needed to complement our victory, just because it sounds bad to them and fits badly with their libertarian postulations, a word which here means no outrage to their feelings of liberty, because the word and action derived from it will further strengthen the chances of success of the people at arms.⁵¹

By February 1937, while the Iron Column deliberated its future, the debate was over. The following extract from *El Combate* summarizes the attitude most concisely – the time for discussion had passed and the time for action was at hand, there was a war to be won:

There are comrades of impeccable conduct and foolproof morality that still seem to be in their respective unions discussing this or that matter, and comrades, the reality is quite different. The war does not allow, if we want positive results not discussions and disagreements, but specific contributions and harmony... despite the many 'reasons' alleged by those who do not want to accept militarization.⁵²

El Frente echoed this attitude, arguing that the time had come 'to forget silly quarrels that lead to nothing useful'.⁵³ By March 1937, with the final acquiescence of the Iron Column, the anarchist movement's militia columns became authentic military units with rank, differential pay and traditional military discipline (albeit imposed by the non-traditional means of commissars). The anarchist military ideal was over, brought to an end due to outside political pressure. This was rationalised in the anarchist press as being a decision taken in the name of military efficiency and for the good of the war effort. Yet it would be the Iron Column who

revolutionary action. The conflict split the Republic with the CNT finding itself torn along a fault line that saw the POUM on one side and PCE on the other.

⁵¹ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 9 January 1937, p.1.

⁵² *El Combate*, 26 February 1937, p.4.

⁵³ *El Frente*, 8 February 1937, p.1.

had reached the right conclusion on the reasons for the decision made, as the introduction of militarization to all units did, as stated in *Línea del Fuego* follow ‘the orbit of the Ministry of War’. It was the first of several ideological sacrifices that the CNT was to make during the war and this became an integral part of anarchist propaganda, the necessity to sacrifice ideals in order to obtain victory.

As mentioned above, militarization was part of a larger discourse of ideological disagreements within CNT as the pressures of war caused the more pragmatic and revolutionary poles to schism. Anarchist entry into government was, alongside militarization, the main topics of disagreement. This astonishingly uncharacteristic move was an attempt by the leadership of the CNT, in acknowledgment of the re-imposition of the state, to guarantee the power and revolutionary gains, as well as address the military disasters of the previous months.⁵⁴ This did, however, mean a political *rapprochement* with the less revolutionary of the Popular Front’s participants was a necessity, the result being a stalling of the revolution and its excesses, such as popular tribunals and an end to forced collectivization. To the more radical elements of the movement this understandably represented nothing less than a betrayal of the fundamental revolutionary, anti-statist *raison d’être* of libertarian communism that they believed the CNT represented.⁵⁵ The rationale offered by most leaders of the CNT as justification was that it was an unpalatable necessity and to persevere with the revolutionary ideal under the circumstances would have been, as one communist eloquently put it, ‘like tending your garden and ignoring the elephant about to trample all over it...’.⁵⁶ Yet alongside these rational, pragmatic reasons there were also the beginnings of ideas that would later come to fore in the final two years of the war, as prominent *cenetistas* attempted to show that the new Republican government, like the new Popular Army being constructed, was a world away from the pre-revolutionary state. Diego Abad de Santillán, who would later come to vehemently criticise CNT collaboration, both during and after the war, was initially firmly behind the initial entry into government.⁵⁷ To Abad de Santillán the government had ‘ceased to be a force of oppression against the Working Class, just as the state is no longer the entity that divides society into classes’ and CNT governmental participation could mean that ‘both will stop oppressing the people all the more’.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Graham, *The Spanish Republic...*, pp. 136-137; pp. 2

⁵⁵ Camillo Berneri, ‘Between the War and the Revolution (16 December 1936)’, *The Cienfuegos Press Anarchist Review*, Number 4, 1978 – available at <http://libcom.org/history/between-war-revolution>.

⁵⁶ Fraser, *Blood of Spain...*, p. 325.

⁵⁷ He would, in his memoirs, come to regret this position and position himself as firmly opposed to *cenetista* governmental participation. Abad de Santillán, *Por que luchamos...*, p. 144.

⁵⁸ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 4 November 1936, cited in Graham, *The Spanish Republic...*, p. 228.

Much like the militarization debate, this civilian ‘War versus Revolution’ was to result in defeat for the revolutionary faction of the CNT, as the state and its chief enforcer, the Communist Party, strengthened its authority. Disillusionment was rife at the radical end of the anarchist spectrum and it reached its apotheosis in May 1937 with the so called ‘May Days’. Describing the causes, events and aftermath of the ‘May Days’ has filled volumes and is outside the purview of this chapter, however their legacy does affect the anarchist soldiery, so a brief synopsis of the effects the proceedings had would be advisable. In regards to this study, the most pertinent effect of the May Days and their subsequent repression, which lasted until July of 1937, was that it signified the end of any realistic revolutionary ambitions for the CNT in the short to medium term. As far as the PCE, the ringleader of the pro-statist Republican groups, was concerned the ideological battle was over as soon as the CNT had entered government, the May Days was the physical and tangible imposition of this. Helen Graham summarises this best in her article *Against the State*:

The meaning of the May Days was not... about ‘breaking the CNT’, *per se* – its leadership was already a willing part of the liberal Republican alliance. Rather it was about breaking the CNT’s organisational solidarity in Barcelona in order to deprive its constituencies... of the mechanisms and political means of resisting the state.⁵⁹

The May Days saw the CNT’s structural means of offering any sort of resistance taken away, the movement was not only ideologically compromised by its government participation but it now had no practical way of manifestly demonstrating its disillusionment apart from through the democratic channels of the Republic. The Republican state, in the form of the *Servicio de Información Militar* (Military Information Service, SIM) its communist staffed, NKVD trained secret police, had even replaced the anarchist popular tribunals and *paseos* with its own extra-judicial violent authority.⁶⁰ The ultimate result of this was, therefore, the acceptance by the whole CNT (apart from some vocal, but unrepresentative, exceptions like the ‘Friends of Durruti’ group) that for the remainder of the war at least, the Confederation was now in a post-revolutionary epoch and its political programme would have to operate

⁵⁹ Helen Graham, ‘“Against the State”: A Genealogy of the Barcelona May Days’, *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 4., (1999), p. 531.

⁶⁰ The SIM had a ghastly reputation, mostly deserved, with a network of secret prisons in which they tortured suspected fifth columnists and other political undesirables. For an account of its supposed atrocities, including pictures of its instruments of torture, from an anarchist perspective, see Chapter 17 of Peirats, *Anarchists...*, ‘The New Iberian Inquisition’, pp. 224-234.

within the limits set by the Republic.⁶¹ Moreover, as the war progressed, the revolutionary tendency in the Confederation receded further with August 1937 seeing the agreement of the UGT-CNT pact. If a union with the socialist UGT was not enough of a sign of the CNT's retreat from radicalism, its content was. Heralded as the 'first stone of the monument to victory, and the heaviest slab under which all the differences between antifascists will be buried', the pact guaranteed a respect for the state, a support for and a guarantee of anarchist participation in the Popular Army and was bereft of any notably revolutionary content, focused more on workers' rights than social change.⁶² Further evidence of the Confederation's abandonment of its revolutionary tendency was seen in the plans of CNT Secretary General Horacio Prieto. Drawn up in a text entitled 'polemical essay' from October 1938, Prieto's proposals accepted limited private ownership, advocated a federalist state and, most shockingly, the pursuit of political power 'by whatever means the occasion may commend, including participating in parliament through full and direct participation in electoral contests'.⁶³ While at one time the phrase 'by whatever means the occasion may commend' would have alluded to violent revolutionary action, now it was used to discuss anarchist electoral participation and, by extension, a dramatic shift in ideology.

In regards to the soldiers of the CNT's newly assembled Mixed Brigades, the defeat of May saw the anarchist movement seemingly robbed of its key motivational tool, the revolution. The state had been re-imposed and the revolutionary gains of the last year were rolled back as the Republic came to resemble more Social Democracy than a revolutionary experiment. Furthermore, the revolution had not been defeated by the fascist enemy, but by their own Republican allies. In addition to this, the soldiers of the CNT, who less than a year ago had been creating a new way to wage war, in their democratic, proletarian militia columns were now subject to military authority that their ideology had, up until the very recent past, despised. The events of May, in conjunction with the acceptance of militarization, saw the CNT's troops' morale reach a low point. Miguel González Inestal, who would later go on to become the sub-Commissar of the General Commissariat, spoke of 'illusions to be buried', yet it was to be his fellow commissars whose responsibility it was to find a means to raise morale and motivate the troops to fight for the cause.⁶⁴ As we shall see,

⁶¹ For more on the 'Friends of Durruti Group' see, Agustín Guillamón, *The Friends of Durruti Group: 1937-1939* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 1996), *passim*.

⁶² *Umbral – Semanario de la nueva era*, 3 July 1937, p.12; For more on the details of the CNT-UGT Pact see Lorenzo, *Los anarquistas españoles y el poder...*, p. 233.

⁶³ *Timón*, September 1938 cited in José Peirats, *The CNT in the Spanish Revolution – Volume 3*, (Hastings: Christie Books, 2006), p. 206.

⁶⁴ Fraser, *Blood of Spain...*, p. 337.

this meant creating a programme that appealed to anarchist troops but also remained within the parameters of the ideological programme of the *Ejército Popular* in which the CNT was an active partner.

Republican Anarchists: The Political Commissars of the CNT

The Political Commissariat, as with all units, was fundamental in the political motivation of *cenetista* troops. If, as we have established, following May 1937, anarchist troops needed to become, as Juan Garcia Oliver urged, ‘cogwheels in the military machine’, the commissars undoubtedly provided the ideological axle-grease.⁶⁵ This section of the chapter will focus on the commissars of the *cenetista* units of the *Ejército Popular*, their political outlook and how this informed the *cenetista* military press and propaganda, of which they were the authors. Therefore, understanding more about the commissars themselves is vital. These men had a very specific duty; not only were they expected to follow the general teachings of the *Ejército Popular*, their task being instilling into the soldiery the concepts of traditional discipline and obedience to the Republic and its constitution, they were also required to make these diktats palatable for anarchist soldiers, who had, up until May 1937, held legitimate hopes of overthrowing the state they were now being enthused to obey. It was therefore essential that the commissars in question fulfilled two criteria – the first was that they themselves understood the *raison d’être* of the *Ejército Popular*, the ideas of ‘Republicanism’, and the second was that they understood the CNT, its soldiers and their beliefs in the post-revolutionary epoch. The main source for this section will be the completed questionnaires filled out by all serving and prospective *cenetista* commissars over the summer of 1938. Distributed by the office of Miguel González Inestal, in his position as the general sub-commissar of the General Commissariat, on 9 July 1938 the questionnaire offers a broad and detailed impression of the men who made up the Commissariat in the CNT brigades. The questionnaire consisted of thirteen back ground questions and one essay section. The first thirteen asked the Commissar to provide his personal details, literacy and his military and political history; namely his political affiliation, the date he joined the union or political party, his military unit and the date he volunteered or was enlisted. The fourteenth and final question was a more open ended affair, asking the candidate to present their thoughts on the following – the origins of the war, the origins of the Commissariat, the purpose of the Commissariat, the daily conduct of a commissar and the work of the Commissariat in regards to soldiers, officers and their own organization.⁶⁶ It is in the answers to this fourteenth

⁶⁵ *Le Libertaire*, 8 April 1937, cited in Bolloren, *The Spanish Revolution...*, p. 308.

⁶⁶ CDMH..., SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-MADRID, 439, 1. For a full transcript of the Questionnaire see Appendix I, p. 323.

question that we will learn about the CNT's affiliates in the Commissariat and the subsequent paragraphs will examine their responses.

Before the analysis begins, a note on the sources themselves is necessary. The obvious criticism of using these sources as a reflection of *cenetista* commissars' attitudes is that as they were written for their superiors, the assumption would be that their content is simply what each commissar believed their superior wanted them to say, not a reflection of their actual attitudes. However, the whether or not this is true is inconsequential, as, these were official attitudes and, as we shall see, the output of propaganda by the commissars matches the answers of the questions, showing us, that in the official sphere at least these were the ideals that commissars displayed and instilled in the men. Ultimately, it is the task of the historian to determine the veracity of the content at hand and, in reading the earnest and verbose responses given by the commissars, the conclusion to be drawn is that either they honestly believed what they wrote or were talented in the presentation of an ideology they did not support; both of which, in the context of this thesis, are one and the same.

Analysis of these answers allows for several key themes of the anarchist commissar's value system to come to the fore. These were; a class based, internationalist, antifascist and anti-capitalist view of the war in general, a fervid support for the Popular Army and the work of the Commissariat complemented by a vehement abhorrence for the traditional military system and a strong, almost zealous anti-partisanship. In regards to the interpretation of the war, the majority of these opinions arose in answer to the question 'origin of the war'. The class based interpretation of the war was unsurprisingly strong amongst *cenetista* commissars. To these commissars, the war could be understood as a conflict between the working class and an alliance of all the traditional reactionary enemies of the Spanish proletariat. This 'conglomerate of reactionaries' was agreed to be a combination of any or all of 'militarists... the nobility, bureaucracy, the large landowners and high finance' as well as 'politicians nostalgic for lost privileges' and 'priests in the service of monarchical absolutism'.⁶⁷ Luis García Luque, commissar for the *Compañía de Sanidad* (medical section) of the 147th Mixed Brigade, CNT member since March 1932 and former militant in the *Tierra y Libertad* column described a subversive 'trilogy' of 'Obscurantism, Militarism and Capitalism' while José María García Salceda, a *cenetista* since 5 May 1931 and a veteran of the 26th Division (Durruti Column) described the Civil War as a split between 'two camps, in one the bankers, the bourgeoisie, the Army, monks and all of the mentally retarded of Spain;

⁶⁷ INESTAL..., 14B, Manuel García Planes; 13A.:Adolfo Juste Salinas.

the other, the progressive, the worker; the moral and the intellectual'.⁶⁸ The reasons given for the uprising followed a similar class based tack, with the war being seen as the final desperate act of bourgeois repression and the reaction of the people against the attempted subjugation. José Mateu Cusido, a CNT member since 1923 and an activist during the Primo de Rivera *dictadura* argued that, following the February elections 'the Right could not console itself with the loss of all its posts and raged against the Republic' creating a conspiracy between 'the military and the political to crush the few liberties that remained for our people'.⁶⁹ To Tomás Mingot Lloret, *cenetista* since September 1931, volunteer in the militias since August 1936 and founder of a pre-war anarchist weekly entitled *La Verdad*, the war was 'a natural consequence of social inequality and the unchecked egotism of capitalism', the uprising was a reaction 'to the victory of February [by priests], landowners and the military' and rather than just resulting in another *pronunciamiento* 'the origin of the war... was the political maturity of the working class, the only force that initially faced... the enemy army'.⁷⁰ commissar in the 7th Transport Battalion, Julio Miguel Britapaja, who joined the Confederation in January 1931, took this idea further, giving full agency to the working class, the war being the result of the 'revolutionary training and rebellious spirit of the proletariat that... one day uncontrollably had to take up arms for the conquest of their rights as men against the aristocratic Spanish bourgeoisie and their minions and supporters, THE ARMY, THE POLICE and THE ROMAN CHURCH'.⁷¹ Class lines of the conflict were therefore clearly defined to *cenetista* commissars. The war was the working class Republic against any and all of its enemies from the Republican period and before. The various class differences of the Republic, namely the bourgeois Republican and Catalan Nationalist groups, were ignored and any considerations for the social subtleties of the rebels were equally disregarded. It was, simply, a war between the Spanish proletariat and its enemies.

The conspicuous presence of foreign troops from fascist nations, namely the Italian *Corpo Truppe Volontarie* (Corps of Volunteer Troops, CTV) and the German *Legion Condor* (Condor Legion), meant that the conflict had a distinctly internationalist edge. This, as highlighted in Chapter Two, was a key part of the propaganda of the *Ejército Popular* and was also a key part of *cenetista* commissars interpretation of the war. Every reference to the presence of foreign troops was accompanied by the obligatory moniker of 'invasion', 'foreign invasion' or 'fascist invasion'. The invaders, Italy, Germany and occasionally Portugal, often

⁶⁸ INESTAL..., 14B, Luis García Luque; 17A, José María García Salcedo.

⁶⁹ INESTAL..., 13C, José Mateu Cusido.

⁷⁰ INESTAL..., 13C, Tomás Mingot Lloret,.

⁷¹ INESTAL..., 13C, Julio Miguel Britapaja, Capitals from source.

replaced by the synecdochical figures of Hitler, Mussolini and Salazar, were not a complex enemy. To the commissars, the fascist nations were nothing more than adventurists attacking Spain for her resources, her territory and a desire ‘to make our Spain a country of slaves’.⁷² Luis Villaroel Jeraz, a member of the CNT since April 1931 and a delegate of the Local Federation of Madrid’s Commission of Propaganda and Press and commissar for the 70th Brigade, believed ‘the invaders’ who came to the aid of the rebels had been ‘lurking’, waiting for the ‘approaching time’ to slake ‘their desire for territorial expansion’, ‘conceptualizing like crumbs the Spanish soil’.⁷³ Antonio Mereciano Bruna, commissar of the 7th Transport Battalion, CNT member since September 1930 and an original volunteer of the Durruti Column, echoed these thoughts, describing Italy and Germany succinctly: ‘nations that had already set their sights on the Iberian Peninsula for plans of territorial and economic expansion’.⁷⁴ The war was therefore a national one, in the words of Miguel Melero Lorenzo, a CNT veteran since 1928 and newly graduated commissar awaiting placement, it was a war of ‘true independence against the invasion of the Italo-Germanic countries and their expulsion from our soil’ and any Spaniards fighting on their side were traitors, ‘without any scruple and without honour, that mortgaged to... the richest, most coveted Spanish subsoil to totalitarian countries, leading to the war of invasion’.⁷⁵

Many commissars chose to conflagrate the class and invasion interpretations, making the war a people’s revolt against both Capitalism at home and its allies abroad. Pedro García García, a CNT member since 1931, former delegate of the Albacete CNT’s Commission of Propaganda and an acting commissar in the 147th Mixed Brigade argued that the foreign invasion was an inevitable consequence of the victory of the People:

The people triumphed on the street, capitalism remained undeterred, it was all scheduled and what began as a civil war becomes a war of independence. The Italians and Germans invaded our soil occupying the main areas of wealth of our beloved Spain... Capitalism has no *Patria*; it persists provided the capitalists do not mind giving to another nation the wealth of the country of their birth.⁷⁶

García García, by combining both of these ideas, robbed the rebels of their claim to the nation. Capitalism had no *Patria*, and, in his definition of fascism as merely a ‘new modality’

⁷² INESTAL..., 17B Manuel Villanueva Martínez; 13B, Antonio Miras Nebot,.

⁷³ INESTAL..., 14B, Luis Villaroel Jeraz.

⁷⁴ INESTAL..., 13C Antonio Mereciano Bruna.

⁷⁵ INESTAL..., 13B Miguel Melero Lorenzo; Manuel Villanueva Martínez 17 A3-C;

⁷⁶ INESTAL..., 14B, Pedro García García.

of capitalism, neither did fascism.⁷⁷ These ‘fascists’, namely the treacherous generals, were, as capitalists, out to rob Spain of her riches and nothing more. They had no regard for the nation, only interested in handing over its wealth to the Italo-German invaders. The Republic, on the other hand, was a union of the working class, fighting to protect the nation’s people and her sovereignty, repelling both invaders and capitalists, for they were one and the same. García García ultimately surmised his ideas into the rhetorical conceit of ‘Is it a war of independence that we wage in Spain? Yes! But it is also a class war!’.⁷⁸

García García was not alone in his rhetorical desire to combine the two ideas and frame the war as an anti-Republican international capitalist-fascist conspiracy. Further examples of this attitude were frequent; Fernando Mauri-Vera Iscar, a forty year old former *provocateur* against the Primo dictatorship and *cenetista* since ‘early 1936’ argued that ‘the absolute and resounding victory of the people’ in the early days ‘radically changed the struggle and it became a war of invasion:

A war of invasion – to which we have pushed these classes of privileged and murderous cowards, who rather than surrender into the hands of the people that had overcome them [and] face the justice they deserved, preferred to give over our wealth, our mines, pieces of our Spain to the Italian and German hordes.⁷⁹

Rafael Molin Fernández, a volunteer from in his words ‘the first moment’ of the war, political delegate for the 91st Mixed Brigade and member of the CNT from the first day of 1932, offered an equally proletarian and antifascist chronology, stating that ‘the narrow minded bourgeoisie... did not count on the enthusiasm and incomparable revolutionary spirit of the working class’ who ‘took to the streets to overthrow the traitors in little time’, and subsequently ‘asked for help from the imperial countries, offering slices of our territory in exchange for war *materiel* and the necessary manpower to crush the workers movement, transforming the struggle from a civil war to a war of independence’.⁸⁰ This conflagration of the two ideas allowed for class traitors to become national traitors and for the working class to be the only worthwhile Spaniard. As we shall later see, this idea that Republican Spain was a ‘Republic of the working classes’ was to be fundamental to the anarchist propaganda as the

⁷⁷ *Ibid...*

⁷⁸ *Ibid...*

⁷⁹ INESTAL..., 13C, Fernando Mauri-Vera Iscar.

⁸⁰ INESTAL..., 13B, Rafael Molin Fernández.

presentation of the war as a ‘fascist invasion’ and the combination of these two ideas would serve as a powerful means of mobilization for *cenetista* troops.

While interpreting the war in these terms meant that the commissars of the CNT saw the enemy in the same Manichean context as the overarching discourse, their attitude about the *Ejército Popular* was to be equally in keeping with the Republican concept. In regards to the antecedents of the Popular Army, the militia columns, attitudes varied. Some commissars, such as Adolfo Juste Salinas, commissar of the 121st Mixed Brigade of the 26th Division, described the ‘glorious militia’ as ‘the living example of courage, honesty and austere heroism’.⁸¹ Others, like José Candea García Cadiz, commissar of the Rearguard, were more objective, acknowledging their short history as ‘heroic but ill-organized... poorly disciplined and even worse directed’.⁸² There were even some that were actively critical of the militias, José Madrid Navarro, CNT member since 4 April 1921 and a former militia volunteer, surmised their contribution as ‘wasteful enthusiasm’.⁸³ One thing all commissars agreed upon, however, was that the progression of the conflict, from class struggle to war, from civil war to struggle against invasion, meant that the ‘fruitless effort and sacrifice of life’ exemplified by the militias could no longer continue.⁸⁴ Regardless of their merit in the early stages of the war, they were now obsolete, unfit for purpose. The militias, ‘lacking in all weapons and especially the military organization necessary to fight the enemy’ were unfit to face, in the words of Madrid Navarro ‘the reality of modern warfare and weaponry’.⁸⁵ The solution, therefore, according to Manuel Maeztu Tolosa, member of the *guipuzcoana* CNT since September 1928, was the ‘necessary... creation of an Army with command posts and the whole organization to be efficient’, to ‘channel the heroism and not to proceed with useless sacrifice’.⁸⁶ According to, Gumersindo Marfil Martin, a political commissar of the 61st Mixed Brigade, the Army created was to have ‘a strong political instruction, able to cope with abnegation, with as many sacrifices as may be required... to quickly liberate us of the invasion we have suffered and strengthen, as a power, the Spanish Republic’.⁸⁷

There remained, however, an ideological problem to overcome for anarchist commissars, namely the deeply rooted hatred for the old military, and it is on this subject that the *cenetista* commissars most resembled their dogmatic militia forbearers. The troubled

⁸¹ INESTAL..., 13A., Adolfo Juste Salinas.

⁸² INESTAL..., 15A, José Candea García Cadiz.

⁸³ INESTAL..., 13A, José Madrid Navarro.

⁸⁴ INESTAL..., 13A, Adolfo Juste Salinas.

⁸⁵ INESTAL..., 13B, Rafael Molin Fernández; 13A, José Madrid Navarro.

⁸⁶ INESTAL..., 13A, Manuel Maeztu Tolosa.

⁸⁷ INESTAL..., 13A, Gumersindo Marfil Martin.

history between the CNT and the armed forces, ‘the ongoing succession of betrayals and sabotage of military professionals’, cast a long shadow.⁸⁸ Andrés Marquez Navarro, a *cenetista* since February 1928 and former President of the section of Sanitary Material in Murcia, argued that all that existed in the previous army was ‘despotism and inequality’.⁸⁹ Pedro García García, highlighted the class hatred that was perceived to define the old Army, stating that before the Civil War ‘the children of producers never had access to military schools’ and while Rightists ‘monopolized the right to direct defence of the *Patria*, the children of workers could only be cannon fodder’.⁹⁰ The problem (and solution) to this quandary was summarized by Rafael Molin Fernández:

...the deep anti-military and refractory attitude towards discipline of the revolutionary workers made it necessary that for the militants of the organizations to understand the need for control and discipline and obedience [this] would take an intensive labour, so the work of the Commissariat began to be defined.⁹¹

The Commissariat was, therefore, in the eyes of *cenetista* commissars, the difference between the old Army and the Popular Army and its contribution was not to be understated: ‘The commissar is today the basis of the performance of our Army, he who in his heroism, capacity and tireless resistance is the most firm point of our war’.⁹² It served two fundamental ends; the first was to ensure the army maintained a ‘democratic essence’, a ‘proletarianism’ in order to prevent its officers rekindling the interventionist tendencies of its predecessor, the second was the education and motivation of the soldiery to better understand and accept military discipline and organization.⁹³ In regards to the former, commissars were convinced of the Commissariat’s necessity and there was a marked wish for the new Popular Army to be distinctly different, ensuring against history repeating itself. Pedro Muñoz García, *cenetista* since 1925, explained that the Popular Army, ‘the flesh of the working people, had to be given political guidance’ and that ‘the confidence placed in [officers] was not enough for the government’, to this end the ‘People’s Commissariat’ was created... and with the Commissariat there was no fear that [officers] would undermine the Army with treason’.⁹⁴

⁸⁸ INESTAL..., 13B, Fabián Moro Esteban.

⁸⁹ INESTAL..., 13B, Andres Marquez Navarro,

⁹⁰ INESTAL..., 14B Pedro García García.

⁹¹ INESTAL..., 13B, Rafael Molin Fernández.

⁹² INESTAL..., 13C Fernando Mauri-Vera Iscar.

⁹³ INESTAL..., 13B, Fabián Moro Esteban.

⁹⁴ INESTAL..., 13B Pedro Muñoz García,

This mistrust of officers was clear to see in most commissars' responses; Enrique García Vigneaux, a serving commissar and former subeditor of the *Gerona CNT* daily stated that the Commissariat 'within the army, represents a guarantee that this newly forged organism, in such difficult conditions, does not make the same mistakes as the monarchist military'.⁹⁵ Julio Miguel Britapaja echoed this, arguing that, while the commissar should side with officers over soldiers as a guarantee of discipline, he should 'as a delegate of the people in the Army, seek to ensure that they do not take mistaken paths that can lead to the same vices and defects of the army of the Monarchy'.⁹⁶ Antonio Mereciano Bruna, a volunteer with the Durruti Column since July 1936 and serving commissar of the 7th Transport Battalion was clear on the point: 'The Commissariat was established as political control and guarantee of the effective military officers who were available to the Government, fearing defections'.⁹⁷

The second of these fundamental ends, the education of soldiers in support of military discipline, had the full support of *cenetista* commissars, who enthusiastically pursued this mission. Every commissar would cite the necessity for discipline, to instil in the men 'a love of the antifascist cause, the courage to fight, respect for superiors and observation of military rule'.⁹⁸ The Commissariat was created to maintain discipline, but also to maintain a 'popular' aspect in the Army, it was, in the words of Manuel Maeztu Tolosa 'absolutely necessary to create a Regular Army, but the Army should be soaked in precisely the wisdom that the militias thrived on before it'.⁹⁹ The commissar's duty, in the words of Saturnino Vila Bescompta, commissar of the 7th Transport Battalion and *cenetista* since 1927, was to '...create in everyone a confidence in the orders... striving that military discipline... is pervaded with strength and combines more flexible companionship with higher energy, by which we mean that rather than imposing, we should first try to explain'.¹⁰⁰ For Andrés Monter Buil, commissar in the 26th Division and member of the Confederation since 1929, he was to be a 'role model among all fighters from his unit, he will seek to meet their needs and if we cannot, [we will] tell them why, always encouraging them despite all setbacks'.¹⁰¹ In practice discipline meant that the commissar was expected to take the side of the officer; however, in regards to the Army's 'popular' moniker, it was imperative that he make soldiers understand the reasons for their orders. To Antonio Miras Nebot, a Commissar without

⁹⁵ INESTAL..., 14B, Enrique García Vigneaux,

⁹⁶ INESTAL..., 13C, Julio Miguel Britapaja.

⁹⁷ INESTAL..., 13B, Antonio Mereciano Bruna.

⁹⁸ INESTAL..., 13B, Juan I Miralles García.

⁹⁹ INESTAL..., 13A, Manuel Maeztu Tolosa.

¹⁰⁰ INESTAL..., 17A, Saturnino Vila Vescompta,

¹⁰¹ INESTAL..., 13B, Andrés Monter Buil.

position and CNT member since 1933, the soldiers had to be ‘aware of the command they are held under by their officers’ but also understood what ‘[the officers] stand for and this way we obtain a double result, the result of military discipline and the courage and conscience for moral discipline’.¹⁰² Manuel Molins Mary, a member of the CNT since 1931, stated that the troops of the *Ejército Popular* could not be ‘automatons without consciousness or will’ as existed in the old Army, but instead ‘conscious men, cognisant of why they fight’.¹⁰³

The means of making the men understand the necessity of discipline was by making them understand, through education, that the Popular Army was the people in arms against the fascist enemy; for them to know, in the words of Pedro García García, that ‘the Commanders of our army are the people’.¹⁰⁴ Everything was to be given over to this belief, for Enrique García Vigneaux, the Commissar had ‘to be he who plays the role of diplomat, psychologist, military-technical advisor to the greatest possible extent and be an example of the spirit of sacrifice, serenity and courage in difficult times, basing all of them on a solid foundation of antifascist struggle’.¹⁰⁵ Antonio Miras Nebot felt the Commissar had to ‘feel [the soldiers’] suffering and aspire to their greatness in an Army representing the soul of the people’.¹⁰⁶ As we shall see, the propaganda efforts of *cenetista* Commissars would focus heavily on both anti-fascism and the idea of ‘the people’. Manuel García Planes, a Commissar of the 10th Artillery Corps of the Army of the East, CNT member since 1929 and a volunteer in the Durruti Column at its inception, placed this idea of the antifascist struggle and the people in arms in a starkly political context:

...the Army should be imbued with the essence of peace, freedom and work, for which the people gave their blood, and should be therefore a genuine representation of political and syndical organizations that supported the Government and the Revolution.¹⁰⁷

The implication made is that the CNT was not the only proletarian organization represented in either the *Ejército Popular* or the Republic. García Planes expanded that the commissar had to create a sense of ‘unity and mutual understanding of all the ideas and beliefs, erasing differences theoretical or method’, and ‘therefore should make it a general policy of the

¹⁰² INESTAL..., 13B, Antonio Miras Nebot.

¹⁰³ INESTAL..., 13B, Manuel Molins Mary.

¹⁰⁴ INESTAL..., 14B, Pedro García García.

¹⁰⁵ INESTAL..., 14B, Enrique García Vigneaux,

¹⁰⁶ INESTAL..., 13B, Antonio Miras Nebot

¹⁰⁷ INESTAL..., 14B, Manuel García Planes.

Antifascist Popular Front and persuade the personnel that our only enemy is fascism, making no allowance for derogatory or disreputable phrases towards organizations that make up the antifascist conglomerate'.¹⁰⁸ This attitude was not limited García Planes, in fact, it was a point of policy of commissars to make this as apparent as possible. José Mateu Cusido, argued that this bi-partisanship was the most important of the commissar's duties: 'the neuralgic point of the Commissariat and where he has best course to work, is the need to harmonize the ideological disagreements... of the Army, taking into account the formation and spirituality of it'.¹⁰⁹ Rafael Molin Fernández was in concurrence, stating that 'the primary purpose of the commissar is to bring together all sectors that make up our Army and form a homogenous whole that responds to the purpose for which it was created'.¹¹⁰ To Andrés Monter Buil, the commissar should be strictly objective, with there being no attempts to politically influence the soldiery to any tendency other than 'antifascist'. He argued:

[all commissars' duties] should be brought about in a straightforward manner, without inclination to some end, without proselytizing of any kind, all channeled according to the moment in which we live, the moment of Spanish Independence. Partisanship in the military currently is disruptive to the good work of our struggle.

Manuel Villanueva Martínez, provisional commissar of the 6th Shell Battery, was of the same opinion – the commissar's job was 'to be attentive and not seek to exert any kind of propaganda and political constraints of any kind, solely spreading the slogans emanating from the Government of National Union'.¹¹¹ These examples highlight that ideological impartiality was crucial to *cenetista* commissars, Juan Cabellos García, a commissar in the 70th Brigade and *cenetista* since 1934, offers an example of closest that the responses to the questionnaires came to showing a suggestion of bias:

...Give them, with great restraint, examples of those members of one's own organization, and others, who have given their lives heroically in our struggle against fascism, while avoiding all manner of partisanship.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*...

¹⁰⁹ INESTAL..., 13C, José Mateu Cusida.

¹¹⁰ INESTAL..., 13B, Rafael Molin Fernández.

¹¹¹ INESTAL..., 17A, Manuel Villanueva Martínez.

¹¹² INESTAL..., 15A, Juan Cabellos García.

As is very clear, Cabellos García labours the point that even in the recognition of the heroic deeds of comrades, the commissar could not afford to show any fissures in the Republican antifascist monolith. It therefore safe to say that *cenetista* commissars were committed to presenting the Popular Army and the Commissariat as strictly non-sectarian organizations, devoid of political competition and solely committed to the antifascist struggle. There is, of course, the likelihood that in these official questionnaires commissars would not confess to attempting to proselytize soldiers, but this to look at the problem from the wrong perspective. The interest of the chapter is anarchist military units, so their attempts at proselytization are irrelevant, but their adamantness over the need to remain objective, even amongst their own troops highlights a firm public commitment to the Republican project. Furthermore, the propaganda created by the commissars for the soldiery would also corroborate this idea.

As we have seen, all the commissars mentioned in the Inestal Questionnaires were longstanding members of the CNT. This was a point of policy, with the best positions and opportunities for promotion going to commissars who had a longstanding history with the Confederation.¹¹³ Furthermore, commissars were also encouraged to influence the officers of their units not of the *cenetista* persuasion to adopt a sympathetic approach to the Union's sensibilities.¹¹⁴ Of all the rival political affiliations the most acceptable to *cenetistas* were those of the *Unión General de Trabajadores* (General Workers Union, UGT), its youth arm the *Juventudes Socialistas Unificadas* (Unified Socialist Youth, JSU) or *Izquierda Republicana*.¹¹⁵ Fundamentally, a better understanding of CNT ideas within the units served a dual purpose for the Confederation. The first function was, as previously mentioned, one based in practical military concerns, *cenetistas*, or at least CNT-sympathizers, in positions of authority could better understand soldiers and tailor their command appropriately, leading to a more harmonious unit. The second was a political purpose. Given the low number of CNT officers in the Popular Army it did not have any meaningful representation in the middle ranking officialdom that other groups, most notably the PCE enjoyed. Therefore an alternative approach to maintain a modicum of influence in Army affairs was needed. The solution was to maintain as high a percentage of CNT members in positions of authority as

¹¹³ PS-MADRID 439, 1, *.PROPUESTA QUE HACE LA SECCION DEFENSA DEL SUB-COMITE NACIONAL DE LA CNT AL COMISARIO GENERAL DE SERVICIO DE LA AGRUPACION DE EJERCICIOS DE LA ZONA SUR*. In this dispatch, the only commissars recommended for promotion had been members of the CNT, the FAI or the FIJL since before the outbreak of war.

¹¹⁴ INESTAL..., 13C5.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid...*, in a dispatch from A Igualada, Commissar of the XVIII Body of Engineers to Inestal, he referenced the case of one Julian Castellanos, the *Izquierda Republicana* supporting commander of his unit, who 'had completely won him over, because he possesses a righteous judgement and can be compared to an anarchist in how he acts and how he acts towards others'.

possible, filling any gaps left with those sympathetic to the cause and maintaining the integrity of *cenetista* units.¹¹⁶ The upshot of this was the brigades formed from the original militia columns remained essentially anarchist until the end of the war.¹¹⁷

The CNT and the Commissariat did not begin their relationship on the best of terms as, in the words of Macario Royo ‘when the first exams for political commissars were held, not a single CNT member passed. Illiterates had been sent, the CNT lacked men with education.’¹¹⁸ However, as the war progressed the movement became more and more involved in the recruitment and training of commissars, vetting candidates on political acumen and their ‘cultural understanding’ before recommending them for advancement.¹¹⁹ In addition, as we have seen in answers to the final section of questionnaire, the CNT’s commissars were all members of the CNT long before the war, more often than not having been militants and more than capable of showing an understanding of the issues at hand with lucidity. In a list of applicants for commissars on the central front in 1937, the majority candidates were over 30, married and had a longstanding history with the union. All were literate having filled out their own forms and most offered, in their own words, the ‘a good understanding of culture’ that was desired by the CNT. Furthermore many came from the syndicates of more skilled industries, such as teaching, industrial chemicals, graphic arts and water, gas and electricity.¹²⁰ The impression here is a clear one, that there was a specific kind of *cenetista* that the Confederation wished to serve as commissars, namely a reasonably well educated, longstanding militant. These individuals, many members since before the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, had experience of the movement’s various tribulations, conflicts and schisms and were more likely to better understand the exceptional circumstances that the CNT faced. Much like the 37 year old Juan Garcia Oliver, the 40 year old Cipriano Mera and the 40 year old Ricardo Sanz, they would maintain a sense of perspective in regards to the task they were charged with and the political situation at hand.

¹¹⁶ The CNT would maintain control over its own recruitment throughout the Civil War, recruiting its own soldiers through its National Commission of Voluntary Recruitment, CDMH, BARCELONA, 279; José García Pradas gives a succinct summary of CNT recruitment during the war in Bolloten, *The Spanish Revolution...*, p. 312.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid...*, p. 312.

¹¹⁸ Fraser, *Blood of Spain...*, p. 339. Given that it had long been established that CNT activists were required to be literate it would appear that, if we take Royo at his word, those enlisting in the Commissariat early on were not the best the Confederation had to offer – highlighting the turnaround in opinion that the CNT had towards the institution. Anna Monjo, “Afiliados y militantes: la calle como complemento del sindicato cenetista en Barcelona de 1930 a 1939”, *Historia y Fuente Oral*, No. 7, *Analfabetismo y Política*, (1992), p. 90.

¹¹⁹ PS-MADRID, 439, 1, *RELACION DE COMPAÑEROS PERTENECIENTES A LAS INDUSTRIAS DE ESTA LOCALIDAD QUE HAN SIDO PROPUESTAS POR CONSIDERARLOS APTOS PARA OCUPAR LAS PLAZAS DE COMISARIOS EN LOS CUERPOS DE SEGURIDAD, AVIACION Y MARINA*, pp. 64-66.

¹²⁰ *Ibid...*, pp. 64-66.

The opinions presented by the *cenetista* commissars who completed these questionnaires were indicative of the attitudes throughout the CNT hierarchy in the Popular Army. Yet the attitude towards the Commissariat was not wholly positive across the entire movement. Critics, led by Diego Abad de Santillán, lined up to decry it as a communist-led, counter-revolutionary institution. To these anarchists, the Commissariat was disinterested in fulfilling ‘the function to which it belongs’ and was more concerned with ‘serving the party that gave him its nomination [the PCE]’, a policy that had led to ‘disastrous results for unity of the Army’.¹²¹ On 20 August 1938, the Peninsular Committee of the Federación Anarquista Ibérica (Iberian Anarchist Federation, FAI) released a dossier of its opinions following its plenary that offered a root to branch criticism of the Negrín government, one of the institutions that received most censure was the Commissariat.¹²² The plenary asserted that the Commissariat was, by implementing a dual command structure of officers and commissars, a ‘bureaucratic machine... without manifest utility to our Army’, it was ‘unnecessary’. Most astonishingly and in a complete reversal of any anarchist position, it advocated a return to the old military system, one without a Commissariat, criticising the current state of affairs as one which and did not follow ‘good military doctrine, [where] command of all things must come from the soldier’. Commissars themselves were ‘novices’, ‘lacking in military knowledge and understanding’, the entire institution was under the control of the PCE, ‘harming the war effort with its interference, with the political proselytizing that is effected in favour of one party’.¹²³ This attitude, however, was not shared by Miguel González Inestal, who in a message to the Peninsular Committee in October 1938, rebuked the charges made against the Commissariat. In his response, Inestal would echo the points his commissars did in their *informes*, that the Commissariat was fundamental to the way the Republic was waging its war. Inestal’s tone throughout was recalcitrant, to him the Commissariat was necessary precisely because the ‘character and state of morale’ of the *Ejército Popular* demanded ‘the existence of military command and political leadership for the simple reason that the military has no time to meet the political needs of the army, or in many cases would be unable to do

¹²¹ The opinions of Hilario Esteban, in *Sección Coordinación del Comité Regional de Cataluña*, 1 September 1939, cited in Abad de Santillán, *Por que luchamos...*, p. 221. The FAI was the militant wing of the CNT which had gained disproportionate influence over the 1930s, it counted among its members Buenaventura Durruti, Juan García Oliver and Federica Montseny. Stuart Christie, *We, the Anarchists! – A Study of the Iberian Anarchist Federation (FAI) 1927-1937*, (East Sussex: The Meltzer Press, 2000), *passim*; Casanova, *Anarchism...*, pp. 54-9.

¹²² *Informe que presenta el Comité peninsular de la FAI al Gobierno de la república*. Barcelona, 20 August 1938, cited in Abad de Santillán, *Por que luchamos...*, pp. 215-232

¹²³ Abad de Santillán, *Por que luchamos...*, pp. 220-221; INESTAL..., 14B, Miguel González Inestal, *Al pleno de la F.A.I.*, p. 1.

so'.¹²⁴ In direct response to this and to criticisms of the dual command system that this led to, the message was that it was necessary given the exceptional circumstances:

...to date there has been no war that has had the dual characterization of social being informed by the elements involved therein, and to contribute our politics to its diversity of political influences is our policy that we have put into play. In our case, this dual control, not only must necessarily exist, but it also is the only way to see the new Army fulfill its basic mission and make war and at the same time be able to ensure the harmonious coexistence of the various political sectors that comprise it, while at the same time help build the morale of the new army in a fully consistent manner to its purpose and the aspirations of the elements within it.¹²⁵

To Inestal, dual command was not only a means to ensure the correct political education of troops, an education that the CNT had means to influence, but it also acted as a bulwark against the Army's excesses. In regards to this, the Peninsular Committee's alternative to the Commissariat, 'good military doctrine', met harsh criticism. Fundamentally, this 'good military doctrine' meant, in the eyes of the Committee, leaving the political and military inculcation of troops to the officers, ninety percent of whom, according to the dossier, had been politically vetted.¹²⁶ Predictably, given the attitudes of the majority of commissars, the reaction to this statement was not positive as the FAI was accused of 'speaking the language of militarists', of ignoring the lessons of the past and the value of having political experts amongst the soldiery:

It is desirable that the Committee of the FAI point out the good or bad military doctrine, because that good military doctrine is precisely what failed on July 19. And frankly, it failed because the soldier was not interested, in general, nothing but an instrument of oppression. Thus, evil could gain the confidence of the soldier... he was treated despotically as a mere instrument, as a being no account was taken of him... It is therefore absurd to invoke the 'good military doctrine', when we are specifically paying the consequences for it.¹²⁷

This wholehearted defence of the methods of the Commissariat by a dedicated *cenetista* commissar to his own comrades highlights his commitment, and the commitment of others

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*..., p. 6.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*..., p. 5.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*..., pp. 3-4.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*..., p. 4.

like him, to the Popular Army project. Both the traditional military system and the militia system were criticised as outdated and unfit for purpose, and, as we have seen, the Commissariat was, in the eyes of CNT commissars, the only way to guarantee a functioning Popular Army with traditional military discipline.

To the assertion that Communists were in control of the institution, Inestal countered that although this may have been true in the immediate aftermath of the events of May 1937, the current situation was far more balanced, with PCE representation in the Commissariat dropping ‘by 42%, while that of the CNT, amounted to 26% of PSOE to 27% and Republicans have also gained some ground’.¹²⁸ Furthermore, Inestal offered a clear summation of the reason why the PCE were permitted such previous mastery in the Commissariat, due to them gaining ‘official favour [through] their guarantee of absolute discipline of their members and affiliates’.¹²⁹ They had offered the necessary attributes to form an army while the CNT units of the time, ‘had neither the vision necessary to focus the orientation of the militants, or the solvency required to impose a line of conduct consistent with the requirements of the time’.¹³⁰ The message was one of clear support for the current military system and, by reflecting on the previously failed anarchist military policies, critical of the only other ‘popular’ alternative.

The FAI’s concerns in regards to the PCE were in fact shred by many *cenetistas* serving in the Popular Army were fully aware of the machinations of the PCE and Communists were viewed with a distinct mistrust by *cenetista* commissars. Yet rather than deal with them publically, they were kept internalised to maintain the façade of unity. The concern was such that in August 1938 the *cenetistas* of the Commissariat put together a dossier on ‘Proselytism in the Army of the East’ and sent it to González Inestal. The nineteen page document provided various accounts of the attempts of the PCE to gain control of the levers of power in Popular Army and indoctrinate the men. According to one commissar ‘the

¹²⁸ *Ibid...*, p. 3; This assertion was true, as, following Prieto’s reforms and the reorganization of the Commissariat in October 1937 the percentages of commissars ascribed to each political tendency was as follows:

Socialist Tendency	33%
Libertarian Tendency	33%
Communist Party	14%
Republican Parties	10%
Syndicalist Party	5%
Regional Parties	5%

PS-MADRID, 439, 1, *PROYECTO DE REORGANIZACION DEL COMISARIADO GENERAL, QUE SOMETE A LA CONSIDERACION DEL EXCELENTISIMO SR. MINISTRO DE DEFENSA NACIONAL, EL SUBCOMISARIO GENERAL DE LA C.N.T. MIGUEL GONZALEZ INESTAL*, p. 5

¹²⁹ *Ibid...*, p. 2.

¹³⁰ *Ibid...*, p. 2.

whole war policy of the Army of the East was subordinate to these activities, without much regard for the general interests of the country and war'.¹³¹ Another felt so strongly about this issue, stating that, when faced with the extent of proselytism, 'I could not hide my disgust'.¹³² Ricardo Sanz would, in an internal CNT memorandum to non-military hierarchy of the CNT, make clear his frustration with these machinations stating that it seemed the PCE wanted 'to play the 'game' of parties, forgetting how expensive and hard for us it is proving to be, and costing this damn war'.¹³³ Yet, despite this antipathy towards the Communist party and its methods, the commissars maintained their commitment to the maintaining the party-political objectivity of the Commissariat. These issues were never made public and *cenetista* commissar-authored propaganda contained nothing detrimental about the PCE until the fall of the Party in the final months; on the contrary there were even complimentary pieces about certain Communists.¹³⁴ Ultimately, for CNT-affiliated commissars, the benefits of criticizing the PCE in public were outweighed by the negatives. It appears that undermining Republican unity and the war effort was a far greater crime than political proselytization.

The responses by the commissars to the questionnaire and those of Miguel González Inestal to the FAI plenary clarify that CNT affiliated commissars were committed to the ideas of the Commissariat, both its existence as a practical necessity in a standing Army and its non-partisan political programme. CNT-affiliated commissars were dedicated *cenetistas*, their longstanding history as members and the militant past of many makes this clear, however their attitudes towards the war, the Popular Army and the proletariat were almost identical to those of general 'Republicanism'. To individuals like González Inestal, Saturnino Vila, José María García Salcedo and Rafael Molin Fernández the CNT was part of an antifascist alliance that needed to remain strong against a greater foe and any sedition from this was counter-productive. The reasons for this attitude lay in the post-revolutionary political situation that the CNT found itself in. It must be understood that, by autumn of 1937, following the repression of the more extreme elements of the Confederation, the CNT could no longer maintain a stance of pursuing the revolution while the war was being fought. May 1937 had put an end to any revolutionary ideas that may have still been entertained by *cenetistas* in the short to medium term. Furthermore, the subsequent UGT-CNT pact and

¹³¹ INESTAL..., 13A, *INFORME SOBRE EL PROSELITISMO EN EL EJERCITO DEL ESTE ESPECIALMENTE EN EL Xº CUERPO DE EJERCITO*, p. 1.

¹³² *Ibid.*..., p. 4.

¹³³ CDMH..., SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-BARCELONA 809, 1, Internal memo from Ricardo Sanz to *Comité de Enlace, Comité Regional de Cataluña CNT Defensa; Comité Regional de Cataluña FAI; Comité Nacional de la CNT; Comité Peninsular de la FAI; Comité Ejecutivo del Movimiento Libertario*, p. 1.

¹³⁴ *La 70 – Órgano Semanal de la Brigada*, 8 June 1938, p. 6.

never realised plans to stand in elections were clear evidence of an ideological shift away from apoliticism by the hierarchy. The task at hand for the CNT was to now win the war and, following militarization, this was only possible through participation in the Republic and its Popular Army. Political disagreements were likely, however the place for debate was outside of the Army – hence the harsh criticism of the PCE remaining private and the strong response from Inestal to the FAI Peninsular Committee’s criticism. There was a war to be won and the commissars of the CNT could not afford to undermine the ‘*Gran Unidad*’ with the ‘political game’.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ PS-BARCELONA 809, 1, Ricardo Sanz, *Puesto Mando*, 20 Mayo 1938, p.1.

The Civil War in *cenetista* Military Press

It will be necessary first of all introduce our idea of freedom in a broader and less sectarian spirit and demonstrate its affinity, indeed its identity with the idea of general progress. The prosperity of our cause is inseparable from the smooth running of all forms of progress. Our cause is great, but suffers greatly by its actual isolation. It can flourish only in an overall environment conducive to all progress.¹³⁶

These were the words of German anarchist Max Nettlau, published in June 1937 in *Libertad*, the weekly of the 42nd Division of the Popular Army, constituting of the 59th, the 60th and the 61st Mixed Brigades, all comprised of former militiamen and anarchist volunteers.¹³⁷ The article, entitled ‘The dangers of simplistic propaganda’ was intended as a general comment on the nuances of anarchist propaganda, part of the paper’s regular *Temas sustanciales* column, however it was a fitting summation of the challenges that faced commissars of anarchist units. This task, as stated before, was the creation of a suitably *cenetista* narrative of the war that motivated troops to accept the military discipline foisted upon them but also remained within the parameters of ‘Republicanism’. Despite the limitations placed upon commissars, the ideological material at their disposal was still reasonable; there still remained a strong sense of anarchist identity that defined the movement for the rest of the war. This identity was rooted in anti-capitalism (and by extension, anti-fascism), proletarianism and a proletarian Spanish nationalism that was itself based upon these ideas. Although not groundbreaking in the leftist spectrum of the Popular Front, they remained anarchist ideas and appealed to *cenetista* sensibilities. What was created was a propaganda palimpsest, taking the form of *cenetismo* and even adopting some of its language, but espousing a markedly different message to that which had come before albeit inhabiting *cenetista* forms.

As has been made clear, the fundamental task of the commissar was to convince the soldiers that the Popular Army, its discipline, ranks and orders were a force for good, an entity that was worth the ideological sacrifices made by the Confederation. In the words of *Espartacus* the organ of the 77th Mixed Brigade, formerly the CNT’s ‘Espartaco’ battalion of Jarama, ‘something had to be worth the sacrifice’ and it was the initial and ongoing task of the commissar to elucidate this ‘something’.¹³⁸ At almost every opportunity the unique and ‘popular’ nature of the army was restated, it was an ‘example of the moral capacity that

¹³⁶ *Libertad – Semanario del Frente*, Año. 1, Número. 2, p. 7.

¹³⁷ Engel, *Historia de las brigadas mixtas...*, pp. 61-4.

¹³⁸ *Espartacus – Órgano de la 77 Brigada Mixta*, 1 January 1938, p. 3; For the full background of the 77th Brigade see Engel, *Historia de las brigadas mixtas...*, pp. 70-1.

embodies all men', 'the basis of our triumph', 'strong and invincible... the sole instrument that can save us from ruin!'¹³⁹ The Popular Army, therefore, gave the Republic a 'great advantage' and was truly distinct from its *ancien régime* and militia predecessors.¹⁴⁰ It had the discipline of the enemy's armies (for the Popular Front faced many enemy armies) but the moral capacity of the militias; it represented the evolution of the people at arms. The old military made men slaves, the soldier's 'whole existence was as a faithful servant of the capitalist class', incapable of independent thought he 'had no objection to strafe when their masters ordered it... Immorality, incompetence and subservience to the powerful caste was signified by those soldiers'.¹⁴¹ The soldiers of the *Ejército Popular* however, were freer men, no longer 'entities without judgment or automatons without will', the soldier now had autonomy 'respecting and obeying when there is that to respect and obey' as he was, through his education, 'convinced of that which is necessary'.¹⁴²

Emphasizing the difference with the old army was fundamental due to the anarchist antipathy towards it, yet alongside this there was a concerted effort to make the Popular Army seem as much a successor to the militias as possible. As we have seen from the Inestal questionnaires, several commissars were as unconvinced as anyone as to the merits of the militia columns, but, due to their special status among the anarchists as the representation of the 'people at arms', the voluntarily act of taking up the struggle against the invader, they were presented with reverence. The following extract from *El Frente* highlights the image of the Popular Army that the Commissariat wished to convey to the men:

We fight within a Popular Army because its background is now not the same as that of the Army of yesteryear, developed by aristocrats with a desire to wear stars. Our Army is based on the old militia to which we must pay the tribute of heroes, because they have allowed for us to be able to fight the automaton soldiers representing Italy and Germany.¹⁴³

All the positives attributes of the militia columns were to be found in the *Ejército Popular* and, with the introduction of military discipline, none of the negatives. *Umbral*, the weekly for the 25th Division that comprised of 116th, 117th and 118th Mixed Brigades, all former

¹³⁹ *El Frente*, 5 October 1937, p. 2; *El Frente* 11 October 1937, p. 1; *Libertad*, Año. 1, Número. 4, p. 1; *El Frente*, 2 August 1937, p. 1.

¹⁴⁰ *El Frente*, 29 August 1937, p. 4.

¹⁴¹ *Espartacus*, 22 February 1938, p. 12.

¹⁴² *Libertad*, Año. 1, Número. 1. p. 12.

¹⁴³ *El Frente*, 5 October 1937, p. 4.

militia columns, made clear that the voluntary heroism of the militia columns remained in the new regular army¹⁴⁴:

[The] spirit of sacrifice that is seen in the soldiers, the unbreakable will, the urge to achieve victory regardless, in any kind of conditions, it made the forces that organized the unforgettable militants of the CNT and that will is now directed by prestigious popular leaders, one of the most solid foundations on which our army of peerless glory stands firmly.¹⁴⁵

By likening the *Ejército Popular* to the militias the Commissariat appealed to one of the fundamental ideas that made the militias such a *cause célèbre* for anarchists, that they were the people at arms, the military expression of the proletariat. The importance of this idea to the CNT cannot be understated; forfeiting the movement's anti-statist agenda did not make it any less anti-capitalist nor proletarian. For anarchists there needed to 'be a correspondence, a constant bond of union and loyalty' between the army and the people, 'to ensure those who are fighting [are doing so for] the assistance of those who work, to give them the confidence that in the army they have a guardian and defender of their interests and achievements'.¹⁴⁶ Fortunately for *cenetistas*, as Chapter 2 has outlined, the identification of the Popular Army in this manner was one of the most fundamental tenets of its political programme, a fact not lost on the CNT-affiliated element of the Commissariat. The army was described as 'born of the People to be the fairest expression of justice', 'created to defend the interests of the people', the 'lifeblood and soul of the common people', where 'all that fight... are workers' and, according the *Libertad*, 'where the peasant and the industrial worker have placed their hopes of wellbeing'.¹⁴⁷ It was referred to as an historical marvel, with precedent only seen in history's greatest expressions of popular struggle:

With the powerful People's Army, the victory must be ours, Our Army of the Revolution – like the *Grand Armée* of Napoleon or the Red Army – it arises from the living bowels of a people stirred, to prevent anyone from being able to enslave it. Nothing and nobody can beat us.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Engel, *Historia de las brigadas mixtas...*, pp. 105-7.

¹⁴⁵ *Umbral*, 31 July 1937, p. 10

¹⁴⁶ *Umbral*, 17 July 1937, p. 12

¹⁴⁷ *1º Enero – Órgano del 4º Batallón de la 81 Brigada Mixta*, 1 August 1937, p. 2; *La 70*, 25 July 1937, p. 37, p. 3; *Libertad*, Año. 1, Número. 1, p. 2 ; *Libertad*, Año. 1, Número. 4, p. 1.

¹⁴⁸ *Libertad*, Año. 1, Número. 4, p. 1.

The fact that Napoleon's *Grand Armée* was defeated by the Army of backward Tsarist Russia was not mentioned, nor the draconian discipline enforced by the Red Army, instead the rhetorical emphasis was placed on the proletarian, politicised nature of the two forces. This proletarian nature was important, as one of the fundamental means of motivation used by *cenetista* commissars was presentation of the war as a class war, a struggle between the working class and its capitalist enemies. The Republic was constituted of 'men, longing for a better society', where all struggled in their 'supreme effort to shine the light, the light of justice and human welfare' to achieve 'freedom, justice and peace'.¹⁴⁹ The war itself was framed as a war of emancipation of the working class from its many oppressors. To *Libertad*, the war was:

'our war', the war of producers, the working people's war against the parasite of capitalism, ancestral clericalism and headless and bloody militarism, the social war that world watches engrossed, and history, stunned, records in its annals, as the leading example for the new humanity.¹⁵⁰

This class interpretation meant that the conflict was no traditional war, a 'contemptible struggle', like of the past, it was not a battle 'between capitalist interests or atavistic selfishness or privileged castes or classes' that took place 'without an atom of humanity' and left 'only a memory of barbarism and hatred, crime and violence'.¹⁵¹ It was instead a proletarian struggle, one that would leave 'a shining path of culture and progress of improvement', *Umbral* described it thusly:¹⁵²

It is an ideological war, of profound social content. [It is] a war of the Spanish classes. A war of regimes for the world. For us, a class war, because those who revolted, the clergy, high finance and capitalism, the three pillars that, through history, have maintained the oppression and misery of the people. War of regimes for the world, because our struggle is between popular democracy and totalitarianism, dictatorship, fascism.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹*El Frente*, 26 July 1937, p. 5; PS-BARCELONA 809, 1, Pamphlet distributed by commissars to the soldiers of the 28th Division, *Hombres de la 28 División: Conducta responsable y moral invencible. ; 1º Enero*, 7 July 1937, p. 2.

¹⁵⁰*Libertad*, Año. 1, Número. 1, p. 12.

¹⁵¹*El Frente* 5 October 1937, p. 4; *El Frente*, 26 July 1937, p. 1.

¹⁵²*El Frente*, 26 July 1937, p. 1.

¹⁵³*Umbral*, 19 July 1937, p. 1.

The statements made here would not have been out of place in the pages of *Línea del Fuego*, such was their class-based fervour to defeat these traditional enemies (albeit excised of its reference to popular democracy).

This theme is best exemplified by the continued use of the revolution as a rhetorical concept despite its categorical defeat, the phrase being seen regularly on the pages of most anarchist units' newspapers even after May 1937. It was not the sole motivational factor within CNT propaganda, but it was still present and was, certainly in 1937, used as a semantic conceit to make the political programme of the *Ejército Popular* more palatable to the CNT's troops. However, this did not mean a return to the revolutionary attitudes of 1936, or even a clearly defined revolutionary ambition, that ship had sailed. It was merely a useful means of escalating the rhetoric of the class based interpretation of the war. The revolution that was referred to was either one that had already been realised, signified by the defeat of class enemies following the revolution of July 1936 and the Republic's undeniable shift to the left since the outbreak of war, otherwise it was that which was yet to come, set for an undefined date following the war, soldiers were fighting for it, but most definitely under the Republican state, through the Popular Army and against fascism. It remained, categorically, an abstract concept to be achieved in the future. In regards to the former definition, there were several articles that were aimed at making it clear how far the Republic had come since the beginning of the war, an editorial in *Libertad* from the summer of 1937 outlined the strides that the people had made:

Today, before the end of the war, everything has changed. Now there remain no landowners, there remain no priests; there remain neither *señoritos* nor millionaires. When victory is ours, when each one of us returns to our labour, when leaving arms triumphant, we return to the lands and the factories, to the workshops and the fields, we will work with happiness. Nobody will be able to exploit us now. Nobody will be able to profit from our sacrifice and our blood. The whip of the landowner will no longer be raised over our backs; now we will no longer have behind us the gun of the Civil Guard; will not have millionaires that squander in play that which they robbed from the proletariat, We will have a new, happy, free Spain. We will have a distinct society, comprehensive and human. We will have a nation of workers, where all will have the pride in knowing we are equals.¹⁵⁴

This 'revolution' was not the social revolution of the previous year, where all vestiges of the state were swept away, leaving only the people. It was leftist and proletarian, in keeping with

¹⁵⁴ *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 1, p. 2.

Abad de Santillán's statements about the state no longer being an oppressor, but it was certainly not anarchist. In regards to the latter of the two interpretations of the 'revolution', these would always be themed around the necessity to win the war first, for 'victory is the guarantee of the revolution itself'.¹⁵⁵ There were no articles that dealt exclusively with the CNT's revolutionary plans as before, and even the more 'traditionally' revolutionary of the articles, that cited that war and revolution as 'inseparable', that 'war and revolution that merge into a common desire', always stated that, ultimately there was only one way to 'achieve the sacred revolutionary ideals for which the working class struggle' and that was 'to win the war' and realise 'The Triumph of the antifascist cause!'.¹⁵⁶

However, even these lukewarm revolutionary sentiments cannot be imbued with too much importance; they were not attached to any revolutionary programme save for wholly Republican anti-capitalist proletarianism. It was, even by 1937, an empty phrase used by the CNT to signify the gains of the previous year and perhaps those to come. Arguably the most telling evidence for this is that the idea of the revolution was even used in this manner by the counterrevolutionary vanguard, the PCE, through a Dolores Ibárruri speech to the *Cortes* in July 1937 that urged 'In the front and the rear all cards must have the same respect and we must all submit to the guidelines agreed to win the war *and not lose the revolution*'.¹⁵⁷ By 1938, with the CNT's vigorous attempts to re-enter government, the use of the revolution as a realistic motivational technique was almost completely negated. The gains hoped to be achieved by it in the pre-war period were presented as having already been realised and the CNT were now shown as willing participants in a proletarian government:

With the overthrow of the monarchy... accordingly, [the government] takes on an important character. That is, no less the ultimate purpose of historical revolutions, with the economic emancipation of the working class, it legitimately embodies the emancipation of the people.

Today [we have] minister [Segundo Blanco] – representing the CNT – in the popular unity government, formed for the purpose of continuing the war until victory in defence of high historical interest – the fate of history – which, is understood as freedom and universal justice.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ *Umbral*, 25 July 1937, p. 3.

¹⁵⁶ *Umbral*, 25 July 1937, p. 3; *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 1, p. 4; *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 5, p. 9.

¹⁵⁷ Extract from a speech by Dolores Ibárruri to the *Cortes* in July 1937 (Italics my own), cited in *Boletín de Información – Noticias facilitadas por la seccion de información, propaganda y prensa*, 21 August 1937, p. 11.

¹⁵⁸ *El Frente*, 16 April 1938, p. 8.

The ‘revolution’, therefore, remained part of the CNT lexicon, but in its changed context, as the absence of any actual revolutionary intent by the Confederation, ‘revolution’ became a word stripped of its previous meaning. Consequently it became merely a non-descript statement of propaganda, as empty as ‘freedom’ or ‘victory’ in its ideological specificity. Ultimately this retreat from the revolution, the acceptance that the chance of its realisation had been missed, was the story of the anarchist wartime experience. The War versus Revolution debate was lost following militarization and the events of May 1937 and ultimately the revolution itself was a casualty. The pressures of war made the CNT sacrifice its ideals in early 1937 and as the conflict continued this mollification continued also, to the detriment of the union’s own original ideals.

It must be noted, that even in the above extracts regarding the war being seen as a ‘class war’, all the enemies listed (clergy, high finance and capitalism) were ostensibly affiliated with the opposing side. To present a war against them as a class war was not a subversive act in the Republican polity allowing for the war to be framed in terms that fit with the proletarian ideals of the CNT. However, it needed to be made understood that the working class was not simply the CNT, but it constituted a union of all the factions of the Popular Front and if the working class and the revolution were to prevail there could be no partisan interests, all had to be given over to the common cause. There may have been a ‘Changing climate, environments. Other features, other obligations’ but each group had ‘the same desire, the same illusion. Winning the war and strengthening the revolution’.¹⁵⁹ It was down to all the various factions to create this unity, to forget their differences and focus on their shared goal. For, in the Popular Army, they were ‘all comrades’, ‘all sons of the same people that work, that fight and that die for the same redemptive cause’ and ‘in these moments we are not socialists, communists, nor anarchists’.¹⁶⁰ ‘In short’, according to *Libertad*, ‘all the young Marxists or libertarians... must work for a new society that does not know of misery, exploitation, injustice and parasitism, and where honesty and morality occupy the foreground, while vices and vagrancy are removed’.¹⁶¹ The *Ejército Popular* was fundamental to this concord as an ‘example of unity, cohesion and discipline’, in the words of Indalecio Prieto ‘The army belongs to everyone and to no one’ and political interests were

¹⁵⁹ *Columna de Hierro – Órgano 83 Brigada Mixta*, 19 July 1937, p. 5.

¹⁶⁰ *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 1, p. 4; *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 1, p. 12.

¹⁶¹ *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 2, p. 2; a fine example of propaganda attempts to show the anarchists allies as comrades can be seen in Appendix II p. 324.

forgotten in its ranks.¹⁶² *Libertad* gave a suitably hyperbolic summary of the aims and requirements of this unity:

[To] form an impregnable block of indomitable bodies and iron will, that nobody will dominate nor even dent, and all said and done with affection, with love, and with softness and finesse that we employed with our brothers as if we played in the backyard, under the cool, clear eyes of our mothers; because this land, land of Spain, is the home of us all, and this bond, this revolutionary bond, should preside our thoughts and our acts.¹⁶³

The sentiments explained here, of fraternal affection and a ‘revolutionary bond’ were key. Not only were CNT soldiers expected to cooperate with their Popular Front allies, they had to do so willingly, ignoring the past. Soldiers were urged to ‘Forget silly feuds and grudges and eagerly prepare yourself to defend your trench’ there needed to be an end to ‘[political] rivalries, which inadvertently, willingly or not, do nothing more than to create distance from the objective’.¹⁶⁴ There was an imperative to ‘shorten our distances and understand, *despite everything*, that the blood spilled to flow through the towns and fields of our martyred Spain is not sterile and blossoms in red poppies of final liberation’.¹⁶⁵ Any attempt to oppose this unity were greeted with predictable opprobrium: *Espartacus* in February 1938 poured scorn on anyone who still had the temerity to call themselves a militant – ‘the man that calls himself a militant and continues the same vices as the capitalist society’, he had ‘no moral value [as] he cannot make anyone... do his duty for the benefit of the war, because he is the first not to comply’. For the author, it was ‘time now to for militancy be classified and considered as such, of yesterday, in the capitalist era, and today, in times of war continue, under the same indication: "freely give everything for the cause of Freedom!"’.¹⁶⁶ *El Frente* echoed this sentiment, stating concisely that ‘anyone who objects to our union must be crushed as a traitor’.¹⁶⁷ It appears, therefore, that there was a marked desire to eliminate all the party boundaries within the *Ejército Popular*, a concerted effort made to make clear to the soldiers the commissars’ wish for the Popular Army to remain apolitical, united in a desire for the triumph of the entire working class.

¹⁶² *Umbral*, November 1937, p. 3; *ABC Madrid*, 8 October 1937, p. 1.

¹⁶³ *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 1, p. 4.

¹⁶⁴ *Espartacus*, November 1937, p. 5; *Espartacus*, 1 April 1938, p. 9;

¹⁶⁵ *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 1, p. 12, (Italics my own).

¹⁶⁶ *Espartacus*, 22 February 1938, p. 4.

¹⁶⁷ *El Frente*, 4 May 1937, p. 2.

Yet for this working class victory to be achieved, soldiers could not forget that it came at the price of discipline. It seems a curious situation, given that the commissars were tasked with motivating the troops with ideas that would make them accept discipline that commissars would have to continue justifying its imposition. Yet it remained, fundamentally, a constant obligation placed upon men whose original motivation for picking up arms was to rid themselves of all forms of oppression. Therefore, the necessity of discipline, orders and military protocol was made paramount. It was what separated the *Ejército Popular* ‘envy of the entire world’, from their militia forebears: ‘In the front and the rear... the phrase is repeated, as an isochronous, monotonous, boring refrain: Discipline! Discipline! Discipline!’.¹⁶⁸ It was what would guarantee victory, for ‘this discipline’, the ‘good organization and distribution of a mass of energies’ was ‘in favour of something as homogenous and loved by the people, the conquest of its liberty’.¹⁶⁹ Consequently, for all the praise lavished on the militias for their spirit, their lack of discipline meant that they were ultimately condemned as failures:

Hitler and Mussolini came with their armies and their powerful weapons of war. Facing them were enthusiastic militias, but without discipline, organization and weapons. It was logical to back off. They squandered heroism without rate or extent. But were defeated in every battle up to the gates of our Madrid.¹⁷⁰

The solution, the Popular Army, through its introduction of discipline, would ensure that the heroism that defined the militias was not squandered. Moreover, to the credit of the commissars, they did not attempt to present the discipline that the men experienced at the hands of their officers as anything other than what it was, military discipline:

What is understood by discipline is the strict observance of all military obligations, and it is the basis of the education of the troops: subordination, obedience, respect and deference to superiors fall squarely inside of its sphere, so too the consideration of the citizen and of property, cleanliness, work ethic, aversion to vices etc etc. Discipline is as necessary for the life of the Army as blood for the human body.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 1, p. 12.

¹⁶⁹ *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 5, p. 9.

¹⁷⁰ *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 4, p. 1.

¹⁷¹ *El Frente*, 13 September 1937, p. 1.

It is also imperative to understand that this threat of military discipline always remained.¹⁷² Soldiers were brought to trial and faced harsh penalties for dereliction of duty, drunkenness and refusal to follow orders.¹⁷³ However, the aim of the propaganda surrounding the issue was the hope that by allowing the men to understand why they fought they would accept orders readily. It became an important part of propaganda to tell the men this; to let them know that source of authority of the discipline was the people, or at least ‘in the hands of the institutions that are created by the people itself’ and that acquiescence to it was not subjugation, but a voluntary proletarian act, informed by ‘the sense of individual responsibility exercised conscientiously’.¹⁷⁴

It had to be this way, as, in keeping with the ideological basis of the Popular Army, ‘discipline which as its basis has only fear of punishment, would be very superficial’. It was a necessity, as for a modern, effective army to function ‘it must be founded on self-esteem that drives the performance of military duties’ and that ‘trust and respect’ were felt by all in the hierarchy.¹⁷⁵ The policy of education and trust was presented as the apotheosis of military development; the men accepted their positions and understood their duties as they were respected within the new system:

We have our companies, battalions, brigades, our lieutenants, captains, chiefs, commissars, we have magnificent soldiers, almost all volunteers and therefore, more secure, because they have accepted spontaneously the compromise of making the war until victory and this compromise obliges them much more than the law of the mobilization of forces: they are obliged to honour their own decisions.¹⁷⁶

There was no indication of a return to the auto-discipline of the militia columns that had been a disaster, instead men now understood their positions and accepted what was imposed upon them stoically through their obligation to honour ‘the great cause’.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 5, p. 9.

¹⁷³ PS-BARCELONA 809, 1, *COMITE NACIONAL – SECCION DEFENSA*, these documents, from October 1937, show that soldiers were still harshly disciplined, more often than not sent to a disciplinary battalion for the various transgressions ranging from the relatively meagre misdemeanour of having the incorrect papers to more serious indiscretions such as drunkenness and desertion.

¹⁷⁴ *El Frente*, 26 July 1937, p. 4.

¹⁷⁵ *El Frente*, 13 September 1937, p. 1.

¹⁷⁶ *El Frente*, 2 August 1937, p. 1.

¹⁷⁷ *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 1, p. 12.

Ultimately, these explanations of the bases of discipline, the special nature of the Popular Army, the portrayal of the war as a proletarian struggle, even the resurrection of the macabre spectre of the much vaunted revolution were supplementary ideas to the main motivating factor. At the root of all anarchist propaganda, there was the main motivational tool that forced them to accept ideological compromise after ideological compromise, one factor so fundamentally important that anarchists were moved to state ‘we have to accept [sacrifice], because we must accept [sacrifice]...Because we want to win the war’.¹⁷⁸ This was the rationale behind almost every ideologically disagreeable issue, whether it was militarization or cooperation with other Popular Front groups (namely the Communists), defeating the enemy mattered more.

The reasons for this were based around a fear of a return to the old pre-war systems and a portrayal of a fascist Spain as both a social and national disaster. The first of these ideas was a complementary argument to the interpretation of the revolution as having already happened. The emphasis on the gains of the revolution allowed for the past to be put into harsh perspective, and this was certainly undertaken with enthusiasm in the pages of the anarchist military press. There was an emphasis on what could not return; namely the monarchy and the power of the Church. *Umbral* ran articles entitled ‘That Which Cannot Return’ and the two were important features. The former, perennially unpopular with anarchists, (in 1928 Durruti and Ascaso even staged a failed attempt to kidnap and hold ransom King Alfonso XIII during a state visit to France) was described as ‘sad and ridiculous’, the ‘tuberculosis of the Spanish people’, ‘a political system completely disconnected from the popular Spanish soul’ and, ultimately, ‘one of those things that can never return’.¹⁷⁹ The latter, a longstanding enemy of the Spanish anarchists, was also pilloried: its worst excesses of the pre-war period highlighted in an article from 31 July 1937:

They cannot rise again, the churches, over the wretched villages of Spain with a display of control and denomination, those cults full of magnificence that were and insult to misery cannot return, we cannot tolerate a return to the confessional, the focus of all the intrigues of Spanish society, it is not possible for Spaniards to give up their children to priests and monks.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ *El Frente*, 2 August 1937, p. 1.

¹⁷⁹ Abel Paz, *Durruti in the Spanish Revolution*, (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2007), pp. 99-106; *Umbral*, 24 July 1937, p. 9.

¹⁸⁰ *Umbral*, 31 July 1937, p. 3

Here we see the Church as a collection of reprobates, obsessed with people's private lives; so degenerate that they could not be trusted with children. Moreover in the rhetoric of commissars, the Church was one of the groups to blame for the uprising that permitted the invader onto Spanish soil. In short the Church, in conjunction with the Monarchy, was no ally of the Spanish anarchist. Spain before the revolution had been ruled by these men, it was they who had allowed for landowners, the Civil Guard and capitalists to exploit the worker and the peasant and only through victory could a return to this nightmare be averted.

The fear of defeat was exacerbated by the portrayal of fascism, as an even more formidable opponent to the people than the traditional class enemies. It was the moral nadir of humanity; its authority was 'a state of oppression, where the only ones who have liberty are the priest, the thief and the capitalist murderer'.¹⁸¹ It was the antithesis of all that *cenetistas* held dear: it opposed freedom as it represented the 'perpetuation of slavery and the exploitation of man by man'; it opposed the proletariat as it represented 'the labour of workers for the profit of the big capitalists and landowners... hunger and submission to authority' and it represented war as it was 'the germ of all violence'.¹⁸² *Umbral* described a defeat to this ideology in suitably apocalyptic terms:

Our defeat would signify, not a return to the state of things on the 19th of July, but to a state of slavery for the proletariat, like how it found itself a few decades ago. It would represent the loss of all liberties and popular conquests; conquests and liberties that cost so much blood, struggles and sacrifice to conquer.¹⁸³

Libertad offered a similar interpretation of the victory of the fascist menace:

With the triumph of fascism we would experience brutal repressions, they would close Universities and other cultural centres to the young, while they would open wide the doors of the prisons, gaols and concentration camps.

With fascism we would get the days of hunger; in a word; slavery. The fascist state is the faithful interpretation of crime and barbarity, evidenced by the vile and cowardly bombing of civilians and the defenceless, killing innocent people.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 1, p. 15.

¹⁸² *El Frente*, 18 October 1937, p. 2; *El Frente*, 6 November 1937, p. 4.

¹⁸³ *Umbral*, 19 July 1937, p. 1

¹⁸⁴ *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 1, p. 15.

Alongside these fears for their own safety and those of the people in general, more emotive calls were made as anarchists were instructed to fight against fascism to protect not only themselves but also their loved ones. Implications were made about the necessity to fight fascism (and fascist men) as it ‘embodied brutality’ and, therefore, anarchists needed to ‘defend the honour of our mothers, sisters, wives and girlfriends’.¹⁸⁵ Fear of fascism, therefore, comprised an important part of the motivational content of anarchist martial politics and this was strengthened by the identification of these fascists as foreigners, adding a nationalist tinge to the antifascism.

At first impression it would seem that a nationalist interpretation of the Civil War, although in keeping with the ideas of the *Ejército Popular*, was not suitable to an ideology as internationalist as Spanish anarchism. However, during the war, anarchism embraced nationalist discourse as the nation came to be viewed as a community of workers, who throughout time had been constantly faced by foreign and bourgeois threats to their freedom.¹⁸⁶ The Spanish people were ‘racially anti-dictatorial’ and had a fundamental national opposition to ‘oppression’ and ‘fascism’.¹⁸⁷ They were ‘a sublime example of a brave people’ one that represented the national antipathy of ‘tyranny and terror which national and international fascism represents’.¹⁸⁸ Those who fought against the people could consequently only be seen as traitors or foreigners.¹⁸⁹ The portrayal of the proletarian Republic as the true Spain permitted for a more overt, xenophobic nationalism to come to the fore as anarchist propaganda adopted the discourse of the invasion wholeheartedly. The National Socialist German and Italian fascist invaders, aided by traitors like Mola and Franco, wished to rob Spain of her sovereignty and enslave her people:

The treacherous generals intended it, to make Spain a colony of Italy and Germany, invading Iberian soil through men and arms, for which they intended the same privileges of civilization as they had Abyssinia.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁵ *El Frente*, 5 October 1937, p. 2.

¹⁸⁶ Nuñez Seixas, “Nations in arms against the invader...”, p. 54; Nuñez Seixas, *¡Fuerza el invasor!...*, pp. 62-77.

¹⁸⁷ *El Frente*, 16 August 1937, p. 1.

¹⁸⁸ *El Frente*, 11 October 1937, pp. 1-2.

¹⁸⁹ *Solidaridad Obrera*, November 20 1937, p. 1.

¹⁹⁰ *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 4, p. 2.

These ‘privileges of civilization’ meant the introduction of fascism and curtailment of all the natural Spanish inclinations such as freedom, equality and fraternity. If this were to be allowed to happen, ‘the Spanish would cease to be, becoming being subject to vassalage imposed by the colonizer’, the nation itself, robbed of its free proletarian nature, would be lost.¹⁹¹

The colonialist intentions of the Italians and Germans were presented in a matter of fact manner; their rapacious desires not even a subject for debate:

Germany and Italy each have an excess in population and a deficit in primary materials. Germany wants our mines in Rio Tinto, Almaden, Linares and Asturias; our factories in Vizcaya and Catalonia, our ports and our shipyards. Italy wants the oil of Andalusia, the wine of La Mancha, the oranges of Levante and the wheat of Castilla.¹⁹²

Here we see a descent into base national stereotyping, showing the enemy to be either a functional German, only concerned with industry or a romantic Italian, obsessed with food. Neither was an edifying presentation, but they served to show the enemy as a greedy brute, interested only in their own national wellbeing rather than that of another nation, or of the international proletariat. Fascists, after all, were only interested in ‘ruthless war between men to satisfy their vile imperial appetites, their egoisms of economic superiority and their longing for dominance over the proletarian majority’.¹⁹³

Fascism could therefore not be permitted to win, lest all the gains of the revolution be lost or worse still, foreigners be allowed to rob Spain of her riches and enslave her people. However, the only way to ensure that victory was achieved and this predacious enemy prevented from imposing his vile will on the Spanish people was to accept militarization and discipline, to engage wholeheartedly in the experiment that was the *Ejército Popular*. Just as it was the first idea that forced the movement to accept militarization, it became the most utilised means to keep the soldiers motivated. The sacrifice of ideals was a cross to bear yet, as *Umbral* would state in July 1937, ‘it’s worth what we have done and how much still remains to be done, provided we attain victory’.¹⁹⁴ *El Frente* supported this, whilst reinforcing the idea of Republican unity stating that:

¹⁹¹ *Umbral*, 19 July 1937, p. 1

¹⁹² *Libertad*, Año 1, Número, 3, p. 2.

¹⁹³ *El Frente*, 6 November 1937, p. 4.

¹⁹⁴ *Umbral*, 19 July 1937, p. 1.

It is in everyone's interests to win the war... for that we have accepted a multitude of things, that had we not been at war, we would not have admitted, but we are in the dance and we must dance.¹⁹⁵

This 'dance', was known to every anarchist and was inescapable, the war had caused them to make sacrifices they would have preferred to have not made, and this was recognized in propaganda. However, *Espartacus* clarified the issues clearly:

However much it is argued, however much we strive to maintain our principles, there is a latent reality that is above all, and war, like it or not, is the heart that binds us all, no one, absolutely no one, escapes the effect of their influences.¹⁹⁶

There was no escaping defeat if the Republic lost, so arguments over anarchist principle and ideology were irrelevant when faced with an enemy as ruthless as International Fascism.

Ultimately, therefore, all issues were rationalized through the prism of victory and all sacrifices made in its name. However, that is not to underplay the other factors; the CNT remained a left wing, proletarian organization and emphasizing these factors made affiliation with the Republic and its allies, those who had crushed the revolution and, it cannot be forgotten, killed anarchists, less painful. Yet, in regards to the issues that contravened anarchist scruples such as military discipline and unflinching submission to the *mando único* (single command), the necessity for victory – perhaps better understood as fear of defeat – was the preferred rhetorical means.

¹⁹⁵ *El Frente*, 19 July 1937, p. 9.

¹⁹⁶ *Espartacus*, 1 April 1938, p. 9.

Short Term Gains, Long Term Recriminations – Conclusions on *Cenetista* Military Discourse

This discourse would remain the attitude in the CNT military until the end of the war, one of defence of unity and discipline due to fear of defeat. In reality this proved to be a suitably *cenetista* programme, with no repeat of the May Days or any other conflagration against their allies until 5 March 1939, less than a month before the end of the War.¹⁹⁷ It is true that with the state reasserting its unchallenged physical and political authority following the May Days the CNT was left with no means to oppose the status quo, but this would be to only tell half of the story. It appears that *cenetistas* engaged with the material presented – with many in soldiers' letters mimicking the themes outlined.

The idea of the war as one between Spaniards and invaders was elucidated, albeit not too widely, with one soldier stating in 1938 that he felt an 'unwavering faith in the victory of the Spanish people against international fascism'. Moreover, he was willing to remain loyal to this cause, this faith enough to ensure that he would 'be forever enthusiastic and constant until seeing our soil free of oppressive forces'.¹⁹⁸ Yet for many more the war was to be viewed as a proletarian struggle, one in which Spain was at the forefront of an international endeavour for the betterment of the people; according to one soldier in 1937, the war was very much a 'class war'.¹⁹⁹ However, what pervaded both of these ideas was a uniform hatred towards the enemy, a desire to see fascism defeated, if only out of fear of what it would impose. One soldier, writing in 1937, would state as much, listing his fears of what would happen if the Republic were to lose: 'if we lost the war ... our Spain, glory of all nations, would be invaded and divided between foreign fascist scum and we would become, our children too, slaves'.²⁰⁰ These ideas were sufficient to create a climate in which anarchist soldiers to would claim 'never [to] be dismayed... with the moments of sacrifice, which we currently spend' as they understood that 'tomorrow this sacrifice will give us our happiness and such fruits we will all cherish'. The desire for some form of gratification for this sacrifice was not quelled, yet the necessity for it to be granted immediately was absent. The theme of sacrifice, in order to 'bring the final battle to a fascism that wants to humiliate us', seemingly

¹⁹⁷ The conflagration in question was a *coup d'état* that toppled Negrín and his PCE allies, led by Republican general Segismundo Casado. The motivation for the coup was the erroneous belief that the Francoists would impose a gentler peace with the excision of the PCE. Helen Graham, *Socialism and War: The Spanish Socialist Party in Power and Crisis, 1936–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge university Press, 1991), pp. 223-244.

¹⁹⁸ Cited in Cervera Gil, *Ya sabes mi paradero...*, p. 365.

¹⁹⁹ Núñez Seixas, *¡Fuera el invasor!...*, pp. 159-160.

²⁰⁰ Cited in *Ibid...*, p. 159.

superseded any latent revolutionary ambition.²⁰¹ Effectively, the ideas of the Commissariat were accepted and engaged with by *cenetistas*, who came to view the war in terms akin to those outlined in the motivational programme of the *Ejército Popular*.

That is not to say that the anarchist lines were a paragon of enthusiasm and there remained frequent cases of desertion and indiscipline. Yet morale did not collapse within CNT units any more than in any other unit and the disciplinary indiscretions of *cenetistas* were rarely for political crimes, committed instead for the apolitical indiscretions of drunkenness, hunger and cowardice.²⁰² Political recriminations only really began to show themselves immediately before the Fall of Catalonia in January 1939 with soldiers, sensing defeat was near, criticising the PCE and its perceived obscurantism and megalomania. One example came in the form of a young *cenetista* named Floreal, who accused PCE aligned officers he knew of hoarding supplies and destroying the minutes of meetings.²⁰³ Yet despite this he maintained an enthusiasm for the war, even going so far as to be frustrated by the apparent demoralization of the other troops, insisting in January 1939 that ‘the situation is not hopeless and there is still reason for heroic measures’, going on to outline a plan which involved calling up the final reserve units, those aged 16 and 41, to repel the enemy.²⁰⁴ There would be no stated desire to return to a policy of voting on orders and informal discipline for this particular *cenetista* soldier. However, once all was actually lost, there was a relatively swift return, among some high ranking *cenetistas* at least, to a more classically ‘anarchist’ philosophy. With the rationale for unity and sacrifice, victory over the fascist invader, now gone, there was recovery of the previously absent libertarian sensibilities and a renewed enthusiasm for the ‘revolution’, which consequently became mythologized in sympathetic historiography.²⁰⁵ However, what must not be forgotten is that, up until the final two months of the conflict, there was an acceptance of the ‘Republican’ project amongst soldiers affiliated to the CNT.

In the context of this thesis, the simple conclusion to be drawn is that ‘Republicanism’ was easily tailored to suit the CNT’s ideological palate. However, to imagine that this was

²⁰¹ Cited in Cervera Gil, *Ya sabes mi paradero...*, p. 337.

²⁰² Seidman, *Republic of Egos...*, p. 214; Michael Seidman, “Quiet Fronts...”, pp. 836-837; PS-BARCELONA 809, 1; El día 13 Marzo se organizaron las milicias confederales de este sector, las cuales pasaron a tomar parte del Ejército, y debiéndose a la Division Autonoma “D”.

²⁰³ Cited in Cervera Gil, *Ya sabes mi paradero...*, p. 386.

²⁰⁴ Cited in *Ibid...*, p. 400.

²⁰⁵ This is best elucidated in Isaac Martín Nieto, “El mito del paraíso revolucionario perdido. La guerra civil española en la historia militante libertaria”, *Ayer*, Vol. 89, (2013), pp. 145-166; Alicia Alted Vigil, “El exilio de los anarquistas” in *Tierra y libertad: cien años anarquismo en España*, ed. Julián Casanova, (Barcelona: Crítica, 2010), pp. 187-188.

merely a happy coincidence would be naïve, as it is clear that the CNT's own ideology became severely altered and influenced due to its interaction with the authors of the Popular Army's political programme. Political influence outside of the *Ejército Popular* meant that the CNT became a more 'republican' organization, and, through the cooperation of the commissars, who were well trained in and seemingly enthusiastic for the Republican project, a *cenetista* propaganda programme was created that reflected this. The men were consequently educated that ideological sacrifice and cooperation were the only means to achieve victory, or, more accurately, avoid disastrous defeat.

The Republican template offered suitable latitude to allow for the propaganda of the *cenetista* commissars to indulge in populist anti-capitalist sloganeering to their hearts' content, with vitriolic statements regarding capitalism and fascism being a key component of the motivational programme. However the revolution, a key part of anarchist identity, was stripped of its meaning and any and all criticism of fellow members of the Popular Front was completely absent. The CNT, in terms of its martial politics at least, became a virtually textbook republican organization, as evidenced by its commissars' defence of the Popular Army and unity at all ideological costs. The CNT's military propaganda from the beginnings of militarization to the end of the war was evidence of a constant retreat from ideals. First came the acceptance of the military, then the loss of the revolution, then the abandonment of any revolutionary programme all under the auspices of unity in the name of victory. The CNT's commissars were only too happy to help this retreat, engaging in the Faustian pact with the Republicans and Communists in the name of victory.

Here we have an answer to the historiographical question posed at the beginning of the chapter. The rejection of libertarian communism in favour of Republicanism in order 'to win the war' and the subsequent lack of opposition amongst troops meant that, on the surface, there was little to differentiate the CNT from other Republican groups following the revolution. The result was that the formerly historically remarkable *cenetistas* that realised an anarchist revolution became merely another leftist union, with little to distinguish them from their allies other than their history.

In conclusion, the motivational programme of the *Ejército Popular* proved to be suitably broad enough to appeal to *cenetistas*, yet this was not merely a case of it proving to be a universally applicable programme. The CNT and its affiliated soldiers were, due to events in the war, forced to reassess their political ambitions and accept that their revolutionary aims were, for the short to medium term, no longer attainable. In this context the Republican programme became newly appealing. However, there remained ideological

incongruities and the not inconsiderable problem that the Republic and its authorities were responsible for the destruction of the revolution and the death of *cenetistas*. It is here that the importance of the Political Commissariat is seen, as through the work of these skilled, well trained and committed individuals a programme that appealed to *cenetista* sensibilities could be forged, even after they had lost so much at the hands of their supposed allies. It is here where the *Ejército Popular* was most successful; by having a programme suitably broad to be easily manipulated to any group of a vaguely leftist leaning and having a Commissariat committed and gifted enough to make it a reality. However, due to the programme's reliance on the fear of defeat, it did not have any longer lasting effects, with Republican sentiment collapsing and political recriminations beginning almost as soon as the war was lost.

Chapter Four: God, *Patria* and Freedom – Motivating the *gudaris* of the *Euzko*

Gudarostea

The *gudaris* of the *Euzko Gudarostea*, the soldiers affiliated to the *Partido Nacionalista Vasco* (Basque Nationalist Party, PNV), have been selected as a case study in this thesis as they typify the extreme right of the Republican alliance. Although to even define the Basque nationalists and their troops as part of any sort of ‘Republican alliance’ would be to downplay their autonomous claim and the extent to which they emphasized it. Basque nationalists, both military and Civilian, were a socially conservative, devoutly Catholic group, who saw themselves as distinct from the Spanish Republic and their Francoist enemies. As has already been made clear, the ‘Republicanism’ was a markedly leftist undertaking, with tones of Spanish nationalism that, if not wholly anti-clerical, certainly had an uneasy relationship with the Catholic Church. The aim of this chapter is to assess how the means of motivation for Basque nationalist troops fit in the Republican project, essentially, how were the distinctly ‘un-Republican’ ideals of the Basque nationalists, in the case of this thesis best typified by the PNV, rectified with those of the Republic. The argument of the chapter is that the propaganda and means of motivation of the PNV’s columns signify a failure of the ‘Republican’ project for several reasons, the main being that, due to extra-military political considerations, there was no significant attempt to create a relationship between the ideals of the autonomous Basque region, *Euskadi*, and the rest of the antifascist alliance. Fundamentally, the output of the political organs of the PNV and their allies, most prominently *Gudari*, *Lan-Deya* and *Euzkadi*, was the antithesis of the previous case study as each elected to ignore a broader, antifascist understanding of the conflict and instead focus on content that was distinctly and idiosyncratically Basque nationalist.

At this juncture it worth clarifying the Catalan question i.e. to explain why this chapter, that focuses so much on the issue of regional autonomy, will not directly deal with the role of Catalan nationalists. There are of course similarities between the Basque and Catalan cases that make the study of Catalonia during the Civil War worthwhile and most of the issues that were important to Basque nationalists were shared by their Catalan counterparts, namely cultural specificity, linguistic differences and questions of sovereignty. However, the primary aim of this study is not the relations between the centre and the peripheral nationalisms, but the relationship between the Republic and its various political constituents. To this end Basque nationalism offers a far more rewarding case study due to its relative conservatism and Catholicism in comparison to the Catalan case – a nationalist

ideology, of course, but one with social-democratic leanings, an anti-clerical tendency and a relationship with the centre less fractious than the Carlist-hued Basque one.¹

The chapter will begin with an outline of *peneuvista* political thought, and the background as to how the Conservative PNV came to be allies with the leftist Republic prior to the outbreak of war. Following this there will be an overview of the differences between the *Euzko Gudarostea* and the Popular Army, leading into an analysis of the two groups' martial politics. Ultimately the chapter will examine *gudaris*' own motivations in the conflict and how these reflected the limitations of Republican motivational framework.

¹ For a comparative study of the Basque, Catalan and Galician peripheral nationalisms in the Spanish Civil War see Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas, "Las patrias de la república: la experiencia de los nacionalistas periféricos durante la guerra civil española (1936-1939)", *Historia Contemporánea* 38, (2010), pp. 13-47; Núñez Seixas, *¡Fuera el invasor!...*, pp. 356-428.

Jaungoikua eta Lagi-zara: The PNV in the Second Republic

At the outset, it is worth clarifying the ideological basis of Basque nationalism, its values and aims, in order to better understand political position that *gudaris* would face while fighting in the Civil War. Essentially, Basque nationalism during the Republican period and Civil War was based on, but not wholly married to, the beliefs of Sabino Arana-Goiri, the father of Basque nationalism and its foremost ideologue. Arana, a Bilbao lawyer from a Carlist family, was a strident separatist, who believed that the Spanish and the Basque peoples were fundamentally different and had no place in the same state.² These differences were made manifest in the key areas of morality, history, culture and race. In one work, *Bizkaitarra*, Arana focused on the dissimilarities between Spaniards and their Basque (in this case, more specifically, Vizcayan) counterparts.³ For Arana, the people of Vizcaya were distinctly superior to their Spanish equivalent; ‘the Vizcayan was intelligent... the Spaniard is short of intelligence’, ‘the Vizcayan is an entrepreneur... the Spaniard undertakes nothing’, ‘the Vizcayan is hard working, the Spaniard is lazy’ and while the ‘Vizcayan does not serve, he was born to be a lord, the Spaniard was born to be no more than a vassal and a servant’. This difference was also noticeable in the morals of each people, for while ‘the Vizcayan is charitable to his enemies, the Spaniard is avaricious even to his brothers’ and the ‘Basque loves his family and his home’ yet ‘between Spaniards adultery is frequent’.⁴ The root of this moral superiority came from the devout Catholicism of the Basque race, which was ‘in its character, in its tradition... essentially Catholic’. God even came before the *Patria* for Arana, who stated that ‘If my people resisted [this assertion], I would renounce my race; without God we do not want anything’.⁵ The Spanish people, on the other hand, had ‘forever resisted [the Church’s] beneficial influence, always remaining irreligious and immoral’ and this was reflected in their racial shortcomings. Consequently, the conclusion was made that for the spiritual good of the Basque people, they needed to be free of Spain: ‘Bizkaya [sic], if

² For more on Sabino Arana and a more detailed study of his ideas of nationalism, see Esteban Antxustegi Igartua, *El debate nacionalista: Sabino Arana y sus herederos*, (Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 2007), *passim*; Javier Corcuera Atienza, *The Origins, Ideology, and Organization of Basque Nationalism, 1876-1903*, (Nevada: Centre for Basque Studies, 2006), *passim*.

³ Throughout the thesis I have, in an effort to avoid confusion, used the English translation, provided one exists, for each Spanish region or city referred to. However, in the case of Vizcaya, I have chosen to use the Spanish original instead of the antiquated Biscay, which, much like Saragossa for Zaragoza, has fallen out of common usage. Furthermore, due to the content of the chapter and the rhetorical importance of the work, I shall also, from time to time, use *Euskadi* as shorthand for the Basque Country. However, when directly quoting primary material I will use the spelling adopted by the PNV, *Euzkadi*.

⁴ Sabino Arana-Goiri, *Páginas de Sabino Arana – fundador del nacionalismo vasco*, 2ª edición, (Madrid: Criterio Libros, 2001), pp. 46-7.

⁵ *Ibid...*, p. 33.

dependent on Spain, cannot address God, cannot, in practice, be Catholic'.⁶ The attitude amongst Basque nationalists that their people were distinctly Catholic was a durable one, lasting up to and throughout the Civil War. This was not mere hyperbole, there was profound evidence for it; a 1936 survey conducted by the bishop of Vitoria reported in the rural areas of the Basque Country almost 100 per cent were practising Catholics, while in urban areas these figures dropped off, they still remained healthy and over 50 per cent.⁷ The Basque clergy themselves were considered the best in Spain, their piety and theological knowledge unquestioned. Moreover, before the outbreak of the war, of Spain's sixty-one dioceses, fourteen had a Basque-born bishop.⁸ Furthermore, the two most prominent Basque nationalist politicians, *lehendakari* (president) of the Basque government José Antonio de Aguirre and the Basque representative in the Republican Government Manuel de Irujo, were both practising Catholics.⁹

Historically, Arana saw the Basque people as separate from their Spanish counterparts. The two shared little and, up until the nineteenth century and the Carlist Wars, the Basque people had enjoyed the freedom afforded to them by the *fueros*, a mediaeval equivalent of an autonomy statute for the Basque region.¹⁰ The *fueros* afforded the region and its people special privileges and, most importantly for Arana, freedom from Castilian interference. The Carlist Wars saw the *fueros* revoked and a growing Castilian influence on the Basque nation, making it, according to Arana, part of the 'most degraded and abject nation in Europe'.¹¹ The mixing of the Basque people with the Spanish had led to a 'century of... degradation, of misery, of ruin, a century of aberrations... a century of slavery!' which in turn led to the perceived Basque moral malaise that would eventually cause him to form his ideas of nationalism.¹² This historic difference between the two people meant that there

⁶ Cited in Juan Díez Medrano, 'Patterns of Development and Nationalism: Basque and Catalan Nationalism before the Spanish Civil War', *Theory and Society*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Aug., 1994), p. 541.

⁷ *Le Clerge Basque: Rapports présentés par des pretres basques aux autorites ecclésiastiques* (Paris, 1938), pp. 11-19, cited in José M. Sánchez, *The Spanish Civil War as a Religious Tragedy*, (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), p. 72.

⁸ Francis Lannon, 'Modern Spain: The Project of a National Catholicism', *Religion and National Identity*, ed. Stewart Mews, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982), p. 582.

⁹ José Antonio de Aguirre *Freedom was Flesh and Blood*, (London: Victor Gollancz, 1945), pp. 19-20; Ronald Radosh, Mary R. Habek, Grigory Sevastianov, *Spain Betrayed: the Soviet Union in the Spanish Civil War*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 223-4.

¹⁰ While being a gross simplification, it is illustrative of the nationalism of Sabino Arana who, though opposed to a modern form of autonomy, saw the *fueros* as the indicator of *Euskadi's* archaic independence; backward, traditional in nature, that he longed to re-impose. For a more nuanced description of their development, effect and eventual abolishment, see Stanley G. Payne, *Basque Nationalism*, (Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1975), pp. 5-37.

¹¹ Arana, *Páginas de Sabino Arana...*, p. 68.

¹² *Ibid...*, p. 92. Marianne Heiburg, *The making of the Basque nation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 49-50.

were chasmic cultural differences between the Spanish and Basque people. The latter had through their separate history developed into the culturally superior race, more devoutly Christian and morally upstanding: ‘Listen to a Vizcayan speak, and you will hear the most euphonic, moral and cultured of the tongues; listen to a Spaniard, and if you only hear him bray, you can be satisfied, because the donkey does not utter obscenities nor blasphemies’.¹³

This ‘euphonic tongue’ was the greatest cultural difference between the two peoples: the Basque language, a tongue so unique that its very existence signified the profound and longstanding difference between the Basque and his Castilian neighbour.¹⁴ To Arana, himself not a native speaker and one that never became fluent, this linguistic difference was fundamental:

Euzkera is not one of many Spanish languages such as Galician, Catalan, Castilian, etc. Linguistically or internally considered, there is far more difference between *Euzkera* and any of the Spanish languages, than between it and the language spoken by the natives of Asiatic India; considering it politically, there are by law as many differences between the *Euskeriano* language and the Spanish languages as now exist between French and the latter, because *Euzkera* is the language of a people that has never been dominated by Spain, a nation that has never been Spanish, while Spanish languages belong to regions, it is certain that in abnormal political situations have been ruled independently one from to another, but they have never ceased to be Spanish kingdoms or counties.¹⁵

The Basque language, therefore, was important to the Basque people, as it highlighted the difference of *Euskerianos* from not only the Spanish, but the other lesser, autonomous movements. Furthermore, this difference needed to be fostered and protected, kept exclusive not just to the Basque people, but to Basque nationalists as a sign of their difference:

For the heart of the *Patria*, each Basque that does not know *Euskera* is a thorn; two thorns for each Basque that knows it and is not a patriot; three thorns for every Spaniard that speaks *Euskera*.¹⁶

¹³ Arana, *Páginas de Sabino Arana...*, p. 47.

¹⁴ Basque and Castilian share no common ancestry, their vocabulary rarely overlaps and their grammatical structure is fundamentally different. Furthermore, Basque was recognized as an old language, spoken in the region before the arrival of Castilian, leading some 19th century Christians to believe it to be the language of the Creation. Heiburg, *The making of the Basque nation...*, p. 13.

¹⁵ Arana-Goiri, *Páginas de Sabino Arana...*, p. 54.

¹⁶ *Ibid...*, p. 56.

Basque was a language for Basques, and needed to remain so in order to emphasize their unique nature. Certain schools taught only in Basque and children were urged to learn the language during the Republican period and the back page of *Euzkadi*, the daily of the PNV, was Basque language, as were various articles in the weekly for Basque troops *Gudari*.¹⁷

However, despite the importance of the language, it was to be the race that was the most important part of the Basque *Patria* for Arana, who saw Basque blood as something that needed to be preserved at all costs.¹⁸ According to Arana, ‘friction with the Spanish’ had caused a ‘weakness and corruption of heart’ in the Basque race, and had allowed ‘the moral character of the people’ to become ‘dead and decomposed’.¹⁹ The Basque and the Spanish were mutually exclusive, subjects of a ‘substantial ethnological difference’ and as a result the two could not live together.²⁰ The only way to ensure that the Basque race was protected from a people that ‘washed once in their life and moves once a year’ was for the Basque people to be completely separate in their own country, *Euskadi*.²¹ The task of the Basque nationalist was to therefore ‘isolate’ Basque society from ‘its interaction with the Spanish’ in order ‘to save its members, and to save those yet to come, to isolate it tomorrow absolutely through political independence’.²²

Ultimately, the ideas of Arana would be watered down as the PNV matured into an electable political party, the discourse of the party chose to focus away from vehement hatred for the Spanish people and adopt a less exclusivist ideology.²³ Nevertheless, Arana remained key, since its invention in 1933 he was remembered each year on *Aberri Eguna* (The Day of the Fatherland) which coincided with Easter Sunday, and he was referred to as ‘the maestro’ in PNV publications.²⁴ Furthermore, his slogan for the Basque nationalist movement *Jaungoikua eta Lagi-zara* (abbreviated to JEL and translated as ‘God and the old laws’ in

¹⁷Irene López-Goñi, ‘Basque Schools in Navarre: The Early Stages, 1931-1936’, *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 45, No. 4, (Winter 2005), pp. 565-592.

¹⁸ Arana was very strict on this issue, judging who was Basque by their surname – there could be no assimilation into the race ‘A Basque was a person with Basque surnames – a proof of Basque descent even though he spoke only Spanish. Conversely, a Spaniard was someone with a Spanish surname, even though he spoke only Euskera. A Sanchez would always be Spanish. A Zubizarreta always Basque’, Heiburg, *The making of the Basque nation...*, p. 52.

¹⁹ *Ibid...*, p. 43.

²⁰ *Ibid...*, p. 50.

²¹ Arana-Goiri, *Páginas de Sabino Arana...*, p. 46.

²² *Ibid...*, p 45.

²³ José Luis de la Granja, *El Oasis Vasco – El Nacimiento de Euskadi en la República y la Guerra Civil*, (Madrid: Ténos, 2007), pp. 33-4.

²⁴ ‘Now the longings of our maestro Sabino are being realized: Us for *Euzkadi* and *Euzkadi* for God’, *Gudari*, 8 April 1937, p. 13. For more on Basque nationalist ‘days of the *Patria*’ see de la Granja, *El Oasis Vasco...*, pp. 189-209.

reference to the *fueros*) remained as a mantra for the party.²⁵ Ultimately, and most importantly, his basic ideas of reverence for Catholicism and cultural, linguistic and ethnographic separatism remained key to the politics of the PNV, feeding into the most important part of Basque nationalism, namely the quest for independence for the Basque people and their homeland.

Due to their unique Catholic-Nationalist ideology the PNV, during the Republican period, so defined by the polarization of politics to either end of the political spectrum, could not be easily defined as either left or right. For while the Left were supportive of regional autonomy (the Catalan nationalists, due to their support for the Treaty of San Sebastián had been granted an autonomy statute in 1931) their social programme, including the anti-clerical reforms of the first Republican-Socialist administration, jarred with the Catholic ideals of the Basque nationalists.²⁶ Conversely, the Right's reverence for the Church and the Catholic faith as well as its anti-Marxism – a wholly unpalatable ideology for the PNV – meant that on social issues the PNV were more closely associated to them.²⁷ Yet the Right's vehement centralism, so concisely surmised by Monarchist José Calvo Sotelo's 1936 broadside against Basque nationalism: 'a Red Spain before a Broken Spain' (*antes la España roja que la España rota*), was an obstacle to any meaningful *rapprochement*.²⁸ The result was a nomadic political experience for the PNV during the Republican period. First it would align itself first locally and then nationally with the Right and sponsor the same candidates as the broad, right wing Catholic alliance of José María Gil Robles, the *Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas* (Spanish Confederation of the Autonomous Right, CEDA). Yet this relationship would inevitably come to an end as Basque wishes for autonomy fell on the deaf ears of the 'imperialist and oppressive' Cortes of the *bienio negro*.²⁹ Relations were soured further as the revolution of October 1934 saw uprisings in Asturias and Catalonia and the issue of regional autonomy came, in the mind of the Right, to be linked to the Left.³⁰ The result of this was that all the prejudices held towards the 'Marxist hordes' were heaped upon the pre-existing

²⁵ Arana-Goiri, *Páginas de Sabino Arana...*, p. 35.

²⁶ de la Granja, *El Oasis Vasco...*, pp. 32-5; Stanley G. Payne, *Spain's First Democracy – the Republic, 1931-1936*, (Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), pp. 40-41.

²⁷ The PNV, as we shall later see, had nationalist and spiritual opposition to the internationalism and Godlessness of Marxism. Francisco Rodríguez de Coro, *Nacionalismo Vasco y frente popular: el pensamiento "Euzkadi" en la crisis de 1936*, (Vitoria-Gasteiz : Servicio Central de Publicaciones del Gobierno Vasco, 1986), pp. 83-86.

²⁸ Manuel de Irujo, *La Guerra Civil en Euzkadi antes el Estatuto – cronología política de Manuel Irujo (1931-1939)*, (Bilbao: Kirikiño, 2006), p.44; Juan Pablo Fusi, "The Basque Question, 1931-37" in *Revolution and War in Spain, 1931-1939* ed. Paul Preston (New York: Methuen, 1984), p. 195.

²⁹ Irujo, *La Guerra Civil en Euzkadi...*, p. 45.

³⁰ At the outbreak of revolution Catalonia even declared an independent Catalan republic before it was quashed within 24 hours, Payne, *Basque Nationalism...*, pp. 140-143.

criticisms of the PNV's autonomy.³¹ This conflict with the parties of the Right resulted in the PNV making the reluctant decision to pursue its quest for home rule with help from those who, in the eyes of the Vatican and many in the Spanish Catholic Church, were 'the end of the Church, of Religion and of Christ'.³² This only served to further alienate the PNV from the Right who in rhetoric typical of the period adopted the unequivocal campaign slogan of 'Against the revolution and its accomplices', a pointed attack at the conservative credentials of the PNV.³³ Yet despite gaining the antipathy of the Right, the PNV were not welcomed with open arms by the Popular Front, instead they were criticised for their assumed complicity in the repression of the revolution of 1934 and their Catholicism and innately conservative politics.³⁴ Furthermore, this problem was only exacerbated by the PNV's desire to be viewed as a worthwhile right-wing alternative to the CEDA. In an election painted as a choice between 'Christ and Lenin', the PNV ostensibly on the side of *Ilich*, made their 'Basque, Catholic and counterrevolutionary' heritage known. Slogans used during the electoral campaign included 'For Christian civilization, the free *Patria* and social justice'; 'We declare... that we are followers of Christ, following the doctrines for twenty centuries'; 'The Basque Nationalist Party intended and creates laws inspired in the most pure Christianity'.³⁵ The PNV cannot, therefore, be viewed as either an ally of the Right nor the Left during the Republican period. In regards to the former, despite sharing many similarities, the *raison d'être* of the Basque nationalists and the centralism of the Rightists meant that there could never be a working alliance between the two. Conversely, even though there was a shared antipathy between the Popular Front and the PNV on most social issues, they agreed on the topic of regional autonomy, meaning that the PNV's best hope of realising its wish was through the abettors of 'red extremism'.³⁶ To this end the Popular Front government entered negotiations with the PNV for an autonomy statute that was ready, but not passed, by the outbreak of war in July 1936.³⁷

The outbreak of war and the eruption of open violence between the Left and the Right meant that the PNV, with its torn political loyalties, no longer had the luxury of vacillating

³¹ Rodríguez de Coro, *Nacionalismo Vasco y frente popular...*, p. 19.

³² The words of Cardinal Giuseppe Pizzardo cited in Rodríguez de Coro, *Nacionalismo Vasco y frente popular...*, p. 15.

³³ Julián Sanz Hoya, *De la Resistencia de la Reacción – las derechas frente a la Segunda República*, (Cantabria, 1931-1936), (Santander: Servicio de publicaciones de la Universidad de Cantabria, 2006), p. 231.

³⁴ Juan Pablo Fusi Aizpurúa, *El problema vasco en la II república* (Madrid: Ediciones Turner, 1979), p.129.

³⁵ Juan Pablo Fusi, 'The Basque Question...', p. 198; Rodríguez de Coro, *Nacionalismo Vasco y frente popular...*, pp. 14-15.

³⁶ *Euzkadi*, 9 February 1936, p. 1.

³⁷ Juan Pablo Fusi, 'The Basque Question...', p. 198; p. 199.

between two, a decision over its allegiance would have to be made. The immediate result of the events of 17-19 July 1936 was that two Basque Provinces, Álava and Navarre, immediately fell into the hands of rebels and, illustrative of the PNV's split ideological loyalties, the PNV authorities in both of these regions did not hesitate to declare themselves for the uprising.³⁸ This decision was a simple one, the monopoly of arms held by the rebels meant that any opposition would be met with repression. Moreover, aligning with the Carlists, who claimed to be defending the Church with a rallying cry of *¡Viva Cristo Rey!* against the Marxist hordes – Marxist hordes who at this very moment were killing clergy and burning down churches – was not a huge ideological leap, made even easier by the Carlists themselves supporting some form of regional autonomy at the beginning of the conflict. Support was such that many *peneuvistas* from Álava and Navarre were to be found marching to the front as members of the Carlist *requetés*.³⁹ A further display of the PNV's rightist tinge was evident in the build-up to the outbreak of war as clandestine moves were made by some *peneuvistas* to arm the Party 'in order to form an armed Basque militia that could go into action as soon as the Communist revolution... broke out... with the sole aim of saving the Basque country from Communist chaos'.⁴⁰ By September Guipúzcoa had fallen to Mola's Army of the North, cutting off the loyal Northern regions (Asturias, Cantabria and Vizcaya) and leaving Vizcaya as the only Basque region not under Rebel control. The question over the loyalty of Vizcaya, the only region where a choice could effectively be made, saw the PNV leadership choose to side with the 'legally constituted Republican Regime'.⁴¹ Much was made of the legality of the Republic from the outset and throughout the war, as if to clarify to any *peneuvistas* with reservations (of which there were many), that, in international relations, the Spanish Republic was the legitimate government.⁴² At the outbreak of War, Aguirre cited that support of the PNV was for the Republic as it was 'in consonance with the democratic and republican regime that was particular to our people in its centuries of freedom'.⁴³ *Euzkadi* would regularly reiterate this fact, one such article from November 1936 put the situation in simple, unequivocal terms:

³⁸ Núñez Seixas, 'Las patrias de la república...', pp. 17-18.

³⁹ Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas, 'Los nacionalistas vascos durante la guerra civil (1936-1939): una cultura de guerra diferente', *Historia Contemporánea*, 35, 2007, p. 563.

⁴⁰ Aguirre cited in Payne, *Basque Nationalism...*, pp. 161-2; Núñez Seixas, 'Los nacionalistas vascos...', p. 561.

⁴¹ CDMH, Delegación Nacional de Servicios Documentales de la Presidencia del Gobierno, SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-SANTANDER_L, 629, 8, *INFORME DE DON ANTONIO DE ZARRABEITIA Y ARREGUI, JEFE DE LA MERINDAD DE ARKUDIAGA*.

⁴² According to Aguirre, roughly a third of Basques in Vizcaya were actively in favour of the uprising. Heiburg, *The making of the Basque nation...*, p. 87.

⁴³ *Euzkadi*, 19 July 1936, p. 1.

The fact is, whether or not the anathematized moralist of nationalism confess it, that in the current bloody movement those on the left are the legal and legitimate government of the Spanish State and the Rightists of the military rebels are against these powers.⁴⁴

So far this chapter has failed to note that in the Basque country and Bilbao especially, there were large swathes of the population that identified as ‘leftist’, and importantly, although having a supplementary Basque identity, were not primarily nationalist.⁴⁵ This section of the populace, roughly a third, has been argued as a supplementary influence on the PNV joining the antifascist effort.⁴⁶ Mainly members of the UGT but with some *cenetistas* and Communists as well, the left in the Basque country provided a bulwark of support for the loyal forces that actively sought out and nullified its right wing equivalent. While there remained a violent mobilization of opposition to the uprising, the PNV were unlikely to choose to side with the rebels for fear of reprisals. Ultimately, however, the PNV’s swift decision to join with the Republic meant that the worst revolutionary excesses witnessed in other parts of Spain were avoided in the Basque country, the party helping to keep order in Bilbao and the other leftist flashpoints.⁴⁷

In regards to the PNV remaining neutral in a war between *Spaniards*, this was never likely to happen given that it was home of some of Spain’s most productive industry and that a core belief of one of the two warring sides was that the Basque country was part of the nation being fought over, this was never likely to happen.

Yet despite the legal argument and the threat of leftist violence, the fundamental reason for the choice to join the Republic was clear; that it was the only means to attain any

⁴⁴ *Euzkadi*, 22 November 1936, p. 1.

⁴⁵ The PNV was not the first electoral party in the Basque industrial centres, that honour went to the PSOE, the PNV held political sway in the Basque country due to its popularity amongst the rural electorate. Furthermore, it was difficult to find a Basque of any stripe in this period that did not approve some form of autonomy. José Antonio de Aguirre claimed in his autobiography that the result of a 1933 plebiscite of the Basque country (excluding Navarre) on independence met with 90% approval, *Freedom...*, p. 41, and although an exaggeration, it was not much of one, with the actual result being 84% in favour of autonomy, Payne, *Basque Nationalism...*, p. 134.

⁴⁶ Sánchez, *The Spanish Civil War as a Religious Tragedy...*, pp. 75-6; The political situation of the Basque Country during the Second Republic was described as a ‘triangular struggle’ by José Luis de la Granja, given the similar support enjoyed by the PNV, the CEDA and the Republican and Socialist groups. *El Oasis Vasco...*, pp. 55-56; pp.118-119.

⁴⁷ Obviously the fact that the security services remained loyal to the Republic was the most important reason for this, but the PNV managed to ensure that churches and private property remained respected in the Basque capital. Graham, *The Spanish Republic...*, pp. 241-2; Santiago de Pablo, *Tierra sin Paz – Guerra Civil, cine y propaganda en el País Vasco*, (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2006), p. 19.

form of autonomy statute.⁴⁸ In the end, it was the only likely course of action for three main reasons. The first being that a statute of autonomy was all but ready to be granted by the Republic before the outbreak of hostilities, the second being that it was highly unlikely that the PNV could remain neutral and the third being that joining the rebels was incredibly unlikely to happen, given the latter's virulent hatred in regards to peripheral nationalism, one which had only intensified with the outbreak of war.⁴⁹ Yet Basque involvement was far from enthusiastic, and its entry into the war was reluctant, typified by the fact that the vast majority of units affiliated to the PNV, the *Euzko Gudarostea*, did not leave for the front until 25 September, two days after the statute of independence was ratified in the *Cortes*.⁵⁰ The Basque nationalists were not Republicans, this is clear, but an alliance with the Republic represented the means to achieve their singular goal, and it is perhaps fitting that an Arana, in this case Luis, the brother of Sabino, best manages to succinctly capture the mood of most Vizcayan Basque nationalists in the summer of 1936:

The Basque Nationalist Party in *Jaungoikua eta Lagi-zara* lives only for *Euzkadi* and if this government and regime is bad for *Euzkadi*, a fascist military government would be worse. Therefore, the PNV is obliged to maintain order at all costs because we live in our house, our fatherland, in our Vizcaya and it is our duty to conserve it.⁵¹

The Statute ultimately came on 1 October 1936, with José Antonio de Aguirre being sworn in as the first *lehendakari* of *Euskadi* in the shadow of the *Gernikako Arbola* (the Tree of Guernica, the site where the *fueros* were ratified by the Kings of Castile) on 7 October.⁵² Aguirre's PNV, as the largest single political party in the Basque country and despite the large leftist presence, were handed the political initiative by the statute. The cabinet put together was a PNV dominated affair, with Aguirre taking the presidency as well the Defence ministry; further PNV ministries were Culture, Justice, Interior and the Treasury as Agriculture went to the liberal PNV offshoot *Acción Nacionalista Vasco* (Basque Nationalist Action, ANV), Commerce to the *Izquierda Republicana*, Labour, Social Services and

⁴⁸ This is the generally agreed upon historical consensus, Santiago de Pablo, Ludger Mees and José Antonio Rodríguez Ranz, *El péndulo patriótico – Historia del Partido Nacionalista Vasco, II: 1936-1979*, (Barcelona: Crítica, 2001), p. 10; Núñez Seixas, 'Los nacionalistas vascos durante la guerra civil...', p. 564.

⁴⁹ See Chapter One.

⁵⁰ de Pablo, Mees and Rodríguez Ranz, *El péndulo patriótico...*, p. 17; Núñez Seixas, 'Los nacionalistas vascos...', p. 570.

⁵¹ Cited in Heiburg, *The making of the Basque nation...*, p. 87.

⁵² Juan Pablo Fusi Aizpurúa, *El País Vasco, 1931-1937: autonomía, revolución, Guerra Civil*, (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2002), p. 231.

Industry to the PSOE and Public works to the *Partido Comunista de Euzkadi*, the PCE's Basque arm.⁵³ *Euskadi* was now an autonomous political entity and within it the PNV, with its cabinet majority and control of all the major ministries, was the master of its own dominion. The political and, by now, geographical separation of *Euskadi* from the central government meant that the Basque country was a wholly autonomous entity. This idea was a deeply ingrained one, as far as many Basques were concerned, following the capture of Irun and the closure of the border with France, the Basque Nation was on its own (choosing to ignore the Cantabrians and Asturians to the west). Aguirre in his 1945 memoir *Freedom was Flesh and Blood* described the situation in suitably heroic terms:

After the fall of Irun the land frontier with the rest of the world was shut off for us. We were surrounded on all sides, just as those brave men of Bataan were surrounded. Our only possible outlet was the closely guarded sea and the air already dominated by Hitler.⁵⁴

Therefore, we see that, from the outset of the war, the ideological starting position of *peneuvistas* was not akin to that of the Popular Front; to them, *Euskadi* was an independent entity. The alliance with the Republic was a means to an end; initially to obtain autonomy and, following the granting of the statute, the perpetuation of the war as a means to protect that autonomy. The subsequent sections of this chapter will focus on the role of the PNV's propaganda in reinforcing these ideas to its soldiers.

⁵³ Fernando de Meer, *El Partido Nacionalista Vasco ante la Guerra de España (1936-1937)*, (Pamplona, 1992). p. 181.

⁵⁴ Aguirre, *Freedom...*, p. 43.

Euzko-Gudarostea – The Soldiers of the PNV

In regards to the theme of this chapter, the most important result of the Basque autonomy statute was the scope given to *Euskadi* and, by extension, the PNV, to wage war on an independent footing. The Basque armed forces were effectively free from Republican interference for the main part of the war in the North. This resulted in a wholly different experience for the soldiers of the PNV, as the centripetal influence of the Republic on the political development of the troops was mostly absent. The outbreak of war saw the PNV and other Basque nationalist groups, namely the *Solidaridad de Trabajadores Vascos* (Basque Workers Solidarity, STV), *Euzko Nekazari Bazkuna* (Organization of Basque Farmers, ENB), *Euzkadi Mendigoxale Batza* (Board of Basque Mountaineers, EMB) create the Basque Militias, who, due to a shortage of arms, were stationed in the rear until September 1936, leaving the militias of the socialists, anarchists, communists and left republicans to serve at the front.⁵⁵ The end of September 1936 saw formation of the *Euzko Gudarostea* in Vizcaya and as with the autonomy statute the PNV was given official military authority over the defence of *Euskadi*.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the PNV was guaranteed total political control over its own units, freeing them from Popular Frontist ‘contamination’, while the party also ensured that, until February 1937, only Basque units would fight in *Euskadi* and *gudaris*, with the exception of certain units stranded following the capture of Irún, would only be stationed on the Basque front.⁵⁷ Unsurprisingly, as the pressures of war took their toll, this separate command structure resulted only in problems between the Army of *Euskadi* and its Asturian and Cantabrian counterparts, as problems of coordination came to undermine the war effort in the North.⁵⁸

One fundamental difference that made the PNV soldiers political experience of the war different to their counterparts in the centre, east and south was that in the Army of *Euskadi* there were no Commissars until May 1937. There was a plain refusal on behalf of the Autonomous Government to accept political officers within the *Euzko Gudarostea*, Manuel de Irujo stating in January 1937 that:

⁵⁵ Manuel Vargas Alonso, ‘El Partido Nacionalista Vasco en Guerra: Euzko Gudarostea (1936-1937)’, *Vasconia*, 31, (2001), pp. 306; Fraser, *Blood of Spain...*, p. 189.

⁵⁶ Núñez Seixas, ‘Los nacionalistas vascos...’, pp. 566-7;

⁵⁷ Vargas Alonso, ‘El Partido Nacionalista Vasco en Guerra...’, p. 310.

⁵⁸ de Pablo, ‘La guerra civil en el País Vasco...’, p. 131.

In *Euzkadi* we have a way of seeing the war that's not exactly the same as on all other fronts of the territories of the state... there are no committees or delegates and politicians in the battalions, there are chiefs, there are official orders and single command.⁵⁹

The primary reason for this refusal was that they were seen as a leftist and centrist institution. Not only was the Commissariat a Republican institution that answered to the central government undermining the sovereignty of *Euzkadi* and the autonomy of the *Euzko Gudarostea*, it was also seen as a 'Communist invention' that would only undermine political authority of the PNV with Marxist ideas.⁶⁰ Moreover, many units of *gudaris*, like their rebel counterparts, had priests and chaplains attached to them who, while caring for the spiritual wellbeing of the soldiers, also fulfilled some of the morale-boosting duties and political education-based of a Commissar – masses were celebrated at the front in which *ikurriñas* (Basque flags) were blessed and soldiers urged to remember the teachings of Arana.⁶¹ As we have seen the Commissariat, in many cases, were introduced to instil discipline and, through educating the men as to why they were fighting, offer an alternative approach to traditional military discipline. In the Basque country this was not deemed necessary as most volunteers had no ideological objection to the imposition of military discipline and military command was present in the Basque militias from the beginning. Unlike in the Republican media there was no relentless campaign in the Basque military press to reiterate the necessity and importance of discipline. It was cited in their handbooks, the *Gudari Agiria*, the identity card issued to *gudaris* that included a code of conduct, as an important part of a *guduri*'s duties and there were occasional statements of its significance in the broader press.⁶² Yet it seems that an assertion made by *Gudari*, that '*gudaris* have no problem with discipline, eager to die for the nation, their only concern', while hyperbolic, did encapsulate the lack of widespread antipathy towards discipline amongst Basque soldiers in comparison to their anarchist or socialist allies.⁶³

However, this different attitude towards discipline, nor the work of the Chaplains could replace the organizational structure, the specifically tailored propaganda or the ability

⁵⁹ Cited in Vicente Talon, *Memoria de la guerra en Euzkadi de 1936: III. Por Tierra, Mar y Aire*, (Barcelona: Plaza & Janés, 1988), p. 657.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*..., p. 655.

⁶¹ Núñez Seixas, 'Los nacionalistas vascos...', p. 573; For a comprehensive list of the Basque units and their chaplains, see Vargas Alonso, 'El Partido Nacionalista Vasco en Guerra...', pp. 314-340.

⁶² SAF, Irujo, k. 00013 c.1, *Euzko Gudaroztea (milicias vascas)*, *Gudari Agiria*, p. 2.

⁶³ *Gudari*, 14 April 1937, p. 2.

of dedicated Commissars. Commissars offered a tried and tested means to motivate and organize poorly equipped troops and to ensure that vested political differences did not overshadow the greater goals of the war. It was to this final end that in May 1937, with Mola's assault on Vizcaya underway, Aguirre belatedly accepted a semblance of a Commissariat to be introduced to the Basque Country. However, it was not the far reaching and influential edifice of the Republic, but an anaemic compromise with no control over propagandistic content, that distinctly lacked in the vitality of its equivalent in the main *Ejército Popular*.⁶⁴

From the outset, the units of the PNV were distinct from their Republican counterparts; they had distinctly Basque names such as 'Aralar', 'Kirikiño' and 'Irrintzi', fought under a different flag (as Basque units raised only the *ikurriña*) and while soldiers of the non-Basque militias were 'milicianos', Basque soldiers were 'gudaris', a neologism from the Basque word for war 'guda', replacing the more traditional term 'soldadu'.⁶⁵ This chapter, as stated, will focus on these units that were of a PNV affiliation, and while it is important to understand that they were not the sole political affiliation in the Basque Country, they did hold the reigns of political power and the majority of units in the *Euzko Gudarostea* were directly affiliated with the PNV (28 batallions were *peneuvista*, 14 UGT-PSOE, 9 *Juventudes Socialistas Unificadas* (Unified Socialist Youth, JSU), 4 ANV, 3 STV and 2 of radical nationalist *mendigoxales* or *Jagi-Jagi* and one *Unión Republicana*).⁶⁶ The soldiers that fought in the PNV Battalions were mainly comprised of agricultural workers and the petit-bourgeoisie, the electoral base of the Party. An examination of the roster of the *Padura* Battalion from May 1937, although not a large enough sample size to offer whole conclusions, does offer some evidence in favour of this. The Second Company of the Battalion, of its one hundred and eight men, included sixty-eight day labourers, eight clerks, eight farmers, four mechanics, three were vaguely titled industrialists, three carpenters, three bakers, two salesmen, two cabinetmakers, two chemists, two barbers, one butcher, one 'merchant', one sailor, one turner, one chauffeur, one potter, one sailor, one shepherd and one student. The captain of the Company, Ricardo de Olabarrieta Monasterio, was a clerk. The Third Company of the Battalion, consisted of ninety one men, fifty six of which were day

⁶⁴ For full details of the Commissariat's introduction to the Basque country, including the limits on its propagandistic scope, see Talon, *Memoria de la guerra en Euzkadi de 1936...*, p. 657-9.

⁶⁵ Núñez Seixas, 'Los nacionalistas vascos...', p. 573; Vargas Alonso, 'El Partido Nacionalista Vasco en Guerra...', pp. 309-10. The Aralar battalion was named after the shrine of San Miguel, the patron saint of Basque nationalism, Kirikiño after a famous Basque writer and Irrintzi was a euphoric exclamation in Basque. Payne, *Basque Nationalism...*, pp. 261-264.

⁶⁶ Santiago de Pablo, 'La guerra civil en el País Vasco: ¿un conflicto diferente?', *Ayer*, Vol. 50, (2003), p. 131.

workers, eighteen farmers, five clerks, two mechanics, two students, two ‘traders’, two metal casters, one industrialist, one dentist, one barber, one bricklayer and one carpenter. The Captain of this Company, Pablo de Erea Zapirain, was an Electrician. Of the one hundred and four men of the Fourth Company, there were fifty day labourers, eighteen farmers, five cooks, two clerks, two accountants, two blacksmiths, two bricklayers, two tailors, two carpenters, one butcher, one chauffeur, one waiter, one ship-owner, one miller, one sailor, one student, one salesman, one metal caster, one miner, one cobbler, one ironmonger, one abattoir worker, one fitter, one mechanic, one stonemason, one turner, one machinist and a tinker, the Captain, Juan Espinosa Sagarduy, was an industrialist.⁶⁷ Taking into consideration this spread of employment, it would not be a huge supposition to believe that the political concerns of the average *gudari* were, in the *Padura* Battalion at the very least, in keeping with supporters of the PNV given its correlation with the demographics of PNV support. That is to say: Basque nationalist, socially conservative and Catholic. Reminiscences and memoirs of former *gudaris* corroborate this, although their testimony – following their exposure to the propaganda efforts of the PNV that we are about to examine – should not be treated as Gospel, their accounts offer an idea of the attitudes prevalent at the time. One such account describes the motivations of the *gudaris* when they enlisted:

The volunteers had a great patriotism, a great love of *Euzkadi*... Under our Basque Nationalist Party the doctrine is positive and is based in... Democracy, Social Justice and a Free *Patria*... Here are these Christian and democratic *Gudaris* and they come to defend these liberties that the Basque people had and have lost because of a few swords.⁶⁸

Another, *gudari* the former Communist and ANV battalion member Mario Salegi, reminisced about how *peneuvistas* ‘died for the unity of the *Patria* and religion’ and a comrade described the soldiers of the PNV as fighting under ‘the distinct name of *Jaungoikua eta Lagi-zara*.⁶⁹ Chilean-born Gabino Artolozafa, former member of the Yugoslav independence group *Sokotz* and *Sinn Féin*, stated that the prime motivation of the ‘final battle’ was ‘the liberty of *Euskadi*; our independence... to raise all of Vizcaya in arms and proclaim Basque

⁶⁷ CDMH, Delegación Nacional de Servicios Documentales de la Presidencia del Gobierno, SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS SANTANDER_A 215, 15, *Batallón Padura*.

⁶⁸ José Estornés Lasa, *Un gudari navarro en los frentes de Euzkadi*, Asturias, *Cataluña: problemática vasca*, (San Sebastian: Editorial Aunamendi, 1979), p.45.

⁶⁹ Mario Salegi, *Verano del 36: Memorias de un gudari*, (Tafalla: Txalaparta, 2005), p. 50.

independence to the entire world'.⁷⁰ Here we see the nationalist and religious themes of the PNV come to the fore, alongside a vague commitment to the idea of democracy in the face of fascism and Spanish militarism. These ideas were the fundamental touchstones of the *peneuvista* war mentality, the following section will analyse how they were put together to motivate the soldiers and, ultimately, the relationship between this war mentality and that of the Republic.

⁷⁰ Cited in Vargas Alonso, 'El Partido Nacionalista Vasco en Guerra...', pp. 310-11.

Making *Euskadi* – Basque National Identity in the *Euzko Gudarostea*

Propaganda for Basque nationalist soldiers, given the limited input of the Commissariat, was nowhere near as wide-ranging as it was for most Republican units. Whereas each Division in the Popular Army had its own newspaper, often individual Brigades and even some Battalions had specifically tailored output, the soldiers of the *Ejército de Euzkadi* were given the single publication *Gudari – Revista gráfica semanal de Euzko Gudaroztea*. Published from December 1936 until the fall of Bilbao in June 1937, *Gudari* was an illustrated weekly edited first by Basque nationalist poet Esteban Urkiaga Basaraz (better known under his *nom-de-plume* Lauaxeta) and, following Urkiaga's arrest and execution by Francoists, by the head of the PNV's Commission of Propaganda, Pedro de Basaldua.⁷¹ There were exceptions, members of the JSU, the UGT's youth movement had their own publication in *Joven Guardia* and each political stripe had its own party's newspapers, such as the PNV's *Euzkadi* or the ANV's *Tierra Vasca*, but, in comparison to the *Ejército Popular*, political propaganda in the Basque Country was significantly less prevalent. As this is a study of PNV affiliated troops the majority of this section will focus what was being said in articles of *Gudari*, with supplementary information from *Euzkadi* and *Lan-Deya*, the daily of the STV, in an effort to analyse the political motivation of soldiers of the *Euzko Gudarostea*.

Unlike the anarchist case, there was not a great degree of propagandistic development over the course of the war; the same themes were declared throughout the short life of the *Euzko Gudarostea*. Even the bombing of Guernica, arguably the most famous single incident of the entire civil war, failed to alter Basque the overarching message of the propaganda. The terror bombing, although serving its purpose in intimidating the Basque civilian population, did not frighten the PNV into changing the message presented to Basque troops. There were effects in the content; a marked increase in the reference to the innocent civilians killed by the enemy, the use of more visceral descriptions of the ignominy of the enemy and noticeably more references to aeroplanes and bombing, but no development of propaganda to a more vitriolic level of anti-Spanish feeling, as may have been the case. The focus remained, as it had always done, on the dual concerns of national independence and religious piety.⁷²

Gudari, in its 3 March 1937 edition would state its intentions as a publication. It hoped to 'provide shelter to both the social and religious so they can follow different paths, but in all traces leave a clear trail of nationality' and 'through a unity of spirits [and] aid'

⁷¹ Núñez Seixas, 'Los nacionalistas vascos...', p. 572.

⁷² See below for the propaganda aimed at soldiers in regarding Guernica.

foster an ‘intimate understanding’ in the soldiery. Ultimately, the publication hoped to serve as ‘an invitation [to PNV ideas] to all the youths who consider themselves nationalists’.⁷³ *Gudari* here establishes itself as a publication for all *gudaris*, regardless of their social or religious thoughts, yet there was no negotiation over the topics it would deal in – the fundamental rallying call to all who read the publication was the ideology of the PNV. This nationalism was painstakingly delineated on the pages of *Gudari* (and *Euzkadi*, which was read by many in the Basque battalions), as the *Patria* came to be defined along roughly Aranist lines; that is to say, defined as a wholly separate people to the Spanish, both invader and ally alike. The freedom of the *Patria* from the Spanish yoke was to form a key cornerstone of the political motivations of the *Euzko Gudarostea*, the war as a ‘defence of race, language, customs, moral and material heritage of the Basque country’.⁷⁴

First and foremost the Basque race had a specific character, while their enemies were ‘cowards, traitors and murderers’, the Basque people were ‘noble’ and ‘indomitable’.⁷⁵ The idea of the race was a diffuse one; sometimes the racial element of the nation was emphasized as fundamental to the struggle, mirroring right wing interpretations of the as the nation as an ‘idea embodied in the people’ that directed ‘the action of the people, their lives, with increasing dominance’.⁷⁶ In an extreme case, prior to the final assault on Bilbao by the Francoist forces, the war was even described as a ‘race war... a bitter struggle between two opposing souls’.⁷⁷ However, in practice the racial element promulgated in the pages of *Gudari* had a more rhetorical rather than biological or ethnographic distinction, with the differences between peoples dealt with in discursive rather than *faux*-scientific terms. There was definitely no adoption of Arana’s diktat on surnames, a simple glance at various *apellidos* (dual surnames) of *gudaris* shows that there was no shortage of García and Fernández alongside Urkitza and Abrisketa.⁷⁸ Yet the chance to use the idea of ‘race’ as a means to extenuate the difference in character of the Basque people was taken at most given opportunities, with the superiority of the Basque people lauded. The Basques had their own ‘natural characteristics’ those of a simple, peaceful, ancient, agrarian people for ‘No people

⁷³ *Gudari*, 6 March 1937, p. 5.

⁷⁴ *Euzkadi*, 9 February 1937, p. 1.

⁷⁵ *Gudari*, 15 April 1937 p. 25; 1 June 1937, p. 31.

⁷⁶ *Gudari*, 7 June 1937, p. 6. The idea of the race as dictating national action was, interestingly, one fundamental to Spanish Right wing thought, namely José Antonio Primo de Rivera, Christopher Bannister, ‘Christian Fascism: José Antonio Primo de Rivera’, *Right Wing Thought in Civil War Era Spain*, eds Alejandro Quiroga and Miguel Ángel del Arco, (London: Continuum, 2012), pp. tbh.

⁷⁷ *Gudari*, 7 June 1937, p. 12.

⁷⁸ CDMH, Delegación Nacional de Servicios Documentales de la Presidencia del Gobierno, SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS SANTANDER_A 215, 15, *Batallón Padura*.

of the world are as married to the earth as cleanly and profoundly as the Basque people'.⁷⁹ Ultimately, and unsurprisingly given *Gudari*'s readership, Basque pre-eminence was best typified in the *gudaris* themselves who embodied 'the spirit of sacrifice and the love of defending their God, their country and their freedom'; they were 'coarse, virile, warriors... the race at war, as magisterial as in peace' and the embodiment of 'a new spirit of overcoming and ennoblement'.⁸⁰ In a war where 'unscrupulous foreigners' took 'bloody pleasure of killing children and elderly women' the *Gudari* did not allow himself to become brutalized.⁸¹

The war causes moral epidemics that are easily found when in contact with timid or indifferent spirits. But thanks to God, that contagion has no sense nor feeling for the *Gudari*, the burly *euskotar* boy, steel of spirit.⁸²

The race, the Basque people, was therefore different, better even, than their Spanish counterparts, and *gudaris* had an obligation to defend their own homeland to ensure that this people were protected and preserved. This desire to not become brutalized was reflected by *gudaris* themselves. In letters written from prison prior to their execution, some *gudaris* would profess their happiness in remaining 'innocent' in the face of war. Antonio Izaguirre, facing execution on 17 December 1936 stated that he died without 'any criminal stain', while Pedro Barrondo Garay, a *gudari* executed a day earlier in Larrinaga Prison in Bilbao professed that he had the 'satisfaction of dying with nobility and trust in God, without having [his] hands stained in blood'.⁸³

Language remained a key signifier of the Basque national identity in the *Euzko Gudarostea*. While it was not the first language of most Basque nationalists, it retained an exalted position within the armed forces. The language was 'sweet and harmonious... all the more loved the more we considered it as seal of the race', it had its own 'feelings and a spirituality, [and was] daughter of [the Basque] nature and temperament'.⁸⁴ While *Euzkadi* had been running several pages printed in *Euskera* since before the war, *Gudari* also ran several Basque language pages in each edition and many of the songs sung by the men, such

⁷⁹ *Euzkadi*, 12 June 1937, p. 1; *Gudari*, 20 March 1937, p. 20; *Gudari*, 1 June 1937, p. 16.

⁸⁰ *Gudari*, 6 March 1937, p. 13; p. 11; 15 April 1937, p. 5.

⁸¹ *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p. 12; *Lan-Deya – Órgano de Solidaridad de Trabajadores Vascos*, 28 April 1937, p. 3.

⁸² *Gudari*, 15 April 1937, p. 34.

⁸³ Sabino Arana Fundazioa (SAF), DP-565/12, Antonio Izaguirre; Pedro Barrondo Garay.

⁸⁴ *Euzkadi*, 9 May 1937, p. 1.

as the national anthem *Euzko Abendearen Ereserkia* and the anthem of the *Euzko Gudarostea*, *Euzko Gudariak*, were in Basque.⁸⁵ Furthermore the *Gudari Agiria* was written in Basque, as were its rules of conduct for *gudaris*. However, in testament to the language not being widely spoken, it also included a glossary of Basque military terms and their Spanish equivalents.⁸⁶ The fact that *Euskera* was not the *lingua franca* meant that the language remained more as a badge of honour in the *Euzko Gudarostea* than as something serving a practical purpose. Much like it was in the theory of Arana, its importance was played up as a further example of Basque difference, yet official business and most press output remained in Castilian.⁸⁷

The Basque military press asserted that this racial and linguistic difference were not new concepts, there was a long history Basque ‘difference’ that had existed for centuries, millennia:

Our Basque nationalism has deep *historical* sense, because Basque history – the famous and prehistoric – is the life of the race spent over centuries of unbroken original freedom, it is the vessel that contains all the essentials of tradition... a resumption of free racial life.⁸⁸

Furthermore, this conflict over the issue the Basque birthright of freedom had always happened; this current struggle was the latest conflagration of a longstanding conflict, borne from Spain’s ‘eternal mortal hatred towards Basque nationalism’.⁸⁹ The peaceful Basque people had been the object of Spanish hatred since ‘the birth of Spain’. While ‘the Basque race which had spent more than ten thousand years of free life’ their Spanish counterparts, ‘the ancestors of the current Spanish fascists, began to feel the hatred of the people of ours, conceived in full freedom’.⁹⁰ An article in *Gudari* listed the various violent transgressions that the Basque people had suffered from first Roman, (lest we forget that ‘Spain was born at the hands of imperialist Rome’) and later Spanish aggression:⁹¹

⁸⁵ Talon, *Memoria de la guerra en Euzkadi de 1936...*, pp. 635-636; Examples of *Gudari* printing articles in Basque can be found in *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p. 7; 8 April 1937, p. 8.

⁸⁶ SAF, Irujo, k. 00013 c.1, *Euzko Gudaroztea (milicias vascas)*, *Gudari Agiria*,

⁸⁷ Unlike in its Catalan counterpart, all internal documents and memorandums of the *Euzko Gudarostea* were in Castilian.

⁸⁸ *Gudari*, 7 June 1937, p. 7. Italics from source.

⁸⁹ *Euzkadi*, 9 February 1937, p. 1.

⁹⁰ *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p. 21.

⁹¹ *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p. 21.

The Basque people have never been defeated by arms. The flavour of legend of these fights in which Roman pride suffered the most vivid mortification has been renewed each time the Basques at arms have defended the small national territory. Against Moors, against *leoneses* against Castilians, most recently, a century ago, in the Carlist War... And in the days in which we live against Hispanic imperialism, that in its latest outbreak is incarnated in the military caste whose maximum representation is Franco.⁹²

The Carlist Wars were the latest symptom of this hatred, presented as a precursor to this conflict, as ‘those elders who fought in the Carlist War look with sympathy to the new *gudaris* fighting for freedom of the Basque people’; both conflicts were prompted by ‘a desire to recover the personality of the race... in which the Basques shed blood’. This was a flagrant misrepresentation of both conflicts and although some differences were accepted, the old Carlists ‘fought singing the *Gernika’ka Arbola* and those now fighting sing the *Euzko Abendearen Ereserkia*’, both ‘retained in their blood, their bowels, the root of the race, which never varies’.⁹³ Any difference was immaterial anyway, as they were part of the same race, as even though ‘The teachings of the ‘Maestro’ had not purified into the Basques’, there was always a separatist character as the ‘farmers of our mountains, strong in their tradition, were able to imprint on the Carlist War a sense of liberation.’⁹⁴

Euskadi, as it was portrayed in *Gudari* had been ‘repelling the invaders’ of ‘barbaric civilization... *in aeternum*’ always with the same result.⁹⁵ The enemy may ‘change the medium’ with ‘the accumulation of immense elements of destruction’ yet the ‘scenario is the same, with the same scenery’ and the Basque spirit remained ‘always the same as that of the old and vigorous race’.⁹⁶ Yet this most ‘bloody and perfidious’ conflict would be the last in this terrible cycle, as the current war was a campaign of ‘extermination of all Basques and our entire culture’ and the time had come to ‘fight vehemently and courageously for the comprehensive conservation of our ideals and the indestructibility of our country’.⁹⁷ Nothing but victory was acceptable, now was the time to have ‘vitality enough to protect and heal the race, as it has been to cleanse the country’s politics’ and with this vitality the people of

⁹² *Gudari*, 8 April 1937, p. 8.

⁹³ *Gudari*, 20 March 1937, p. 24

⁹⁴ *Gudari*, 20 March 1937, p. 24.

⁹⁵ *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p. 13.

⁹⁶ *Gudari*, 8 April 1937, p. 8.

⁹⁷ *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p. 11.

Euskadi would ‘march to success, to the final victory... under the sublime banner of patriotism and enthusiasm’.⁹⁸

The battle at hand was final as now the Basque Nation had become truly separate and Independent. It had its own government, its own army, all fighting for the Independence and freedom of the *Patria*. The importance of the government and the Statute of Autonomy were never knowingly underplayed, representing, as they did, the legislative apotheosis of independence and the interests of the Basque people. The government was ‘the national will represented’, ‘the spirit of all Basques, that directs us towards a free *Euzkadi*’.⁹⁹ Yet to achieve the aims of independence, the government of *Euskadi* required loyalty:

The Government of *Euzkadi* will not abandon us. It works tirelessly to put in our hands the means to crush the invader. We should not abandon, for our part, the Government. It demands sacrifices, tears, painful separations, blood and lives, including our family and relatives. We put everything at its disposal.¹⁰⁰

This loyalty was not afforded to an antifascist alliance as in the Republic, but solely to the government of *Euskadi*. *Gudaris* were not expected to show any affiliation to their allies, in fact, the relationship was merely one of convenience to achieve independence. For the war was a war of independence, a truth so important that *Gudari* was moved to assert that ‘any suggestions that do not originate from our independence – our right to freedom – must be rejected by all Basques’.¹⁰¹ A further article in *Gudari* would emphasize this:

At this point, some party has launched the following slogan: ‘the first thing is to win the war’. In Basque country that is to say THE FIRST THING IS TO WIN INDEPENDENCE... The first task is to gain independence, and, spoken or not, we must act on this motto.¹⁰²

This re-wording the Republican idea of winning the war before pursuing individual political interests highlights further the separate political identity of the Basque nationalists. As, unlike in the Republican case, where all sacrificed their own interests for the good of the war effort,

⁹⁸ *Euzkadi*, 30 August 1936, p. 1; *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p. 12

⁹⁹ *Gudari*, 6 March 1937, p. 8.

¹⁰⁰ *Gudari*, 1 June 1937, pp. 26-7.

¹⁰¹ *Gudari*, 14 May 1937, p. 26.

¹⁰² *Gudari*, 27 March 1937, p. 22.

this interpretation states that the individual interest, that of independence, would have to be put before any other concerns. It was an inherent undermining of all the Republican efforts for unity.

Yet paradoxically, an alliance with the Popular Front was the best way to achieve this Independence, although the relationships functionality was never forgotten. A *Gudari* piece from 20 March 1937 would outline the relationship with the Popular Front as one of convenience based in the small ideological overlay of the two groups:

It is true that the glue of the various elements comprising the Popular Front is formed by two factors: one for individual dignity, individual freedom, which is not feasible without a formula that will dignify social worker and ensure their economic independence, but the other is collective dignity, collective freedom, of Basque self-government, which is not feasible without Basque independence. And we have cited this second factor is for us the most important, BECAUSE WE ARE BASQUE NATIONALISTS before anything else, and we have never hidden that.¹⁰³

There was never any implication that the PNV was part of the Popular Front. Azaña's government was a separate entity that ruled a different nation, an ally, not a master and any belief to the contrary was incorrect. Centralism regardless of whether it was leftist or rightist, 'was precisely where evil lay' and extricating *Euskadi* from its clutches had to be the end of the war, 'if [anything else] were so the sacrifice would only serve to reinforce the chains of slavery'.¹⁰⁴

Independence was so imperative that its protection was emphasized at the expense of good relations with the Republicans, as they were portrayed with suspicion as both duplicitous and centralist. They were shown to desire to renege on the Statute, assumed to believe 'that a concession of our rights is a chain that binds us to the central power', and later to be as imperialist as their rebel counterparts:

Because Spanish nationalist tyranny will arise. With kindness, perhaps. Charged with extremism, probably. But *Euzkadi* cannot submit to these Spanish nationalist conceptions which both damage have done to us.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ *Gudari*, 20 March 1937, p. 31

¹⁰⁴ *Gudari*, 27 March 1937, p. 33.

¹⁰⁵ *Gudari*, 27 March 1937, p. 33.

The relationship with the central government was never portrayed to *gudaris* as particularly healthy and always through the prism of the Basque national interest. There was no attempt to highlight any worthwhile mutual ideological interest. In fact, there shouldn't have been one, as one of the fundamental understandings of Basque independence was that only an individual *Patria* could address its own problems, and it was impossible for 'other communities understand the mess of race, culture' that comprised the Basque *Patria* and 'the remedies of Spanish sociology cannot serve *Euzkadi*'.¹⁰⁶

Ultimately, by emphasizing the idea of a wholly different nation, with its own government and a particular culture and to define this nation by its differences from Spain, the propaganda of *Gudari* only served to create a cleavage between the Basques and their Republican allies. By emphasizing *Euskadi* vehemently, the message given to the *gudaris* was that they were separate from their Republican allies, different, joined to one another only through circumstance. Ultimately, the relationship between the two 'races circumstantially united against fascism' was presented as a marriage of convenience that would end in independence for both nations: 'Spain is free, it is our noble desire. *Euskadi* will also be governed by our own, Basque, religious, social and policies ideas'.¹⁰⁷ The result being that there was little effort to present the Republic or Republicans themselves as anything more than a means to an end.

¹⁰⁶ *Gudari*, 20 March 1937, p. 31; 8 April 1937, p. 16.

¹⁰⁷ *Gudari*, 14 May 1937, p. 27.

‘All for *Euzkadi* and *Euzkadi* for God’¹⁰⁸ – The Catholic Faith in the *Euzko Gudarostea*

The Catholic faith had long been a cornerstone of Basque nationalism and the *Partido Nacional Vasco* and it can therefore come as no surprise that it would play a large part in the propaganda of the Army. A first step in this was attempting to extricate the Basque nationalists from the rebel dialectic of the war as one between ‘Christians and Marxists’ as, through this, the Basque nation would not be tainted by the irreligion of their allies. The war was therefore presented as ‘not only between antifascists against anti-Marxists [but] is also between Basque nationalists and Spanish imperialists’.¹⁰⁹ The Basque people were different to their allies, more ‘given to bourgeois and democratic government’ than to ‘collectivise the lands and factories’ and, most importantly ‘unlike in the Republic, they did not set fire to a church’.¹¹⁰ In regards to the Basque nation itself, *Euzkadi* and *Gudari* both reasserted the Aranist line, declaring that Basque nationalism was based upon ‘Christian Strength’ and that the Basque people themselves had ‘a profound attachment to the Catholic faith... their piety, well known in Spain, is more ardent than ever’.¹¹¹ There was a special sense to Basque Christianity owing to its individual ‘concept of the Christian life’ which resulted in the belief that the Basque ‘popular soul vibrates with... Christian civilization’.¹¹² An article in *Gudari*, entitled ‘Our Nationalism’ would highlight the importance of religion and Arana’s thoughts to *peneuvista* ideology:

Our Basque nationalism has deep religious meaning, because spiritual disaster of the race, the imminent danger of the loss of its Christian faith, whose situation was rapidly reaching a result of foreign domination, influenced the soul of Arana-Goiri, deeper and more decisively than the national physical disaster, more than the danger of the disappearance of the race, to proclaim his Nationalist Ideal... the final cause that impelled him to his ministry was not patriotic other than the assurance of Christian life in Basque society.¹¹³

Here we see that Arana’s first imposition as the founder of Basque nationalism was not a Nationalist one, but a religious one, a desire to save the pious of *Euskadi* from the corrupting external influence of the their religiously wayward Spanish neighbour. This assertion, that the

¹⁰⁸ *Gudari*, 8 April 1937, p. 13

¹⁰⁹ *Gudari*, 20 March 1937, p. 13.

¹¹⁰ *Gudari*, 20 March 1937, p. 26.

¹¹¹ *Gudari*, 20 March 1937, p. 20; p. 27

¹¹² *Euzkadi*, 16 September 1936, p. 1; *Gudari*, 1 June 1937, p. 27.

¹¹³ *Gudari*, 7 June 1937, p. 7.

Spanish were less pious than the Basques would play an important part in the *Euzko Gudarostea*'s religious conception of the War.

Nationalism and Christianity went hand in hand, as, given the piety of the Basque people, defence of one was defence of the other. Much like their enemies, the Basque press would emphasize that their struggle was with God, not against him:

God uses the human for His own purposes, I am persuaded that in our *Euzkadi* God has made use in these momentous times of Basque nationalism to preserve and strengthen our Catholicism.¹¹⁴

This dual commitment was often emphasized when the obligations of the *gudaris* themselves were referenced. The *gudari*, the best example of the Basque *Patria* was expected to sacrifice all for the nation, and it was in his sacrifice that the religious and the nationalist would unite. The death of a *gudari* was not only a death for the *Patria*, but also a sacrifice for God, who would welcome him into his Kingdom.

Then it is the painful, but glorious, sacrifice, the hour that spreads its resonance to the throne of God... The death of the *gudaris* is the life of *Euskadi*. Children that a land encloses in its bowels for delivery to eternity.

The wooden crosses from the battlefields of *Euzkadi* wait for the Great Day, to lose themselves in His plenitude.¹¹⁵

This sacrifice was nothing to fear, as it was of the 'demands of his Christian conscience', and that his reward would be in heaven, or if he lived, to be able to tell his children: 'Love, I defended my religion and I have defended many homeland'.¹¹⁶

In practice, the religious-nationalist conception of the war was reinforced by Mass being celebrated at the front and priests and chaplains joining units of *gudaris* at the parapets to look after their spiritual wellbeing. For *Gudari* 'the priest represented... the reflection of the natural characteristics of the Basque people [and] ministered to spiritual needs'.¹¹⁷ The message relayed by these priests and in the literature of the *Euzko Gudarostea* was the same; regardless of their enemies' claims on Christian Civilization, the Basque nationalist conception was the correct one. The death of the priest José María Korta at the front was met

¹¹⁴ *Euzkadi*, 30 August 1937, p. 1.

¹¹⁵ *Gudari*, 15 April 1937, p. 5.

¹¹⁶ *Gudari*, 8 April 1937, p. 13.

¹¹⁷ *Euzkadi*, 12 June 1937, p. 1.

with dismay, yet his religious concept of the war came to be shared with all *gudaris* as he was mourned:

He always knew, and cared not ever to forget that every religious obligation is not only perfectly compatible with the rights and the national interest of the Basque people, but that they have in the confession of the same a natural route to its observance and for its development; he knew, and taught at all times, that religion should and can be maintained in its purity in love with *Euzkadi*. And took care to explain that faith in God and love of *Euzkadi* in our people was not an arbitrary parallel but a harmony.¹¹⁸

Korta's example showed that religious piety was Basque nationalism and Basque nationalism was religious piety, their symbiosis inherent. The presence of clergy, especially clergy who supported the Basque nationalist idea so vehemently, only served to legitimize the Catholic interpretation of the war. In a conflict where virtually every member of the Spanish Clergy had sided with the rebels, later to be joined by the Vatican and where the Basque nationalists had allied themselves with groups that were openly violent towards Clergy, the Basque clergy's independence and support was vital in legitimizing the *peneuvista* conception of the war following the Pope's *Divini Redemptoris* of March 1937 that declared:

Communism is intrinsically evil, and no one who would save Christian civilization may collaborate with it in any undertaking whatsoever'. Needless to say, this created a difficult theological position for Catholic Basque nationalists.¹¹⁹

This made the contribution of the Basque nationalist priests all the more important to the legitimacy of the PNV's struggle. One *gudari*, José Estornés Lasa, put this in clear terms, stating simply that 'with their Christian heroism they saved the Christian faith of our people'.¹²⁰

As has been established, adhering to the Catholic Faith was fundamental to *peneuvista* ideology, therefore to fight against fellow Christians, even for national sovereignty, was, in *raigambre sabiana*, a difficult situation to rationalise. To do so while fighting alongside

¹¹⁸ *Gudari*, 27 March 1937, p. 24.

¹¹⁹ Cited in F. Redal Súnier, *¡Arriba España! Por la verdad*, (Manila: Santo Tomás, 1937), p. 3.

¹²⁰ Estornés Lasa, *Un gudari navarro en los frentes de Euzkadi, Asturias, Cataluña...*, p. 124.

known Church-burners and priest-murderers made the situation all the worse. This was paradox was played on by rebel counterpropaganda, which attempted to emphasize the supposed theological chasm between the Basques and their Republican allies. Octavillas were regularly dropped over *gudaris*' positions imploring them to give up their arms. One asked *gudaris* a series of pointed questions over who they really shared affinity with in the conflict:

Catholic Basques, what do you defend in the red camp? Religion? In Asturias and Santander you have seen the destruction of all religious exteriorization, temples, images, with savage rancour they are destroyed. Tomorrow it will be the same in your region. You defend the family? See the disorder, the licence with which the red zone destroys it and the absence of all the fundamentals of Catholicism that sustains it.¹²¹

The octavillas were complimented by radio transmissions, stating that *Gudaris* were breaking with the Vatican and that their position was ridiculous, the 'absurdity of fighting to help those without God, without family, without land, against us, your companions in religion, in morals, in respect for property, in defence of the Christian Family home'.¹²² Consequently, the PNV, in order to legitimise their position within their own ideology and to their own troops needed to somehow 'de-Christianize' an enemy fighting under the banner of a crusade and while simultaneously emphasize its own religiosity.

This was achieved by attacking the enemy as fascists, who hid behind the defence of religion without even understanding its teachings. The war in the Basque country was portrayed as an invasion, a useful rhetorical tool in a nationalist capacity, but it also had a religious importance as well. The teachings of Christ were of peace, but the fascist invaders had contravened these through their attacks:

The doctrine of Christ is the doctrine of peace, abnegation and kindness! "Thou shalt not kill!" said Christ. And the invaders of *Euzkadi*, that (what sarcasm!) say they fight for this doctrine; they villainously murder their own peaceful and Catholic brothers, for the simple and essential fact of wanting his own *Patria* and to confessing it without fear.¹²³

Christianity, could not be used as a means to go to war, as the concept was itself, in the Basque nationalist interpretation, oxymoronic: 'There is no possibility of a religious war,

¹²¹ AGMAV, C. 2497, 22/61.

¹²² AGMAV, C. 2497, 22/60.

¹²³ *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p. 12.

because, the essence of the defended religion forbids it'.¹²⁴ The invaders, despite stating they were fighting for God, were not acting in a manner befitting his followers: 'they speak their own language, the language of denial, anti-Christian language, the translation of which is faithful to its moral decay'.¹²⁵ This 'moral decay' was best exemplified by the adoption of a new fascist morality that was incompatible with true Catholicism:

The fascist catechism... the ethical absurdity of inferring that strength is the basis of law. It is the false theory of Hobbes and Spinoza, according to which all rights are necessarily based on force, power and justice, keeping the strictest proportion with each other. All this is contrary to the Catholic truth.¹²⁶

The Spanish invaders, in the Basque conception, could never be true Catholics they were too enamoured by the martial, and lived 'perpetually for the glorification of violence, repression and punishment of war and the pride of strength, gold and empire on earth'.¹²⁷ These fascists were not interested in the teachings of Christ, who 'won without weapons and bloodshed' and therefore the Catholic 'cannot embrace him, as the Catholic doctrine is far superior to him in truth, justice and charity'.¹²⁸ One article in *Gudari* pointedly stated that their entire ideology was theologically anachronistic positing that 'the times of this divinity of war, Mars, have now passed, never to return' and, that even the most Catholic of the rebel interpretation of the conflict was un-Christian 'the spirit of the Crusades is not that of today'.¹²⁹ The Catholicism preached to *gudaris*, it appears, was a peaceful faith based in Social Justice and concord between Christians, not the destructive, apocalyptic path of righteousness that it was in the Rebel zone.

The execution of Basque nationalist priests in Navarre by the rebels fit the anti-Catholic conception of the enemy perfectly. Moreover, it also served to allay some fears over the anti-clerical violence of the allies of Basque nationalism as now there was a riposte to the question as to why Catholic *peneuvistas* would ally with violent anticlerics ahead of those who revered the Church.¹³⁰ The presentation of the persecution of these priests in the Basque military press was, as you would expect, one of victims and aggressors:

¹²⁴ *Gudari*, 8 April 1937, p. 12.

¹²⁵ *Euzkadi*, 1 May 1937, p. 1.

¹²⁶ *Euzkadi*, 24 November 1936, p. 1.

¹²⁷ *Euzkadi*, 22 November 1936, p. 1.

¹²⁸ *Euzkadi*, 8 May 1937, p. 1.

¹²⁹ *Gudari*, 8 April 1937, p. 13.

¹³⁰ For information on the repression of priests and of repression in general in Navarre, see Alaffyala Kultur Taldea, *Navarra en 1936 – De la esperanza al terror* (Tafalla: Alaffaylla Kultur Taldea, 2004), *passim*.

The killings there were not the work of the ‘uncontrollables’, but the leaders of the movement. They were rejected by the authorities, but ordered by them. The perpetrators were not punished, but still in command, that the bloodshed in torrents seem not to have tarnished their authority and honors to the slightest degree.¹³¹

Here a clear demarcation is drawn between the behaviour of the rebels and that of the allies of the Basque nationalists. While the anti-clerical violence of the Republic were the excesses of some individual reprobates that had been stopped once order had been restored, that of the Rebels was organized, official and unpunished. This served to show that, while Republican anti-clerical violence did exist, it was unsanctioned whereas those who called themselves ‘defenders of religion’ were, in fact, authorizing the execution of clergy.¹³² The priests killed, like the priests at the front were venerated as both heroic Catholics and heroic nationalists, they were ‘virtuous’, murdered solely ‘for the fact of being Basque’.¹³³ Their executors, on the other hand, were stripped of their Catholicism, now just the agents of ‘rightism organized by Freemasons’.¹³⁴ In reality, the two outbreaks of anti-clerical violence were incomparable, with almost seven thousand members of the Clergy executed by ‘uncontrollables’ compared to a few dozen by the rebels. However, the fact that any priests at all were killed allowed for the portrayal of ‘the invader’ as violent and un-Christian to be reinforced as well as the questions over the morality of allying with violent anti-clericals to be discursively negated.

By portraying the war as an invasion, the Basque nationalists used their conception of Christianity as a peaceful religion in their favour. The Basque people, Catholic and non-violent, were merely acting in self-defence, for ‘the Basque race never responded to hatred with hatred, apart from when it was forced to defend its freedom, its blood’.¹³⁵ In contrast to their attackers, the Basque war was a defensive fight to repel an invader from their soil. The emphasis on defence was stressed regularly, it was the ‘defence of *Jaungoikua eta Lagizara*’, ‘a war to defend Christian civilization, social justice, the free *Patria*’ to defend ‘against a brutal aggression’.¹³⁶ The Basques fought against bellicosity, against the un-Christian ‘madness of the warlike Right’, which made their struggle all the more heroic: ‘When one goes to war it is for a noble cause – and what is nobler than defending the soil of the *Patria* against the invader?’¹³⁷

¹³¹ *Gudari*, 1 June 1937, p. 17

¹³² *Euzkadi*, 9 February 1927, p. 1.

¹³³ *Euzkadi*, 1 May 1937, p. 1.

¹³⁴ *Euzkadi*, 22 November 1936, p. 1.

¹³⁵ *Gudari*, 6 May 1937, p. 21.

¹³⁶ *Euzkadi*, 30 August 1936, p. 1; *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p. 2; *Euzkadi*, 6 September 1936, p. 1.

¹³⁷ *Gudari*, 15 April 1937, p. 24.

On one occasion the invaders, because of their religious transgressions, were presented as no more Christian than the allies of *Euskadi*, in fact, they were less so. While the fascists were obsessed with strength, violence and destruction, the Popular Front, despite its anti-clerical excesses, were more in tune with God's message:

Who doubts today, having seen the fruits of Germanic or Italian absolutism, there is more Christian spiritualism in the hopes of social ascent of the masses than in those of fascist leaders?¹³⁸

Yet this comparison was not indicative of the general output, with the overall message being one of Basque Catholicism against the false Catholicism of the rebels. Their allies were an afterthought. Moreover, by emphasizing the piety of the Basque people in comparison to the Spanish, first by distancing themselves from their 'Marxist allies' and then by emphasizing the hypocritical Christianity of the Rebels, religious propaganda became a double edged sword. For as much as it exacerbated the differences between the *Patria* of *Euskadi* and the enemy invader, religious identity also served to highlight an implicit difference between the Basque people and their allies, further isolating *Euskadi* from the Republic in the propaganda of the *Euzko Gudarostea*.

¹³⁸ *Euzkadi*, 22 November 1936, p. 1.

The Invasion – Anti-Spanish Sentiment in the *Euzko Gudarostea*

The war itself was fought defensively, with the Basque troops rarely going on the offensive nor venturing past their borders and the rhetoric of the *Euzko Gudarostea* mirrored this. Much like the Republican conception of the War, the conflict was a war of invasion, however, in the *peneuvista* propaganda the worst oppressors of all, ahead even of the Republican *bêtes-noires* the Germans and the Italians, were the Spanish.¹³⁹ The Spanish enemy was presented as a reactionary throwback, host of ‘a political character born of *antivasquismo*, of its imperialist Spanish sentiments’.¹⁴⁰ The Aranist assertion of the Spaniard as a moral reprobate a ‘strange and bloodthirsty people’, historically given to fits of cruelty, was present in the *Euzko Gudarostea*’s conception.¹⁴¹ The imperial past of Spain indicative of the racial shortcomings of the Spanish *Patria*:

The patriotic altruism – civilizing zeal in modern dialectic – has not existed in Spain. And the error of Spain – fundamental – was precisely that.

And Spain – her greatest error – has not changed with the 20th century. An accentuated imperialism that has manifested in all the plans of governing of the nation.

The victims of this ‘accentuated imperialism’ had always been the Basque people, whose ‘lives, property, peace, religious view, have been bloodied thousands of times in the drunken fury of the Spaniards’ as ‘voices of war and extermination’ came from Madrid.¹⁴² The reason given for Spanish hatred of the Basque people was simple, a petty jealousy of the Basque national spirit; ‘inherited over two thousand years of slavery, a growing hatred against the freer and more democratic race of the land’. The Spanish simply could not accept that the Basque people ‘did not feel any patriotism other than that which arises uncontrollably of the bowels of the Basque race’ so chose to ‘turn their unlimited hatred on our people to exterminate it’.¹⁴³

The historical deficiencies of the Spanish were now being experienced in this war, as their national character had, in fascism, discovered an ideology to which it was perfectly

¹³⁹ ‘The invasion’ was an even more prevalent term in Basque military propaganda than Republican, with almost every reference to the enemy referring to him as an invader.

¹⁴⁰ *Gudari*, 6 March 1937, p. 13.

¹⁴¹ *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p. 12.

¹⁴² *Gudari*, 27 March 1937, pp. 16-17.

¹⁴³ *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p. 21.

suited. This was clear for all to see given that the ‘essence [fascism] boils down to slavery of the people – [which] has prevailed in Spain forever’.¹⁴⁴ It was merely ‘the eruption of a new barbarity’ and the aims of the Spanish fascists remained the same as that of their predecessors; to steal the Basque ‘soul and spirituality’, their entire being was given over to ‘the destruction and death of what is sacred’.¹⁴⁵ ‘Hatred, destruction and barbarity’ were all part of Spain’s history and character, and even ‘one hundred years of hatred... and curses against the nationalist race will not be enough for the satisfaction of the Spanish people’.¹⁴⁶

This degeneracy in the Spanish character was put forward as the reason for their violent tendencies against the Basque. The war had, according to *Gudari*, been a procession of atrocities committed by the invader against the Basque people. The invader had entered *Euskadi* and begun ‘to murder families and destroy homes’, they were ‘murderers’, intent on spraying their ‘odious spittle the meat of our women’, for whom ‘Fire, flame, smoke, are the fleeting standard’.¹⁴⁷ Moreover, the invaders’ very presence in the homeland was a violent act – they never set foot in *Euskadi*, but ‘trampled’ its soil, ‘its freedom’.¹⁴⁸

This rhetoric became all the more pronounced following the bombing of Guernica. The event was met with emotive rhetoric as the city had not merely been bombed, but ‘burned, destroyed, devastated’, by an enemy who represented the elite of world savagery’.¹⁴⁹ The enemy who had committed this atrocity was ‘something unspeakable, something that is beyond crime and barbarism’, Guernica had ‘quenched his sadism... his cruel appetite [with] those strafed’ as he derived ‘bloody pleasure [from] killing children and elderly women’.¹⁵⁰ The victims of the bombing were always the most vulnerable, as Guernica in the aftermath of the event was said to be littered with ‘the bodies of women, children, the elderly, religious men and women, the sick and wounded, stiff on the rubble’.¹⁵¹ The bodies of the victims were described in vivid detail, they ‘emerged in droves’ from the ‘horrific spectacle of flames and debris’, the bodies of Basque women, who had moments before ‘challenged the aeroplanes’ were now at ‘rock bottom, their bodies cruelly twisted, pierced by shrapnel from abroad’.¹⁵² Subsequently, any attack on civilians in the Basque country was described with

¹⁴⁴ *Gudari*, 6 May 1937, p. 21.

¹⁴⁵ *Gudari*, 27 March 1937, p. 11; 15 April 1937, p. 13.

¹⁴⁶ *Gudari*, 6 March 1937, p. 12; *Euskadi*, 1 May 1937, p. 1.

¹⁴⁷ *Gudari*, 7 June 37, p. 25; 15 April 1937 p. 25; 2 May, 1937, p. 10; 20 March 1937, p. 23.

¹⁴⁸ References to the enemy ‘trampling’ can be seen in *Patria Libre – Vascos Unidos y haced libre a Euskadi*, 30 December 1937, p. 1; *Gudari*, 2 May 1937, p. 10; *Euskadi*, 1 May 1937, p. 1.

¹⁴⁹ *Gudari*, 2 May 1937, p. 5.

¹⁵⁰ *Lan-Deya – Órgano de Solidaridad de Trabajadores Vascos*, 28 April 1937, p. 3.

¹⁵¹ *Euskadi*, 1 May 1937, p. 1.

¹⁵² *Gudari*, 2 May 1937, p. 32.

reference to the most innocent, the occupation of Guipúzcoa was retrospectively described on 1 June 1937 as having begun with ‘the shooting of peaceful people, among which there were the elderly, some woman’ and the occupation of the Basque country became the site of not only murder, but also rape as the enemy became a more oppressive and violent force, given to ‘watering the conquered Basque land with the blood of its children’.¹⁵³

Interestingly, despite the violence itself being described in the most visceral and emotive term, the presentation of the enemy did not become more aggressive. There was some, as seen in the *canción del gudari*, a song specially written and distributed by the Basque Government. The lyrics covered the expected topics of patriotic pride, (for the history of your race, for the national honour), glorification of the land of *Euskadi* (the *Gernika’ka Arbola*, the sea and the mountains of *Euskadi* are all referenced) and sacrifice, (‘give your generous blood, water of a new Jordan’).¹⁵⁴ Yet they also highlighted the necessity for the *gudari* to sharpen his knife several times, before stating that:

Comrade, my brother
sharpen the knife well
and plunge it so boldly
in the soul of the thug
who cursed your *Fueros*.¹⁵⁵

There were further isolated examples of violent rhetoric, seen in articles in *Gudari* that urged the *gudari* to ‘kill without remorse’ and promises that the ‘enemy will be defeated, annihilated’.¹⁵⁶ However, these were exceptions and there were no graphic calls for violent acts to be committed against the enemy’s bodies.¹⁵⁷ The majority of the visceral descriptions, the references to ‘pulverized flesh’ and ‘drained blood’ remained in the description of the enemy’s atrocities or the expected sacrifices of the *gudaris* themselves, not what should be done to the enemy.¹⁵⁸ This is understandable, given the prevailing sentiment within rhetoric that *gudaris* should not become brutalized and, furthermore, it fostered a feeling of discrepancy between the civilized, Christian Basques and their violent fascist enemies. As

¹⁵³ *Gudari*, 1 June 1937, p. 16; references to rape, of both Basque women and the *Patria* found in *Euzkadi*, 24 November 1936, p.1; 1 May 1937, p. 1; 9 May 1937

¹⁵⁴ A full translation of the song can be found as Appendix III p. 325.

¹⁵⁵ CDMH, Delegación Nacional de Servicios Documentales de la Presidencia del Gobierno, SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-SANTANDER_O, 267, 1, *Canción de Gudari*.

¹⁵⁶ *Gudari*, 2 May 1937, p. 10.

¹⁵⁷ *Gudari*, 15 April 1937, p. 24.

¹⁵⁸ *Gudari*, 14 May 1937, p. 23.

one *gudari* stated ‘not to stain our hands in blood was always as big a problem for us as winning the war’.¹⁵⁹

It is also important to maintain that the invaders were not solely Spaniards, but also Germans and Italians as well. The latter two were both described in similar terms to their ‘natural allies of the modern fascist Spaniards’ fellow advocates ‘of concentrated hate’ and their equals in terms of their capacity for violence, as ‘German and Italian soldiers’ became ‘those who have filled the world... with their bestial insanities against our civilian populations’.¹⁶⁰ However, whereas the description of the Spanish was a detailed creation that undermined the national character and history, implicitly emphasizing the necessity of Basque independence, the Italians and Germans, like in the Republican discourse were described more as avaricious adventurers and mercenaries, who, through the ‘endemic disease’ of fascism, were compelled ‘to steal the property of others’.¹⁶¹ The two dictators were portrayed as obsessed with Basque riches:

Hitler yearns for our minerals, seeing in our mines gaping black mouths the raw materials to arm his tortured people with canons and cruisers.

Mussolini, nostalgic and more Latin, covets our blue coast to serve as a bed for his pirate navy.¹⁶²

Much like in anarchist propaganda, the two foreign nations are here reduced to stereotypes – the functional German and the almost quixotic Italian. The intent is also the same as the anarchist one, to portray the enemy as greedy to satisfy the needs of only his own countrymen. However, whereas for the anarchists this was a reflection of fascism and its disregard for workers, the Basque impression is one of inferior *Patrias* attempting to steal from a noble one. Needless to say, the Italians and the Germans were never looked upon kindly. However, unlike in the Republican conception, where the German and Italians became the focal point of ire, helped by traitors, the Basque conception of the invasion saw them as a secondary threat behind the Spanish. The Italians and Germans were once

¹⁵⁹ Fraser, *Blood of Spain...*, p. 407.

¹⁶⁰ *Euzkadi*, 1 May 1937, p. 1.

¹⁶¹ *Tierra Vasca – Órgano de Acción Nacionalista Vasca*, 19 June 1937, p. 1; *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p.32

¹⁶² *Gudari*, 22 May 1937, p. 32.

dimensional, avaricious: ‘They want to steal from us... leaving us beggars of our own wealth’.¹⁶³

Yet the main enemy of the Basque people remained the Spanish invader. Historically a race with questionable character and an oppressive people by nature, they were now, through the adoption of fascism, charged with an ideology that suited their ‘race’ perfectly. However, this anti-Spanish sentiment could only prove to be detrimental to the Basque relationship with the Republic. By creating a discourse that attacked a single nation’s history and ‘racial character’, it becomes increasingly difficult to rhetorically differentiate between different factions of that nation. There were clear efforts to show that the rhetoric was aimed at the fascist enemy, however by undermining the character of the entire Spanish people, the impression of the allies of the Basque soldiers, of whom *gudaris* heard little, can only have been damaged. While it was never suggested the Republic was anything other than an ally to *Euskadi*, they remained Spanish and *Euskadi* was, categorically, a different nation.

The view from the other side, however, was markedly different. As seen in the previous chapter, there could be a distinct difference between private attitudes towards allies and public propaganda, depending on the importance of these attitudes to the war effort. For example, prominent members of the CNT were anti-Communist and while in the civilian press the FAI may have criticised the PCE, the military press was a paragon of united virtue. The same could not be said of the PNV’s output, in both *Gudari*, the dedicated military periodical and *Euzkadi*, that was widely read at the front, all shows of unity with the Republic came with a variety of caveats that always highlighted the differences between the Basque and the Spanish governments. Their allies, on the other hand, made notable efforts to show rhetorical support for the Basque nationalists and their government despite private misgivings about the whole project. And misgivings there were; Manuel Azaña was a high profile critic of the *Euskadi* government’s existence, as were the socialist party and the CNT whilst the PCE were, despite Stalin’s public diktats on nationalism, vehemently opposed the devolved government.¹⁶⁴

The Basque country and the war in the North were both reported well in the rest of Spain. Newspapers of the Popular Front gave regular news from the battlefronts of *Euskadi*, keeping the soldiery informed of the latest developments.¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, editorial articles would offer support for the government of *Euskadi* and its people. The Republicans’ ‘Basque

¹⁶³ *Gudari*, 6 March 1937 1937, p. 6.

¹⁶⁴ Payne, *Basque Nationalism...*, p. 210.

¹⁶⁵ *Ejército Popular*, 13 April 1937, p.3; *El Frente*, 26 April 1937, p. 3; 4 May 1937, p. 3.

brothers' were portrayed as a 'proud and democratic' people, staving off the 'morbid appetites' of the fascist invaders.¹⁶⁶ Their struggle was 'the pride of Spain' and their contribution 'a wonder of the civilized world'.¹⁶⁷ In the Basque country itself there was marginally more political friction, *Joven Guardia*, the newspaper for the JSU in the Basque country outlined its ideas on the Basque nationalist question as one of conditional Stalinist support:

Our nationalism understands the need for all workers, irrespective of borders, to unite to form a strong army, in short, is that people should keep their specific characteristics, their customs, their own culture, but that does not mean never to be reluctant to accept other customs or other cultures that are recognized as superior rationally.¹⁶⁸

This argument could be construed as dismissive of the Basque nationalist tendency to reject any outside interference in Basque affairs, however, this friction never undermined the major aim of the struggle in the north which was repeated regularly, 'to defend freedoms of *Euzkadi*'.¹⁶⁹

While the Republican papers may not have offered either a clear or wholly supportive position on the nationalist question itself, there was a well-defined show of support for the struggle of the Basque people. In comparison, the closest *Gudari* came to giving news on any front other than the north was the occasional article of isolated Basque units fighting in Madrid. This discrepancy can only be attributed to Basque nationalist isolationism – it seems that, in the propaganda for its troops, the PNV wished to only focus on the conflict in the Basque arena. While this adoption of a *Patria chica* mentality was perfectly understandable for a separatist movement, it was not conducive to good relations with the allies when the status quo of the conflict was to change.

¹⁶⁶ *Libertad*, Año. 1, Número. 2, p. 8 ; *Durruti*, 5 June 1937, p. 5.

¹⁶⁷ *Libertad*, Año. 1, Número. 2, p. 8.

¹⁶⁸ *Joven Guardia – Órgano de la Federación de JSU de Euzkadi*, 22 November 1936, p. 2.

¹⁶⁹ *Joven Guardia*, 22 November 1936, p. 3.

The Treaty of Santoña and the Fall of the Basque Country

The independent *Euskadi* would fall on 24 August 1937, when the treaty of Santoña was signed and the remainder of the *Euzko Gudarostea* surrendered to the Italian CTV at the Cantabrian port, two months after the loss of Bilbao.¹⁷⁰ The Italians were the chosen ‘victors’ of the Basques as they provided a guarantee of the lives of *peneuvistas* and a bulwark against the repression that would have inevitably followed a surrender to Franco’s troops. In the end this was irrelevant, as Franco would renege on the agreements of Santoña and persecute those who had surrendered in any case.¹⁷¹ The surrender had only been a matter of time since the fall of Bilbao and was met with some dismay by the rest of the Republic, as, much like the surrender of Bilbao in June 1937, it was a relatively peaceful affair which saw little bloodshed and a desire to preserve Basque lives at the expense of their allies military goals.¹⁷² This attempt to come to a reasonable compromise was characteristic of Basque wartime practice, as the leaders of the PNV refused to sanction a scorched earth policy in the Basque country. This allowed for vital industry to fall into enemy hands, yet preserved thousands of Basque livelihoods.¹⁷³ In addition to this, the night before the fall of Bilbao, the PNV ordered the release of all right wing prisoners in order to prevent their execution at the hands of leftists – in a further effort to avoid the loss of life that pained the Basque nationalists so.¹⁷⁴ It is therefore not an overzealous assumption to state that the Basque nationalists of the PNV, as the fall of the North became inevitability, were no longer committed to the Republic war effort. There remained some enthusiasm for the Republic, but this was nominal at best; Irujo, Aguirre and their respective staff continued to fly the flag of Basque nationalism *in absentia* and the 142nd Mixed Brigade maintained a Basque battalion, that of the *vasco-pirenaica* that fought in the *Ejército del Este* until the end of the war.¹⁷⁵ However, it is reasonable to conclude that, to the majority of *gudaris*, the loss of Bilbao and Vizcaya spelt the end of their

¹⁷⁰ For a full account of the surrender see J.M. Garmendia, “El Pacto de Santoña”, in *La guerra civil en el País Vasco, 50 años después*, eds. Carmelo Garitaonandia and José Luis de la Granja (Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco, 1986), pp. 157-180.

¹⁷¹ Payne, *Basque Nationalism*, pp. 224-5 n. 58.

¹⁷² An example of this dismay was seen in *El Socialista* that would state its ‘concrete, expressed, indignant revulsion against the culprits of the “pact of Santoña” an infamous treason’, cited in Pere Gabriel, *Historia de la UGT – Un sindicalismo de guerra, 1936-1939*, (Madrid: Siglo Veintiuno, 2011), pp. 152-3.

¹⁷³ de Pablo, Ludger Mees and Rodríguez Ranz, *El péndulo patriótico...*, pp. 32-41; The most startling example of this was the refusal to destroy the industrial left bank of the river Nervión when the city fell to the rebels, allowing for munitions factories, heavy steel industries and shipbuilding yards to fall into enemy hands. Fraser, *Blood of Spain*, pp. 408-9.

¹⁷⁴ For an account of Basque nationalist prisoner transfers, see *Ibid...*, pp. 405-408.

¹⁷⁵ Engel, *Historia de las brigadas mixtas...*, p. 123; For more on Aguirre as exiled *lehendakari* in the immediate aftermath of the war see, Ludger Mees, *El Profeta Pragmática – Aguirre, el primer lehendakari*, (Irun: Alberdania, 2006), pp. 21-29.

nationalist dream and, ultimately, their emotional involvement in the war. Ultimately, a large number of former *gudaris* were mobilised in Franco's Army, fighting their former allies on the fronts that their former leaders had been so reluctant to place them.¹⁷⁶ One *peneuvista* stating that even at Santoña loyalty had swung away from the Republic:

If Franco had been clever, he would have told our troops that they had fought bravely, cleanly and surrendered honourably. Having said that he would have called for volunteers to join his army to take Madrid. I'm convinced that eighty per cent of our troops would have responded to such a call on the spot.¹⁷⁷

Sadly for the men of the *Euzko Gudarostea*, this was not the case, and hundreds of the captured *gudaris* were sentenced to death. Although many of these cases were commuted, by December 1937 there were 7,935 political prisoners spread amongst the gaols of Bilbao alone, many of them *gudaris* awaiting execution. In that month there were 77 executions of prisoners, compared with the previous month's 180, by the ninth day of the following year there had already been 31. Over the course of the war, the number of political executions in Vizcaya is believed to be around 916.¹⁷⁸ There remain copies of many of these soldiers' final letters and through analysis of these letters we can see what *gudaris* final reflections on the conflict were and what they felt they had given their lives for. Examination of this material shows that their concerns in the conflict mirrored the discourse presented. The parallels between discourse and their own desire to be seen as anti-belligose has already been covered and their view of the larger issues of the conflict, the reasons why they were fighting, were also in keeping with the martial discourse presented. The majority of the letters examined are those of *gudaris* about to be executed with many of the letters written only a few hours before they were to face the firing squad. In the face of imminent death two ideas repeatedly came to the fore for *gudaris* which were, unsurprisingly given the ideology of *peneuvistas*, the concepts of *Euskadi* and God.

In the face of execution *gudaris* showed great pride in dying for their *Patria*. One *gudari* named José María Uredos, executed 11 March 1938, would state in a letter to a friend that he said 'goodbye to this life, proud to be a martyr of *Euzkadi*'.¹⁷⁹ In a separate letter to two other friends he would state his sole regret was 'not having a son for the day in the future

¹⁷⁶ Matthews, "Our Red Soldiers...", p. 355.

¹⁷⁷ Fraser, *Blood of Spain*, p. 412.

¹⁷⁸ Figures from Pedro Barruso Barés, "La represión en las zonas republicana y franquista del país vasco durante la guerra civil", *Historia Contemporánea*, 35, (2007), pp. 669-670.

¹⁷⁹ SAF, DP-565/12, José María Uredos, 2.

to be my own defender of the beloved *Euzkadi*'.¹⁸⁰ José María Azcarriaga, executed 16 December 1937, told his comrade Juan de Axubiagerra: '[I am] on the road to a proud death, to give my life for that I have loved: I would never have believed that *Jaungoikua* had reserved for me the great honour of being chosen to die for the *Patria*'.¹⁸¹ José Azcuénaga Aboitz, executed 11 October 1937, stated that he died 'for being Basque and [his] blood waters *Euzkadi*'.¹⁸² Pedro Barrondo stated that death would unite him the supreme patriot: 'We go to Sabino, our teacher... what is the ultimate sacrifice to the highly courageous patriots?'¹⁸³ Most of the letters to fellow comrades ended with a final *¡Gora Euzkadi Askatuta!* (Long live a free *Euzkadi*!) and the willingness to sacrifice their lives for the freedom of the *Patria* being the foremost of condemned *gudaris* concerns.

As seen above, religious discourse was prevalent in *gudaris*' letters. To die was not simply an end, but part of *Jaungoikua*'s plan. Antonio Izaguirre, writing to his friends Julián and Juan, started his letter informing them of his fate, but that he was 'very grateful, for it shall be that which God wishes'.¹⁸⁴ Not all were as content, Felix Larrañaga, executed 17 December 1936, could not 'find any justification for finding himself in this predicament' but he still assigned it to the will of the Almighty, it having been 'so provided by the Eternal, whose high designs we all abide'.¹⁸⁵ One *gudari* who signed his letter simply as Jesús, wrote to his fiancé and spoke of his regrets of this life, but hopes for the following one:

I know that these letters will make you cry, but I also remind you that this life is worth very little. Forgive me for not having made you happy, now I remind you of your prediction 'I fear that we have not married, one must die'. This life is very short, we soon will be together again, and then it will be true forever. Perhaps here, we would not have been happy, because ... I do not know.¹⁸⁶

Here Jesús outlines his clear belief in heaven and, although he may have made mistakes, that he would be given the opportunity to rectify them exemplifying *gudaris*' beliefs not only in an afterlife but that their deaths were viewed favourably by God. Several expressed their happiness at being able to confess and take communion before they died. José María

¹⁸⁰ SAF, DP-565/12, José María Uredos, 2; A note at the end of this copy of the letter states that at the moment of his execution José María expressed a further regret, that he was the only one of his unit not to be killed at the front.

¹⁸¹ SAF, DP-275/2, José María Azcarriaga, 1.

¹⁸² SAF, DP-565/12, José Azcuénaga Aboitz.

¹⁸³ SAF, DP-275/2, P. Barrondo.

¹⁸⁴ SAF, DP-565/12, Antonio Izaguirre

¹⁸⁵ SAF, DP-565/12, Felix Larrañaga.

¹⁸⁶ SAF, DP-565/12, Jesús.

Azcarriaga would state in a letter to his parents and sisters that ‘the priest had comforted [his] spirit with the Bread of Angels and, after this, what did death matter?’¹⁸⁷ Two soldiers, who signed their letter with their (illegible) surnames, stated they went to their death ‘content and happy because we have confessed, celebrated mass and taken communion’.¹⁸⁸ Ultimately, *gudaris* drew personal resolve from God in their final hours, José María Azcarriaga stating that ‘*Jaungoikua* gives us strength and courage to die as Basques’.¹⁸⁹

In regards to the conflict that still continued, *gudaris* opinions were mixed. There was some concern for the Republic’s fortunes betraying a vague wish for it to be victorious. José María Uredos and Antonio Izaguirre even ended their letters with calls *Viva la República* (although in the case of Uredos his was included as one of the correspondents was a Republican).¹⁹⁰ However, overall there was a general malaise amongst *gudaris* in regards to the conflict. For many the war was a minor concern, not warranting a mention in their final words. Those *gudaris* that allowed their minds to turn to the future spoke of Basque Independence as a far off concern unconnected to the current conflict. Alberto de Baranoika would state to his friend that he hoped that one day he ‘shall bring about the thoughts all us nationalists have about the future of *Euzkadi*’.¹⁹¹ One *gudari* calling himself Malxalen, writing from Orúe prison on 20 February 1938, told his children rather than await salvation from the Republic to prepare for a longstanding struggle and occupation:

... we must be strong in the persecution and the suffering does not matter, everything that *Euzkadi* demands of us. They will believe that through the reign of terror that they have implemented, and the vicious persecution they have unleashed that they will make us spy on each other.¹⁹²

This disconnection from the war betrayed either a lack of faith in a Republican victory, a lack of interest now that the war in the *Euskadi* was over or a more aggressive, anti-Republican sentiment. That sentiment being that now the Basque country had fallen there was no further need for Spaniards of any stripe to pretend to be concerned with Basque independence. In regards to the latter there is sufficient evidence to show that many *gudaris* had very little time for their allies in the Republic and their supposed concern for *Euskadi*. For Manuel Ornosti,

¹⁸⁷ SAF, DP-275/2, José María Azcarriaga, 2.

¹⁸⁸ SAF, DP-565/12, author’s signature illegible.

¹⁸⁹ SAF, DP-275/2, José María Azcarriaga, 3.

¹⁹⁰ SAF, DP-565/12, Antonio Izaguirre; José María Uredos, 1.

¹⁹¹ SAF, DP-565/12, Alberto de Baranoika

¹⁹² SAF, DP-565/12, Malxalen.

shot 12 August 1937, the difference between each side was academic. Whether the invader was the ‘Falangists with Franco... the Republicans, Socialists or Communists, for us they were all anti-Basques’.¹⁹³ For one anonymous *gudari*, who from Larrinaga wrote a series of political ‘points’, the opinion was the same: ‘White absolutism – Red absolutism, who cares? Just two funerals for the deceased: man’.¹⁹⁴ Pedro González, in a letter sent before his execution on 16 December 1937, wrote of his shame at once being involved with the CNT stating that he died ‘regretting his past life’.¹⁹⁵ This shame at being involved with a group other than a Basque nationalist one does not inherently imply anti-Spanish feeling but it does point towards a distinct lack of concern for his former comrades; comrades who were still embroiled in a war against those who had sentenced him to death. A general, indiscriminate anti-Spanish feeling had existed amongst *gudaris* even before the end of the conflict in the North. One *gudari*, called Nicolás, would put his feelings towards the Spaniards he fought alongside in no uncertain terms. He claimed that all losses of territory were the fault of units from Santander and Asturias leaving *gudaris* to defend the entire line. For Nicolás, the defence of the Basque country should have been a solely Basque affair, as they were the superior people:

...if they would have left us Basques alone without outside interference and Spanish traitors in the form of friends, we would have as good an army as any in the world, let alone better than the Spanish, because that today we are. Our capacity is so superior to them that the conviction of superiority of race that was once lyrical has now demonstrated realities.¹⁹⁶

Nicolás here highlights the schism that the discourse presented to *gudaris* was always likely to create, one of Basque superiority over their allies as they had been presented with no reconciliatory alternative. Examination of letters of condemned soldiers shows their general lack of concern for their Republican allies and lack of shared ideological intersections. In the material examined, only a single *gudari* mentioned ‘social justice’ as a concern of his in the conflict; the rest were motivated by concerns for the *Patria* and faith.¹⁹⁷ Moreover, there was not even a strong shared antipathy towards the enemy, given the anti-Spanish, rather than antifascist character of propaganda.

¹⁹³ SAF, DP-565/12, Manuel Ornosti.

¹⁹⁴ SAF, DP-275-3, Apuntos.

¹⁹⁵ SAF, DP-275/2, Pedro González, 1.

¹⁹⁶ Cited in Cervera Gil, *Ya sabes mi paradero...*, p. 177.

¹⁹⁷ SAF, DP-565/12, Alfonso.

In light of the attitudes displayed by *gudaris* alongside the above analysis of the Basque martial ideology, the historian is left little other impression than that of a political group that, root to branch, shared little in the way of ideology with its allies. In fact, given its strident Catholicism, it shared a very important source of identity with the enemy forces and the fact that the PNV of Álava and Navarre could so easily side with the insurgents following the uprising is testament to their similarities. Furthermore, that there was no sustained effort by the PNV to instil in its troops a feeling of anything more than ambivalence towards their Republican allies meaning that, following the loss of the most fundamental part of their ideology, the homeland, *gudaris* were left with very little to motivate them to fight. Even those proud to die for the *Patria* seemed unconcerned with the conflict overall following Santoña. The loss of Vizcaya signified, as far as they were concerned and as far as they had been educated to be concerned, defeat. If we compare Basque soldiers to their *cenetistas* counterparts we find an interesting comparison. Why was it that soldiers of the CNT, who had lost their revolution in the war, arguably as important to them as *Euskal Herria* was to *gudaris*, continued to fight? It seems that here we find the crux of Basque nationalism's curtailed involvement in the Civil War – it was fundamentally motivated by a single issue, independence. As we have seen in the case of the CNT, despite the defeat of its revolution and despite it sacrificing its most fundamental idea, anti-statism, the movement was still at its root an anti-capitalist, proletarian organisation in keeping with the general politics of the Republic. The PNV on the other hand, was none of those things; its secondary ideological touchstones were shared with the rebels, not the Republic.

The writings on antifascism were perhaps the only sign of any ideological similarities between the Republic and the Basque nationalists. The enemy to both was a violent invader, out to rape the land and enslave its inhabitants. Yet even on this topic, a large amount of Basque antifascist propaganda was viewed through a Christian lens. This limited coalescence is indicative of the wider ideological problems between the two; the PNV and the Republican groups simply did not share enough and were bound merely by their antifascism. Moreover, there was little interest shown by the *peneuvistas* side in improving this relationship – for while the Republicans made some effort at *rapprochement*, no equivalent was to be found in the martial discourse of the *Euzko Gudarostea*.

Given the ideological basis of PNV martial politics it is hardly surprising that no substantial common ground could be found. The political ideology of Sabino Arana was, as we have seen, a fundamental part of martial Basque nationalism during the war and the man himself was revered as the 'maestro', the leading intellectual light of *Euskadi*. There were

references to him in every edition of *Gudari* each fawning over his ideological prowess, his ‘teachings [were] the guarantee of victory’, and claims that the war would result ‘in the ideas forged by Sabino’.¹⁹⁸ Moreover, a truly Basque house was said to contain three things: a crucifix, an *ikurriña* and a picture of Arana.¹⁹⁹ Any political party that drew its ideology from the political musings of a man whose right wing interpretation of nationalism was so pronounced that it was used by the Spanish Right to undermine the PNV in the Republican period was unlikely to reach ideological *rapprochement* with the proletarian Spanish Republic.²⁰⁰ The *Euzko Gudarostea*’s ideology in the war boiled down to the simple slogans printed in *Gudari*: ‘For Christian Civilization... For freedom of the *Patria*’, there was no leftist tinge, no common ground in the general programme, apart from the obvious antifascism, on which to build a mutual ideology.²⁰¹

This proved to be exacerbated by the significant problem posed by the creation of ‘martial politics’; that the methods used by simplistic propaganda create a mentality that retrenches the strongest ideas of a movement. They reinforce already held beliefs in order to convince soldiers that their struggle is worthwhile in this case, create a Manichean distinction between the proper group and the ‘other’ (in which there was no distinction between Spaniards). The fundamental problem of this in the context of the Basque-Republican relationship was that it meant that, in motivating *gudaris* to fight, PNV propaganda was only reinforcing the differences between them and their Republican allies. Placed in a martial context, into propaganda articles and slogans written specifically to emotionally charge the soldiery, the ideas of Arana would never be suitable to be placed within the ideology of the *Ejército Popular*.

Ultimately, the Basque nationalism of the PNV was too ideologically removed from the Republic for it to create a meaningful relationship with its allies. Yet it needs to be understood that there was no intent to do so from the PNV camp with propaganda focussing solely on issues to do with *Euskadi* and the Basque people and as such, following the fall of *Euskadi*, the majority of Basque soldiers felt no compulsion to help the Republic. This attitude was illustrated by Aguirre in 1939, putting the loyalties of the Basque nationalists in clear relief: ‘Our adherence has been to the freedom of *Euskadi*. We would not have gone to the fight directly; we had not gone to defend the Republic’.²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ *Gudari*, 6 March 1937, p. 6.

¹⁹⁹ *Gudari*, 15 April 1937, pp. 32-33.

²⁰⁰ Payne, *Basque Nationalism...*, p. 144.

²⁰¹ *Gudari*, 20 March 1937, pp. 10-11.

²⁰² Cited in de Meer, *El Partido Nacionalista Vasco...*, p. 154.

Chapter Five: A ‘March on Madrid’ – *Requetés* and the Crusade

The aim of this chapter is to answer two questions – the first: how did Carlist wartime discourse fit with the overarching Crusade framework? The second: how successful was this in motivating soldiers affiliated to the *Comunión Tradicionalista*, known as *requetés*, to fight and die in the Crusade? In answering these questions the chapter will recreate the discourse of the Carlist wartime press and outline the Crusade as it was presented to *requetés*. Concurrently, the chapter will analyse *requetés*’ letters and memoirs to understand the reality of their actual motivations in fighting the war and consequently the relative success of the discourse in convincing them to fight. The hypothesis presented is that there was a limited but nonetheless evident rhetorical detachment between the ‘generic’ Crusade discourse and the discourse presented to *requetés* and consequently *requetés*’ motivations in the conflict differed somewhat from those prescribed by the overarching model of the *africanistas*. While *africanista* Crusade discourse focused on concerns on a national level and attempted to create a singular movement under Franco, *requetés* shunned this conception and were instead motivated by a more parochial conception of the conflict, informed by an idealized perception of the region from which *requetés* hailed.

The first thing that needs to be established before the main bulk of the chapter is approached is the background of the Carlist movement. They were perceived by many as a relic of a bygone era, a superannuated example of Spain’s backwardness, and while it is true that Carlism was an intensely religious, vehemently anti-democratic movement which rejected many of the trappings of the modern era, the reality of this situation was much more complex.¹ Carlist identity, given its admittedly retrograde mindset, was rooted in local and regional heritage, particularly that of Navarre and the Basque country, and to treat it as simply a political ideology would undermine its historical resonance with many of its adherents. The *Comunión Tradicionalista* of the Civil War originated from supporters of the claim of Carlos de Borbón, known to Carlists as Carlos V, to the throne. This dispute of succession led to the First Carlist War of 1833 to 1839 and two subsequent conflicts in the nineteenth century, the Second and Third Carlist wars, lasting from 1846 to 1849 and 1872 to

¹ José Antonio Primo de Rivera, leader of the Falange until his execution in November 1936, referred to the movement’s ideology as ‘intransigent, obstinate, *antipático*’, Indalecio Prieto, *Convulsiones de España – pequeños detalles de grandes sucesos*, (Mexico City: Ediciones Oasis, 1967), p. 139.

1876 respectively, the so-called *carlistadas*.² The cause in the nineteenth century, although ostensibly about a claim of succession, was more a reaction against the influx and influence of Liberal ideas into Spain and the erosion of regional identities, which were held up as fundamental to the *Patria*. Carlos and his supporters desired to rid Spain of not only the liberal values that had come as a result of the Napoleonic invasion, but also the ‘foreign’ ideas of the Enlightenment that had apparently accompanied the Bourbon succession to the throne in 1700 and institute instead a government more akin to the Spain of the era of the Catholic Kings, where Foral diversity was valued.³ It was a populist movement and enjoyed great support amongst the peasantry, especially in Navarre.⁴ A.A. Parker, a Fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, when writing about the *Comuni3n Tradicionalista* in 1937 explained the motivations of the original Carlists with the following succinct phrase:

Men will not risk their lives in order to put a pretender on the throne, unless they are convinced that he stands for something that affects them closely, that he stands for a cause whose triumph will mean the triumph of ideals and interests that they have most at heart.⁵

That is to say that the Carlists, from the nineteenth century through to the twentieth, were always more concerned with the values that their King represented rather than the man himself. This sentiment would have a profound impact upon Carlist wartime discourse.

By the dawn of the Second Republic it can be justly stated that the ideology of the movement had, despite, or maybe because of, its defeats in the nineteenth century, not evolved into one that was best suited to the modern era. There were attempts in the latter part of the nineteenth century to modernise Carlism, most notably by ideologues C3ndido Nocedal and Antonio Aparisi y Guijarro in the 1870s, followed by Juan V3zquez de Mella from the 1880s into the early twentieth century and later by V3ctor Pradera from the 1910s into the

² For more detailed study of the Carlist wars of the nineteenth century see Jordi Canal i Morell, Pedro R3jula L3pez, Fernando Mart3nez La3nez, *Las guerras carlistas*, (Zaragoza: Centro de Estudios Locales de Alcorisa, 2009), *passim*.

³ Julio Ar3stegui, Jordi Canal i Morell and Eduardo Gonz3lez Calleja, *El Carlismo y las guerras carlistas: Hechos, hombres e ideas*, (Madrid: La Esfera de los Libros, 2003), pp. 181-2; Jordi Canal i Morell, *Banderas blancas, boinas rojas – Una historia pol3tica del carlismo, 1876-1939*, (Madrid: Marcial Pons), pp. 19-25. Much like their not-so-different enemies in the PNV, the Carlists were preoccupied with the *fueros*.

⁴ I have, for reasons of brevity, written a rather short and less than detailed *pr3cis* of Carlism’s ideological roots. The reason for this being that I solely wish to provide the necessary historical background for the chapter, a longer and more detailed history of Carlism’s ideological heritage can be found in the above works as well as Alexandra Wilhelmson, *La formaci3n del Pensamiento del Carlismo (1810-1875)*, (Madrid: Actas, 1995), *passim*.

⁵ A.A. Parker, ‘History of Carlism in Spain’, *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 26, No. 101 (Mar., 1937), p. 17.

Second Republic. This led to various splits along so-called *jaimista*, *integrista* and *mellista* as the movement moved towards adopting more social-minded corporatist model, dabbling in ‘organic democracy’ and attempting to put aside questions of dynastic legacy. However, despite these alterations the movement maintained a strict adherence to the ideas of religion and an ‘historic’, Foral form of regional autonomy.⁶

By the Second Republic these differences began to be overcome, and a relatively coherent ideology could be ascertained. Rooted in the ideals of the nineteenth century, Carlism remained firmly counterrevolutionary, anti-liberal and opposed to all forms of modern government, especially the centralization of administration. There was also a dedication to Catholicism, and although not slavishly papist, there was profound commitment to Spanish, particularly Navarrese, religious tradition and a noted desire to restore the Church to the centre of Spanish life.⁷ Away from strictly defined political ideology, an anti-modern sentiment persisted and there was a desire to return to a more parochial social dynamic as cities, especially Madrid, were viewed as untrustworthy and foreign. Industrialization and its ‘advances’ had allowed liberal ideas to flourish and the defining Spanish morals of the regions to recede.⁸ The locality was prized above all, existing outside of modernity, it was defined by its simple ways and clear hierarchy and was viewed by many Carlists as the moral backbone of society.⁹ The ideology was encapsulated in the *trilema*, a mantra as old as the movement itself, the three word phrase *Dios, Patria y Rey* (God, *Patria* and King). It was ubiquitous throughout Carlist discourse and the *requetés’* own writings, and while these three ideas were important to the movement, it is important to understand that these were not the sole beliefs of the Carlists and the ideas explained above were also evoked when the phrase was used.

It is worth noting that all Carlists were not, at its inception, as diametrically opposed to the Second Republic as they would later become. They were apprehensive, pleased at the

⁶ For more on the ideological history of the movement in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century see Aróstegui, Canal i Morell and González Calleja, *El Carlismo...*, pp. 87-97; Ander Delgado Cendagortagarza, “Victor Pradera: Mártir de España y de la causa Católica” in *Soldados de dios y apóstoles de la patria: las derechas españolas en la Europa de entreguerras*, eds. Alejandro Quiroga Fernández de Soto and Miguel Ángel del Arco Blanco, (Granada: Comares, 2010), pp. 66-95.

⁷ Canal i Morell, *Banderas blancas, boinas ...*, pp. 21-22; Aróstegui, Canal i Morell and González Calleja, *El Carlismo...*, pp. 193-195.

⁸ Vázquez de Mella firmly believed that it was ‘modern civilization’ that had resulted in the national malaise, it was ‘at bottom barbarous, because everything that means a revolt against religious and moral principles is barbarity’ cited in A.A. Parker, “History and Policy of Carlism” *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 26, No. 102, (June, 1937), p. 222.

⁹ This idea is outlined very well in Ugarte Tellería, *La Nueva Covadonga...*, pp. 9-18; Fernando Molina, *La tierra del martirio español el País Vasco y España en el siglo del nacionalismo*, (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales, 2005), pp. 137-143.

fall of the Alfonsine monarchy, a longstanding enemy of Carlism, but concerned about the direction that this new government would take. They did not need to wait for long before their doubts were clarified as within weeks of the declaration of the Republic churches were ablaze in Madrid and Catholicism supposedly under attack.¹⁰ There was no forgiveness for the Republic after this as the list of perceived transgressions grew. There was the burning of convents, the expulsion of the Society of Jesus, the removal of the crucifix from schools, the ban on processions as well as the constant breakdown of law and order as anarchist conflagrations arose in Casas Viejas and Alto Llobregat.¹¹ Moreover the Republic saw the localities, the *aldeas* (hamlets) of Navarre, the Basque Country and Catalonia, so vital to Carlism, invaded by a modernising force which sought to alter village life, attempting to speed up the already creeping advances of modernity; this could not be tolerated.¹² This was perhaps best exemplified by the ruling in 1931 that ordered the removal of the crucifix from classrooms, where it had previously been a permanent and beloved fixture.¹³ A greater interference in the established life of the village by the external would be difficult to find.

The Madrid Government was, according to Antonio Lizarza Iribarren, one of the chief Carlist collaborators in the uprising, ‘dirty, sleazy and portent of worse evils’, characteristic of all that was wrong with modern politics and it needed to be overthrown.¹⁴ By the end of the period the Republic had come to represent all that Carlism hated, it was the shatterer of the idyll of the *aldea*, the manifestation of a ‘Jewish-Marxist-Masonic’ triumvirate that had come to conquer Spain.¹⁵ There were some in Carlist circles preparing to topple the government almost as soon as it had arisen, but serious conspiratorial action began with the assumption of the role of Secretary of the Traditional Community in May 1934 by a lawyer from Seville named Manuel Fal Conde.¹⁶ The likelihood of placing the then successor to Carlos V, Don Alfonso Carlos,[±] on the throne was never great, but under the leadership of Fal

¹⁰ Fraser, *The Blood of Spain...*, pp. 124-5; Antonio Manuel Moral Roncal, “1868 en la memoria carlistas de 1931: dos revoluciones anticlericales y un paralelo”, *Hispania Sacra*, No. 119 (January-June 2007), pp. 350-4.

¹¹ Tomás Echeverría, *Como se preparó el alzamiento – El Genera Mola y los carlistas*, (Madrid: Gráfica, 1985), p. 18.

¹² Ugarte Tellería, *La Nueva Covadonga...*, pp. 375-6.

¹³ Gabriel Jackson, *The Spanish Republic and Civil War, 1931-1939*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012), p. 65.

¹⁴ Echeverría, *Como se preparó el alzamiento* in *Ibid...*, p. 18.

¹⁵ Domínguez Arribas, *El enemigo judeo-masónico...*, p. 77; Ugarte Tellería, *La Nueva Covadonga...*, p. 249.

¹⁶ Julio Aróstegui and Eduardo González Calleja, “La Tradición Recuperada: El requeté carlistas y la insurrección”, *Historia Contemporánea*, No. 11, (1994), pp. 32-34; Josep Javier Clemente, *El Carlismo en el novecientos español: 1876-1936*, (Madrid: Huerga y Fierro, 1999), p. 82.

[±] Full name: Don Alfonso Carlos Fernando José Juan Pío de Borbón y Austria-Este.

Conde the Requeté worked tirelessly to prepare for the overthrow of the government.¹⁷ The Requeté, the singular use referring to the paramilitary arm of Carlism, prepared for the uprising intensely, training the *boinas rojas* (red berets) of the militia as if they were a regular Army. Inspired by the *Tercio de Extranjeros*, it was tightly organised into *Patrullas*, *Grupos*, *Piquetes*, *Requetés*, and finally *Tercios*, the smallest comprising of five men and a *Jefe*, the largest of between six and eight hundred men.¹⁸

This preparation meant that almost as soon as the Civil War had begun, *boinas rojas* were marching to the front in support of the rebellion, as *requetés* were some of the first soldiers mobilised. A minimum of 8,000 Carlist troops from Navarre alone heading to the front in the first weeks of the conflict.¹⁹ Despite a Navarrese majority, the *Tercios* hailed from all over Nationalist Spain, with units drawn from the nearby Basque Country and Aragón to as far as Castile and Andalusia.²⁰ Although not drawn exclusively from former *pelayos* (the Carlist youth organisation) and members of the Communion, these groups were, throughout the entire war, comprised of troops affiliated with Tradition and comprised a true volunteer force.²¹ Furthermore, there would even be a *Tercio* from Catalonia, that of *Nuestra Señora de Montserrat* (Our Lady of Montserrat), which was made-up exclusively of Catalan volunteers who had evaded capture and crossed the lines.²² Regarding the social make-up of the *Tercios*, they hailed from across the social spectrum with many coming from the urban bourgeoisie as well as the urban working class. However, many more came from rural backgrounds with peasants, smallholders and richer farmers from the various *aldeas* of the Navarrese and Basque countryside joining the Crusade.²³ Furthermore, volunteers for the

¹⁷ For a good first-hand account of the Carlist preparations for the uprising see Antonio Lizarza Iribarren, 'Memorias de la conspiración', in *Navarra fue la primera: 1936-1939*, (Burlada: Sahats, 2006), pp. 13-173. For more comprehensive works on Carlism during the Second Republic, particularly the *mellista/integrista* split as well as the rivalry between the Navarrese Carlism under Conde de Rodezno and those led by Fal Conde see Antonio Manuel Moral Roncal, "Devociones para tiempos de espadas: El Sagrado Corazón y El Cristo Rey como categorías políticas del movimiento Carlista (1931-1939)", *Historia y Política*, No. 21 (January-June, 2009), pp. 219-246.

¹⁸ Aróstegui and González Calleja, 'La Tradición Recuperada...', p. 37.

¹⁹ Casas de la Vega, *Las Milicias Nacionales en la guerra de España*, (Madrid: Editora Nacional 1974), p. 90.

²⁰ Julio Aróstegui, *Los combatientes carlistas en la guerra civil española, 1936-1939*, Volume. 1, (Madrid: Aportes XIX, 1991), pp. 57-9. For studies on *Tercios* of particular areas, see José María Sanjuán Gil, *Los requetés riojanos en la guerra española, 1936-1939*, (Madrid: Comunidad Tradicionalista Carlista, 2002), *passim*; Javier Nagore Yáñez, *¡Gure Bandera, España 'ren! (Nuestra bandera, ¡he aquí España!) – Los Tercios de Requetés de Guipúzcoa y Vizcaya en la guerra de 1936-1939*, (Madrid: Comunidad Tradicionalista Carlista, 2002), *passim*.

²¹ Canal i Morell, *Banderas blancas...*, p. 329.

²² Salvador Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes del Tercio de Nuestra Señora de Montserrat en la Cruzada Española, 1936-1939*, (Barcelona: Editorial Casulleras, 1956), p. 5.

²³ Canal i Morell, *Banderas blancas...*, p. 329; Aróstegui, Canal i Morell and González Calleja, *El Carlismo...*, pp.159-161. Yet the attitude of all was notably parochial, with Javier Ugarte Tellería stating that *requetés* were 'basically people of the village'. Ugarte Tellería, *La Nueva Covadonga...*, p. 371.

locally sourced *Tercios* could rely on being joined by friends from their villages and even family members, with many *requetés* signing up alongside their brothers, fathers and even grandfathers; it was not unusual to have three generations of *requetés* in a *Tercio*.²⁴ This became a point of pride for many *requetés*, one stating in a letter home:

I am delighted; I was from the moment I learned that from our family home we three brothers have left, ready to give our blood and our lives for the salvation of our holy religion and our beloved *Patria*, Spain.²⁵

All in all, the minimum number of Carlist troops mobilised over the whole conflict can be estimated to be at least seventy thousand.²⁶ Of these seventy thousand the number killed is estimated to be around six thousand, over a quarter of these from Navarre alone.²⁷

This thesis is about the concept of ideological assimilation, how certain overarching ideological structures incorporate others within them, albeit only in the martial sphere. To this end, it is necessary to look at the major political developments outside of this martial sphere in order to understand those within it. Therefore, at this juncture a brief description of the impact of the Decree of Unification of 19 April 1937 upon the Carlist movement is needed. As we shall see, much of the martial discourse aimed at *requetés* was focused on the regional and the ‘eternal values’ it represented, with the minutiae of politics in between ignored. Consequently the Unification did not greatly altar discourse apart from on the issue of Franco’s leadership and the role of the King. Nevertheless, it still had profound effects upon the movement itself as the *Comuni3n Tradicionalista* was no longer a political entity in its own right, but instead a faction within a larger organisation. Furthermore, it made the *madrileño* Falange, previously simply allies in the uprising, their political kin.

The Decree of Unification from the Carlist perspective was not a positive political development. At the stroke of Franco’s pen the Communion, which had been through a great deal of turmoil over the previous century and was finally in the ascendancy, was reduced to

²⁴ Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 7; Jaime del Burgo, *Conspiraci3n y guerra civil*, (Madrid: Alfaguara, 1970), pp. 834-5.

²⁵ Cited in Francisco L3pez Sanz, *Navarra en la cruzada – Episodios, Gestos, Lenguaje Epistolar y Anecdotario*, (Pamplona: Editorial Navarra, 1948), p. 117

²⁶ Canal i Morell, *Banderas blancas...*, p. 329.

²⁷ Rafael Casas de la Vega, *La guerra de Espa3a. El Requeté*, (Madrid: Comunidad Tradicionalista Carlita, 1988), p. 20; p. 38.

the junior partner in a forced coalition.²⁸ The reasons cited in the decree, that there needed to be an integration of all groups into ‘a single national political entity’ given the war’s demands for ‘common destiny’ in the ‘individual and collective action of all Spaniards’ were scant justification for the loss of independence.²⁹ Fal Conde was so incensed that he threatened expulsion from the Party for all those that accepted positions within the new organisation.³⁰ However, it was widely accepted amongst most other Carlists, even high ranking ones, who viewed it as at least superior to a ‘vulgar electoral alliance’.³¹ Carlist and Falangist operations were merged as party hierarchies were replaced, with the Carlists receiving the short end of the stick in terms of influence on a national stage; although they maintained regional authority in traditional areas of Carlist strength, such as Navarre. The numerical superiority of their allies, as well as the Falange’s more prestigious status with certain members of Franco’s political circle, namely his brother-in-law Ramón Serrano Suñer, counted against them.³² The Carlists’ stature in the post-Unification political hierarchy was made clear by the fact that the FET y de las JONS adopted the Falange’s Twenty Six points as its ideological basis, with very little tangible Carlist ideology to be found in the decree or any subsequent literature. In his speech that accompanied the decree, Franco outlined the role of Traditionalists in the new movement as giving it an historical, eternal quality. They were the guarantee of the new organisations historical verisimilitude, while the Falange were the guarantors of the future, in charge of the national trajectory i.e. policy.³³ All in all it is somewhat telling of the Carlists’ role in the new organisation that in an epithet as long and ungainly as FET y de las JONS, their involvement was signified by a single T.

To be clear, this is not a political history of the Communion; there are plenty of works that have covered the intricacies of the Unification with far greater skill and in far greater detail.³⁴ For this project the important factor to focus upon is the subjugation of all authority

²⁸ For more on Carlism’s ‘irrevocable march towards marginality’ see Aróstegui, Canal i Morell and González Calleja, *El Carlismo...*, pp. 195-8. Saz, *España contra España...*, pp. 161-171.

²⁹ *Boletín del Movimiento de Falange Tradicionalista y de las J.O.N.S.*, 5 May 1937, p. iii.

³⁰ Clemente, *El Carlismo...*, p. 121. Fal Conde, at this point, had been expelled from Spain by Franco for reasons that will be discussed in the *Rey* section of this chapter, his position as national chief of the Communion was taken over by Conde de Rodezno.

³¹ This was the opinion of José María Valiente, the former president of the CEDA’s youth movement, the *Juventudes de Acción Popular* and a convert to Carlism in 1934, cited in Blinkhorn, *Carlism and Crisis in Spain, 1931-1939*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 290-1. For the reasons behind Valiente’s conversion see Lowe, *Catholicism...*, p. 150.

³² Canal i Morell, *Banderas blancas...*, pp. 342-347; Clemente, *El Carlismo...*, pp. 121-123.

³³ *Boletín del Movimiento de Falange Tradicionalista y de las J.O.N.S.*, 5 May 1937, pp. i-iii.

³⁴ Most of them are featured in the footnotes of this section, but for the Unification specifically, see Juan Carlos Peñas Bernaldo de Quirós, *El Carlismo, la república y la guerra civil (1936-1937): de la conspiración a la unificación*, (Madrid: Actas, 1996), *passim*; Ismael Saz Campos, *Fascismo y franquismo*, (Valencia: Publicaciones de la Universitat de València, 2004), pp. 132-50; Joan Maria Thomàs, *Lo que fue la Falange – La*

to Franco and the military and the new, closer links to the Falange. The *Tercios* themselves had already been regularised and brought under Army control on 22 December 1936, but they were kept as they were, groups of Carlist volunteers.³⁵ Furthermore, although the Army provided many of the officers, recruitment was also in the hands of the local (formerly) Carlist authorities, meaning that each unit remained wholly ‘Carlist’ for the duration of the conflict.³⁶ The result was that, on the ground, there was relatively little upheaval as a result of the decree. Therefore the Unification, while important in regards to the future of governance of Spain, was not as profound a political development as comparable events on the Republican side, such as the militarization of the militias or the crushing of the revolution. In light of this, while the events’ influence on the discourse will be recognised, they will not dictate the structure of the chapter, unlike in Chapter Three.

Before commencing with the bulk of the chapter, a note on the sources used is necessary. The aim of the first part of this chapter is to surmise the martial-political discourse presented to *requetés*. However, unlike in the Republican sector, there was no strong propaganda machine constantly printing propaganda material or a Commissariat discussing the ideology behind it. As mentioned in Chapter One, it has been suggested by some historians that the chaplains that accompanied *requetés* into battle acted in a role comparable to that of political commissars, yet they left precious little record of what they said to *requetés*.³⁷ While this chapter has attempted to surmise the role of chaplains within the analysis, the paucity of sources meant it was unable to analyse their role with any greater depth – there are references to their work and an outline of their duties, but nothing groundbreaking. Furthermore, this lack of an abundance of sources means that a recreation of military discourse comparable to Chapters Two and Three of this thesis was made more difficult. To compensate, this chapter has cast its net wider and drawn upon sources that *requetés* would have been exposed to, those which would have affected their conception of the conflict, such as, but not limited to, radio broadcasts, civilian newspapers, military pamphlets and propaganda books. The following paragraphs are a *précis* of some of the more important sources consulted.

Falange y los falangistas de José Antonio, Hedilla y la Unificación. Franco y el fin de la Falange Española de las JONS, (Barcelona: Plaza & Janes, 1999), pp. 131-221.

³⁵ Casas de la Vega, *Las Milicias Nacionales...*, p. 35; Anthony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain...*, p. 198.

³⁶ Casas de la Vega, *El Requeté...*, pp. 21-22.

³⁷ The notable exceptions being the memoirs of Juan Urrea Lusarreta, *En las trincheras del frente de Madrid (memorias de un capellán de requetés, herido a guerra)*, (Madrid: F. Uriarte, 1967) and Policarpo Cía Navascués, *Memorias de del Tercio de Montejurra, por su Capellán*, (Pamplona: La Acción Social, 1941).

Given that Navarrese *requetés* comprised a quarter of *Tercios* (*Navarra, Montejurra, Lácar, del Rey, San Miguel* and *Doña María de las Nieves*) a good many of the sources consulted for this chapter are aimed at Navarrese soldiers, most notably *La Voz de España* and *El Pensamiento Navarro*.³⁸ This chapter is not solely about the Navarrese *requetés*, many of the sources consulted in the final section come from *requetés* from other regions, however, due to the practicalities of research, a great deal of the sources relevant to Carlist discourse are Navarre-centric. It is also important to reiterate that the rebels had no equivalent press system to the Republic and that Franco's soldiers were subject to a far smaller volume of written propaganda than their Republican counterparts.³⁹ Therefore the number of newspaper sources consulted in this section has no comparison to that seen in earlier chapters. Furthermore, the two newspaper sources most consulted, the Navarrese pair of *La Voz de España* and *El Pensamiento Navarro*, were both originally civilian newspapers but, much like *Euzkadi*, were widely read on the front lines.⁴⁰

A further important source consulted is Torremar's *La voz del carlismo a través la radio*, a book of transcribed radio broadcasts from *Radio Requeté de Burgos*. Given the relative poverty of the written press, radio was vital for rebel propaganda with special units set up in order to broadcast the various stations to the front line.⁴¹ *Radio Requeté* had various broadcasting units across Castile, Navarre and the Basque country. These units were a serious undertaking, each consisting of four radio technicians, three industrial engineers and a varying number of lackeys to carry the equipment.⁴² One such station, *Radio Requeté de Guipúzcoa*, had a daily agenda that began at nine in the morning with news from *La Voz de España*, this was followed by music, a 'daily comedy' and a broadcast for the hospitalized. At seven in the evening there was a three hour programme of 'propaganda of the Requeté and music', ten saw a retransmission of news from Seville and Burgos, followed at midnight with

³⁸ It is necessary to state that the references to *El Pensamiento Navarro* all come from the book *Relente*; a collection of the wartime editorials of Francisco López Sanz (editor of the publication from 1933-66). Francisco López Sanz, *Relente – de los editoriales de "El Pensamiento navarro"*, (San Sebastián: Edit. Española, 1942).

³⁹ See Chapter One for a full explanation of the disparity in the volume of written propaganda between the two sides.

⁴⁰ Soldiers in the National Army were sent copies of their local civilian newspapers to their position if they wished for them. To obtain one they simply had to fill out a brief form that asked them what issue of what paper they wanted, when they wished to receive it, where they were stationed, their regiment, rank and which region they hailed from and they would receive it in the post. Of course this was not as effective as the Republican propaganda machine, but it ensured soldiers received newspapers that aligned to their political and regional affiliations. AGMAV, C. 1901, 5/1-2.

⁴¹ For a good study of the role of Radio across the entire Francoist zone, not just the front line, see Jesús Orozco Galindo, *Radio Nacional de España – nacida para ganar una guerra*, (Madrid: Mauscritos, 2009), *passim*.

⁴² AGMAV. C. 1457, 27/4.

news from the Americas and the Canary Islands, transmission finished at one in the morning.⁴³

Two further sources consulted are the *Ordenanza del Requeté* and the *Devocionario del Requeté*, short booklets which were issued to all *requetés* either when they were mobilised or, as was the case for soldiers of the *Tercio de Nuestra Señora de Montserrat* in 1937, as a Christmas gift from the authorities.⁴⁴ The content of each, written by Manuel Fal Conde in August 1936, was one of the few codified means of disseminating a clear message to the troops from the Carlist hierarchy. Moreover, although the political fortunes of Fal Conde changed greatly following their writing, both booklets continued to be provided to *requetés* throughout the war; asserting the continued verisimilitude of their content in regards the Carlist military message.

In interpreting the *requetés*' reception of this discourse, the chapter will be examining mostly letters and memoirs. Obviously, to treat the impressions gleaned from the limited sample of sources as indicative of what every single *requeté* believed would be a gross oversight. They were individual men with individual temperaments, experiences, hopes and desires and to expect them to react in exactly the same manner to discourse would be erroneous. However, one can observe what themes from the discourse were most prevalent, which struck a chord with *requetés* and which did not. Furthermore, we can see how successful attempts to alter perceptions were – such as attitudes towards the Falange, simply by seeing how they were referenced in the sources. A further concern is how reliable the sources themselves are – many of them being published in under Francoism where censorship was rife, meaning that complete honesty on behalf of the author was unlikely.⁴⁵ Soldiers' letters also did not escape the censor, but it was not as comprehensive, with censors instructed that due to the sheer volume of correspondence to only read twenty five to thirty per cent of letters.⁴⁶ However, regardless of how many letters were read, soldiers knew that they were subject to censorship and will have most likely autonomously edited the content of their letters so as not to provoke censure. The upshot of the presence of censorship is that a complete picture of each *requetés*' mindset was unlikely to be seen in either books published

⁴³ AGMAV, C. 1457, 27/1; In reference to the point made above, we can see that not only was *La Voz de España* read at the front, but its articles broadcast across the airwaves for *requetés* to listen to as well.

⁴⁴ Salvador Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 65.

⁴⁵ For more on censorship in the Franco era see J. Andrés de Blas, *El libro y la censura durante el franquismo: un estado de la cuestión y otras consideraciones*, (Madrid: UNED, 1999), *passim*; Justino Sinova, *La censura de prensa durante el franquismo*, (Barcelona: Debolsillo, 2006), *passim*.

⁴⁶ AGMAV, C. 2539, 323, 26, 1/10.

before the fall of the dictatorship or letters sent from the front.⁴⁷ For the purposes of this chapter, given it is about the effectiveness of propaganda compelling soldiers to act, this is not a great setback. What motivated soldiers to fight against an enemy that everyone on the Francoist side shared was unlikely to alert the censors.

The structure of the following section on Carlist wartime discourse will attempt to describe the programme in regards to its relevance to *requetés* – looking at how the war was presented in Carlist terms and subsequently how the less cohesive elements of the Crusade were presented. The section begins with an examination of the *Patria* and the importance of the region within this conception, then the role of religion in this context and finally the ideas of the Crusade that did not fit as well into the Carlist ideology. The final section will examine how Franco was symbolically coronated as the new Carlist ‘King’ as well as examining the presentation of the political realities that this brought. Throughout, the chapter will examine *requetés*’ own motivations and how their conception of the conflict reflected the discourse presented to them.

⁴⁷ Books published following the end of the dictatorship, meanwhile, are not perfect either, subject to all the usual concerns the historian encounters in regards to such sources.

The Region as Purifier: The Carlist conception of the *Patria*

In regards to the Carlist presentation of the conflict, there is a noticeable divergence from the ‘generic’ Crusade discourse towards a more idiosyncratic understanding. The Carlist interpretation of the Crusade was one that focused heavily on the regions of Spain, which were seen as the well of national sentiment and the true essence of the *Patria*. The overarching concept of the *Patria* was one of various regions that together formed the rich national tapestry of Spain. The *Ordenanza* informed *requetés* that Spain was ‘Single and indivisible in its rich autarkic regional variety’, a nation whose ‘sublime arcane traditions’ were a ‘Reliquary of greatness’.⁴⁸ The health of the nation relied upon the variety of its constituent parts. Yet the various parts of Spain had, in the recent past, not contributed equally to the *Patria*. The regions, especially those in the Carlist heartlands, with their small tightly knit communities and strong, uncorrupted values were in distinct contrast to the impiety of the capital. There was a longstanding opposition to the purported decadence of Madrid within Carlist discourse, with it being viewed as the portal through which foreign values had been allowed to corrupt the *Patria*.⁴⁹ The result was that within Carlist wartime discourse, the regions were presented as the saviours of the nation.

This conception was neither antithetical to nor incompatible with the overarching Crusade discourse, which celebrated regional differences and would form part of the Francoist nation building project in the post-war period.⁵⁰ Moreover, Carlist demands for regional privileges were even granted as Navarre and the ‘loyal’ Basque provinces of Guipúzcoa and Álava were rewarded with special tax arrangements with the central state.⁵¹ However it was not a central element of the overall programme, which focused more on the nation as a whole, sometimes with a bias towards Castile – given its importance to the historical myths relevant to the ‘generic’ Crusade. This section of the chapter will discuss what the key elements of Carlist discourse were and where it intersected with the overarching Crusade.

Carlist wartime propaganda informed *requetés* that it would be through the imposition of the uncorrupted values of regional Spain, namely Navarre, that the nation would achieve

⁴⁸ *Ordenanza de Requeté*, (Seville: Comunion Tradicionalista, 1936), p. 3.

⁴⁹ Ugarte Tellería, *La nueva Covadonga...*, pp. 305-311.

⁵⁰ Núñez Seixas and Umbach, “Hijacked Heimats...”, p. 299.

⁵¹ *Ibid...*, p. 299.

salvation.⁵² It was an ark of *Hispanidad* that had, due to its traditional character and piety, never been subject to the same corruptive influences as other regions and consequently constituted ‘the national essence, the substance, the tradition, which could serve as an example and teaching standard’.⁵³ According to *La Voz de España*, Navarre had always ‘been stronger and inaccessible to the corrosive etchant of revolutionary aggression and most generous in its entirety in the defence of the *Patria*’. It was the solution to the national malaise, for in the ‘roots of its exceptional political vitality the strength of the public health of all Spain is to be found’.⁵⁴ In other words, Navarre was the leader of the Crusade; it had forever been the cradle of Tradition, which had always opposed the enemies that all ‘good Spaniards’ now fought – it was the purest region, the least corrupted, the most Spanish. In the words of Francisco López Sanz, Navarre represented ‘the most secure shelter and the strongest bulwark’ of the *Patria* and ‘a handful of Navarrese earth smells like heroic resistance, of unblemished piety... of legendary crusades’.⁵⁵ Moreover, as a mostly rural state it had never been subject to the ills of industrialisation that had so affected the so-called ‘red’ cities of Barcelona and Madrid. The capital especially was in need to ‘regional’ attention, with the pious of Navarre marching on Madrid in order to Christianize it anew; the fact that it currently lay in Republican hands only aided this narrative.⁵⁶ Just as *africanistas* had envisaged themselves as lean and strong from their campaigns in the Rif, moulded by violence into the purifiers of a peninsula that had allowed itself to become decadent, flabby and corrupt, so too was it the prescribed role of the *requetés* of Navarre. They were the national saviours from an ‘untouched’ province, to save the rest of Spain, especially its ‘corrupted’ and ‘foreignized’ capital.⁵⁷ The war was, according to one Jesuit priest, the desire to bring ‘the hell of Madrid the heaven of Navarre, all the purity and radiance of the old Spain, that had taken refuge in the rugged and Christian arms of our mother Navarre, full of God, of tradition, of boys who were giants, martyrs of God and Spain’.⁵⁸ The people of Navarre had, according to discourse, always been the most committed to the *Patria*, its

⁵² That is not to say that other regions were not viewed as important within Carlist discourse, with Álava and Guipúzcoa of the Basque Country also being seen as strong embodiments of the *Patria*, however, as discussed, the wealth of sources in regards to Navarre means that it will be the *de facto* focus.

⁵³ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 63; For an explanation of how Navarre and Carlism came to be seen as synonymous see Francisco Javier Capistegui, ‘Spain’s Vendée’: Carlist Identity in Navarre as a mobilising model’ in *The Splintering of Spain – Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War 1936-9*, ed. Chris Ealham and Michael Richards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 177-195.

⁵⁴ *La Voz de España*, 3 October 1936, p. 1.

⁵⁵ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 100; p. 113.

⁵⁶ Ugarte Tellería, *La nueva Covadonga...*, p. 359.

⁵⁷ Canal i Morell, *Banderas blancas...*, p. 328.

⁵⁸ Cited in López Sanz, *Navarra en la cruzada...*, pp. 114-115.

reserve of strength and ‘the anchor of the old and pure values of the race’. The *boinas rojas*, meanwhile, were the martial interpretation of this, they who, in the cacophony of the Crusade, represented ‘the most genuine rhythm in the eurhythmy of the moment’.⁵⁹ Their preparation in the years prior to the uprising, while Madrid had allowed itself to descend into violent discord, represented their deep love for the *Patria*. For when ‘the sacred fire of love of *Patria*’ broke out, ‘the *requetés*, already fanned this flame and were ready – they demonstrated it by coming to the rescue swiftly and already disciplined – to offer themselves for the sake of the salvation of Spain’.⁶⁰ The war was therefore presented as a ‘March on Madrid’ within the Carlist military discourse in which the periphery would educate the centre in the true representation of the *Patria*.

Requetés’ own attitudes would reflect this regional importance, with many viewing their Navarrese (or Basque, or Catalan) locality as the archetype of Spain as a whole. There was an overriding belief among *requetés* that their village life was an idyll, upset by external, modernizing forces, and consequently, rather than they adapt to the modern world it was better for the world to change to suit their idealized parochial understanding.⁶¹ Much like in the discourse presented to them, for *requetés*, Navarre represented the repository of the best aspects of the Spain and was to be the saviour of the nation. In a letter to his parents from early August 1937 one *requeté*, Luis Cemboráin Mainz declared that ‘blessed Navarra, [was] the safeguard of Spain’.⁶² In an earlier letter he had declared his desire to bring the values of Navarre to the corrupted capital and see ‘the front of Somosierra replanted at the gates of Madrid’.⁶³ He felt it was the task of Navarrese *requetés* to save ‘religion and the *Patria*’, and that their piety and strength would defeat their enemies, ‘the despicable mob’.⁶⁴ José María Resa, a *requeté* of Pamplona, stated that it was no surprise that the Navarrese Carlists were ‘the first to step out of such a mess’ and aid the Army to save the *Patria*, given their national commitment.⁶⁵ While a *requeté* from the Navarrese *pueblo* of San Martín de Unx, stated the fervour of the Navarrese soldiers for the Crusade was such that it caused all others to be

⁵⁹ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 11; Torremar, *La voz del carlismo a través de la radio – charlas y conferencias circunstanciales*, (Burgos: Editorial Española, 1937), p. 29.

⁶⁰ *Ibid...*, p. 15.

⁶¹ This idea is expanded upon in Ugarte Tellería, *La Nueva Covadonga...*, pp. 374-80.

⁶² Luis and José Cemboráin Mainz, “Cartas de dos hermanos navarros *requetés* en 1937”, *Príncipe de Viana*, 235, 2005, p. 506.

⁶³ *Ibid...*, p. 489.

⁶⁴ *Ibid...*, p. 503.

⁶⁵ José María Resa, *Memorias de un Requeté*, (Barcelona: Bayer Hnos y Cía, 1968), p. 17.

viewed as ‘a pallid picture’ by comparison.⁶⁶ Navarrese *requetés* would, in their songs, sing of the region’s greatness. One listing the great aspects of Navarre that were exclusive to the region:

noble and warrior-like Navarre,
It was the first of the nation
Without Navarre there is no other in Spain
Capable of defending tradition.⁶⁷

Navarre was exceptional and uncorrupted, especially in comparison with the regions that many *requetés* fought in. These regions, stricken by war, were the antithesis of the *requetés*’ orderly villages, and it was the duty of *requetés* to bring their regional purity to these fallen places. One *requeté*, writing during the Catalan campaign spoke of the ‘these Catalan villages, like those of Aragon, Asturias, Santander and Vizcaya, with their destroyed churches’ and how, with the arrival of the men of Navarre, they were to be ‘reborn in the piety of their liberators, in our piety’.⁶⁸

In keeping with this regional interpretation, Carlist wartime discourse framed the Civil War in similar terms to the previous Carlist wars, a brave provincial force fighting for moral, Christian values against a corrupted, foreignized enemy that, from Madrid, was intent on destroying the true essence of the nation. The actual reasons for the Carlist wars and the current conflict were ignored, with a narrative of regional independence from a centralizing capital put forth. In both conflicts the ‘invader’ wished to impose ‘liberal systems, representing the exotic, the anti-national’, their metropolitan ignorance making them unaware of the true structure of the national character.⁶⁹ While in 1833 it had been the traitorous Liberals with their centralizing, ‘Frenchified’ ideas, now it was a Marxist cabal directed by Jews and Freemasons and aided by Republican turncoats that wished to rob Spain of its independence.⁷⁰ On the anniversary of the outbreak of the war, *La voz de España* would describe both conflicts as ‘the most virile and noble protest of the Spanish spirit against

⁶⁶ Cited in Juan Rey, *Por qué luchó un millón muertos (documentos inéditos)*, (Santander: Sal Terrae, 1962), p. 46.

⁶⁷ Bellosillo, Manuel Bellosillo, *Tercio de Requetés Valvanera – Semblanzas y Canciones*, (Madrid: Aportes XIX, 1992), p. 146.

⁶⁸ Javier Nagore Yáñez, ‘En la primera de Navarra, 1936-1939’ in *Navarra fue la primera*, (Burlada: Sahats, 2006), p. 395.

⁶⁹ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 222.

⁷⁰ For reference to the perceived French influence upon Spain in regards to the Carlist wars see “Hijacked Heimats...”, p. 300.

systems that intended to first bastardize and afterwards destroy, the spirit of our nation'.⁷¹ Just like in the previous century, the Carlists, true patriots, would struggle for regional representation and by extension, national independence. Neither the current *requetés*, nor their grandfathers, nor their great grandfathers before them 'could bring [themselves] to be the servants of foreigners without God and without *Patria*'. Consequently, they 'struggled for the continuation of the Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella against usurpation and the invasion by those arising of the Reformation'.⁷²

This 'new Carlist war' was presented as a continuation of the unfinished previous three.⁷³ This assertion was prevalent across all propaganda as *requetés* were expected to believe, as Torremar put it, that they: 'followed the footsteps of those before us'.⁷⁴ This idea was especially emphasised in the campaign to liberate Bilbao, one of the strongholds of the Liberals in the First and Third Carlist Wars, where *requetés* now fought 'like their grandfathers'.⁷⁵ The ultimate capture of the city was met with great celebration, Mola stating that victory had 'given the red beret meaning' for it meant 'that the third civil war has expired! That tradition has overcome betrayal! That the red of the red beret has triumphed over the red of Marxism!'.⁷⁶ In Carlist military discourse the victory was a final vindication, 'it marked the triumph after death of those who could not enter Bilbao in 1835 and 1874, and the defeat of calamitous ideas, lingering for over a hundred years'.⁷⁷ The pious of Navarre had finally defeated the corrupted centre.

There was still a place for other historical myths in the Carlist presentation, ones which overlapped with those of the 'generic' Crusade. There was a great respect for Ferdinand and Isabella and their achievements and a strong affinity towards the imagined period of the 'mediaeval and early modern age, times whose recollection filled Spanish hearts with pride'.⁷⁸ The war was an opportunity for these 'heroic times of legend to return', to the time of 'heroic leaders such as El Cid, Guillén [Francesc] de Vinatea and Juan[sic] Fivaller'.⁷⁹ Now was the time of a renewed *Reconquista* to bring Spain a new Imperial age, much like the previous *Reconquista* had for that of the Catholic Kings. Empire was not 'solely an exterior enterprise', not merely the spreading of the word of God and Spanish

⁷¹ *La Voz de España*, 18 July 1937, p. 17.

⁷² *Ibid...*, p. 61; *La Voz de España*, 18 July 1937, p. 17.

⁷³ Aróstegui, Canal i Morell, González Calleja, *El Carlismo...*, p. 105.

⁷⁴ Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 77.

⁷⁵ Adro Xavier, *La Sangre de su boina*, (Valladolid, 1939), p. 13.

⁷⁶ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 132.

⁷⁷ *Ibid...*, p. 132.

⁷⁸ Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 73.

⁷⁹ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 56.

civilization abroad, but also good for the *Patria* at home, ‘an expansive force, in the interior, fortifying and creative of spirit’.⁸⁰ It was the stated desire in Carlist wartime discourse to return Spain to this glorious era, with the promise that at the end of the war ‘those remaining shall enjoy looking at her beauty without the cosmetics of modernism, foreign products, the exposure which made her a contemptible harlot, even to her own children’.⁸¹ The main divergent point from the overarching Crusade discourse was that this standpoint was once again tied up with a regional understanding, for the spirit to take this new undertaking was to be found in the one place that had never abandoned it, Navarre.⁸²

Despite the focus on other parts of Spanish history, the previous Carlist wars proved to be the historical lens through which *requetés* viewed the Civil War. They sang songs from the previous Carlist Wars, such as the Basque *requetés*’ *Gernikako Arbola* and the Navarrese *requetés*’ *No llores madre*, while the *Oriamendi*, the Carlist anthem, with its refrain’s mention of *padres*, made the connection to the previous conflicts abundantly clear.⁸³ For *requetés* the parallels with the previous wars were clear, so much so that to one *requeté* the parapets surrounding Bilbao could have been ‘daguerreotype of the Carlist wars’.⁸⁴ Bilbao, in a reflection of the propaganda, was not merely an enemy stronghold, but instead represented ‘the triumph *par excellence*... the conquest of the Carlist objective in all times’.⁸⁵ The *boinas rojas* of previous generations were held up as examples to follow, José María Resa stating that he took great pride in being ‘a *requeté* and a volunteer at the front from the first day of our Holy crusade, the same as grandfather’.⁸⁶ Another *requeté*, in a letter to his grandfather, a veteran of the previous war, told him that ‘Since I left home, I only think of you’ and ‘the Carlists before’, that ‘I... came here to imitate the good examples of you who behaved so bravely in the Ninth Battalion of Navarre’.⁸⁷ Once again, the regional and local importance of the conflict is the foremost for *requetés*, as they chose to view the as a modern continuation of their own local, almost hereditary, struggles as opposed to a national uprising.

As previously stated, the enemy that was to be expelled was similar to that of the Carlist wars; a toxic foreign invader that wished to rob Spain of her essential facets and

⁸⁰ *La Voz de España*, 28 September 1936, p. 5.

⁸¹ Torremar, *La voz del carlismo*..., p. 76.

⁸² López Sanz, *Relente*..., pp. 175-6; Ugarte Tellería, *La Nueva Covadonga*..., p. 148.

⁸³ The refrain of the *Oriamendi* in full: *Por Dios, por la Patria y el Rey/ lucharon nuestros padres/Por Dios, por la Patria y el Rey/lucharemos nosotros también*. Songs cited in Bellosillo, *Tercio de Requetés Valvanera*..., p. 218; p. 146. ‘*No llores madre*’ was not the title of the song, it had none, yet its refrain began with these words, Nagore Yárnoz, ‘En la Primera de Navarra...’, p. 311.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*..., p. 197.

⁸⁵ Bellosillo, *Tercio de Requetés Valvanera*..., p. 57.

⁸⁶ Resa, *Memorias*..., p. 103.

⁸⁷ López Sanz, *Navarra en la cruzada*..., p. 113-114.

impose a foreign system incompatible with the traditional, Spanish way of life. This conception took on a number of forms in the discourse presented as the enemy was variously portrayed as Jewish and Masonic but was mainly focused around the ‘Marxist invaders’ representing a new incarnation of the ‘foreignized’ Liberals of the previous century. A link was forged between the current Marxist invader and the old enemy, as the Liberals was presented as the ‘precursor to the hammer sickle’, the Marxist hordes themselves as the ‘the child[ren] of Liberalism’.⁸⁸ Yet this did not preclude their presentation from following similar lines to the overarching Crusade discourse, as the language employed to describe the Marxists was similar to that employed in the ‘generic’ Crusade. The origin of the foreign invasion remained the same as the ‘Marxists’, according to the *Boletín de Campaña de los Requetés* were led by ‘the wretched of Moscow’.⁸⁹ While in a speech broadcast on Radio Requeté, Gonzalo Calamita Álvarez, the rector of the University of Zaragoza, described the invaders as the ‘servants of the Asiatic civilization’.⁹⁰ *Requetés* were not subject to merely enemy fire, but ‘Russian rifle bullets’ and Republican cities were not merely in enemy hands but ‘under occupation’.⁹¹ When Malaga was ‘liberated’ the Andalusian city was said to be now released from ‘the six months it suffered under Moscow’.⁹² ‘Russian’ became a byword for degenerate as these foreign invaders and their treacherous acolytes were portrayed as committed to the destruction of everything that *requetés* stood for. One story spoke of the ‘hero and martyr’ Antonio Moye, who having been injured was captured by these ‘wild animals, the murderers of Spain’ and was tortured. The rest of the piece went as follows:

The inhumane executioners facing him, said to him ‘shout *¡Viva Rusia!*’ and he, with a fortitude and serenity that excited, replied: ‘*¡Viva España!*’ These hyenas responded by cutting off his ear. They returned to demand of him, again, the coveted ‘viva’, him answering with another to Spain; it was that which made them cut off his other ear and an arm. ‘Shout, down with the Church!’ – they proffered now – and he, at the top of his lungs, exclaimed ‘*¡Viva Cristo Rey!*’ and then they commenced to horribly pick upon his entire body. But he drew strength from His same pain, by repeating ‘*¡Viva Cristo Rey! ¡Viva España!*’

And with these sacred names on his lips, he expired.⁹³

⁸⁸ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 225; Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 11.

⁸⁹ *Boletín de Campaña de los Requetés*, 28 August 1936, p. 2

⁹⁰ AGMAV, C.3131, 1/40.

⁹¹ Antonio Pérez de Olaguer in *Los de Siempre – hechos y anécdotas del requeté*, (Editorial Requeté: Burgos, 1937), p. 19.

⁹² Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 67.

⁹³ *Boletín de Campaña de los Requetés*, 28 August 1936, p. 2.

This grisly story tells us a great deal about the differences between *requetés* and their enemies as presented by Carlist military propaganda. The first being that these Marxists ‘animals’ were so enraptured by their Russian overlords and such was their abandonment of any Spanish values or identity that they demanded that the brave *requeté* said *Viva Rusia*, not more recognisably Communist phrases. The second was that they had no other desire in their venal acts other than to corrupt the piety of this brave *requeté*. This acted as a microcosm of the entire conflict as the invader wanted little else than to strip Spain of her national essence. Furthermore, in comparison to these traitors, the brave *requeté* spoke both Spain and Christ’s name, giving his life in a sacrificial act of piety worthy of any true Spaniard. Moya was described as an ‘exemplary lesson of a man of spirit, hero of his race, of its ideals’; he loved both God and Spain, whereas his enemy committed horrific acts to prevent him from doing just that. Interestingly, in this passage we also see that the anti-Marxist and anti-Russian rhetoric occurred very early on in the war, August 1936, before the Unification and the full incorporation of the militias into the Army. Consequently, it can be concluded that Carlism’s antipathy for Marxism owed little to the influence of the *africanistas* or *falangistas*.⁹⁴ That is to say that the Marxist enemy, while being the progeny of liberalism, was distinct in the eyes of Carlists and required no prompting from their more explicitly anti-Marxist allies. This antipathy for Marxism followed the expected rhetorical lines; it was ‘destructive’, ‘engendered hatred’ and was the bringer of ‘smoke and fire’.⁹⁵ It was a ‘rabble’ of ‘cowardly slaves sent from Russia’.⁹⁶

A further enemy presented to *requetés* was Judaism, one of the longstanding pillars in the Jewish-Marxist-Masonic triumvirate that Carlists came to view all on the left during the Republican period. Carlism’s own antipathy towards Jews, the ultimate *hombre de paja* in Spanish politics given their miniscule number, had been on the rise throughout the Second Republic as they came to see Spain as the subject of a Sephardic Jewish ‘invasion’ from Morocco and criticized Alcalá Zamora, Miguel Maura and Fernando de los Ríos for their supposed Jewish background.⁹⁷ Jews were held responsible for the demise of Empire, the

⁹⁴ This is supported by the rhetoric against Marxism seen in the Republican period, where the enemies of the Right were invariably described as Marxists by Carlists, having been the case since the beginning of the period. Blinkhorn, *Carlism and Crisis...*, pp. 112-3.

⁹⁵ Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 37; p. 69; p. 58.

⁹⁶ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 91.

⁹⁷ Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews...*, p. 37; For more on the anti-Semitic rhetoric during the Republican period see Isabel Martín Sánchez, ‘La campaña antimasonica en *El Siglo Futuro*: la propaganda antijudía durante la Segunda República’, *Historia y Comunicación Social*, no. 4, 1999, pp. 73-87; Agustín Martínez de las Heras, ‘La imagen “antimasonica” en la prensa de la Segunda República’ in José Antonio Ferrer Benimeli,

racial mixing of Jews and Spaniards contributing to the decline in the nation's racial purity and, consequently, its fortunes.⁹⁸ Those who were seen to be politically undesirable, namely leftists, were accused of being *conversos*, the genetic descendants of converted Jews and consequently not authentic Catholic Spaniards.⁹⁹ In more contemporary terms, Jews were constantly charged with attempting to take over Spain or at the very least corrupting her regional traditions in an effort to make here more like their stooge-nation of France, which under 'the grandson of Israel' Léon Blum, was enthralled to the international Jewry.¹⁰⁰ *Masones y Rotarios*, a book disseminated amongst the Carlist soldiery which aimed to educate all on the evils of the Rotary Club, described the war as an invasion of anti-Spaniards: 'Masons and Jews today have been brought to our soil with the gold stolen from the Spanish State, the dregs of nations, the undesirable of all peoples'.¹⁰¹ This invasion would only serve to further dilute the purity of the nation and impose ways which were analogous with the anti-*Patria*.

Ultimately, although the roots of acrimony within Carlist discourse can be traced to a longstanding hatred of liberalism and a disdain for 'foreignized' *madrileño* interference in the authentic way of life, the presentation of the enemy followed similar discursive patterns as that of the 'generic' Crusade. That is to say that the enemy was most definitely presented as a Marxist invader, intent on destroying the essence of the *Patria*.

The conception of the enemy in the mind of *requetés* shared a great deal with the discourse presented to them. The enemy was a foreign invader, intent on subjecting Spain to 'Muscovite slavery' and the war could therefore only end with the 'complete flattening of Marxism'.¹⁰² The Republic was viewed by *requetés* as the treacherous institution which had allowed for these invaders to attack the *Patria* and represented everything they despised; it was the 'anti-Spain' opposed to the values of the 'true Spain'.¹⁰³ The Republican period, as we have seen, saw the greatest cleavage between national life and that of the *pueblo*, with 'foreignized' democracy, not content with its own degeneracy, having the temerity to try and influence and alter village life. This was evidenced by the mindset that defined those who supported the Republic; they were men 'without direction, without moral force, without self-

Masonería y periodismo en la España contemporánea, (Zaragoza: Prensas de la Universidad de Zaragoza, 1993), pp. 97-132.

⁹⁸ Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews...*, p. 32.

⁹⁹ *Ibid...*, p. 4.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid...*, p. 53.

¹⁰¹ Anonymous, *Masones y Rotarios: textos y documentos*, (Valladolid: Casa Martín, 1937), p. 3.

¹⁰² Rosendo Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña de un Requeté*, (Barcelona: Editorial Selección de Olesa de Montserrat, 1956), p. 17; (José) Cemboráin Mainz, "Cartas de dos hermanos...", p. 492.

¹⁰³ Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 4.

respect and courage, devoid of sincerity'.¹⁰⁴ This was rooted in the regional understanding, for while, in the words of one *requeté*, the enemy was perceived as 'on the most part foreign, and under the Russian whip', those who were undeniably Spanish were viewed as a far cry from the noble *navarro*. In a reminiscence of an encounter with the forces of *El Campesino*, one *requeté* recalled less an army but a group of bandits, 'shabby, bearded, shirtless, with knives in their belt and bandanas on their heads', dubbing them 'the armies of Pancho Villa'.¹⁰⁵ Rosendo Domenech Puig, a *requeté* with the *Tercio de Montserrat* remembered encountering not simply an enemy, but the devil incarnate, a horde of 'whiskered and heartless militiamen one over another, drooling their wickedness, with grins on their faces like those of the thirsty and lascivious Satan'.¹⁰⁶ These brutes were the complete antithesis of the noble *requetés* of the regions, men who constituted the 'true reserve of the purest national essences'.¹⁰⁷

The interpretation of the enemy as an irreligious, sanguineous mob had demonstrable proof for *requetés* in the evidence of anti-clerical violence, as the defilement of churches and religious artefacts was viewed as the substantiation of the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of the enemy. It was a favoured topic of *requetés*, who were astounded by the destruction they saw. Javier Nagore Yárnoz, a Navarrese *requeté*, described the Cathedral of Vic as 'a ruin; looted and vandalized inside, profaned also', the Murals of Josep Maria Sert were apparently 'painted with shit and piss' and the rest of the church almost 'obliterated by the smoke from the fires' of the burned religious images and confession boxes of the Church. It was, in his words, 'essentially the work of barbarians'.¹⁰⁸ José María Erdozain spoke of a Church he encountered in Navafría that 'had a near repugnant appearance [as] the altars were gone', the Reds having 'formed a pile in the square... giving them to the fire'.¹⁰⁹ The profundity of the anti-clerical destruction that *requetés* witnessed was incredibly strong; Nagore Yárnoz stating that it was in witnessing it he and fellow *requetés* 'saw and realized why we fought against them'.¹¹⁰ The strength of this feeling was such that some *requetés*, having witnessed this terrible devastation, would believe almost anything they were told about the enemy, regardless of how far-fetched or violent. The entire 'Marxist zone' was apparently ablaze,

¹⁰⁴ Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña...*, p. 18.

¹⁰⁵ Cited in Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 47.

¹⁰⁶ Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña...*, p. 19.

¹⁰⁷ Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁸ Nagore Yárnoz, 'En la Primera de Navarra...', p. 404.

¹⁰⁹ Ricardo Ollaquindia, *Cartas de un Requeté del Tercio del Rey: José María Erdozain*, (Madrid: Actas Editorial, 1997), p. 190.

¹¹⁰ Nagore Yárnoz, 'En la Primera de Navarra...', p. 404.

‘the fury of religious persecution ha[d] destroyed all the altars’ as the Reds, at the behest of ‘sectarian Moscow’ had apparently ‘set fire to all religious objects’.¹¹¹ The depravity did not end there, as the prisons of the Reds were apparently the home of ‘sadistic, cruel and refined torture’.¹¹² Erdozáin, in continuation of his story from Navafría, with no more evidence than the ‘two human skulls’ he saw in the street, the destroyed church and some persuasion, believed that ‘several requetés of Pamplona were burned alive over a low heat’ in the town square after having been picked up off the road by the ‘Reds’.¹¹³ This conception of the enemy, as a brutal, sacrilegious mob would serve to strengthen the regional perception, as all that was encountered away from the *aldea* was evidence of the depravity and corruption of the rest of the nation.

In regards to the ‘separatist’ enemy, the presentation in Carlist wartime discourse, despite (or perhaps because of) its regional conception of the war, was far from indulgent. There was a profound intolerance of any form of separatism – which was presented as ‘a poisonous leprosy in vile spirits’, an act of ‘treason and witchcraft... at the service of Masonry, Judaism and Marxism without *Patria*’.¹¹⁴ Yet in regards to Catalonia and the Basque Country themselves, Carlism, given its relative strength in each region, maintained a more complicated relationship. The exceptionality of Catalonia, for example, was professed in *La Voz de España* which, even after two and half years of conflict, still described the region as ‘one of the most noble Spanish lands’ following its capture in January 1939.¹¹⁵ In point of fact, the relationship between the *Comunión Tradicionalista* in the region and the Catalan nationalists of the *Lliga Catalana* was actually a cause for concern for some in military, with one report expressing disdain for ‘the attitude of sympathy to Catalan nationalism’ within Catalan Carlist circles, going on to say that Catalan Traditionalism was ‘frankly contaminated by the Catalanist doctrine’.¹¹⁶ While this criticism may seem a little over the top when referring a group that was committed to the unity of Spain, it does point to the fact that Carlist regional exceptionalism, while acceptable for Navarre, was a more difficult broader proposition for the Communion’s partners.

The Basque country held no less of an exalted position for Carlism. There were five Basque *Tercios* hailing from across Álava, Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa in which the Basque language was, alongside Castilian, another *lingua franca* and songs were sung in both

¹¹¹ Cited in Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 89; Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña...*, p. 92.

¹¹² *Ibid...*, p. 17.

¹¹³ Ollaquindia, *Cartas de un Requeté...*, p. 190.

¹¹⁴ Xavier, *La Sangre de su boina...*, p. 9; *La Voz de España*, 7 October 1936, p. 2.

¹¹⁵ *La Voz de España*, 27 January 1939, p. 1.

¹¹⁶ AGMAV, C.2097, 3, 1 /6-8.

euskara and *castellano*.¹¹⁷ One such song spoke of the sadness *requetés* felt that ‘the immense area of our Spanish soul’ had been ‘broken in vain anarchy’ like the ‘fractured Basque site’, intimating the shame felt that the nation’s dismemberment had come from their region.¹¹⁸ For many *requetés*, regional separatism was made all the worse because it was a corruption of something so profound to Spanish genius, the beauty of regional difference. Basque identity, according to Miguel de Legarra y Belástegui, a *requeté* of the *Tercio de San Miguel*, had been hijacked by the *peneuvistas* to represent something not Basque at all. According to Legarra y Belástegui, ‘they attribute the status of Basques exclusively to those belonging to *sabiano* nationalist parties’ all the while ‘ignoring the volunteers from the *Tercios de requetés*... which formed a large percentage of Basque soldiers’.¹¹⁹ The same was seen in the Catalan case, as one *requeté* of the *Tercio de Montserrat* bemoaned that the true, ‘sensitive Catalan soul’ had, through the action of the separatists become ‘so often ignored, falsified’.¹²⁰

However, separatism of whatever stripe was treated with the same loathing that the *africanistas* afforded it within the established discourse. Catalan nationalism was a hive of ‘separatist hatred’, Barcelona itself was ‘miserable, Soviet’.¹²¹ *El Alcázar*, the daily for the Madrid front, in an article from February 1939, relished in presenting the Catalan nationalists as in the thrall of Marxism, Judaism and Masonry. Under the ‘republican-separatist’ regime of Juan Negrín and Lluís Companys, aided by the ‘judeo-muscovites’, Catalonia been submitted to not only ‘separatism and communism’ but also ‘the international dictates of Blum and Stalin’. For the author, the ‘secessionist war and the Bolshevik revolution were jointly satisfied in their reciprocity of conduct’ both under the instruction of ‘the order of Russia’.¹²² Regional individualism was to be celebrated but in Carlist military discourse Catalonia was Spanish, ‘eternally Spanish, it is a Spanish problem, an issue solely and exclusively ours’ and any separatist designs it had were in direct conflict with the interests of the *Patria*.¹²³

¹¹⁷ Nagore Yárnoz, *¡Gure Bandera, España’ren!*..., p. 27; For a comprehensive list of Basque language songs sung by *requetés* see Bellosillo, *Tercio de Requetés Valvanera*..., pp. 211-219. The five *Tercios* were: from Guipúzcoa, Oriamendi, San Ignacio and Zumalacárregui and from Vizcaya, Nuestra Señora de Begoña and Ortíz de Zárate.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*..., p. 55.

¹¹⁹ Miguel de Legarra y Belástegui, *De la calle Pi y Margall al Tercio de San Miguel (Recuerdos de un requeté)*, (Madrid: Actas editorial, 2008), p. 328.

¹²⁰ Jaime Amat Badrinas cited in Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes*..., p. 105.

¹²¹ Torremar, *La voz de carlismo*..., p. 6; Pérez de Olaguer, *Los de Siempre*..., p. 25.

¹²² *El Alcázar – Diario del Frente de Madrid*, 12 February 1939, p. 1.

¹²³ *La Voz de España*, 27 January 1939, p. 1.

Basque nationalism would come in for even more criticism in Carlist military discourse. It was the sum of ‘dastardly ambitions and passions of collective dementia’ under the banner of ‘*Euzkadi*, [an] invented a name without any historical basis’, whose ‘whole reason for its being, its spiritual background and its doctrine consisted of hatred of Spain and everything Spanish’.¹²⁴ Criticism of the PNV followed the same lines as that laid forth by the ‘generic’ Crusade, that the Basque nationalists had allowed their political ambitions to eclipse their supposedly Christianity. It was argued that the war was a ‘battle being waged between Christianity and communism, between Spain and Moscow’ and that ‘the entire world inside and outside of Spain, has realized this, except the Basque nationalists’. Yet *gudaris*, for their petty nationalist concerns, were willing to ‘fight with their God and their *Patria* at the side of murderers and arsonists in intimate union with *maketo* soldiers’.¹²⁵ The fact that they chose this hypocritical route, to fight against fellow Catholics for such an un-Catholic cause, meant they could not be true believers. The very act of calling themselves Catholic meant that through their conduct, through enabling ‘sacrilegious crimes’, they had ‘sullied the clean reputation’ of their region, had ‘sullied the fields and villages’, corrupted them and ensured that the shameful memory ‘will not ever be erased from Basque generations’.¹²⁶ As far as the Carlist military press was concerned, all who fought for *Euzkadi* were therefore ‘Marxists’ themselves, ‘hysterics blinded by insanity... uniting in sacrilegious play the hammer and sickle with the separatist star’, Bilbao was an ‘ungrateful city’ that had never known the face of God, ‘motionless in its criminal blindness’.¹²⁷

Overall, the presentation of separatism in Carlist military discourse did not differ greatly from the overarching crusade programme. There was a pronounced support for regional difference, but attempts to ‘dismember’ the *Patria* were met with a similarly immense hostility. *Requetés* own views mirrored those presented in the discourse in regards to separatism. There was a profound antipathy, with death being wished upon the ‘repugnant red-separatists’.¹²⁸ Catalan independence represented ‘vile captivity’ away from the *Patria*, and Barcelona had become, in exile, a ‘mocked and punished’ land.¹²⁹ The Basque country, meanwhile, had descended into anarchy as in Bilbao ‘robbery and arson were the orders of

¹²⁴ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 54.

¹²⁵ ‘*Maketo*’ is a Basque word for a Spaniard who does not come from the Basque Country nor speak Basque. *La Voz de España*, 18 September 1936, p. 1.

¹²⁶ *La Voz de España*, 4 April 1937, p. 3.

¹²⁷ Xavier, *La Sangre de su boina...*, p. 4; p. 13; These beliefs were in line with the Pope’s *Divina Redemptoris*, Redal Súñer, *¡Arriba España!...*, p. 3.

¹²⁸ (Luis) Cemboráin Mainz, “Cartas de dos hermanos...”, p. 484.

¹²⁹ Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña...*, p. 100; p. 75.

the day'.¹³⁰ Furthermore, as we have seen above, separatism was all the more hated for its perversion of the ideals of regional difference and Catholicism, the *peneuistas* being particularly guilty of this, partnering with 'atheist, iconoclastic, criminal partners' and dismembering the *Patria* for their misguided nationalist agenda.¹³¹

Overall, in regards to the presentation of the *Patria* in Carlist wartime discourse we can observe that it differed from the overarching Crusade, yet did not contravene it. The regions were a strong source of national pride and represented an example for the rest of Spain to follow. Accordingly, given the Carlist focus on the local, they were always likely to form a large part of the discourse aimed at troops, but this was always within the context of fostering a broader national sentiment, albeit with a Navarrese hue.¹³² Moreover, although the presentation of the conflict as a 'Fourth Carlist War' meant that the enemies were constructed in a context separate to how the 'generic' Crusade proposed their imagination, the resulting presentation of them was remarkably similar, as the Republicans were once again robbed of their nationality and presented as invaders intent on imposing a foreign system upon the *Patria*. Consequently the Crusade, with its tolerance for regional diversity yet hatred for separatism, allowed for the Carlist presentation of the conflict as a regional struggle to function within its parameters, without external input on its content. However, due to the lack of coherency between the Carlist discourse and the 'generic' crusade, the *africanistas*' values did not permeate into *requetés*' own conception of the conflict. They were committed to the cause, but saw the patriotic nature of the war in parochial terms, failing to engage with the wider themes of the 'nation on the march' and instead viewing it as more of a regional or even local struggle writ large. This did not alter their commitment to the Crusade, but it did not integrate them with the rest of the Francoists.

¹³⁰ (Luis) Cemboráin Mainz, "Cartas de dos hermanos...", p. 496.

¹³¹ Legarra y Belástegui, *De la calle Pi y Margall...*, p. 330.

¹³² Núñez Seixas and Umbach, "Hijacked Heimats...", p. 299.

Dios – The Carlist Crusade

Religion, given its importance to Carlist identity, played a large role in the wartime discourse aimed at *requetés*. However, the Carlist relationship with faith was not a simple one of mindless devotion to the Church and there are certain other factors that need to be considered when looking at the religious motivations of *requetés*. Firstly, however, it must be established that the troops were, on the face of things, undoubtedly pious and their commitment to the Catholic faith was well documented. Cardinal Isidro Gomá y Tomás in October 1936 observed the *requetés* as:

... people of faith, many of them incredibly pious... They pray the Sacred Rosary publically every day and confess and receive communion at the very least, in the grave moments of their lives as soldiers.¹³³

Soldiers did everything that Gomá observed and more, wearing scapulars and singing songs that attested to their faith and consequently there was an expectation that the Church match this piety.¹³⁴ However, the fact that, in large parts of Spain, the Church did not meet this expected standard contributed to the wider conception of the *Patria* as one of ‘pure’ regions and a ‘corrupted’ centre. The Catholic faith and Christian practice were, in Carlist discourse, linked to the communal aspects of the idealized village life. The Church was the symbolic social centre of the village and the clergy the spiritual leaders of the community.¹³⁵ However, priests themselves were not, by dint of a cassock, superior individuals and if they didn’t carry out their obligations to their parishioners they were strongly criticised.¹³⁶ It was a symbol of Navarrese regional strength that their clergy were contributing members of society, whereas in other regions this relationship had broken down – offering yet another example of national malaise. One *requeté*, Antonio Izu, articulated this disparity clearly:

There wasn’t merely a difference between the Basque and Navarrese clergy and the clergy in the rest of Spain; the gulf was so wide it went beyond being a difference. The communists of Navarre were more religious than the priests in Castile.¹³⁷

¹³³ José Andrés Gallego and Antón M. Pazos (eds.), *Archivo Gomá: Documentos de la Guerra Civil*, Volume I, (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2010), p. 247.

¹³⁴ Resa, *Memorias...*, p. 43.

¹³⁵ Ugarte Tellería, *La Nueva Covadonga...*, p. 387.

¹³⁶ *Requeté* Antonio Izu: ‘Carlists were capable of stoning priests out of their village if... they didn’t carry out their obligations to their parishioners’. Fraser, *Blood of Spain...*, p. 125.

¹³⁷ *Ibid...*, p. 125.

However, within the Carlist wartime discourse this regional friction was, understandably, not related back to the soldiery. The war was presented in relatively straightforward Catholic terms, as one between believers and non-believers, Catholic Spaniards against anti-clerical, atheist invaders. The shortcomings of the clergy in certain regions as well as the disparate levels of piety between regions, especially between Navarre and the *africanista* darling Castile, were overlooked.

In the language of the ‘generic’ Crusade the term *cruzada* permitted for the Civil War to be granted a grandiose and apocalyptic character in rebel rhetoric which suited the more verbose characters of Franco’s Spain, such as José Millán Astray, when constructing their propaganda. Yet in discourse aimed at *requetés* it was a Crusade presented in its most rudimentary sense – a war between the pious and the impious over the fate of the nation. *El Pensamiento Navarro* made the distinction between the two sides very clear: ‘It is the difference between the one who prays and the one that does not pray. That is why one is Spain and other anti-Spain’.¹³⁸ The *Devocionario* clarified this, telling *requetés* to ‘Consider [themselves] soldiers of a crusade... who trust in Him to provide victory’; while radio transmissions told them that they fought a ‘crusade of redemption... a pro-spiritual Hispanic *Reconquista*’.¹³⁹ It was the fight of ‘those who, forever Catholic, struggle, as always, for God’ and, upon death a *requeté* could, without impunity, ‘tell God that [he] died defending Him... [he] died, defending Christ!’.¹⁴⁰ The assertion that *requetés* fought for God was a constant throughout the war, it did not alter or develop with events – it was from July 1936 to April 1939, a Crusade. In August 1936 the *Boletín de Campaña de los Requetés* reminded the soldiers that ‘God is with us, we defend his Kingdom and his Justice, and we must not doubt it’ while in April 1938 *La Voz de España*, in an open letter to Jesus, stated ‘an entire people calls and raises its armies in the shadow of your cross to restore you to your immortal throne’, there was no change in this interpretation of the conflict.¹⁴¹

Throughout the discourse presented to *requetés*, Spain was presented God’s chosen nation and they were inextricably linked. According to Torremar ‘the Cause of Spain is the Cause of God’ and because of this a *requeté* was expected to ‘return to Christ the nation of his predilections that the sects have stolen from him’.¹⁴² In a repeat of the regional discourse, Spanish religious piety was linked to myths of the past. When Spain had held its faith closest,

¹³⁸ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 183.

¹³⁹ *Devocionario del Requeté*, (Seville: Comunión Tradicionalista, 1936), p. 2; Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, pp. 56-7.

¹⁴⁰ Pérez de Olaguer in *Los de Siempre...*, p. 37; p. 161.

¹⁴¹ *Boletín de Campaña de los Requetés*, 28 August 1936, p. 1; *La Voz de España*, 14 April 1938, p. 1.

¹⁴² Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 86; *Devocionario...*, p. 2.

it had resulted in ‘the source of the most brilliant pages of [the Spanish people’s] history’.¹⁴³ It formed the basis of the Empire ‘in spiritual concept’, giving the *conquistadors* the conviction to make it ‘the mother of New Worlds’, ‘to bring light and civilization to lands stricken by the darkness of barbarism and of paganism’.¹⁴⁴ Yet, the nation had allowed itself to become decadent and it once again fell to the unblemished Carlists of Navarre to return faith to the *Patria*. They were the ones that, in the words of López Sanz, were ‘the anchor of the old and pure values of the race’, the ‘ardent defender of the Church’.¹⁴⁵

Within this framework, a permissive attitude towards sacrifice was conveyed to *requetés* as they were expected to welcome their demise. *Boinas rojas* were told to willingly offer themselves up for sacrifice with ‘death in the field of battle’ being presented as ‘the ideal death of great souls’.¹⁴⁶ Martyrdom had long been a part of Carlist tradition, with 10 March of each year since 1896 being celebrated as the *Fiesta de los Mártires de la Tradición* and the war only intensified this feeling.¹⁴⁷ A dead *boina roja* did not represent ‘a life that has ebbed away. Nor a star that lights up. It is simply a soul that flies to enjoy the eternal reward that God gives to his loyal soldiers’.¹⁴⁸ The *Ordenanza del Requeté* echoed this, stating that ‘dying for Him, to die like this, is to live forever... You, soldier of Tradition, you shall have a place in the Kingdom of God’.¹⁴⁹ One *requeté* recalled being told by a Chaplain that death was a privilege granted from God, the result being that the fallen soldier would ‘be a martyr for God and *Patria*, which is to say that you will go directly to heaven without passing through purgatory’.¹⁵⁰ What was therefore needed was ‘a lot of blood, yes a lot, a whole purifying, redemptive, sea of blood’ for, in the end, only ‘the blood of youth redeems Spain from Marxist sin’.¹⁵¹ Those who shed this blood were not to be mourned, but envied as ‘comrades who have been worthy of being chosen by God to offer in sacrifice their lives... for our Spain’.¹⁵² Ultimately, death was not a thing to be feared but was instead an inevitable end that would unlock the gifts earned from a life of piety. One particular phrase, stemming from the *Ordenanza*, outlined this expertly: ‘Before God you will never be an anonymous

¹⁴³ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 21.

¹⁴⁴ Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 86; *Ordenanza...*, p.3; López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 177.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid...*, p. 11.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid...*, pp. 12-13.

¹⁴⁷ For more on the *fiesta* see Jordi Canal i Morell, “Fiestas, calendarios e identidad carlista: la festividad de los Mártires de la Tradición”, *Bulletin d’Histoire contemporaine de l’Espagne*, no. 30-31 (January-June, 2000), pp. 87-102; Pedro Rújula, “Conmemorar la muerte, recordar la historia. La Fiesta de los Mártires de la Tradición”, *Ayer*, no. 51 (2003), pp. 67-85.

¹⁴⁸ Pérez de Olaguer, *Los de Siempre...*, p. 74.

¹⁴⁹ *Ordenanza...*, p. 2.

¹⁵⁰ Resa, *Memorias...*, p. 38.

¹⁵¹ Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 30.

¹⁵² *Ibid...*, p. 8.

hero' (*ante Dios nunca serás héroe anónimo*).¹⁵³ God's omniscience meant that heroism was forever witnessed, relegating it from something that required an audience for it to be appreciated to the mundane. Every sacrifice that would further the cause was recorded (and later rewarded) by Him, meaning any reservations on behalf of the *requeté* to act heroically were moot – if a *requeté* died heroically, he had nothing but exaltation to look forward to; as the *Devocionario* stated: 'Fear not; rest in the peace of Christ, like he who sleeps, for he who dies in God's grace, he rests, he rests'.¹⁵⁴ This religious interpretation meant that *boinas rojas* were expected to be the best troops, the bravest, as they had God on their side. The image of the fearless *requeté* was presented to the soldiery as expected conduct.¹⁵⁵ They were 'modern Maccabees' imbued with the 'fighting spirit of the Christian Knights of others centuries'.¹⁵⁶ Their intense faith made them better fighters as a *requeté* was not merely soldier but a 'missionary' upon whose 'faith builds all the virtues of the soldier'.¹⁵⁷ They had a reputation to uphold, a reputation which, according to Adro Xavier (real name Alejandro Rey-Stolle Pedrosa) in *La Sangre de su boina*, was prodigious:

There is no corner of Spain, whether dark and forgotten about, or an arrogant summit that rises above, which does not testify with its history of blood that no one can oppose the advance of a red beret. In this crusade that is the daily lesson¹⁵⁸

The result was that *requetés* had a series of martial expectations to fulfil rooted in their piety. To not act accordingly would implicitly equal not contributing their fullest to the Crusade. The press was full of instances of *requetés* who had fully contributed; giving their lives with the *trilema* or 'Viva Cristo Rey!' (Long live Christ the king!) on their lips and there were myriad examples of 'new heroes [that] have made the sacrifice of their life to save the *Patria*'.¹⁵⁹

This concept was, on the whole, well received, as many *requetés* ostensibly welcomed the idea of worthy sacrifice and several expressed feelings of contentment towards the idea of

¹⁵³ *Ordenanza ...*, p. 2. This phrase was present throughout propaganda cited in López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 121; Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 80-81 as well as adorning posters and postcards from the era, an example of which is available online from the Wolfsonian-Florida International Institute: <http://libimages.wolfsonian.org/XB1991.1152.000.jpg>

¹⁵⁴ *Devocionario...*, p. 13.

¹⁵⁵ This image had more than a kernel of truth, as the *Tercios* were used as Nationalist shock troops due to their fearless conduct, many *requetés* even requested transfers to more active *Tercios* in order to be face more action. Aróstegui, *Los combatientes carlistas...*, vol. 1., p. 326.

¹⁵⁶ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 45; p. 121.

¹⁵⁷ *Boletín de Campaña de los Requetés*, 28 August 1936, p. 3; *Ordenanza...*, p.2.

¹⁵⁸ Xavier, *La Sangre de su boina...*, p. 12.

¹⁵⁹ *Boletín de Campaña de los Requetés*, 28 August 1936, p. 2; Pérez de Olaguer, *Los de Siempre...*, p. 71

dying in battle. One stated in a letter to his sister prior to going into battle that he was ‘happy, happier than in my entire life, because I am at peace with God and Country and my pride is being a *requeté*’.¹⁶⁰ This happiness meant that *requetés* supposedly entered battle with ‘the impetus of those who feel like soldiers of Christ’ bereft of any fear of death which became, in the words of Sergeant Guillermo Serra Bardolet, ‘irrelevant because, basically, the real life awaited [them]’.¹⁶¹ One *requeté* even stated that he was ‘envious’ to ‘see *requetés* die, with the name of Christ the King and Spain on their lips’.¹⁶²

Sacrifice was not motivated solely by religious desires, however, but also linked in with the ideas of family and heritage.¹⁶³ In this discourse we see the pride *requetés* took in emulating their ancestors. In letters home *requetés* assured their families of the honour of having a son or brother who had given his life for God and Spain. Rosendo Domenech Puig made this clear in two letters to his parents. In the first, dated 8 June 1937, he stated that he knew that were he to die they would be ‘proud if that were the case, because not all parents have the grace of a child martyr awaiting them in heaven’.¹⁶⁴ In the second he implores them to consider the glorious circumstances of his proposed death:

Your son died! But not from terror or a stabbing in the most vulgar of tavern brawls; nor did he die in a hospital corner from the scourge of his vices. Your son died fighting for *Dios, Patria y Rey*. Long live Spain!¹⁶⁵

In both cases Domenech states that death at the front is nothing less than an honour for both him and his family. José María Resa felt identically, stating in his prison letter that:

[I do not wish that] you shed any tears for my absence, I would like much more the opposite, than you feel very proud and happy to have a son and brother on the list of the glorious fallen, martyrs of the Holy Crusade for *Dios, Patria and Rey*.¹⁶⁶

Manuel Beriain Zabalza of the *Tercio de Navarra* told his sister Javiera in a letter from May 1937 to inform their mother that if he were to die, ‘not to cry, [for] she can be proud that one

¹⁶⁰ López Sanz, *Navarra en la cruzada...*, pp. 100-101.

¹⁶¹ Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 41

¹⁶² C. Revilla Cebrecos, *Tercio de Lácar*, (Madrid: G. del Toro, 1975), p. 183.

¹⁶³ Jordi Canal i Morell gives a very good explanation of the importance of the ‘Great Carlist Family’ in *Banderas blancas...*, pp. 271-3.

¹⁶⁴ Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña...*, p. 21.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 138.

¹⁶⁶ Resa, *Memorias...*, p. 104.

of her sons has died for his God and for his *Patria*'.¹⁶⁷ The pressure to sacrifice was such that *requetés* even felt a sense of shame when they expressed fear. One reminisced that on his way to the front in 1937 he felt 'worried, depressed' about the fact that his 'nineteen years [were]... not so solid that one should come to despise life, nor so light that one does not realize the seriousness of the moment'. The juxtaposition between his fear of death and his desire to fulfil his obligations to *Dios* and *Patria* troubled him so much that he was eventually led to curse: 'that damn survival instinct'.¹⁶⁸ Jaime Amat Badrinas, a Catalan *requeté*, in a letter to his father articulated the conflict *requetés* felt as well as the ultimate religious and social pressure to remain in the firing line:

...you know me too well and can understand that I would not resist two months in the rear [but] I believe that my duty is on the front, and I'm willing to stay on it. The rest is up to the will of God.¹⁶⁹

The commitment to heritage and family is evidenced further by many *requetés*' concerns over where their bodies would be buried; whether they would be returned to their families to be laid to rest in their *pueblo*. Many fallen *requetés*' comrades would contravene orders and ensure that their fallen companions' cadavers were properly sent back for burial beside their ancestors.¹⁷⁰

In less dramatic terms, the strength of religious discourse was mirrored by the soldiery in their religious practice which played a large role in the day to day life of *requetés*. Yet religious practice was not embraced solely because *requetés* were simply the 'best Christians', although they were incredibly pious. There was a different context through which it was viewed as Catholicism was considered by *requetés* in a more personal context, linked back to their life in the *aldea*. Religious acts were an everyday occurrence, with each battalion being assigned with a chaplain who tended to the religious needs of the *requetés* and more often than not hailing from the same region as the *requetés* themselves. Their duties covered a variety of roles, ranging from offering mass and taking confession before battle to administering the last rites afterwards. They also engaged in the more mundane religious acts such as the blessing of food as well as lay acts of support for the soldiery, like helping them

¹⁶⁷ López Sanz, *Navarra en la cruzada...*, pp. 109-110.

¹⁶⁸ Cited in Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 11.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid...*, p. 60.

¹⁷⁰ Ugarte Tellería, *La Nueva Covadonga...*, p. 382.

to write letters home.¹⁷¹ These ‘zealous chaplains’ were presented in propaganda as paragons of piety, ‘for whom all praise would be too little’.¹⁷² Moreover, while Carlists often held many members of the clergy in disdain, there was little evidence of this being the case regarding their chaplains with them often sharing jokes as if they were comrades.¹⁷³ The religious practices that these chaplains oversaw were as popular as those who offered them. The celebration of Mass was seen as a necessity by many *requetés*, one even went so far as to individually clean the local church in order to for it to be said.¹⁷⁴ For while there was obviously a pressure to attend, given the expected piety of *requetés*, there was sufficient evidence to show that, in reality, *requetés* themselves were more than happy to engage in organised religious activity. One recalled that ‘mass, as the circumstance permitted, was celebrated even in position, sometimes under the grim strumming of enemy lead’.¹⁷⁵ When Mass in position was not viable, *requetés* made arrangements to go to where it could be celebrated: ‘[on] Sundays a representation of the *Tercio* went down from each position, in turn, to hear mass, which was held in the Parish’.¹⁷⁶ *Requetés* were also as seemingly enthusiastic about private religious practice. Although there was official encouragement to pray regularly, the *Devocionario* implored soldiers to ‘do all you can to pray the Rosary every day’, it appears that this was unnecessary as it was already part of many *requetés*’ daily routine and they prayed it ‘with the greatest fervour’.¹⁷⁷ One recalled that ‘every afternoon we met with our colleagues from another position near ours to pray the Rosary together’.¹⁷⁸ Another stated that after battle, even though he and his comrades were ‘tired, hungry, half asleep, [they] prayed the Rosary’.¹⁷⁹ A further stated that he and his comrades did not allow ‘a single day go by without praying the Rosary together’.¹⁸⁰

However, as stated, these acts were not taken solely at the behest of propaganda and they fulfilled a further need beyond the theological. A sergeant from the Catalan *Tercio de Requetés de Nuestra Señora de Montserrat* speaking of his own chaplain, Ramon Carrera Iglesias, gives us some insight into the reasons for the popularity of the Chaplains and, by extension, religious practice:

¹⁷¹ Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 15. Seidman, *The Victorious Counterrevolution...*, pp. 168-171.

¹⁷² *Boletín de Campaña de los Requetés*, 28 August 1936, p. 2.

¹⁷³ Cía Navascués, *Memorias...*, p. 98.

¹⁷⁴ Ollaquindia, *Cartas de un Requeté ...*, pp. 162-163.

¹⁷⁵ Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña...*, p. 193.

¹⁷⁶ Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes ...*, p. 72. See also Fig. 1, depicting *requetés* celebrating mass in the field during the Catalan campaign, 15 March 1938. AGMAV, F. 363, 2, 235

¹⁷⁷ *Devocionario...*, p. 7; Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña...*, p. 193.

¹⁷⁸ Resa, *Memorias...*, p. 48

¹⁷⁹ Yárnoz, ‘En la primera de Navarra...’, p. 205

¹⁸⁰ Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, pp. 79-80.

...of Father Carrera it can be said much and little. That is, all that one can say of a Saint. Outwardly nothing special, but a tremendous inner life shone through. He was a *pequeñín* (small man), but with eyes that announced his overwhelming love for all those around him. He was a true priest, rather than a lieutenant-chaplain and totally identified with the spirit that animated the *requetés*... He embodied the figure of St. Paul, who wanted to give all of himself sacrificially. When a *requeté* entered into the *Tercio*, he was always diligent about winning the friendship of the newcomer. Economically he helped all *requetés*. From his official pay not a *centimo* was left to reach the half of the month, everything had been given. Most zealous of worship, he spent hours and hours in the daily confessional. With *Tercio* officers he kept a discreet friendship, but tried to remain independent of the higher ranked.¹⁸¹

The best chaplains, it appears, understood *requetés* and their traditions. They knew their simple customs and engaged with them in a manner similar to that of the local parish priest, as an equal and a friend. The re-creation of this local character in the field, in both the conduct of the chaplains and religious practice, placed their placid communal identity within the concept of the war. The rest of Spain was in turmoil and the only means to gain solace from this was by reverting back to the practices that defined their idealised village life. In letters home and memoirs, religious acts would consequently be perennially linked to tranquillity and serenity, to the bosom of family life.¹⁸² Luis Cemboráin Mainz was a key exponent of this, with religious practice for him being synonymous with his worldview, tinged by the familial. He regularly relayed information of his religious experiences to his family at home and asked them to tell him his, Moreover, while he enjoyed the ones he partook in in the field, his reminiscences were tinged with melancholy as they were constantly compared to the ones he had at home, as he was ‘very mindful of Pamplona’.¹⁸³ José María Erdozáin would also regularly relate his religious acts back to his parents, also relating his distress and guilt that he had not heard mass in over two weeks, finally asking for them to pray for God to forgive him offence.¹⁸⁴

Religious practice allowed for Carlist soldiers to fully reflect on what God and His war meant to them individually. Religion, acting as a primary signifier of local identity, was inherently linked to a particular way of life and regular practice would have reminded *requetés* of this fact. Each *requeté* would have been raised in a pious family with, on average,

¹⁸¹ Salvador Nonell i Bru, *El “pater” era un santo – Mn Ramon Carrera Iglesias Capellán – “El Pater” – del Tercio de Requetés de Nuestra Señora de Montserrat*, (1910-1937), (Barcelona: 2004), p. 35.

¹⁸² Ugarte Tellería, *La Nueva Covadonga...*, pp. 386-7.

¹⁸³ Cemboráin, “Cartas de dos hermanos...”, p. 491.

¹⁸⁴ Ollaquindia, *Cartas de un Requeté...*, pp. 183-4.

at least one family member in the clergy. The predominant cultural influence upon their lives had forever been the Catholic Church.¹⁸⁵ Attending mass, giving confession and the praying of the Rosary were acts and practices that they would have done since as far back as they could remember. All were deeply personal and linked to their individual interpretation of the world. Through the praying of the Rosary and private prayer soldiers were given opportunity to engage with their faith on a personal level, to think about and pray for their own individual concerns – allowing for the strengthening of their relationship with the faith. It allowed for the simple concept of ‘returning the nation to God’ to be imbued with each soldier’s own personal interpretation of what that was, strengthening its importance. This meant each *requeté* was not merely defending the abstract conception of ‘the Church’ of which he was a member, but everything that the idea of the Church represented for him as an individual.

Throughout the war soldiers sang traditional Carlist songs, stating they went to war to ‘fight for our faith’ and ‘to overcome and triumph for God’.¹⁸⁶ Yet these songs were as much related to their heritage and locality as their faith, with many praising the regions from which the *requetés* hailed. *Rosa d’abril, Morena de la Serra: del Virolai de Mosén Cinto*, the song of the *Tercio de Montserrat* contained religious references about ‘raising young souls to heaven’, yet was as much an expression of Catalan identity, being sung in the language and talking of the beautiful ‘Catalan land’.¹⁸⁷ Basque *requetés*, meanwhile, would sing the same song so revered by their *gudari* enemies, *Gernikako Arbola* and the Navarrese *Tercios* often sang a song which praised the beauty of the girls of Pamplona, the simplest of expressions of their regional superiority.¹⁸⁸

Letters and memoirs also included the usual bald statements of religious fervour, that soldiers went to the front believing themselves to be crusaders for ‘*Dios y España*’ and there can be no doubt that there was a profound desire amongst *requetés* to defeat the ‘reds’ and ‘return the nation to God’.¹⁸⁹ Moreover, there is such weight of evidence that we cannot deny the veracity of their claims that they were crusaders saving the nation.¹⁹⁰ However, it is

¹⁸⁵ Fraser, *Blood of Spain...*, p. 124.

¹⁸⁶ Extract from untitled song, cited in López Sanz, *Navarra en la cruzada...*, p. 23; Extract from the ‘*Oriamendi*’ cited in *Recopilación de Himnos patrióticos*, (10ª edición económica, 1938), p.3. The importance of songs to *requetés* is expounded in Seidman, *The Victorious Counterrevolution...*, pp. 187-88.

¹⁸⁷ Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 184.

¹⁸⁸ Bellosillo, *Tercio de Requetés...*, p. 218; *Ibid...*, p. 152. The song in question ‘*Adiós Pamplona*’ had a serious message alongside this, stating that *requetés* marched not just for the the pretty girls, but for the nation: ‘No me marcho por las chicas/ que las chicas guapas son/ guapas son/ que me marcho voluntario/ por la nación’.

¹⁸⁹ Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña...*, p. 226; Ollaquindia, *Cartas de un Requeté...*, p. 194.

¹⁹⁰ References to the war as a ‘crusade’ abound in memoirs, as do claims that soldiers were ‘fighting for God’. Resa, *Memorias...*, p. 38; Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña...*, p. 137; Nagore Yáñez, ‘En la Primera de Navarra...’, p. 395. Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 15.

impossible to simply view *requetés* religious fervour for the conflict in the binary terms of believers versus non-believers, divorced from the regional understanding. All the interpretations of the conflict existed alongside one another, with religion playing an important role in their idealised regional outlook; as established in the previous section, the piety of the *aldeano* Carlists being one of the reasons as to why it was they that needed to save the nation from the atheist cities.

For *requetés* religious identity was, partially at least, a representation of the superiority of the Navarrese regional idyll compared to the rest of Spain as it appears that ‘the Church’ – given its importance to Carlists, encompassed much more than the Gospel. Engaging in religious acts allowed them to reflect on the communal and familial (and religious) strength of their *pueblos* or *aldeas* in comparison to the rest of the country. Given that *requetés* were often employed as shock troops and were some of the first Francoist troops in previously Republican territory, the experience of destruction and degradation that often greeted them would have this bolstered perception as the idealized *pueblo* would have been compared to the rest of Spain. This conception, however, did not fit with the discourse presented to them, nor that of the ‘generic’ Crusade both of which shied away from a regional religious emphasis. The result being that in the minds of *requetés* the themes of religion, while one of the fundamental shared aspects of the overarching Crusade discourse, served to strengthen their parochial interpretation of the conflict, rather than open them up to a broader Francoist idea of the war.

The success of presenting the war as a march of the regions upon the capital was mixed. It certainly engaged Carlist troops, who were some of the most enthusiastic in the conflict and many gave their lives readily for the cause. Yet the necessary *Franquista* elements of the Crusade (the supremacy of the Army, Franco’s leadership, the Unification) all needed to be accommodated elsewhere in the programme of the Carlists to integrate them into the same programme. However, their absence from the discourse on the most obvious common values, those related to religion and the *Patria*, resulted in ungainly attempts to forge a symbolic fraternity between the Carlists and their allies. These efforts will be analysed in the following section.

‘Magnificent Brotherhood’? – *Requetés* and their Newfound Allies

The attempts made in Carlist wartime discourse to integrate aspects of the ‘generic’ Crusade programme into their own *tradicionalista* conception of the conflict fell into the two categories. The first was the justification of the Unification, in which the Falange and Communion were presented as partners in a ‘magnificent brotherhood’.¹⁹¹ The second was the re-appropriation of the concept of the Carlist ‘King’ to accommodate Franco’s rise to Caudillo, which also included the theme of the military as a patriotic institution. Each of these would, given their exclusion from the mobilizing discourse of *Dios* and *Patria*, have limited results in enthusing *requetés* to fight for Franco alongside *falangistas* within the framework of the FET y de las JONS. The single greatest problem being that the connection between the local and regional values that *requetés* held dear and those of their allies was weak and consequently no meaningful, resonant relationship could be established.

At the beginning of the conflict the *Falange Española* was not a major concern of the Carlist military press and were therefore rarely mentioned. Certain sources that this chapter has until now relied upon heavily, such as Torremar’s *La voz del carlismo a través la radio*, for example, never mentions it by name. When the Falange were referenced, it was more often than not presented as an ally of the Carlists, one that fought the same enemies, but never as anything particularly noteworthy. The relationship prior to the war was never a cold one: Carlist and Falangist youth groups had, in the pre-war period, forged close alliances, fighting alongside one another in street brawls and sharing information on enemies since later 1935. In 1936 Rodezno had even broached the idea of an alliance before the Unification proper.¹⁹² This warm relationship was rekindled on occasion, with the *Boletín de Campaña de los Requetés* praising ‘the unbeatable courage’ of ‘Falangists who have fought like lions’, elevating them to the same level as *requetés* and the Army as amongst the ‘valiant [that] fight for Spain’.¹⁹³ Yet this was an exception, not the norm, in the discourse that *requetés* were exposed to prior to April 1937 and it is probably best to describe the presentation of the Falange as that of allies, not comrades.

The dynamic of relative disinterest continued in this underdeveloped manner until the Unification, whereupon there was a drastic shift in how the Falange was presented to *requetés*. The Unification itself was incongruously reported as a natural political progression

¹⁹¹ Wenceslao González Oliveros, *Falange y Requeté, orgánicamente solidarios – Introducción al estudio de la nueva política española*, (Valladolid: Impresa Católica de Francisco G. Vicente, 1937), p. 17.

¹⁹² Blinkhorn, *Carlism and Crisis...*, p. 282.

¹⁹³ *Boletín de Campaña de los Requetés*, 28 August 1936, p. 1; p. 3

following months of fighting side by side. *La Voz de España*, in an editorial introduction to the full transcripts of both Franco's 'transcendental' speech and the Decree of Unification, stated that '*requetés* and the Falange, symbols of the national uprising' had been unified as they, 'the martyrs of Spain, that are winning the war, require a unity of command and doctrine to win the peace'.¹⁹⁴ In reality, there had been little clamour in the press demanding this 'unity of doctrine' and unity of command was never an issue, given the supremacy of the Army and Franco's ascendance to supreme leader in October 1936. Moreover, there was in fact hostility on the part of Fal Conde and his followers to the idea of the Falange and the Communion being unified into a singular party. Yet the idea of unity, of command and ideology, was the first means of rationalising the Unification to *requetés*. As argued by *La Voz de España* on 21 April 1937, it was necessary to achieve any national ambitions:

[For] without unity there can be no prosperous society, nor strong state, nor thriving economy. Without unity ideals perish, energies are bargained away, efforts are undermined. Without unity there can be no Spain.

What was required was 'unity of thought, aspirations and feelings... unity of belief, of *Patria* and command' as 'only based on strong unity can Spain march further into the future'.¹⁹⁵ The Decree, therefore, was rationalised as necessary for the future of the *Patria* – something that needed to be undertaken not only for the war to be won, but for post-war aspirations to be achieved as well.

This rationale, while an important pillar of the presentation of the Unification, could not explain the reasons why these two groups, with their differing social bases, history and ideology were fused into a single political entity. Further efforts were needed to justify this union. The key text in this brave new world was *Falange y Requeté, orgánicamente solidarios – Introducción al estudio de la nueva política española* by the former chair of legal philosophy at the University of Salamanca, Wenceslao González Oliveros.¹⁹⁶ In this text González, a future president of the National Tribunal of Political Responsibilities, member of the Special Tribunal for the Repression of Freemasonry and Communism and neither a Falangist or Carlist, stated that:¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ *La Voz de España*, 20 April 1937, p. 1.

¹⁹⁵ *La Voz de España*, 21 April 1937, p. 3.

¹⁹⁶ Michael Seidman, *The Victorious Counterrevolution...*, p. 205.

¹⁹⁷ González was originally a monarchist. Julius Ruiz, *Franco's Justice – Repression in Madrid after the Spanish Civil War*, (Oxford; Oxford University Press 2005), p. 27.

[His] purpose is to discover, or reiterate, that the solidarity of the Falange and Requeté turns out to be not ‘mechanical’ nor episodic, but categorical and ‘organic’ [that] they coincidentally – without trying – are joined in the cause of their justification... in the Imperial design which is, for both, at the same time aim and starting point.¹⁹⁸

By stating that the two had a joined cause for their justification, that their ultimate imperial aims were one and the same, González aimed to prove that the two belonged together. The Unification was not a simple amalgamation of two political organisations into a singular body, but a ‘saving dualism’, a ‘double-headed eagle’ that respected the heritage of each movement. There was even a nod to the Carlist Foral preoccupation, with González emphasising that ‘even in the case of union, they shall represent the variety in unity’.¹⁹⁹ Within this union the two were presented as dovetailing one another perfectly, they were ‘two complementary modes of the full and unique national being’ and the FET y de las JONS provided these ‘organically absolute and constructive forces’ their ‘perfect composition’ as ‘the *requetés* were the first Falangists of yesteryear, and the Falangists are the new Traditionalists of today’.²⁰⁰ This assertion was supported by a mutual hatred for the decadence of democracy and the depravity of Marxism, as well as a shared enthusiasm for Spain’s imperial heritage.²⁰¹ Moreover a mutual religious sympathy signified ‘another point of contact, another crucial match between Falange and Requeté’, as they both shared a ‘perception of the religious sense of this war’.²⁰² The common desires of the two were shown by González to highlight that they shared ‘the same genealogical pulchritude’, and ‘consequently, there is no reason to condemn either the Requeté to the past or the Falange to the future, when it comes to a future and a past equally imperial’.²⁰³ By presenting the FET y de las JONS as an organization where both groups complemented, rather than represented, one another, the myriad ideological differences between the two groups could be overlooked. Instead, the broad similarities they shared were presented as evidence of ‘two complementary modes of the full and unique national being’.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁸ Wenceslao González Oliveros *Falange y Requeté, orgánicamente solidarios – Introducción al estudio de la nueva política española*, (Valladolid, Impresa Católica de Francisco G. Vicente, 1937 – 2nd edition), p. 17.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*..., p. 19.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*..., p. 17; p. 30.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*..., p. 29.

²⁰² *Ibid.*..., p. 29.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*..., p. 30; p. 31.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*..., p. 17.

Following Unification the presentation of the Falange to *requetés* changed to accord to the new situation. While there remained a distinction between the two, the Falange became less of a foreign entity in Carlist martial-political discourse. Its symbol, now the symbol of the FET y de las JONS, was ‘the graceful symbol of arrows and yoke’ and José Antonio Primo de Rivera, whose canonization by the rest of rebel Spain had been overlooked by the Carlist press, was now recognized as ‘a champion of the new style’, ‘a young man who while loving life knew to die with classical heroism’, who although he ‘did not belong... to the Carlist Party... his doctrines can be classified as within the larger Traditionalist Communion, of that great Communion of those who belonged even without following the banners of Don Carlos’.²⁰⁵ In Adro Xavier’s 1938 book describing the life of a chaplain who fought with the Basque Requeté, *La sange de su boina*, the presentation of the Falange strongly resembled the ‘complementary modes’ described in González’s work. The Falange and the Requeté were ‘Two flowers on the chest of Spain’; the two units he described, the Basque Requeté and the Falange of Navarre, were ‘all as one’ the *requetés*’ berets representing the ‘red blood of patriotism’ and the Falange’s shirts the ‘warm blue from dawn’, joined underneath the glorious imperial flag ‘its red and gold colours symbolic of immortality’.²⁰⁶ The two were the physical embodiment of the complementary relationship, their two synecdochical elements, the red beret and the blue shirt, amounting to the same whole that they both wore; the uniform of the FET y de las JONS.

The conclusion to be drawn in this brief exposition of the presentation of the Falange to *requetés* is that the official presentation of the Carlists’ partners in the FET y de las JONS developed from one of an ally in the same conflict into that of a supposed political brother with very little supporting rationale. All of the above rhetoric illustrates a divergence away from the values of the *requetés* and wholly ignored their regional understanding of the conflict, relying on empty grandiloquent flourishes. The focus on national issues of ‘economy’ and patriotic ‘unity’ and attempts to portray the Communion as some sort of ‘proto-Falange’, its historical forerunner, only served to further belittle the Carlists already diminished political influence. The incongruity of this approach would mean that *requetés*’ enthusiasm for their comrades was limited.

For many *requetés*, the Falange was not a suitable partner for Tradition. It was, to all intents and purposes, a *madrileño* political upstart whose years as a political institution amounted to single figures; the Carlists could count three. However, despite Tradition’s

²⁰⁵ *La Voz de España*, 18 July 1937, p. 1; 20 November 1937, p. 3.

²⁰⁶ Xavier, *La Sangre de su boina...*, p. 8.

seniority in years of service to the *Patria*, the Falange was the senior partner in the FET y de las JONS. There was a degree of respect from some *requetés* towards the Falange, one even going so far as to claim ‘we appreciate the Falangists, from the depths of our hearts’.²⁰⁷ José María Resa, reminisced about the longstanding cooperation of the two movements, citing the times before the war when the ‘student youth who were already active in the Falange and Traditionalism... fought in the streets against the enemies of Spain’ as well as ‘the supreme moment’ when each offered ‘the first volunteers to take up arms to support the Army in victory’.²⁰⁸ Resa went even as far to admonish ‘the short sighted people’ that failed to embrace ‘the active and mutual participation of all good Spaniards’.²⁰⁹ However, despite these positive accounts there is also evidence of *requetés* being actively hostile towards *falangistas*. Manuel Bellosillo speaks of a fistfight that erupted between a group of *falangistas* and a group of *requetés* from the *Tercio del Rey* in August 1937, stemming from a conflict over the latter’s occupation of a town square.²¹⁰ A further example of tensions coming to a head was seen in a disagreement in the village of Vallafogona de Balaguer, near Lleida in May 1938. Following the arrival of a Falange press and propaganda corps in the newly conquered village there was some discontent among the *requetés* of the *Tercio de Valvanera* that the propaganda posted on the walls was ‘entirely falangist and had nothing that represented Tradition’. In response to this the *requetés* threw at pots of paint at the Falangists as well as over some of the posters, the rest they tore down as well as vandalising a sculpture of the yoke and arrows that had been placed in the town.²¹¹ This led to the *falangistas* having to abandon the village; such was their fear of *requeté* reprisals. The point of upset is clear, that *requetés* felt that the Falange was overrepresented within the FET y de las JONS, at the expense of Tradition. For while the propaganda aimed at *requetés* attempted to show the two as equals, *requetés* knew better and the Falange’s greater numbers and better grasp of modern propaganda techniques meant that the fascists, and their ideas, were far more prominent in most representations of the FET y de las JONS. However, despite this falling out, what must be maintained is that there was never any question of *requetés* stopping from fighting. The following day in Vallafogona de Balaguer, when the *pueblo* came under attack, they remained to fight.²¹² In Ronald Fraser’s *Blood of Spain* one of his subjects, Antonio Izu,

²⁰⁷ Cited in Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 27.

²⁰⁸ Resa, *Memorias...*, p. 123. For more on this pre-war co-operation see Blinkhorn, *Carlism and Crisis...*, p. 181.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid...*, p. 159.

²¹⁰ Bellosillo, *Tercio de Requetés Valvanera...*, p. 63.

²¹¹ AGMAV, C. 1297, 75/ 1-4.

²¹² AGMAV, C. 1297, 75/ 3.

talks of distaste for the violent methods of some *falangistas*, stating their tactics ‘going from house to house looking for people’, were ‘shameful’.²¹³ Of course *requetés* were hardly innocent of violent acts, but the unwillingness to remain silent in mutual culpability speaks to the subject’s distaste for his supposed comrades.²¹⁴ Izu gets the root of discord with a simple statement: ‘The Falange never inspired any confidence... It was a totalitarian, centrist movement, without respect for the *fueros*’, ultimately, ‘they had a different mentality’.²¹⁵ For *requetés*, it appears that Tradition’s relationship with the Falange was built upon foundations of sand. Despite the attempts made in the discourse presented to them, their perceptions of the conflict varied too much and the Falange were viewed as unaware of the necessary traditions to return the nation to greatness. Nevertheless, despite their distaste for the Falange and, by extension, the political situation, the Unification was never greatly railed against, perhaps because of the futility of such an effort. More pertinently for the aims of this thesis, the lack of enthusiasm for the Unification did not have a particularly great impact on *requetés* commitment to the conflict at hand, with them remaining some of the most reliable troops in the Francoist Army.²¹⁶

Franco’s position as Caudillo was rationalised as a new Carlist *Rey* with Carlist wartime discourse presenting the *Generalísimo* as the modern incarnation of the legitimate ruler of Spain. The Carlist movement, it must not be forgotten, was borne from a dispute over succession and, despite the ideological divergence from this due to the work of Víctor Pradera, the claim of the descendants of Carlos María Isidro de Borbón was never abandoned. However, as we have seen in Chapter Two, a fundamental part of the Crusade was Franco’s role as Caudillo; there was no position for any kind of King regardless of whether it was the Carlist pretender or the ousted Alfonso XIII. This section will examine how Franco’s undisputed leadership of not just Spain, but also Carlism itself following the Decree of Unification, was rationalised in Carlist martial-political discourse.

At the outbreak of war, literature aimed at *requetés* was very much monarchist. The *requeté* was nothing more than ‘a servant of the Spanish Traditional Institution’, he who ‘forever monarchist, struggles, as always, for the King’, a foot-soldier dedicated to placing

²¹³ Fraser, *Blood of Spain...*, p. 121.

²¹⁴ For more on Carlist repression see Altaffayala Kultur Taldea, *Navarra en 1936 – De la esperanza al terror* (Tafalla: Altaffayalla Kultur Taldea, 2004), *passim*; for a particularly graphic description of Carlist violence see Iñaki de Azpiazu, *7 meses y 7 días en la España de Franco – El caso de los católicos vascos*, (Caracas: Gudari, 1964), p. 115.

²¹⁵ *Ibid...*, p. 312.

²¹⁶ Prieto stated the troops he most feared were the *requetés* following communion. Seidman, p. 168.

the pretender upon the throne.²¹⁷ In regards to the man himself, the Carlist military press was as effusive as was to be expected. Don Alfonso was not merely a leader, but instead the personification of Carlist ideology. According to *La Voz de España*, speaking upon his death on 29 September 1936, the day Franco assumed premiership of the rebel zone, ‘Tradition, forever on the march, forever constant and immutable had its expression in this old man, all majesty and integrity’.²¹⁸ He was the ‘latest representative of the Carlist dynasty’ who showed ‘the red berets and its banners the route to victory’.²¹⁹ His nephew, Don Francisco Javier, who upon the outbreak of Civil War was made commander-in-chief of the Carlist forces by Don Alfonso to go with the Prince Regent title he was given the previous January, was also presented as the protector of the beliefs of *Dios* and *Patria*.²²⁰ Whenever possible, the Prince Regent’s valour and piety were cited as well as his selfless commitment to the Traditionalist cause. He was ‘the good prince, the holy prince, the selfless and heroic prince’, ‘whose working life causes notorious admiration’.²²¹

However, the role of the *Rey* in Carlist ideology was not simply that of a monarch nor his relationship with his followers that of ‘king and subjects’. The King could not be a distant sovereign, ruling by virtue of birth, but had to be the spiritual leader of the *Patria*, representing the ideals of Carlism. The reason why the Prince Regent was held in such high regard in the propaganda of the early part of the war was because he and his predecessors had been ‘the guarantee of continuity historical in the life of the *Patria*’.²²² The *Comunión Tradicionalista* did not support the claim of Carlos V nor any of his descendants because it was overly concerned with the question of fair succession; for Carlists, ‘the men that died, they died for something deeper and more emotional than a family feud’.²²³ They supported him because they were the guarantors of the ‘Traditional Spain, commanded by the rightful King Carlos V, which rose in spirited exploits against a bastard Spain, false and made foreign’.²²⁴ What the pretender’s claim and the claim of his successors represented was, to quote Torremar, ‘[a monarchy] in the faithful service of our traditions’.²²⁵ Those traditions being the protection of regional values and a healthy hatred for ideas which undermined

²¹⁷ *Ibid...*, p. 15; Pérez de Olaguer, *Los de Siempre...*, p. 37.

²¹⁸ *La Voz de España*, 1 October 1936, p. 1.

²¹⁹ *La Voz de España*, 1 October 1936, p. 3.

²²⁰ Martin Blinkhorn, ‘Carlism and the Spanish Crisis of the 1930s’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 7, No. 3/4 (July-October., 1972), p. 84.

²²¹ Pérez de Olaguer, *Los de Siempre...*, p. 37; Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 37.

²²² Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 15.

²²³ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 224.

²²⁴ *Ibid...*, p. 21

²²⁵ Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 14.

them: ‘the Traditional King is incompatible with liberalism. And is by nature an enemy of the revolution’.²²⁶ It was by extolling this specific concept of the King that the *tradicionalista* press rejected the common insinuation made by their opponents and allies alike that they were absolutists. While Traditionalists’ virulent hatred of democracy, liberalism and all other modern forms of government may have made this seem the case, there was an important distinction to be made between their form of monarchy and that of ‘French despotism’.²²⁷ The distinction lay in the belief that ‘when all authority comes from God, men cannot, whether they are kings or emperors, use that authority at whim, with despotism and cruelty’, they still needed to listen to their people. To hold absolute power was to reject the singular authority of heaven, the King with absolute power was not humble, and ‘the king who is not humble is not Christian’, a strong accusation.²²⁸ However, this rejection of a the concept of absolutism was not in any way a rejection of traditional hierarchical structure, the chain of command was a fundamental part of Carlist military discourse. For Carlists, ‘all was hierarchy’, one which felt that a ‘sense of discipline, order, hierarchy, loyalty to the rulers, the undisputed authority’ were not only important to the movement, but meant that Carlism transcended to become ‘more than an office’ but ‘a social class, a way of life’.²²⁹ The role of the King as leader, in Carlist discourse, was surmised by Torremar as one of ‘Authority without personal omnipotence’.²³⁰

Ultimately, the most important thing about the Carlist *Rey* was not the man himself, nor his leadership or birthright, but his role as the guarantor of the ideals of the *Comuni3n Tradicionalista*. The *Ordenanza de Requet3* made this very clear, as the King ensured ‘continuity in the glorious destiny of Spain’ and was ‘the first soldier of Tradition’.²³¹ Monarchy suited the Carlist needs for leadership perfectly, as it is by its very nature an important institution represented by unimportant characters, the tenure of each is transient yet the institution as a whole permanent. While Kings may grow old and die, they are replaced by a successor, one who fulfilled exactly the same requirements – ensuring ‘continuity’. Provided they were a champion of the values of Tradition, the identity of the King was irrelevant. In an editorial for *El Pensamiento Navarro*, Francisco L3pez Sanz stated that Carlists were not like other groups, following a *Duce* or *F3hrer* because of his abilities, but rather they looked for his commitment to their longstanding ideals:

²²⁶ *Ibid.*..., p.15; the *Ordenanza* ..., also states that the King was ‘naturally illiberal [and] anti-revolutionary’, p. 4

²²⁷ L3pez Sanz, *Relente*..., p. 74.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*..., p. 39.

²²⁹ Echeverr3a, *Como se prepar3 el alzamiento*..., p. 43; p.49.

²³⁰ Torremar, *La voz del carlismo*..., p. 15.

²³¹ *Ordenanza*..., p. 4.

We have not fallen in love with the person for his kindness, for his talent, his energy his 'type' or other talents that come together or may come together in men. We fell in love with the Flag, with its principles and we love with unwavering loyalty the persons who represented or embodied these principles and held with dignity that flag.²³²

This, therefore, was the blueprint for a Carlist *Rey* as dictated by Carlist military discourse. He could not dictate from above, for as we have seen, this was for God alone, but instead he was to serve as the individual expression of the ideas of Carlism, which were the eternal desires of his people. He needed to be a man who would protect *Dios* and *Patria* and oppose malignant foreign influences such as liberalism and its modern equivalent, Marxism.

In regards to the criteria for King outlined above, Franco's suitability was mixed, with his supreme personal authority (and his lack of any claim to the throne) conflicting with this conception of what a Carlist king should represent. Yet there was a marked desire to place him in the position regardless. One such example on a national scale was seen in 1938 when the radio reported that a 'study' by Juan José Pradera Ortega, a prominent Carlist, declared that Franco was, in fact, the legitimate successor of Alfonso Carlos.²³³ A more intimate example was found when a priest, in celebrating mass, urged *requetés* of the *Tercio de Montserrat* to 'promise loyalty to the *Patria*, to Tradition, the Caudillo and to God'.²³⁴ By late 1938, there were even occasions of the *trilema* becoming *Por Dios, Por Patria y Por Franco*.²³⁵

Franco's unspoken assumption of this role would stem from the fact that as the war progressed, the prospect of Don Javier sitting upon the throne became increasingly unlikely. On 8 December 1936 Fal Conde, backed by Don Javier, created a Royal Carlist Military Academy in an attempt to assert the independence of the *requetés* from the Army.²³⁶ This proved to be imprudent on his behalf as Franco sentenced him to exile in Portugal – while shortly afterward bringing the militias under Army control, all with the consent of Fal

²³² López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 19.

²³³ AGMAV, C. 461,5,1/11.

²³⁴ Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes...*, p. 72.

²³⁵ This trend was seen in *La Voz de España* which on the 23 August 1938 changed its subtitle from *Diario de Falange Española Tradicionalista de las JONS*, to the aforementioned. At the beginning of the war it was simple *Diario Tradicionalista*.

²³⁶ Ugarte Tellería, *La nueva Covadonga...*, pp. 292-294; Canal i Morell, *Banderas blancas...*, pp. 336-337.

Conde's long term rival, the leading Navarrese Carlist personality Conde de Rodezno.²³⁷ This was a blow to Don Javier's claim as not only had Franco exercised his complete authority over the Carlist movement, but the pretender's own supposed supporters had not opposed it. Fal Conde was permitted to return to Spain in November 1937 to form part of the first of the National Council of the FET, but the damage to the Prince Regent was already done, Franco's position was unassailable and his supporters had abandoned him. Worse was to come for Don Javier, however, as in December 1937 it was his turn to be expelled from Spain, and he was not permitted to return.²³⁸ Furthermore, as if to underline his dominance, in 1940 Franco would deny Don Javier safe passage to Portugal following the German invasion of France (the Prince Regent having volunteered for the Belgian Army) and he would spend the Second World War in a string of Nazi internment camps.²³⁹ Following the fall of Fal Conde, de facto leadership fell to Rodezno, who, given his flirtation with authoritarianism throughout the Republican period and previous willingness to work with Mola in the run up to war, had few qualms about Franco's premiership provided other ideological considerations were met, namely guarantees regarding his political primacy in Navarre.²⁴⁰

It is important to maintain the relative unimportance of the *Rey* when compared to *Dios* and *Patria* in the Carlist imagination. Who led the Carlists was a tertiary concern, it was always 'God, first and foremost, then the country, and then the rest', the King's identity was second to his support for the values of Tradition, which were being addressed.²⁴¹ Therefore, given that the function of the King – to protect the values of Tradition – was in general being pursued, the necessity of pursuing a question of succession, especially one as futile as the Carlist one, was pointless. Nevertheless Carlism as an ideology still demanded a leader – a 'loving father of all', 'the first soldier of Tradition [that] personifies the virtues of genuine Spanish Monarchy'.²⁴² It is here that Franco, in rhetorical terms at least, fulfilled enough of the 'regal remit' by dint of his unwavering support for *Dios* and *Patria*, his tolerance of regional exceptionalism, his leadership of the state and of the FET y de las JONS and his resolute hatred for any and all forms of liberal government. He consequently became a key

²³⁷ Jaime Ignacio del Burgo, 'El agónico final del carlismo', *Cuadernos de Pensamiento Político*, No. 31, (July/September 2011), pp. 188-189.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.189.

²³⁹ María Teresa de Borbón Parma, José Carlos Clemente and Joaquín Cubrero Sánchez, *Don Javier, una vida al servicio de la libertad*, (Barcelona: Plaza & Janés, 1997), p. 183-186.

²⁴⁰ Del Burgo, 'El agónico...', p. 189.

²⁴¹ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p.11.

²⁴² Torreomar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 15; p. 81.

pillar in post-Unification Carlist military propaganda, with the virtues of the Kings of Tradition transposed onto him.

Franco's profile was not as high as it was in the *africanista* or *falangista* press, more often than not Carlist newspapers such as *El Pensamiento Navarro* or *La Voz de España* would refrain from placing him, or tributes to him, on the front page of most numbers. Yet his presence still loomed large in Carlist martial-political discourse and his newfound discursive importance cannot be dismissed. Franco, unsurprisingly given his position, was always spoken of in glowing personal terms; he was the 'hero', the 'undefeated Caudillo' that had 'saved Spain', a new 'emblem of the *Patria*'.²⁴³ Yet by mid-1937, he was also presented as specific to the Carlist movement, he became more than just the head of state, he had 'from his high seat of honour' begun, in the words of *El Pensamiento Navarro* 'to do [Tradition] justice'.²⁴⁴ He individually fulfilled the most important ideological needs of a Carlist leader. He was pious and an undoubted patriot, in tune with the wishes of the nation, for *La Voz de España* 'never before have a people seen... nor has arisen from the pages of history a protagonist with more precision in the Spanish desires than Franco'.²⁴⁵ He was as intolerant of liberalism and its legacy as the *requetés* themselves, being 'the voice against compromises and against [the] dealings of parliamentary liberalism' and committed to 'erasing the bad actions of the Marxist mob who took us to the brink'.²⁴⁶ Furthermore, Franco himself was suitably respectful of the Carlists' ideas as he described the Carlist wars as a first, Navarrese-led attempt to achieve the same end as this current Crusade, to return Spain to its Imperial glory.

The greatest effort to restore that great moment in Spain was given in the last century... Spain, represented then by the Carlists, fought against the bastard Spain of the Liberals, Frenchified and Europeanized, this stage remained localized and dormant in the bushes of Navarre, embalmed in a dam, the entire spiritual treasure of fifteenth century imperial Spain.²⁴⁷

²⁴³ *La Voz de España*, 3 October 1936, p. 1; Xavier, *La Sangre de su boina...*, p. 3; *La Voz de España*, 2 April 1937, p. 2.

²⁴⁴ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p.138.

²⁴⁵ *La Voz de España*, 17/7/38, p. 3.

²⁴⁶ Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 83; *La Voz de España*, 2 April 1936, p.2.

²⁴⁷ *Boletín del Movimiento de Falange Tradicionalista y de las J.O.N.S.*, 5 May 1937, p. ii.

The conditions for Franco's assumption of the rhetorical (to match his actual) leadership of Tradition were therefore favourable – and there is ample evidence that he accepted it. The following pair of radio broadcasts from late 1937 point to this fact:

The voice of the *Generalísimo* is our voice, the voice that Spain has listened to for a century, the voice that today vibrates in the air of the *Patria* with the music of realisation.²⁴⁸

The voice of *Generalísimo* Franco, which currently is the voice Traditional Spain, has voiced one of the ambitions of the idiosyncrasy of the Carlist: he has expressed the realisation of the yearnings of old, encouraged in the hearts of good Spaniards.²⁴⁹

Franco was presented as having tapped into the desires of the Carlists. He was not a Borbón, yet he was, through his actions, what was desired by ideology in a *Rey*. By the second anniversary of the uprising Franco's ascension to symbolic King was effectively complete with his face adorning the front page of *La Voz de España* under which the subtitle read:

Franco, *Generalísimo* of the armies, *Caudillo* of Spain, great architect of victory and creator of the New Spain:

On this second triumphant anniversary, we ask God, with more fervour than ever; guard his life, for the good of Religion and the *Patria*.²⁵⁰

This statement provided the clear message that it was now Franco, like the Kings of old, who was the guarantor of the primacy of the values of God and *Patria* in Spain.

For the *requetés* themselves, despite this charm offensive, Franco's role as *Caudillo* was not the greatest of their concerns. He was certainly admired for his military prowess, Luis Cemboráin Mainz betraying his enthusiasm for the legend of the General in a letter dated on the day of the Unification, stating his excitement at receiving cigarette cards from his father featuring the great man's image.²⁵¹ Moreover, there was some traction for his position as *Caudillo*, with Manuel Bellosillo offering the closest example of a *requeté* mirroring the discourse presented. To Bellosillo the *boinas rojas* respected Franco as a 'supreme leader' and upon 'each *requeté* is printed a silent message of recognition for the

²⁴⁸ Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 83.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*..., p. 52.

²⁵⁰ *La Voz de España*, 17 July 1938, p. 1.

²⁵¹ (Luis) Cemboráin Mainz, "Cartas de dos hermanos..." p. 491.

victory, and loyalty, because those who freely and voluntarily fought to the orders of a *jefe*, will never be disloyal'.²⁵² Yet despite this evidence, the general impression is that Franco was not the subject of much *requeté* adulation, with his mention in letters and memoirs being minimal. For some he was even viewed as a *falangista* leader, rather than a Caudillo for all. A good example of this came in the conflagration at Vallafogona de Balaguer in May 1938, where *requetés* not only threw paint at *falangista* propaganda, but also allegedly defaced several images of the *Generalísimo*.²⁵³ This was an isolated case, but it highlights the fact that Franco was never completely accepted by *requetés* in the role of 'King'. It appears *requetés* were not particularly enamoured by Franco's leadership – this did not mean they were opposed to it and there was no concerted groundswell of animosity towards him, simply that he was not a motivating factor for *requetés* to fight in the war. The rhetoric of 'the voice of the *Generalísimo* is our voice' had failed.

Finally it is necessary to examine the relationship with the armed forces; how the supremacy of the Army was presented to *requetés* and how they reacted to authority being subjugated to the military. Unsurprisingly, given that Carlist wartime discourse was a firm proponent of hierarchy, the Army was never presented as anything other than a great ally. It was a bulwark against the counterrevolution, an ark of national sentiment that would act to protect the *Patria* where it saw fit; its authority over its soldiers unquestionable. This understanding was perhaps the least complicated of all Carlism's relationships with the overarching Francoist Crusade as obedience to authority and a strict sense of hierarchy were fundamental to Carlism. The *Requeté's* 'intimate union with the courageous Spanish army' was never questioned as the Army was the master of its men and each *requeté's* job within it was a simple one, to unquestioningly die for the cause.²⁵⁴

Propaganda regarding the armed forces was never less than effusive, with organs falling over themselves to heap praise on the Army. The technical director of *Radio Requeté de Guipúzcoa*, writing to the military governor of the region in December 1936, stated that the output of the station was 'concentrated entirely on the conscientious service of the Glorious Spanish Army in this patriotic enterprise' and that its output would be 'that which is most beneficial for the good of our dear *Patria* and the glory of the Spanish Army, to which we are intimately linked'.²⁵⁵ The Army was presented as an institution that was fundamental to a healthy Spain as the nation needed to 'have a large army in the service of God and the

²⁵² Bellosillo, *Tercio de Requetés Valvanera...*, p. 99.

²⁵³ AGMAV, C. 1297, 75/3.

²⁵⁴ Anonymous, *Masones y Rotarios...*, p. 3.

²⁵⁵ AGMAV, C. 1457, 75/ 1.

Patria'.²⁵⁶ Without it, Spain would descend into the 'crude and brutal militarism that is suffered in Russia'.²⁵⁷ The military were fellow 'Crusaders forming this holy Crusade', 'proud and fanatically patriotic', an exemplar of the 'spirit of adventure and chivalry of [the] race', that '[forged] the Empire on the edge of its sword'.²⁵⁸ The rector of the University of Zaragoza in his Radio Requeté speech called it 'the glorious national Army' that fought against the 'anti-*Patria*' of the Republic.²⁵⁹ It was the best expression of the *Patria*, its generals 'Catholics, and by dint of being good Catholics, excellent Spaniards', given that the two were inseparable.²⁶⁰ *La Voz de España*, in support of this, echoed in July 1938 a statement made by the Monarchist José Calvo Sotelo: 'Today the Army is the nation at arms and the nation is the Army of peace'.²⁶¹

Carlism in general valued the martial; its identity was rooted in two uprisings and the *abuelos* that had been to war were held up as paragons of Carlist virtue.²⁶² Military duty was vital to Tradition and the *Ordenanza de Requeté* outlined what was expected of a *requeté*. He was to be, amongst other things, a 'disciplined spirit', 'brave in service', a 'volunteer for risk', 'subordinate and punctual as a rule', 'strong, physically and morally' and 'never tepid, always imperturbable'.²⁶³ In one of the few attempts to synthesize the current political situation with the ideas of Tradition, the *Devocionario de Combatiente* would present military adherence as a religious obligation:

The best prayer and the first devotion is the fulfilment of your military obligations. The one that best fulfils their military obligations is the best soldier. The one that best offers to God those obligations fulfilled, is the most pious soldier.²⁶⁴

Fulfilment of military obligations was therefore a means of serving God, it was, after all, a war against His enemies to return His values to the heart of Spain and each *requeté* was therefore expected to be 'the greatest soldier of Christ'.²⁶⁵ Dereliction of duty was forbidden, not only that, but deviation of any kind was looked upon in the strongest possible terms as 'he

²⁵⁶ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 177.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*..., p. 108.

²⁵⁸ Torremar, *La voz del carlismo...*, p. 76; *La Voz de España*, 18 July 1937, p. 3.

²⁵⁹ AGMAV, C. 3131, 1 /40-41.

²⁶⁰ López Sanz, *Relente...*, p. 177.

²⁶¹ *La Voz de España*, 17 July 1938, p. 3.

²⁶² The historical importance of this is expounded by Eduardo González Calleja and Julio Aróstegui, in 'La Tradición Recuperada...', pp. 29-32

²⁶³ *Ordenanza...*, p. 5.

²⁶⁴ *Devocionario...*, p. 10.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*..., p. 10.

that encourages discussion about the wisdom of command; he that believes himself to be an improvised strategist; he who fails to be dependable; he is collaborating with the enemy'.²⁶⁶ It is worth noting that both the *Ordenanza* and the *Devocionario* were written by Fal Conde in 1936, highlighting how close Carlist attitudes on military discipline were to those of the Crusade even before the Army imposed its political authority upon the Communion. This is hardly a surprise, however, given the organization of the Requeté prior to the outbreak of war. Finally, Carlists were beseeched to be 'attentive to military command, which will lead us to the crushing of the Marxist oppressor', emphasising that adherence to military discipline was not only an obligation given the Army's national importance, but also a practical decision, as it would bring about a swifter victory.²⁶⁷

In *requetés'* eyes, the military was something to be respected. While there was nothing as fawning as Tomás Echeverría's assertion that 'the Carlists always saw in the military establishment ... the categorical essences of the *Patria*' the overriding attitude to the military's primacy on the behalf of *requetés* was one of genial acceptance.²⁶⁸ As we have seen from the discourse there was an ideological imperative to respect the martial within Carlism. This was reflected by Carlist soldiers, who, often commanded by professional army officers were said to be 'always attentive of [them]'.²⁶⁹ Rosendo Domenech Puig spoke of the *Tercios'* 'unity and rapport with the other tentacles of the National Army', highlighting *requetés'* respect for their fellow fighting men and the military in general.²⁷⁰ The Foreign Legion was afforded special respect for its military achievements, highlighting the profound respect for this most elite of military units. Manuel Bellosillo argued it was the perfect form of military existence, stating that 'the Legion is the Legion and discipline is the lifeline of military effectiveness that allows it to constantly survive and overcome'.²⁷¹ José María Resa spoke of the Legion's great hero, José Millán-Astray in equally reverent terms, to Resa 'he was a legendary figure, tall, skeletal, covered with wounds and mutilations, symbol of the *Patria*, his charged word a poignant force'.²⁷²

However, despite this inherent respect for the military, the discipline of some *requetés* was not exemplary and desertions from the *Tercios* were not a wholly uncommon occurrence. However, the context of some of these desertions needs to be taken into account as we once

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*..., pp. 13-14.

²⁶⁷ Torremar, *La voz del carlismo*..., p. 76-77.

²⁶⁸ Echeverría, *Como se preparó*..., p.43.

²⁶⁹ Cited in Nonell Brú, *Los Requetés Catalanes*..., p. 27.

²⁷⁰ Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña*..., p. 46-7.

²⁷¹ Bellosillo, *Tercio de Requetés Valvanera*..., p. 67.

²⁷² *Ibid.*..., p. 123.

again see the overriding importance of the local to *requetés*, as the reasons for many desertions was to help in the tasks of the *aldea*, with the harvest being the key draw back home.²⁷³ Abandoning the front and turning ones back on discipline for something so ostensibly trivial may seem at first curious, however given the war was being waged to bring the mindset of the village to the rest of the nation it makes perfect sense. After all, what use would it be to bring the *aldea* to the nation if one was willing to immediately abandon its practices?

²⁷³ There were, of course the usual reasons for desertion, but this was surprisingly prevalent Seidman, *The Victorious Counterrevolution...*, p. 237.

Crosses in every Classroom – The *Requetés*' Crusade

When analysing the success of the overarching Crusade in the motivation of *requetés* one thing needs to be established, that *requetés* constituted, throughout the war, some of the most committed units in the Francoist forces.²⁷⁴ They were used almost constantly as shock troops and were some of the most reliable soldiers in the conflict.²⁷⁵ However, how important was the Crusade in creating this milieu?

The answer is an interesting one for this study. The 'generic' Crusade's values incorporated important issues for *requetés* such as religion, the importance of the *Patria* and the destruction of the Republic, yet its presentation lacked a suitably *tradicionalista* approach. However, it did permit for sufficient latitude on the importance of the region that allowed for the rhetoric presented explicitly to *requetés* to remain within the parameters defined by the *africanistas* yet still appeal to the idiosyncrasies of Carlism. The war was consequently presented as a 'march on Madrid' from the regions as their 'eternal' values were now in the ascendant, flooding forth from the *aldeas* to destroy Marxism and return Spain to its years of glory. This idea struck a chord with *requetés* as the local becoming a model for the national was taken up. This was perhaps best exemplified by the wish of some to return the cross to the classroom following its 1931 removal. This idea was to be Rosendo Domenech Puig's final conclusion of his memoir, stating he was pleased that 'Christ, will return to chair and lecture the classroom'.²⁷⁶ Although only a small concern, it encapsulated all that *requetés* believed, honouring religion, but also the idea of the *aldea* writ large as the traditional school was brought to the national stage. The national zone had, in fact, returned the crucifix to the classroom as early as April 1937, with the crucifix as well as an image of the Virgin Mary being needed to be hung in all primary schools, yet the rest of the nation needed to follow suit.²⁷⁷ Its return across the nation was a symbol of the strength the ideas of the *pueblo* over those of the corrupted cities.

However, despite the effectiveness of this discourse in motivating *requetés* to fight, there was little enthusiasm for the other ideas of the Crusade. Franco was tolerated, respected even, but the Falange did not become trusted comrades. Following the end of hostilities there were isolated examples of violence breaking out between *falangista* and *requeté* soldiers, and

²⁷⁴ Overall, Carlist units had the lowest number of deserters of all volunteer groups in the Civil War. Aróstegui, *Los Combatientes carlistas...*, vol. 1, p. 176.

²⁷⁵ Seidman, *The Victorious Counterrevolution...*, p. 187.

²⁷⁶ Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña...*, p. 181.

²⁷⁷ Jackson, *The Spanish Republic...*, p. 422.

while this is a risk amongst soldiers awaiting discharge, it is not a common occurrence amongst allies. One incident from the military archives tells of two *requetés* who beat a *falangista* Lieutenant to death in July 1939, for apparently political reasons.²⁷⁸ While this is a unique case, it does point towards a lack of the ‘magnificent brotherhood’ trumpeted by González Oliveros.

Perhaps, had the war gone a different way, there may have been more fissures among the rebels. As we have seen in Chapter Three, Republican unity held until the beginning of 1939 and despite problems cracks in the hastily constructed artifice only began to show when hope began to rapidly fade. The rebels, on the other hand, were fighting a victorious campaign and Franco’s soldiers were emboldened by victory, this could have nothing less than a positive effect upon morale. In the words of Rosendo Domenech Puig, ‘The constant victories ... act upon fighters as a powerful restorative agent’.²⁷⁹ In regards to the relationship with the Falange this was also the case. Javier Nagore Yárnoz stated that he felt nothing but warmth towards *falangistas* he met, to him ‘we were volunteers and we all liked the wine and spirits’, they were brought together in ‘the same spirit: we were on a crusade, we had hope, enthusiasm, courage, faith and hope in the triumph’, but what helped the most was that they ‘always went from victory to victory. This increased our joy, constant and youthful’.²⁸⁰ It is pointless to question what may have happened if events had gone differently, however, looking at the weakness of the programme in regards to integrating each side, it is perhaps best for the rebels that they were so effective in the field.

This lack of any established fraternity was the result of the rhetoric presented to *requetés* being caught between two stools. As this chapter has illustrated, there was a split between the effective discourse of a classic Carlist campaign brought into the modern era, a Fourth Carlist War, and the unsuccessful approach, that of the convoluted re-appropriation of cultural touchstones such as the ‘Rey’ complimented by empty rhetoric of ‘destiny’, used to link the ‘generic’ Crusade to the campaign of the Carlists. The result was that *requetés*’ motivation was not informed by Salamanca or Burgos, but by their *aldea*, as they wished for order on a national level to emulate order at a local one. There nevertheless remained a shared set of general values, enough to be allied in a fight against Muscovite invaders, but there was no shared political agenda. Ultimately, however, apart from in some individual cases, *requetés* remained at the front and were dedicated to the cause and in this context

²⁷⁸ AGMAV, C. 2323, L. 45,28/2.

²⁷⁹ Domenech Puig, *Diario de Campaña...*, p. 142.

²⁸⁰ Nagore Yárnoz, ‘En la Primera de Navarra...’, p. 226.

alone, the context of this thesis, the Crusade could be said to have served its purpose. Politics were not a matter for the front.

Chapter Six: ‘Rescuing the *Patria* from the clutches of beasts’ – Falange Volunteers and the Crusade

The following chapter, the last of the case studies, is focused upon the presentation of the conflict to soldiers in the Falange’s volunteer units, known as *banderas*. The chapter will first establish the discourse that soldiers affiliated with the Falange were exposed to and, in the following section, the reception of this discourse by the soldiery. The ultimate aim is to understand the efficacy of the Crusade in motivating *falangista* volunteers. It will be structured thematically, specifying the values of the Crusade that were used to motivate soldiers of the *banderas* during the war, the order of their importance within Falange wartime ideology and how this ordering and presentation of values corresponded with that of their allies. The Falange’s wartime propaganda has been addressed in historiography before but never in this particular context and any minimal repetition of previous works, while regrettable, is necessary to understand the discourse to which soldiers were exposed.¹ Therefore, while there are works that have undertaken similar research, this chapter will present the discourse in comparison with other ideological programmes and also examine its efficacy in regards to influencing the soldiers’ own attitudes.

The *Falange Española* was formed in 1933 with little fanfare and enjoyed minimal popular support. In four years, following a merger first with the *Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional-Sindicalista* (Unions of the National-Syndicalist Offensive, JONS) in February 1934 and later the *Comunión Tradicionalista* in April 1937, it would become the sole legal political organisation in Franco’s Spain – the ruling party of the New State – the FET y de las JONS.² José Antonio Primo de Rivera, son of the later dictator, became the undisputed leader of the Falange in 1934, leading it until his death by Republican firing squad in November 1936. During the Republican years Jose Antonio (he was known mostly by his first names) would create an ideological programme that would later become the twenty-six points of Franco’s ruling Party. This ideology was developed throughout the Second Republic and was an

¹ Study of Falangist propaganda in the Civil War is included in Sevillano Calero, *Rojos...*, *passim*; Núñez Seixas, *Núñez Seixas, ¡Fuera el invasor!...*, pp. 177-327.

² For a more comprehensive history of the political formation of the Falange see Ismael Saz Campos, *España contra España...*, pp. 118-155; Thomàs, *Lo que fue la Falange...*, pp. 35-88. Sheelagh M. Ellwood, *Spanish Fascism in the Franco Era – Falange Española de las Jons, 1936-1976*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987), pp. 7-24; Julio Gil Pecharromán, *José Antonio Primo de Rivera – Retrato de un visionario*, (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 1996), pp. 150-169.

attempt by the young Primo de Rivera to create a Hispanicised version of the ideology that had catapulted Mussolini to power in Italy just over a decade earlier.³

As with all fascist organisations, the central ideology was informed by a strident, aggressive nationalism. There was a profound dismay at the *Patria*'s malaise, Spain's loss of international prestige and the prevalence of anti-Spanish ideas within the nation's polity; ideas like liberalism, socialism, Marxism and peripheral nationalism, all of which the Republic supposedly represented. José Antonio's solution to this national malaise was to propose the immediate overthrow of the Republic and the re-structuring of society around a 'Unity of Destiny in the Universal', where all members of the *Patria* were united by a common goal.⁴ The aims of this 'Unity of Destiny' were decidedly palingenetic and classically fascist; the desire being the effectuation of a national re-birth that would bring a return of the days when Spain was ascendant.⁵ Much like their allies in both the Army and the ranks of the *Comunión Tradicionalista*, the era fetishized by the Falange was the Spanish Imperial Age of the sixteenth century. To recreate this period José Antonio called for the removal of the democratic political system and its values that had brought about nothing but decadence and discontent. This would then be followed by a refocused effort on imposing the 'national will' upon 'weaker nations'. The re-creation of an Empire was seen as a means to aggrandise the nation while bringing social cohesion at home, offering the common goal that Spain had lacked since the end of the *siglo de oro*.⁶ However, unlike the Traditionalists, a wish to return to the days of Empire did not extend to a rejection of the modern. The 'Unity of Destiny' would be achieved through an invigorating 'national-syndicalist' revolution, which would rid the nation of its decadent parasites. Along with the destruction of democracy and the banishment of Marxism and peripheral nationalism, the Falange's revolution would, in theory at least, limit the power of the old forms of wealth like those of the *latifundistas* and the banks. Society would then be remodelled along corporatist, national-syndicalist lines with

³ A complete transcript of the twenty-six points can be found in Primo de Rivera, *Obras Completas...*, pp. 519-526.

⁴ For a more comprehensive definition of the 'Unity of Destiny in the Universal' see Bannister, "José Antonio..." pp. 96-98. For its use in the *posguerra* see Saz, *España contra España...*, pp. 230-243.

⁵ For more on the concept of palingenesis see Kallis, "To Expand or not to Expand..." p. 239; Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 32-36.

⁶ These ideas first appeared in the 1932 work of germanophile and leading wartime *falangista* Ernesto Giménez Caballero, *Genio de España – exaltaciones a una resurrección nacional y del mundo*, (Barcelona: Planeta 1983), p. 196.

Capital and Labour working in unison for the national benefit, as opposed to being constantly at odds.⁷

While nationalism was paramount in Falangist doctrine, this did not preclude a profound respect for and strong engagement with that other great institution of the Right in Spain, Catholicism. In *joseantoniano* discourse, Catholicism is best interpreted as akin to the Italian fascist interpretation of *Romanità*: the cultural bedrock which defined the Spanish people.⁸ For José Antonio, Catholicism was constituent of the *Patria*, it was fundamental to the Spanish character and could not be side-lined. In his *Puntos Iniciales* from December 1933 he stated that ‘the Catholic interpretation of life is in first place, the truthful one, but furthermore, it is the Spanish one’. However, he did not wish for a confessional Spain with the Church and State reliant upon one another, instead he wished for faith to influence those in power, not dictate to it.⁹

It is important to emphasise that in its imagery and practices the Falange was conspicuously fascist. They had a symbol, the *yugo y flechas* (yoke and arrows), an anthem, *Cara al Sol* (face to the sun), adopted the Roman salute and had a wide variety of slogans that emphasised their nationalist and social concerns such as: *España ¡Una, Grande y Libre!* (Spain: One, Great and Free!), *¡Arriba España!* (Arise Spain), *Por la Patria, el Pan y la Justicia* (For the *Patria*, Bread and Justice).¹⁰ However, despite this outward fascism and ideological framework provided by Mussolini, José Antonio Primo de Rivera and other Falange ideologues such the Ernesto Giménez Caballero and Onésimo Redondo also drew inspiration from Spain’s own rightist thinkers, many of the same ones that had influenced the *africanistas* in their political formation. These included, amongst others, Joaquín Costa, Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo and José Ortega y Gasset as the idea of the ‘Iron Surgeon’ and the biological conception of the nation each played a role in pre-war Falange ideology.¹¹

The Falange, throughout the entire Republican period enjoyed a vicarious existence, reliant on external backers to keep it afloat, first from the Monarchists of *Renovación*

⁷ For a more detailed analysis of the national-syndicalist revolutions see Saz, *España contra España...*, pp. 128-139.

⁸ Bannister, “José Antonio...”, p. 96.

⁹ Primo de Rivera, *Obras Completas...*, p. 495.

¹⁰ *Ibid...*, p. 163; p. 670; *Arriba*, 12 January 1936, p. 1; José María Escalera, *Banderas Victoriosas (Falangistas y requetés en los frentes de Andalucía)*, (Seville: Álvarez González Cuadrado, 1939), p. 89. For more on the history of the Falange’s symbols see Thomàs, *Lo que fue la Falange...*, p. 37.

¹¹ The influence of these thinkers upon the early *falangistas* is detailed in Saz, *España contra España...*, pp. 101-155; Saz, *Fascismo y franquismo...*, p. 33-39.

Española and later from Mussolini's Italy.¹² It was not until the victory of the Popular Front in the February 1936 elections that its membership would number in more than four figures.¹³ Following the elections, it became clear that a critical number of the Spanish Right no longer saw efforts to overthrow the Republic in the ballot box as a viable political option. The Falange, because of their longstanding anti-republicanism, violent rhetoric and, due to a falling out between them and the CEDA, exclusion from the CEDA lists in the election itself, were viewed by many as the only party on the Right that had not tainted itself through collaboration with the Republic.¹⁴ In addition to this the factors that drew recruits throughout the Republican period still persisted: they were viewed as a more vibrant and modern organisation in comparison to other rightist groups, replete with a charismatic and verbose leader who enthused the politicised youth.¹⁵ The result was a vast increase in Falange membership as members of the CEDA's youth, the *Juventudes Acción Popular* (Popular Youth Action), amongst others, joined the ranks of the Falange.¹⁶

This swelling of Falange numbers before and immediately after the outbreak of war meant that once hostilities commenced they were well represented in the rebels' volunteer forces, with the Falange having over thirty six thousand volunteers at the front by October 1936. This enthusiasm was typified in Orense, Galicia, where *falangistas* were so eager to head to the front they did so ahead of their famously well drilled allies in the Communion, with the *Legión Gallega* heading to the front three days before volunteers for the Galician *Tercio de Requetés*.¹⁷ The story of Rogelio de la Torre, a *falangista* from Madrid, illustrates the extraordinary lengths that some Falangists' would go to fight in the conflict. Following the outbreak of war he managed to escape the capital and leave Spain via Valencia, travelling from Belgium to San Sebastián to enlist in a *bandera*. However, upon presenting himself at the Falange's regional headquarters he was turned away after a medical revealed a lung

¹² José María Gil Robles, *No fue posible la paz*, (Madrid: Ediciones Ariel, 1968), p. 442; Payne, *Fascism in Spain, 1923-1977*, (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), p. 161. Ironically, *La Ametralladora* would in 1938 accuse leftist political groups of this very charge, stating that 'it was always foreign gold that filled the purses of the working class agitators', 15 May 1938, p. 3.

¹³ Julián Sanz Hoya, *La construcción de la dictadura franquista en Cantabria: Instituciones, instituciones, personal político y apoyos sociales (1937-1951)*, (Santander: Universidad de Cantabria, 2008), p. 99.

¹⁴ Paul Preston, *The Coming of the Spanish Civil War – Reform, Reaction and Revolution in the Second Republic*, (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 239-275. For a detailed study of the phenomenon in the Andalusian Falange see José Antonio Parejo Fernández, *Las piezas perdidas de la Falange: el sur de España*, (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2008), pp.71-118.

¹⁵ Xosé-Manoel Núñez Seixas, "La Falange en los años treinta. El fascismo en Galicia. El caso de Orense (1931-1936)", *Historia y Fuente Oral*, No. 10, (1993), p. 161.

¹⁶ Thomàs, *Lo que fue la Falange...*, p. 94. The Carlists, had, of course maintained these anti-republican credentials since before the Falange was even established and also enjoyed a bounce in membership. However, Traditionalism proved to be less enticing to the politicised youth when compared to 'virile' Fascism.

¹⁷ Núñez Seixas, "La Falange en los años treinta...", pp. 173-4.

problem. This did not deter him and he instead enlisted in a different *bandera* when visiting his uncle in Galicia, allowing him to serve as acting lieutenant until he developed tuberculosis and was removed from the front line to convalesce.¹⁸

This enthusiasm, at least in numerical terms, was maintained throughout the war as, by the end of the conflict, *falangistas* would later account for roughly three-quarters of all volunteer soldiers in Franco's armies. In February 1939 the number of soldiers in Falange-affiliated units totalled 72,608.¹⁹ The *banderas* themselves were, until their integration into the military, not as rigorously organised as the *Tercios* and operated under a more lenient military discipline. As the conflict progressed this became less and less the case as Soldiers were given both military and doctrinal instruction regularly and, much like in the Army, this was led by officers.²⁰ However, despite their adoption of most military mores, the *banderas* retained a conspicuously *falangista* identity, maintaining their insignia on uniforms and correspondence and certain other mores such as the use of the term *¡presente!* when referring to fallen comrades in reports and logs.²¹

It is worth mentioning as a brief aside the relative disparity in reputation between *banderas* and *Tercios*. It became a feature of the conflict that while the *requetés* gained a reputation as brave soldiers, the *banderas* standing was of an altogether patchier nature. While some *banderas* were respected for their bravery, such as the Fifth *bandera* of Navarre, which was awarded the Collective Military Medal for the bravery of its soldiers, many were viewed as a less than effective fighting force by their comrades in the Army and Requeté.²² This could be interpreted as *falangistas* being less committed to the conflict than their Carlist allies, but that would be erroneous. The reasons lie in the respective military uses of each unit, for while *Tercios* were on the main used as shock units, the *banderas* were not (There were exceptions, such as the aforementioned Fifth *bandera* of Navarre and the First *bandera*

¹⁸ Alfonso Bullón de Mendoza and Álvaro de Diego, *Historias orales de la Guerra Civil*, (Barcelona: Ariel Historia, 2000), pp. 41-2.

¹⁹ Rafael Casas de la Vega, *Las milicias nacionales*, (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1977), p. 269; Seidman, *The Victorious Counterrevolution...*, pp. 26-7.

²⁰ An example of this can be found in a January 1937 extract of Julio García Fernández, *Diario de operaciones del 3er. batallón de Palencia y 5ª bandera de Navarra de Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las JONS*, (Burgos: Imprenta Aldecoa, 1939), p. 31, which states: 'Friday morning, reading about comradeship, morality and decency. Saturday, reading about the obligations of the sentry and afternoon instruction in close order and weapon movements'.

²¹ José Antonio Martínez Barrado, *Cómo se creó una Bandera de Falange*, (Zaragoza: La Academia, 1939), p. 33; CDMH, Delegación Nacional de Servicios Documentales de la Presidencia del Gobierno, INCORPORADOS, 753.

²² García Fernández, *Diario de operaciones...*, pp. 25-27; Stanley G. Payne, *Falange: A History of Spanish Fascism*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), p. 145.

of Castile).²³ This meant that when a *requeté* fell, a similarly committed troop was found to replace him in the ranks in order to maintain the ‘spirit of sacrifice’ that ensured the efficacy of the crack unit.²⁴ However, this was not the case for some *banderas*, the result being that casualties occasioned a dilution of ideological vigour with replacements that were less committed than their forebears.²⁵ All this said, it is important to bear in mind that this level of motivation was relative, and while the commitment of some *banderas* to the cause was called into question by certain allies, the vast majority of Falange units remained some of the most committed and reliable units on the rebel side.²⁶ In certain units recruitment to *banderas* was limited to only the most committed of *falangistas*, those ‘who, as well as their family members, enjoyed a neat and Catholic social behaviour, [that] publicly repudiated having any connection to the Popular Front and others of the left’.²⁷

As was the case for the Carlists, the Decree of Unification of April 1937 would have a profound effect upon the Falange. However, unlike its newfound political brethren, the Falange was not relegated to a subservient position. Although it had to sacrifice the political independence of the movement, thereby abandoning their wishes for a comprehensively Falangist ‘conquest of the state’, the Falange became the party of power and its twenty-six points became the ideology of the New Spain. While some aspects of *falangismo* had been adopted over the autumn of 1936, such as the terms ‘revolution’ and ‘unity of destiny’, the symbol of the yoke and arrows as well as a propagandistic preoccupation with bread, now they were all adopted in earnest. *Cara al Sol* became an unofficial national anthem and *falangistas* took up the majority of the desirable positions of political influence. For a group that until just over a year previously had been reliant upon external backers to keep it afloat, its rise to power had been remarkable. However, despite the advantages, it did not mean that all the ideological desires of the movement were met. Franco became the new leader of the organization, replacing José Antonio (whose death was not disclosed until 1938) and the calls for the revolution were dampened as it became clear that there would be no drastic

²³ Sisinio Nevares Marcos and Rafael de Yturriaga González-Jurado, *La primera bandera de Castilla: Su historia. Una unidad de combate de la Falange Española, Tradicionalista y de las J.O.N.S.* (Madrid: Ediciones del Movimiento, 1968), p. 74.

²⁴ More often than not this was a *requeté*, but it was not unknown for *regulares* or *legionarios* to take the place of *requetés* in Tercios. Seidman, *The Victorious Counterrevolution...*, p. 52.

²⁵ The crack *banderas*, such as the 5th of Navarre, would take the same approach as the *Tercios* and replace their fallen only with sufficiently ideologically motivated replacements. Moreover, the unit’s officers would actively weed out the troops whose ideological commitment ‘did not reach the level required for the forces of each unit’ and send them to units in the rearguard to maintain the integrity of the *bandera*. García Fernández, *Diario de operaciones...*, p. 103.

²⁶ Seidman, *The Victorious Counterrevolution...*, p. 74. In fact *falangistas* were so committed that there existed plans to parachute them into units to prevent desertions. Seidman, “Quiet Fronts...”, p. 833.

²⁷ Nevares Marcos and de Yturriaga González-Jurado, *La primera bandera de Castilla...*, p. 74.

restructuring of society in Franco's *Nuevo Estado*.²⁸ The Unification was greeted with widespread acceptance by *falangistas*, although there was still some outspoken opposition with a purported 1459 members arrested due to their disagreement with Decree 255.²⁹ In the subsequent sections of the chapter the effects of the Unification, most notably the presentation and reception of Franco's ascent to leadership, the alliance with the Carlists and changes to the Falange's revolutionary programme will be analysed.³⁰

For the bulk of this chapter the focus will therefore be on what themes were used to motivate the soldiers and which were excised from the discourse to fit with the later political realities, their reception will be analysed following this. An important point to make regarding the discourse of the Falange is that it was, in comparison to José Antonio's own writings as well as those of other Falange ideologues from before the war, noticeably simplified during the conflict. This was partly due to the fact that martial discourse is, as we have found, Manichean and unsophisticated and partly due to more complex reasons, namely the influx of new recruits following the February elections. The Falange was flooded with new converts following the Popular Front's victory and, having spent almost its entire existence on the metaphorical breadline, lacked the sufficient infrastructure to educate such large numbers in the nuances of *falangismo*. This influx of members, as well as the general simplification of rhetoric in mass politics that came at the end of the Second Republic, meant that there was a discrepancy between levels of ideological knowledge in the Falange. While longstanding members of the Falange, known as *Camisas Viejas*, would have a grasp of the finer points of the national-syndicalist revolution, the newer members would have a more rudimentary understanding of ideology – mainly focused on the key topics of the primacy of the *Patria*, the importance of the Church to the Spanish character and the necessity of a national-syndicalist revolution to re-organise Spain into a 'unity of destiny in the universal'.

²⁸ Antonio Cazorla-Sánchez in his detailed study offers an analysis of the continued efforts to implement the national-syndicalist revolution and the various ways in which it was stifled throughout the post-war period, *Las políticas de la victoria, la consolidación del Nuevo Estado Franquista (1938-1953)*, (Madrid : Marcial Pons, 2000), *passim*.

²⁹ Figures from Luís Suárez Fernández, *Francisco Franco y su tiempo*, cited in Ellwood, *Spanish fascism...*, p.53 n77. An in-depth analysis of an ideological conflict precipitated by the Unification during the war can be seen in José Antonio Parejo Fernández, "Entre la disciplina y la rebeldía: Miranda versus Sancho Dávila, 1936-1938", *Historia y Política*, No. 22, (July-December 2009), pp. 185-206.

³⁰ Saz, *Fascismo y franquismo...*, pp. 132-50; Thomàs, *Lo que fue la Falange...*, pp. 131-221; This is not a thesis on the political history of the Falange and therefore the above paragraph is merely an attempt, alongside the other presentations of the Unification, to provide an overview of the political situation behind the discourse being analysed. It is of course important to the thesis that this information is provided, but there are far more comprehensive works on the subject, some of them included above, some not. Important works on the Unification so far not cited include: Paul Preston, *Franco, "Caudillo de España"*, (Barcelona: Grijalbo-Mondadori, 1998), pp. 315-348; Javier Tusell, "El proceso hacia la Unificación", in *La guerra civil española* (no. 11): *Los dos estados*, ed. Manuel Tuñón de Lara, (Ed. Folio, Barcelona, 1997), pp. 61-94.

Once war commenced, the Falange's discourse continued along this simplistic path, with even the flamboyant and pleonastic propagandist Giménez Caballero, author of the prolix works *Genio de España* (Genius of Spain) and *Yo, inspector de alcantarillas* (I, Inspector of Sewers), toning down his grandiloquence. The sources used for this thesis share the same simplicity, rarely delving deeply into doctrine, but instead offering a simple, direct message on the Falange's conception of the conflict.³¹

In regards to the sources used, Newspapers, both civilian and military, have been consulted as, much like in the Carlist case, there is sufficient evidence to show that both were read at the front.³² Research for this chapter also highlighted that in comparison to their Carlist allies, both before and after the Unification, the Falange had far better developed written propaganda. Their civilian press was more vibrant; they had a national newspaper in *F.E.* a number of full length regional *falangista* newspapers as well as a number of shorter *hojas de combate*. The weekly of the *falangista* charity movement, *Auxilio Social* was distributed to troops, advertising the charitable works done for those at and away from the front. However, the output of the Falange still paled in comparison with that seen in the Republic, especially in military circles. Moreover, due to a lack of paper, faulty machinery and poor communications between each of the newspapers and the leadership there was a problem in standardising the output of each of the papers in the early stages of the conflict. Furthermore, there were various ideological disagreements amongst the party's intelligentsia which affected the ideological stance of certain newspapers. According to Eduardo González Calleja the Falange press in the early stages of the conflict was a 'veritable chaos' that 'lacked unity, organization and clear ideology'.³³ This was certainly the case in regards to the more complex details of doctrine, yet in regards to the key issues of the Crusade, namely the primacy of the *Patria*, anti-Marxism and the role of the Church, there remained a sufficiently thematic coherence to the discourse, despite the problems in its organization. As the war wore and *falangismo* became ever ascendant, a more coherent propaganda programme was developed as the National Delegation for Press and Propaganda and its provincial and local sub-divisions, with *falangistas* in key positions, began to take shape. Following the

³¹ Sheelagh M. Ellwood, 'Falange Espanola, 1933-1939: From Fascism to Francoism' in *The Fascism Reader*, ed. Aristotle A. Kallis, (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 226; For more on the simplification of rhetoric in the Second Republic see Eduardo González Calleja, 'The Symbolism of Violence During the Second Republic in Spain, 1931-1936' in *The Splintering of Spain – Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939*, eds. Chris Ealham and Michael Richards, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 38.

³² Colmegna, *Diario de un médico...*, p. 52; AGMAV, C. 3131, 4/53.

³³ Eduardo González Calleja, 'La prensa carlista y falangista durante la Segunda República y la Guerra Civil, (1931-1937)', *El argonauta español*, No. 9, (2013), p. 21.

Unification and with the resolution of most ideological quandaries, propaganda became relatively standardised in the Falange press.³⁴

Falange newspapers were subject to the same checks as the civilian press that reached the *requetés* and any organ that threatened to undermine unity at the front was thoroughly admonished. One such example was Zaragoza's daily *Amenecer* which was criticised by Army officers in late 1936 for its ideological content and the fact that it may have caused friction between *falangistas* and *requetés*.³⁵ Alongside the newspapers consulted are a number of propaganda books that were brought to the front and shared between soldiers. Amongst them were *Camisa Azul y boína colorada* and *España y Franco*, both by Ernesto Giménez Caballero and both from the publishing house of *Los Combatientes*. These short handbooks were compilations from the *falangista* weekly newspaper *Los Combatientes*, created especially for the troops at the front with a circulation of 52,000.³⁶ Unfortunately I was unable to find a repository of copies of *Los Combatientes*, so these two examples serve as this publication's contribution to Falange wartime discourse. A further disappointment was the lack of a comprehensive source for radio broadcasts, there is some material taken from the Archivo General Militar de Ávila, but nothing in comparison to Torremar's *La voz de carlismo a través la radio*. For the final section the sources consulted are similar to the previous chapters with assorted memoirs of soldiers from the *banderas* as well as extracts from soldiers' letters.

Apropos to structure, this chapter will first examine the ideas of *falangismo* that fit with the overarching Crusade discourse, such as the importance of the *Patria*, the myths of the past, the role of religion and the presentation of the enemy. The chapter will highlight that on a great deal of issues, the 'generic' Crusade discourse and the *falangista* discourses were very similar, reflecting an ideological overlap between the two. Following this the chapter will examine the more ideologically incongruous parts of Falange wartime discourse and doctrine, such as the national-syndicalist revolution and Franco's role as leader of the movement. The argument here will show that *falange* wartime discourse would, on the main, assuage any ideological concerns that may have posited themselves through rhetoric which appealed to broader and more 'essential' ideals. Subsequently the chapter will analyse which of these factors was the most motivational for *falangistas* and what specifically *falangista* values were the cause for dissatisfaction amongst the soldiers of the *banderas*. The

³⁴ *Ibid.*..., pp. 17-23; 30-31.

³⁵ AGMAV, C. 2325, L. 48. Cp. 17/ 1-4

³⁶ AGMAV, C. 3131, 4/42.

hypothesis of the thesis is that the majority of *falangista* soldiers were happy to fight the war which they were presented with and that even those were dissatisfied with the political developments that occurred during the war were still often coerced into fighting through the evocation of other values.

A War to Save the *Patria*

First and foremost it is important to emphasise that the overriding and primary concern in all the Falange's wartime literature was very similar to that outlined in the 'generic' Crusade, the resurgence of the nation; the return of the *Patria* to its previous glory after years of neglect and ill-treatment. This section will detail how closely the Falange discourse matched that of the 'generic' Crusade (while remaining suitably fascist) on the issues of the *Patria*, the myths of the past, the role of religion and the presentation of the enemy. The aim being to show that, on these topics at least, there would have been little cause for soldiers of the *banderas* to have been dissatisfied with. The following two sections, on the idea of the fascist revolution and the role of the Caudillo will examine the divergences from the 'generic' Crusade discourse.

As already stated, the *Patria* was the centre of all the Falange's political concerns, its well-being was the reason the movement was created and the task of awakening the 'heroic feeling that slept in the substance of the race' and the creation of 'a new Spain, one that resurges like new Phoenix, to amaze the world again with its greatness and power' was the motivation for all *falangista* action.³⁷ According to the national newspaper *F.E.* in September 1936 the war itself was a battle for the 'The fate of Spain... the future and the interests of the *Patria*' and a 'great work of rescuing the *Patria* from the clutches of beasts that struggle to destroy it'.³⁸ The war was seen as a means of national salvation from the perceived nadir of the Republican period, Ávila daily *Yugo y Flechas* in August 1936 stated that soldiers were fighting 'to raise [Spain] from the sludge where it has sunk, [that] which was once the admiration and model for nations, glorified and always respected'.³⁹ This belief did not change over the course of the war with the book *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo* saying much the same thing in 1938, stating that the war's aim was 'the glory of Spain, so that the *Patria* regains its greatness'.⁴⁰ Those who participated in this great undertaking transcended the terrestrial and were guardians of 'a celestial design, protagonists of a universal task'.⁴¹ This 'universal task' gave the *Patria*, which had previously been in 'in the throes of consumption', a new purpose 'the common solidarity of a transcendent enterprise', a 'rehabilitation of conduct, an historical trajectory', which it had previously lacked, leading to the

³⁷ Eugenio Montes, *La Hora de la Unidad – tanto monta, monta tanto, Requeté como Falange*, (Burgos: Imprenda Aldecoa, 1937), p. 9; *Yugo y Flechas – Hoja de combate de F.E. de las J.O.N.S.*, 26 October 1936, p. 2.

³⁸ *F.E. – Diario de Falange Española de las J.O.N.S.*, 4 September 1936, p. 1; p. 4.

³⁹ *Yugo y Flechas...*, 15 August 1936, p. 1.

⁴⁰ *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo*, (Bilbao, Imprenta Moderna, 1938), p. 39.

⁴¹ Montes, *La Hora de la Unidad...*, p. 15.

aforementioned national malaise.⁴² The war was the *Patria*'s 'Unity of Destiny' helping here realise her potential.

The war was therefore presented to *falangista* soldiers as a national undertaking that defined those who took part in it as members of the *Patria*, united by a common destiny of national redemption.⁴³ Yet while this was the case, it was effectively only the beginning of the Falange's ambitions for Spain. In a suitably fascist manner, the Falange wished to return the past glories of the nation, in this case, those of the Empire of the Catholic Kings, when Spain was 'the mother of a hundred nations'.⁴⁴ This had been an ideological fixture since from before the war began, and did not diminish as it continued. In 1936 *F.E.* stated that the Falange had the 'will of Empire' and its desire was to 'return to the past; collecting in knowledge of the present the glorious content of other centuries' with the ultimate aim of 'making penance for the mistakes, misfortunes, of emptiness and futility of our eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of the shame and sorrows, agony, suffering of a great race, a great nation' and 'to return to the spiritual glory of the Spain of antiquity'.⁴⁵ This continued throughout the war as illustrated an editorial from August 1937, in the suitably named *Imperio*, stated clearly that Empire was 'profound meaning of our war', that the Spanish people had a 'vocation of Empire... and this seems to be a deep truth of the being of Spain'.

The rewards of Empire were myriad. For the Pamplona doctrinal review *Jerarquía* Empire was an edifice built from the greatest virtues of the *Patria* which would provide great rewards:

Love and Justice will put the foundations; Work and Discipline will erect the walls, the Obedience and Concord they will tend to the vaults in space, and then will come Joy, Confidence, Faith, Prayer, Courtliness, Humility, with all her sisters, daughters of heaven, to decorate the porticos and weave brilliant tapestries, and till the coffers and polish the marbles and bronzes and cover the wonderful stays of the palace with magnificence.⁴⁶

Empire would bring Spain prosperity and happiness, a unity of purpose that would lead to the list of rewards above. It was an enterprise that enriched all who engaged in it, provided they offered the sufficient requirements. Imperial Spain, past, present and future, was presented as

⁴² *Proa*..., 24 November 1936, p.1; 30 July 1937, p. 1

⁴³ There will a more detailed definition on the enemies of the Falange in wartime discourse later in this section.

⁴⁴ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 25 January 1937, p. 2.

⁴⁵ *F.E.*..., 3 September 1936, p. 1.

⁴⁶ *Jerarquía – La revista negra de la Falange*, no.3., 1938, p. 38.

the embodiment of all that was, is and would be good in the nation, its essence was ‘that of Isabel and Fernando, that of *manco de Lepanto*, that of Columbus... the Imperial. That of Franco, that of Moscardó, that of the ABSENT ONE’.⁴⁷ The Catholic Monarchs themselves, meanwhile, according León daily *Proa*, were seen as the great historical representations of the *Patria*, they were the ‘expression of the race’ their actions the ‘script for our designs on the path of history’.⁴⁸ Empire was presented as something worth emulating.

Empire appears to be the overwhelming historical fixation for the Falange wartime press, yet it was not the sole Spanish historical achievement referenced. The war was, on occasion and much like in the ‘generic’ Crusade discourse, framed as a new *Reconquista*. This was prevalent from the beginning of the war and throughout, with an early example being seen in *F.E.* in September 1936, in which those leaving for the front were described as soldiers in this great day of salvation of a *Patria*, following ‘the path of Reconquista’.⁴⁹ However, Spain’s Imperial past remained the most prominent historical myth in wartime discourse as it complimented the *falangista* imperialist urge. Just as the Carlist military press presented the war as a continuation of their past conflicts, the Falange wished to show the conflict in a palingenetic light, the beginning of a new transcendent chapter of Spanish history, rather than as simply another case of Spanish military success upon Spanish soil. The perceived New State for which troops were motivated to fight would be Imperial in form and have, in the words of *Yugo y Flechas*, ‘At its ends... embryonic seeds of the Castilian and Aragonese monarchies and the political and imperial plans of Isabel la Católica’.⁵⁰

Religion in *falangista* Wartime Discourse

Religion had always been vital for the Falange. José Antonio Primo de Rivera himself was a staunchly pious man and his original twenty-seven points had been informed by his own Catholic faith.⁵¹ Furthermore, Falange troops themselves were often deeply religious. Troops regularly prayed the Rosary in evenings and mass, celebrated each Sunday unless event

⁴⁷ *La Nueva España*, October 1938, p. 1; The *manco de Lepanto* was a common Spanish moniker for Miguel de Cervantes, the Absent One (*El Ausente*) was the name given to José Antonio Primo de Rivera post-November 1936.

⁴⁸ *Proa*..., 30 July 1937, p. 1.

⁴⁹ *F.E.*..., 9 September 1936, p. 1; further examples can be found in *La Nueva España*, October 1938, p. 1; Montes, *La Hora de la Unidad*..., p. 15; *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo*..., p. 11.

⁵⁰ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 15 August 1936, p. 4.

⁵¹ The twenty-six points were originally twenty-seven, but the final point, regarding the refusal to cooperate with other groups, was removed followed Unification, for obvious reasons. Payne, *Fascism in Spain*..., p. 129.

dictated otherwise, was well attended.⁵² In regards to doctrine, the twenty-fifth of the twenty seven points made the role of Catholicism abundantly clear, maintaining that while the state and the Church needed to remain separate ‘our movement incorporates the Catholic sense – of glorious tradition, prevalent in Spain – for national reconstruction’.⁵³ Religion was therefore afforded a special place within *Falange* wartime discourse – that being, as stated, the provision of a ‘sense’ to the work of the Falange. An article in *F.E.* referencing point twenty five of the Falange’s original programme, made allusions to this, stating ‘Spain is, above all, traditional and predominantly Catholic [and] *Falange Española* undertakes this great work of reconstruction, impregnating it with the Catholic sense, which has profoundly deep roots in our nation’.⁵⁴ However, despite its importance, it was never portrayed as the very definition of the *Patria*. In regards to this chapter, religion must therefore be viewed as an important constituent to the composition of the Spanish *Patria*, and the relationship to faith a close one, but its role in ideology and the motivation of troops was not fundamental and it certainly did not evoke the same emotive responses for the soldiers of the *banderas* that it did amongst *requetés*. The following paragraphs will outline how religion was presented to the soldiers of the *banderas*, and show the role Catholicism played in the *falangista* martial discourse.

Religion was presented as important to the *Patria* throughout the war. From the very beginning, its role to the *movimiento salvador* was stressed. *Yugo y Flechas* in October 1936 stated that, spiritually speaking, ‘there is no other solution than *Cristo Rey* for this gigantic and divine drama’ while *F.E.* in an explanation of its name (*fe* in Spanish meaning ‘faith’ as well as being the initials of *Falange Española*) stated that it was named ‘Faith primarily as [we are] believers in God’ as well ‘patriots in the destinations of Spain, in the powerful reserves of spiritual vitality’.⁵⁵ This continued throughout the war, with religion continuing to be seen as a vital part of the *Patria*. A 1937 radio address to *Falange* troops on the Madrid front would attest that faith in ‘God, Our Lord’ would lead to Spain once again becoming ‘the light of the world’ and that ‘same faith of Religion and *Patria*’ would lead to ‘A great State with justice and work’.⁵⁶

The war itself was, on occasion, presented as a religious struggle and much like the other two discourses religious imagery was used to demarcate the two sides. The ‘good

⁵² Nevares Marcos and de Yturriaga González-Jurado, *La primera bandera de Castilla...*, p. 68; García Fernández, *Diario de operaciones...*, p. 30; p. 46; p. 58; p. 64; Colmegna, *Diario de un médico...*, p. 21; p. 139.

⁵³ Primo de Rivera, *Obras Completas...*, p. 526.

⁵⁴ *F.E.*..., 1 September 1936, p. 1.

⁵⁵ *Yugo y Flechas...*, 26 October 1936, p. 1; *F.E.*..., 10 September 1936, p. 1.

⁵⁶ AGMAV, c. 2900, 8, 1/3.

Patriots' of Spain had suffered 'the pain of being mocked and crowned with thorns' and their *Patria* 'torn and sold for the thirty pieces of silver for which Judas sold the Divine Master'.⁵⁷ *Jerarquía*, comparing the relative spiritual merits of each side stated the absurdity that 'Science rebelled against faith, faith! An unheard of aberration! It wanted to rebel against revelation'.⁵⁸ The understanding of the conflict here is clear; that those on the Republican side had no reasonable reason to fight, for they opposed they who fought for God. The Falange placed itself firmly in this camp, Eugenio Montes, a founding member of the *Falange Española*, stating the movement was 'born for real battles, for the wars of God'.⁵⁹ This Christian morality of the rebels was often presented as what separated them from their enemies:

All Spaniards who have formed their consciousness in the healthy immutable beliefs of justice and Christian coexistence will inescapably have to be stationed, to deliver our *Patria*, and with it the whole of humanity, from the vile materialism that has submerged it... until it came to drown in rotteness ... this Soviet monstrosity called the Popular Front.⁶⁰

In much the same way as it did for the 'generic Crusade', Christianity provided Falange propaganda with a simple justification for their side's moral superiority.

Yet religious discourse was not as widespread as it might have been. An example of this can be seen in the manner in which Spain's historical achievements were presented as a triumph of the greatness of the *Patria*, rather than the Carlist discourse that presented Empire as gift of Providence. *Yugo y Flechas* stated in 1937 that the Empire was made of 'people[s] who received their language and blood and their civilization and spirituality' from Spain.⁶¹ In *La Hora de Unidad*, Eugenio Montes put it very simply, claiming that 'Spain was the first European power, and, bursting with ambition and cosmic mission, discovered the Indies'.⁶² Rather than God bringing Spain to the New World, therefore, it was the Spanish race which had brought the word of God to the Americas and had, in the words of *Amanecer* (Zaragoza), 'made the Atlantic [Spain's] lake'.⁶³ Furthermore, one of the most pervasive religious terms

⁵⁷ *Amanecer (Jerez de la Frontera)*..., 14 September 1936, p. 1; *Yugo y Flechas*..., 25 January 1937, p. 2

⁵⁸ *Jerarquía*..., no.3., 1938, p. 73.

⁵⁹ Montes, *La Hora de Unidad*..., p. 9.

⁶⁰ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 25 January 1937, p. 2.

⁶¹ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 5 March 1937, p. 2.

⁶² Montes, *La Hora de la Unidad*..., p. 15.

⁶³ *Amanecer – Diario de Falange Española Tradicionalista de las J.O.N.S. (Zaragoza)*, 1 October 1938, p. 1.

of the entire conflict, *cruzada*, was not as prominent in *Falange* discourse as it was in either that of the Carlists or the ‘generic’ Crusade. There were, given Franco’s predilection for the term, references to war as such. Examples of this can be seen in various publications, the earliest being seen in September 1936 in *F.E.* and later in *Yugo y Flechas*, *Proa*, *La Nueva España* and *Amanecer* (Zaragoza).⁶⁴ Yet the war was also referred to as a great number of other things, many of which had a more fascist subtext. For example, the previously noted ‘*gran empresa*’ was, for example, used just as regularly as well as ‘*quehacer*’ and ‘*tarea*’.⁶⁵ Even following the Unification, while the use of *cruzada* did increase, *gran empresa* or one of its equivalents was as likely to be seen as *cruzada* in discussion of the war.⁶⁶

The Army in *falangista* Wartime Discourse

In regards to the presentation of that other great institution of the rebellion, the Army, Falange wartime discourse was, as could be predicted for a party that was founded by a General’s son, overwhelmingly respectful. This had been the case since before the war with José Antonio in May 1936 reiterating the stance his father had taken, that the Army was the guarantor of the *Patria* that it was ‘the [nation’s] permanent subsistence, in essence, that which can survive the fate of the various parties’.⁶⁷ Furthermore, throughout the Republican period, José Antonio would regularly attack the Republic for its attempts to lessen the political influence of the military.⁶⁸ In the propaganda consumed by soldiers who served in the military, albeit in volunteer militias and later *banderas*, this reverential tone was adopted wholeheartedly; remaining the case even from early on in the conflict to its conclusion and beyond.

From the start of the war the Falange press had nothing but profound respect for the military with the Army never being portrayed in anything other than a complimentary light. *F.E.* made Falange attitudes towards the army incredibly clear in an article from 4 September 1936, stating ‘we would fly in the face of our most sincere feelings and silence our most

⁶⁴ *F.E.*..., 4 September 1936, p. 5; *Yugo y Flechas*..., 25 January 1937 p. 2; *Proa*..., 17 July 1938, p. 4; *La Nueva España*..., October 1938, p. 1; *Amanecer* (Zaragoza)..., 1 October 1938, p. 1.

⁶⁵ Examples of ‘*gran empresa*’ can be seen in *Yugo y Flechas*..., 15 August 1936, p. 2 and *Amanecer* (Jerez de la Frontera)..., 5 October 1936; those of ‘*quehacer*’ and ‘*tarea*’ can be seen in *Amanecer* (Jerez de la Frontera)..., 7 September 1936, p. 5; *Proa*..., 15 November 1936, p. 1

⁶⁶ Examples can be seen in *Imperio: Diario de Zamora de Falange Española de las J.O.N.S.*, 15 May 1937, p. 1; *Proa*..., 15 November 1936, p. 1; *Amanecer* (Zaragoza)..., 31 July 1938, p. 4; *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo*..., p. 25.

⁶⁷ *Carta a los militares de España*, 4 May 1936 in Primo de Rivera, *Obras Completas*..., p. 671.

⁶⁸ One such example was his speech at the Norba Theatre, Cáceres, in January 1936, where José Antonio criticised the ‘cowardly and cruel’ government for its attempts at military reconstruction. *Ibid.*..., p. 161.

ardent enthusiasm if, from the columns of honour of our newspaper, we did not pay fervent homage in affection and admiration to the glorious and heroic army of Spain'.⁶⁹ It was almost always referred to as 'the glorious Army' and its limited military achievements in the Rif almost always overblown, allowing for it to be presented as 'undefeated', marching from 'victory to victory'.⁷⁰ Speeches from generals were commonplace in the *Falange* wartime press.⁷¹ Given that Spain's historical greatness had come from feats of military derring-do, its 'entire history being that of a militant nation', the Army was a perfect representation of the *Patria*.⁷² Therefore there was an historical imperative to emulate the military's 'ethical conception of life' as patriots needed to be 'military and martial, serious, austere'.⁷³ According to *F.E.* soldiers were the best aspects of the *Patria* made flesh, 'a constellation of unsung heroes, the pride and encouragement of all patriots' and that 'few examples in the history of the world have such excitement, such beauty, as that of the Spanish soldiers [as they] leave the golden wake of their heroism, nailed forever in the peace of towns and cities'.⁷⁴

Following Unification and the installation of Franco as not just the head of rebel Spain but the head of the Falange the presentation of the Army remained as effusively sycophantic, echoing the 'generic' Crusade discourse. It was a 'custodian of national honour', comprised of a 'heroic spirit of self-sacrifice and service dedicated to an ideal: the *Patria*'.⁷⁵ In addition to praising its usual attributes, praise for the Army's political involvement became even more prominent. Any question of the political role of the Army was weighted against its action for the *Patria*, which, given the fact that it had rebelled against the hated Republican government, could not be questioned and therefore, by extension, neither could its involvement in the conflict. The book *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo* stated that the Army, 'is given participation in the political life of the nation; participation to which it is entitled and which it has earned more than any other social group'.⁷⁶ Furthermore, given that, as a fascist movement, the *Falange* was preoccupied with strength and virility, questioning a body

⁶⁹ *F.E.*..., 4 September 1936, p. 4.

⁷⁰ *Unidad – Diario de Falange Española Tradicionalista de la J.O.N.S.*, 31 July 1937, p. 3; *Amanecer (Jerez de la Frontera)*..., 14 September 1936, p. 1.

⁷¹ This was favoured particularly by *Proa*, which regularly included speeches by Millán-Astray and Queipo in its pages – over November and December 1936, four transcripts of Millán-Astray speeches appeared on 22 November 1936, 1 December 1936, 6 December 1936 and 16 December 1936.

⁷² *Amanecer (Jerez de la Frontera)*..., 7 September 1936, p. 1.

⁷³ *Proa*..., 15 November 1936, p. 2.

⁷⁴ *F.E.*..., 9 September 1936, p. 1.

⁷⁵ Montes, *La Hora de la Unidad*..., p. 6; *Proa*..., 5 September 1937, p. 1.

⁷⁶ *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo*..., p. 23.

as potent as the Army would be somewhat antithetical. For *Proa* a military role in national politics was only natural given that:

The Army is permanent expression of the national will because it is for combating external and internal enemies of the *Patria*, that is to say performing the most basic desires of this: the living, that is, in short, an embodiment, an embodiment made flesh and blood of the instinct of self-preservation of the *Patria*.⁷⁷

According to *Proa*, therefore, the Army's natural role was not only the destruction of external enemies, as the function of an Army is normally understood, but its internal ones as well. This was effectively akin to giving the army *carte blanche* for any and all political involvement. It had no need to justify its actions, given the fact that it was the embodiment of an instinct. Moreover, the particular political hue of Spanish Army in particular was praised. Ernest Giménez Caballero in his work *Camisa azul boína colorada* claimed that armed forces themselves were not special, that every country had an army, even 'the Red Spain... the Russians have an army, the French have an army'. Instead what was important 'was not the Army, but the content of the Army, the ideology of the Army, the morality of the Army, the ideals of the Army'.⁷⁸ The Spanish Army was presented as possessing the correct values and (in the discourse at least) their role in politics was welcomed.

Falange wartime propaganda, in keeping with its support for all things military, firmly advocated the tenets of discipline, hierarchy and obedience. Since its inception, the Falange wished to bring military concepts to civilian life and this continued throughout the war, as soldiers in the field were subjected to regular lectures from officers and chaplains on the importance of military discipline and hierarchy.⁷⁹ *Jerarquía* succinctly articulated this military interpretation in 1938, stating that 'The military endeavour is the only complete way to understand life'.⁸⁰ The importance of discipline to the Falange can therefore not be understated, it was vital to ensure that every soldier 'know their role and that they are dedicated to it, always maintaining hierarchy and discipline'.⁸¹ Fundamentally, discipline was presented as indispensable to the war effort and all the prosperity it would bring afterwards as

⁷⁷ *Proa*..., 5 September 1937, p. 1.

⁷⁸ Ernesto Giménez Caballero, *Camisa azul y boína colorada*, (Madrid Ediciones: "Los Combatientes", 1939), p. 29.

⁷⁹ García Fernández, *Diario de operaciones*..., p. 60.

⁸⁰ *Jerarquía*..., no.3., 1938, p. 62.

⁸¹ *Amanecer (Jerez de la Frontera)*..., 28 September 1936, p. 8.

‘without [discipline] no collective enterprise is possible’.⁸² *Proa* in an article from August 1937 entitled ‘Spirit of the militia’ offered a more philosophical interpretation of the concept while maintaining the same sentiment, stating that ‘nobody is more free than one who freely renounces a portion of his freedom... as for whatever each of us renounces the future of Spain is made greater’.⁸³ Soldiers were therefore required to remain ‘disciplined, iron-willed’, for the good of the *Patria*.⁸⁴

The implication of unwavering support for military discipline was that, in certain circumstances, soldiers would be required to sacrifice their lives in the line of duty. This was presented to the soldiers of the *banderas* in the same manner it was to the soldiers of all other political affiliations, as a heroic act vital to the ultimate aim of the war, in this case, the redemption of the *Patria*. Soldiers were expected to offer the ‘cheerful sacrifice of life itself’, to engage in ‘preparation for death every day’.⁸⁵ They needed to be ‘generous in the trenches, giving the *Patria* the currency of their sacrifice, of their pain and blood’ as ‘in the trenches tilled with blood, sacrifice and heroism, are the fertile furrows of tomorrow’.⁸⁶ ‘Death’ was the ‘supreme affirmation of life!’, as it was in the ultimate service of something so worthwhile.⁸⁷ Those who ‘shed their blood, gave their lives and went to the stars’ could ‘expect the fruit of his patriotism and the results of their sacrifice’ to be rewarded.⁸⁸ Death, therefore, was presented in a manner wholly concordant with the military presentation of it in the Crusade discourse, as part and parcel of military discipline, as a duty in order to help the *Patria*.

The call for discipline was accompanied by an embrace of hierarchy, which was needed to ensure that discipline remained ‘not something sporadic and in a moment, but of all time’.⁸⁹ Soldiers were, from the very beginning of the war, asked to ‘swear wherever it may be to obey or to command in respect of our hierarchy from first to last rank’.⁹⁰ According to *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo* two things were necessary within the hierarchy of the Falange and the Army, to ‘know how to obey and know how to command’.⁹¹ The work went on to state, much like *Proa*, that obedience had individual and national benefits as:

⁸² *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo...*, p. 29

⁸³ *Proa*, 4 August 1937, p. 1.

⁸⁴ *F.E...*, 3 September 1936, p. 1.

⁸⁵ *Proa...*, 17 July 1938, p. 5.

⁸⁶ *Amanecer (Jerez de la Frontera)...*, 14 September 1936, p. 4; *Auxilio Social*, October 1938, p. 4; p. 5.

⁸⁷ *La Falange conmemora a los mártires de La Tradición*, (Sevilla: Impresa F.E., 1938), p. 31.

⁸⁸ *Auxilio Social*, October 1938, p. 10.

⁸⁹ *Amanecer (Jerez de la Frontera)...*, 7 September 1936, p. 1.

⁹⁰ *Yugo y Flechas...*, 15 August 1936, p. 1.

⁹¹ *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo...*, p. 29

Nothing improves man like the dual exercise of command and obedience. By obeying or ordering he will come to be a better Spaniard every day, because that command and that obedience are geared to the high service of the *Patria*.⁹²

However, perhaps the best articulation of Falange attitude to hierarchy and discipline and the articulation which helps to bring into focus one the key points of this thesis came early in the war, prior to the Unification, prior to the integration of the militias into the Army, prior even Franco's ascension to supreme commander. Entitled 'Unity of Command' the piece was published in *Amanecer* (Jerez de la Frontera) and outlined what was expected of a militant of the *Falange Española*, stating 'the unity of command is a way to understand the whole hierarchy of our movement, the first to the last rank' and that its 'members must maintain the vigour of the entire hierarchy, from the supreme commander of the Falange to the squadron leader, and should have a rigorous conception of command and obedience'. It went on state the importance of discipline and hierarchy in clear terms:

We have to sacrifice everything to the principles of unity and authority, which are the key to power. It is not true as noted by some simian mimics of the Falange that "leaders are never wrong." The superiors can be wrong, but even then they should be obeyed because generally the damage that follows of obeying his transient and correctable or punishable error is much less severe than the deception which would follow by altering or denying the principles of authority and unity.

It is here that we see the importance of the concept of discipline in Falange discourse: that hierarchy needed to always be obeyed, even in the face of incompetence. Obedience to command, therefore, was not simply an idea that needed to be adhered to, but a cultural bedrock deeply rooted in the ideology of the movement and presented within the *falangista* motivational programme as being important enough to die for at the behest of an incompetent.

By comparing this attitude briefly to the Republican equivalent presented in this thesis, that of the CNT, we are presented with a stark contrast in the size of the task that each overarching concept faced. The Crusade had to convince soldiers to fight for a cause to which they were already sympathetic and was aided by the fact that the groups it was charged with

⁹² *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo...*, pp. 29-30.

motivating were, by dint of their membership to authoritarian right wing groups, ideologically predisposed to firstly revere the armed forces and secondly be unwaveringly obedient to authority, even in civilian life. The Republicans, on the other hand, were faced with motivating troops who were initially vehemently opposed to the idea of a regular Army and had had the reason they took up arms in the first place, the revolution, crushed by the very authority they were now being asked to fight for. In addition to this it also had to at the same time appeal to various other political groups with radically different, yet equally difficult agendas. The comparison is a stark one.

The Enemies of the *Patria* in *falangista* Wartime Discourse

Falange presentation of the enemy was in line with the ‘generic’ Crusade as the Republic was presented as home to the enemies of the *Patria*. Whether they were malignant forces from within the country which had allowed the nation to become corrupted or external enemies from without, all were at home under Azaña. In regards to the former, the Falange press adopted a biological interpretation, with discourse on Spain being an organic entity with an infection prominent from the beginning of the conflict. As early as August 1936 *Yugo y Flechas* spoke of a desire for the ‘sanctification of the *Patria*... the health of the ill Spain’.⁹³ This conception of the *Patria* was best articulated in *F.E.* in September 1936, where a classic example of its interpretation was presented:

[Violence] is a surgical need, a painful necessity. This is the case of the removal of a gangrenous arm to save the individual.

Society, unfortunately, was contaminated by the gangrene of Marxism, selfish capitalism, by the immorality in all orders. The surgical extirpation of those sick, rotten appendages was, therefore, necessary to save the individual and society, the nation, the *Patria*....⁹⁴

Proa echoed this in December 1936, stating that Spain was still not ‘cleansed [of] this red and morbid Satanism’, that ‘the ramshackle decrepit Spain still squirms’.⁹⁵ Following the Unification, these ideas continued to be prominent, especially in the work of Ernesto Giménez Caballero. Writing in *España y Franco*, he stated that the nation was ‘at the mercy

⁹³ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 15 August 1936, p. 1.

⁹⁴ *F.E.*..., 2 September 1936, p. 4.

⁹⁵ *Proa*..., 18 December 1936, p. 5.

of measles and chicken pox, from germs floating in the air, pathogens of the enemy'.⁹⁶ He repeated these ideas in *Los Combatientes*, later published in a collected volume, stating that Spain had previously suffered in 'an atmosphere of tuberculosis and indiscipline' which meant that there was now a 'need to modify the cranium – the mindset – of the Spanish. That cranium, which has been democratized, liberalized Frenchified and Europeanized by three centuries of cranial degeneration'.⁹⁷ Spain was presented as a living thing which needed for its 'ailments' to be attended to in order for it to live healthily and prosper over the course of the war. Moreover, violence itself was presented with a Sorrelian transcendence, reminiscent of the discourse of Millán Astray; it was an act that made its perpetrators stronger and more virile, strengthening the *Patria* while ridding it of its corrupted parts. *Amanecer* (Jerez de la Frontera), for example, claimed in 1936 that for them, civilization gave 'preference to physical force, to fortitude, to virility, to valour. In this civilization there is a perfect match and harmony among all values' as it was 'those qualities that characterise MAN'.⁹⁸

The similarity in presentation of the enemy was mirrored by a similar attitude its treatment. For example, the attitude in how to deal with the 'gangrenous arm' that undesirable political ideology represented was viewed in very similar terms, with the Falange being the most enthusiastic participants in repression during the war, so much so that they were admonished by *requetés* for it.⁹⁹ Furthermore, the attitude to this 'cleansing' in regards to the *posguerra* followed that of Franco's 'victors versus vanquished' conception with *Proa* stating in 1938 that even once all Republican territory was covered all patriots needed to remain 'on a war footing until the complete extermination of the enemy traitors to the cause of Spain'.¹⁰⁰

In regards to the internal enemies that needed to be expunged, they were, in the main, identified as the political class that had allowed Spain to become so corrupted that the Army had to rise to save the *Patria*. According to *F.E.*, reflecting on the republican period in September 1936, patriots had suffered in a Spain where there was a 'visible preponderance... of the negative values of spirituality', defined by 'the cowardice and weakness of those who could be interposed with the enemies of the *Patria*' and where there ruled an 'apostasy,

⁹⁶ Ernesto Giménez Caballero, *España y Franco*, (Madrid: Ediciones "Los Combatientes", 1938), p. 17.

⁹⁷ Giménez Caballero, *Camisa azul...*, p. 33; *Ibid...*, p. 44.

⁹⁸ *Amanecer (Jerez de la Frontera)...*, 14 September 1936, p. 4.

⁹⁹ The Falange's role in repression is expounded in Thomàs, *Lo que fue la Falange...*, pp.95-101; Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War – Third Edition*, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1986), p.259-262; a first-hand account of Falange repression can be seen in Bahamonde y Sánchez de Castro, *1 año con Queipo...*, p. 51.

¹⁰⁰ *Proa...*, 30 July 1938, p. 1.

achieved by greed or vanity'.¹⁰¹ The weakness and decadence of democracy had meant that national impetus was lost and the nation had 'gone from being Spain to become God knows what country, colonial and subordinate'.¹⁰² This belief, that democracy had led to national malaise, continued throughout the war as liberal ideas were presented as decidedly unpatriotic, having resulted in the *Patria* contracting a 'contamination from this sludge the Republic had thrown against national history'.¹⁰³ This had created, according to *Proa*, a 'wasteland' upon which 'Spain was vegetating, living an agitated life of a giant prisoner and bound in the midst of dwarves'.¹⁰⁴ This malaise was exemplified for Falange wartime discourse by the proliferation of communism. Democracy was presented as the 'antechamber to Marxism', *Jerarquía* asserting that 'Communism comes from the liberal order and perfection of its forms and tendencies'.¹⁰⁵ The solution, of course, was that everything needed to be removed. Reminiscent of Mola's wish to 'wrench out by the roots, forever, all that represents the organisations and principles of Marxism' *Yugo y Flechas* would present a similar attitude to democracy and the old political system:

No. Nothing of the old politicians. Not one of those who have thrived on the old policy will be rehabilitated. Their mistakes that are being paid for are too expensive. All young blood in this war that is spilling stains their hands. Their constant myopia led them to believe, discussed in a rotten parliament, that they could manage Spain. They did not realise this did not interest anyone and instead, the poetry of the stars would make a whole people move.

... they should be impeached in the Spanish political future. If they were to live a hundred years they still would not have paid off all their faults.¹⁰⁶

Nothing was permitted to remain, lest it allow for the *Patria* to sink so low once again, the 'stupid inconsistency' of democracy, which had led to the 'brutal vulgarity' of Marxism needed to be banished from Spain forever.¹⁰⁷

Although they could be understood as an internal enemy, the peripheral nationalists were viewed not so much as a cause, but a symptom of the greater national malaise. According to *Amanecer* (Jerez de la Frontera), when Spain had 'like a madman' followed

¹⁰¹ *F.E.*..., 10 September 1936, p. 1.

¹⁰² *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo*..., p. 15.

¹⁰³ *Proa*..., 8 September 1937, p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ *Proa*..., 17 July 1938, p. 24.

¹⁰⁵ *Jerarquía*..., no. 3., 1938, p. 38; *Proa*..., 14 November 1936, p. 1.

¹⁰⁶ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 12 January 1937, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ *Imperio*..., 6 August 1937, p. 1.

‘strange liberal paths’ it allowed for separatism to sprout. For, when Spain ‘had no role to play, nor endeavour to realise, nor enterprise to carry out it ceases to be one’ the result being that ‘by Spain not having a common destiny, each region seeks its own’. This was only permitted to escalate under ‘the weak and cowardly administrative decentralisation’ of the Republic, as ‘along with their own particular mission comes a soil and a language and customs’. According to *Amanecer* ‘in that moment separatism is born because Spain does not give them an undertaking... Spain is an empty village, aimless with no ideals’. Democracy’s lack of national mission, therefore, had caused parts of the *Patria* to deform to such an extent that they no longer understood their role within the national mission. Spain was a single entity and could only recapture its historical prestige as such, as ‘these heroic deeds were not Catalan or Basque, or Castilian nor Galician. All were done by Spain’.¹⁰⁸ Despite having the reason for their existence explained peripheral nationalist groups themselves were not viewed with any particular understanding. They and the Marxist invaders had, in the 1936 words of *Proa* ‘been collaborating with rashness for the annihilation of the spirit and being of Spain’¹⁰⁹ Given that peripheral nationalism and the invasion of the *Patria* were seen as the result of the same democratic weakness, there appeared to be no problem with referring to the peripheral nationalists themselves as ‘reds’; the two forms of sedition were also sometimes conflated, with the term ‘*rojo-separatista*’ being used to describe them.¹¹⁰ Separatism was, in short, presented as every bit as execrable as that other product of democratic politics, Marxism.

In the Falange wartime discourse on the external enemy, Marxism was a universal term. It could refer to Russian invaders, to Republicans or to any other perceived enemy of the *Patria*. In regards to the former, the ‘barbarian invaders from Moscow’ had been part of *Falange* discourse since before the conflict. The phrase having appeared as early as 1935 in a speech by José Antonio in Valladolid where he stated that the ‘classic ages’ were ruined by such an invasion and this could not be allowed to be repeated. This persisted to right before the start of the war, the *Carta a los militares de España* warning of an ‘invasion of barbarians’, with a radically ‘anti-Spanish’ sentiment, its clarion calls said to be ‘¡Viva Rusia!’ and ‘¡Rusia, sí; España, no!’.¹¹¹ This continued following the declaration of hostilities. *Amanecer* (Jerez de la Frontera) claiming in September 1936 the war was the first battle in the defence of ‘European civilization against the invasion of barbarism’.¹¹² *Yugo y*

¹⁰⁸ *Amanecer (Jerez de la Frontera)*..., 7 September 1936, p. 5.

¹⁰⁹ *Proa*..., 14 November 1936, p. 1;

¹¹⁰ *Unidad*..., 19 June 1937, p. 7.

¹¹¹ Primo de Rivera, *Obras Completas*..., p. 38; pp. 669-70.

¹¹² *Amanecer (Jerez de la Frontera)*..., 14 September 1936, p. 1.

Flechas a month before had said much the same thing, stating that the war was ‘the cause of the spiritual, of civilization against an annihilating, repugnant and anti-human materialism’ a fight by ‘our own bold Spanish personalities’ to free itself ‘from slavery and laxity of the race in which huge and dark foreign powers were interested’.¹¹³ In 1938 this attitude of an invader was still prevalent, an example being seen in *Amanecer* (Zaragoza) which stated that ‘Russia, aspires to the invasion of the rest of the world to establish the universal Communist regime’.¹¹⁴ The attitude persisted into 1939, Giménez Caballero stating that the war was the starting point of this conflict in which a ‘Russia sought to redden the masses of the world’.¹¹⁵

In one article appearing in *Amanecer* (Zaragoza), reminiscent of the diktats to the commissioner of *Radio Nacional de España* seen in Chapter One, the influence of Russia was noted by listing the similarities between the Popular Army and Russia’s Red Army as the former was presented as merely an appendage of the latter. While the Nationalists Army was the paragon of patriotic virtue, its Republican counterpart was infested by foreign influence, its soldiers were:

... Subjugated by political commissars that are dependent in their entirety on foreign nationals, and closely watched by the secret agents of Russian communism, officially embedded in companies and battalions under the typically Soviet name of "activists".

The Popular Army was presented as under the complete Russia direction, its ‘nervous system consists of a brain that resides in Moscow’. Such was its devotion to Moscow, in fact, that it even ‘[bore] on its documents and uniforms emblems of the Soviet Russia’.¹¹⁶ Much like the ‘generic’ discourse, the presence of Italian and German troops was not a problem. They were simply concerned allies in the continent-spanning struggle against the expansion of Marxism, whose ‘deep desire is that the slow fire in which Spain is consumed could be quickly and permanently extinguished’.¹¹⁷

Concurrent to the idea that the war was a battle for civilization against an uncivilized invader was the presentation of the invader’s ideology as equally uncivilized. Marxism was a ‘beast of Moscow... the weak, cowardly countenance, the naked body of a snake that only

¹¹³ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 15 August 1936, p. 2.

¹¹⁴ *Amanecer* (Zaragoza)..., 10 August 1938, p. 1.

¹¹⁵ Giménez Caballero, *Camisa azul*..., p. 18.

¹¹⁶ *Amanecer* (Zaragoza)..., 10 August 1938, p. 1.

¹¹⁷ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 12 January 1937, p. 1.

holds in his veins, poisonous venom'.¹¹⁸ It had a 'cold and destructive spirit', a 'criminal and destructive zeal of... rancour and hatred'.¹¹⁹ They that followed this ideology were no longer be portrayed as Spaniards, but simply as Marxists, the 'vile servants of Moscow'.¹²⁰ Those that fought for the Republic were merely presented 'Marxist hordes', without discipline or morals; a 'rabble' that only 'rampaged... vitiated, robbed, murdered'.¹²¹ The members of this 'Marxist horde' were not only robbed of their Spanish nationality, but they were often portrayed as lacking any human decency. 'Marxists' were, as we have seen, capable of the most profane of activity, *Unidad* reporting that the eating of 'putrefied horse meat' was a commonplace occurrence in Madrid, 'initiated by the Russian reds'.¹²² Zaragoza's *Amanecer* went as far as to describe them as 'monsters with human figures', capable of 'acts of unsurpassed savagery whose precedents should be sought in the primitive races'. The newspaper went on to state that 'one of the most difficult tasks is to understand the true meaning of the form that the monstrous Marxist animals have taken, men? Demons? Beasts?'¹²³

As was mentioned in the introduction, Falange discourse on the *Patria* differed little from that of 'generic' Crusade, the only notable divergence being, curiously enough, the absence of the term itself. The perceived enemies, the foreign invaders and their traitorous allies, were the same and the aim of the conflict, to return Spain to a position of prestige, was also shared. There was a common perception of the 'Republican experience' with Falange discourse presenting the previous five years as very similar to that of the 'generic' Crusade; a period of persecution and national malaise, of the *Patria* being hijacked by traitors. Furthermore, the Army was presented as being an institution of supreme patriotic virtue. The presentation of the Catholic faith, as a fundamental aspect of the *Patria*, was shared also. The similarity between the two discourses should not be too much of a surprise. The Falange was, after all an authoritarian fascist movement and major divergence the typically military ideas of nationalism and extreme anti-Marxism and illiberalism would have been more of a shock. Moreover, the summer of 1936 saw an adoption of some of the Falange's symbols and rhetoric and the Unification saw the adoption of more (provided they did not contravene the primacy of the Army or the Caudillo). The following year saw Dionisio Ridruejo, a

¹¹⁸ *Yugo y Flechas*, 25 January 1937, p. 3.

¹¹⁹ *F.E.*..., 9 September 1936, p. 1, *Imperio*..., 8 May 1937, p. 1.

¹²⁰ *Amanecer (Jerez de la Frontera)*..., 14 September 1936, p. 1.

¹²¹ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 15 August 1936, p. 2; *Amanecer (Jerez de la Frontera)*..., 28 September 1936; *Proa*..., 26 September 1937, p. 2; *Amanecer (Zaragoza)*..., 17 June 1938, p. 1.

¹²² *Unidad*..., 22 April 1937, p. 4.

¹²³ *Amanecer (Zaragoza)*..., 17 August 1938, p. 6.

falangista, made propaganda minister. At the other end of the discursive scale the overlapping elements of each would, on a day to day basis, be emphasised regularly as a great number of the officers in *falangista* units were taken from the ranks of the Army.¹²⁴ Given the ‘traditional’ structure of the *Ejército Nacional* and the necessity for officers to not only take charge of military but also motivational affairs, a focus upon the coinciding points of the Crusade such as nationalism and anti-Marxism was to be expected. Consequently, on shared issues there was more than likely to be an element of crossover and repetition of rhetoric, perhaps best evidenced by the similarities in the presentation of the Popular Army, as equally run by Russians or by the same biological conception of the democracy and Marxism as carcinogenic to the *Patria*. The result of this is that the likelihood of ideological disillusionment of *falangista* troops over the issues presented above was incredibly unlikely, given that not only were they integral to *falangismo* but presented across ‘generic’ discourse, not just exclusively *falangista* discourse, in similar terms. However, there were issues where *falangismo* and the overarching Crusade discourse did not fit so well. The following two sections, on the position of Franco and the role of the national-syndicalist Revolution, will highlight how in the discourse regarding these two issues certain ideological questions were emphasised, answered, altered or ignored in order to assuage the ideological concerns of *falangistas*.

¹²⁴ Payne, *Fascism...*, p. 143.

Franco, Caudillo of Spain and the FET y de las JONS

When analysing the motivation of troops affiliated to a fascist group such as Falange, the presentation of the leader of the group is fundamental. Writing in 1938 Dionisio Ridruejo put this in the simplest of ideological terms: ‘the Falange always needs a *jefe*, because it is its dogma to have one’.¹²⁵ In imitation of its Italian and German forebears, there was a doctrinal necessity for a strong individual was necessary to lead the *Patria* back to greatness. This had always been the case, José Antonio asserting in his 1933 introduction to the Spanish translation of Mussolini’s *Il Fascismo* that:

The man is the system; this is one of the profound human truths that has returned to give value to fascism. All the nineteenth century was spent devising machinery for – good government... Nothing real, eternal and difficult, as governing is, has been done by machine, it has always had to recourse, at the last minute, to that which, from the origin of the world, has been the only device capable of leading men: man. That is to say, the *jefe*. The hero.¹²⁶

Furthermore, for José Antonio the relationship between leader and movement was clearly one of subservience; he expected a leader’s followers to be obedient and to bow to the diktats of their *jefe*. For him ‘the *jefe* should not obey the people, they should serve him’ as ‘to serve him is to order the exercise of command towards the good of the people, seeking the good of the people governed’. Moreover, the leader need never explain himself to his followers, but they should follow him regardless, for ‘although the people themselves may not know what his duty is... it is to feel accord with the popular historical destination, even when it disagrees with that which the masses fancy’.¹²⁷ The position of *jefe* in the Falange, therefore, was a key ideological lynchpin for the movement. José Antonio himself, although he would have concerns regarding his own suitability for the position, recognised the importance of the leader to Fascism, as without his leadership the entire enterprise was immobile.¹²⁸ The movement needed a strong leader to follow, one who had the strength of character, foresight and ability to lead.

¹²⁵ *F.E.: Revista mensual...*, No. 3, April 1938, p. 36.

¹²⁶ Primo de Rivera, *Obras Completas...*, p. 457.

¹²⁷ *Haz*, 12 October 1935, p. 1.

¹²⁸ José Antonio would repeatedly tell friends that his calling was elsewhere. He would even, in a letter to *ABC* in 1933, state that his characteristics were ‘the worst fit with those of a Caudillo’. Cited in Preston, *¡Comrades!...*, p. 87.

However, during the Civil War this role became a complicated issue, as the original leader, José Antonio himself, never had the opportunity to lead the *Falange* during wartime. He began the war in enemy incarceration and was executed within the first six months, on 20 November 1936, despite several abortive attempts to rescue him.¹²⁹ His death, although known in official channels and reported in the Republican and French press, was not disclosed publically in the rebel zone until almost two years after his death, 16 November 1938.¹³⁰ The intervening period was defined by the ascent of his successor, Franco, from Commander in Chief of Spain to supreme political leader of not only the nation but of the *Comunión Tradicionalista* and José Antonio's very own *Falange Española*.

In the early months of the conflict, due to the fact that José Antonio was imprisoned for what many believed would only be a temporary period, steps were taken to provide the Falange with some form of temporary leadership until his release was assured. The decision was made by the *Consejo Nacional de F.E. de las J.O.N.S* (National Council of the Falange) in Valladolid in September 1936, with the promotion of the passionate but politically naïve Manuel Hedilla, the provincial chief of Burgos and León, to the President of the *Junta de Mando Provisional* (Provisional Command Committee).¹³¹ Hedilla was a working class activist of little political note, but his promotion served a purpose – that he would offer little resistance when José Antonio returned. Moreover, given his junior status and lack of political acumen, there was little chance of him garnering sufficient support to create a base that would rival that of the José Antonio or the regional chiefs who had promoted him to his position.¹³² This halfway solution left the Falange in a relatively susceptible position, one which Franco was all too able to take advantage of. Lacking a strong figurehead able to stand up to the Army, coupled with a collection of regional bosses all too ready to trade the Falange's political autonomy for a permanent position in the New State, the Unification saw Franco assume supreme political leadership of the Falange without much difficulty. Hedilla was swiftly removed from his position as party leader but offered a seat on the *Junta Política* of the FET y de las JONS, an offer he rejected in the hope that he could hold onto his post. He could not and the result was Franco taking supreme political control. Hedilla, meanwhile,

¹²⁹ Various rescue attempts were put in motion to spring José Antonio from the gaol in Alicante where he spent the months before his death, however they were all destined to fail. Initially this was down to the incompetence of his rescuers but later due to the interference of Franco, the *Generalísimo* deciding the return of a political rival would not have suited him. For details on each rescue attempts see: Felipe Ximénez de Sandoval, *José Antonio: biografía apasionada*, (Barcelona: Editorial Juventud, 1941), pp. 584-588; Pecharromán, *José Antonio...*, pp. 508-10; Ellwood, *Spanish Fascism...*, pp. 36-37; Preston, *Franco...*, pp. 194-195.

¹³⁰ *Unidad...*, 16 November 1936, p. 1.

¹³¹ Ellwood, *Spanish Fascism...*, pp. 37-39.

¹³² Saz, *Fascismo y franquismo...*, pp. 145-146; Thomàs, *Lo que fue la Falange...*, pp. 140-145

was arrested on 25 April 1937 and sentenced to death for ‘acts of mutiny against the Decree of Unification’ on 5 June.¹³³ The Falange, due to its inability to act in absence of José Antonio therefore found itself the subject of Franco’s influence and with the *Generalísimo* as its new chief. By failing to properly replace him, his position was filled through external force.

The importance of Franco’s assumption of the leadership of the Falange in regards to this thesis cannot be overstated. The Falange, by its very nature, needed an active, vibrant leader to follow, a position which Franco had the potential to fill ever since he thrillingly traversed the Strait of Gibraltar and marched on Madrid (by way of the Alcázar de Toledo), emphasising his military prowess. Yet until late 1938 there remained the figure of José Antonio, who was still the *fundador* of the Falange and an important figure to many *falangistas*, he had written the political programme of the movement and led it until his imprisonment. *El Ausente* could not, therefore, be completely erased from Falange history yet neither could he be praised as a leader, as that position now belonged to Franco. The result was that a link between Franco and José Antonio was forged, one which presented the former as a political visionary and the latter as his successor, his political and spiritual heir. This section will describe the transferral of Falange support from José Antonio to Franco – detailing how Falange wartime discourse rationalised the role of Franco the Caudillo (instead of José Antonio the *jefe*) within Falange ideology.

Even prior to his assumption of the official leadership of the FET y de las JONS, Franco was presented in the most glowing of in the Falange wartime press. He was after all, in light of the Burgos summit of later September and the decree of 1 October 1936, the *Generalísimo* of the armed forces and the *Jefe del Estado*, which, coupled with the Falange’s intense respect for the military and hierarchy, afforded him profound respect.¹³⁴ Following the announcement of the former, *Unidad* would state that from now on Franco could expect the Falange to ‘raise its arms in the air’ to him and shout ‘Good news, comrades, Spain had its Marshall!’¹³⁵ More often than not referred to as ‘*el Generalísimo*’ in recognition of his role as a military leader, the praise was gushing. Franco was ‘a national idol’, who was ‘to

¹³³ This was later commuted to life imprisonment. He was eventually released in 1946. Payne, *Fascism in Spain...*, p. 271.

¹³⁴ Preston, *Franco...*, pp. 178-186.

¹³⁵ *Unidad...*, 30 September 1936, p. 1.

save Spanish civilization'.¹³⁶ Even prior to his assumption of power he was still a national hero, 'the glorious general Franco, artifice of the victory of the Alcázar de Toledo'.¹³⁷

Following the Unification, he continued to be described as an unparalleled individual and a great leader. For *Proa* that he was a man of 'pure honour' with 'very clear talents' that had the 'heart of a wolf', while *Amanecer* (Zaragoza) would applaud him as 'father of the poor' of 'simple and tender heart'.¹³⁸ He was also portrayed as a supreme patriot, that 'took Spain bleeding in his Arms' and would return her to health; Giménez Caballero in *Camisa azul y boína colorada* stated that it was he that 'saved the idea of God: the idea of *Patria*'.¹³⁹ His military prowess was commended as he was described as the 'Spirit and arm of the Crusade', a 'captain of crusades', the 'precise genius of invincible strategies', one that would make Spain 'worthy of its history'.¹⁴⁰ *La Nueva España*, in describing the Legion as 'the model body of indomitable courage, discipline and sacrifice', stated this was solely down to the 'creative genius of [its] undefeated general, our Glorious Caudillo'.¹⁴¹ He was regularly portrayed as synonymous with the nation, it was 'The Spain of Franco' and he was the 'Redeemer of Spain'.¹⁴²

Away from personal and military praise, the admiration of his leadership began to take on a more *falangista* complexion as he became the embodiment of the belief of 'the man as the system' described by José Antonio. *Imperio* in an article from May 1937 stated that Franco was 'the brain and heart of New Spain'. He was the Caudillo, the warrior-as-leader, which despite its previous definition, was now meant solely for Franco:¹⁴³

Never has the word had a more just meaning, a more emphatic expression than when applied to the name of this wonderful conductor of a people, who, to forge their future happiness, puts all his love for the *Patria* into such a high enterprise, all that élan of an authentic CAUDILLO ..., because he gave everything and continues giving everything to a Spain that is under his intelligent guidance, it has to be: ONE, GREAT AND FREE, an unbreakable unity with true freedom [and] the high grandeur of empire.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁶ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 25 January 1937, p. 1.

¹³⁷ *Unidad*..., 28 September 1936, p. 4.

¹³⁸ *Proa*..., 30 July 1938, p. 1; *Amanecer* (Zaragoza)..., 1 October 1938, p. 1.

¹³⁹ *Amanecer* (Zaragoza)..., 1 October 1938, p. 1; Giménez Caballero, *Camisa Azul*..., p. 34.

¹⁴⁰ *Proa*..., 17 July 1938, p. 1; *Amanecer* (Zaragoza)..., 1 October 1938, p. 1.

¹⁴¹ *La Nueva España*, January 1939, p. 1.

¹⁴² *Auxilio Social*, November 1938, p. 1; p. 10.

¹⁴³ Prior to it becoming a term to describe only Franco, the term Caudillo was generally used to describe a 'warrior kings' of Spanish antiquity. Alberto Reig Tapia, 'Aproximación a la teoría del caudillaje en Francisco Javier Conde', *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, No. 69 (July/September 1990), pp. 61-2; Preston, *Franco*..., p. 187.

¹⁴⁴ *Imperio*..., 15 May 1937, p. 1; *Proa*..., 18 August 1937, p. 1.

The parallels with José Antonio's criteria are here very clear; the respect of all the *Patria* and the entire nation under his guidance, all in service of that that great Falangist aim: Empire. For *Amanecer* (Zaragoza), writing on 1 October 1938, the so called *día del Caudillo* in celebration of Franco's assumption of power, it was Franco and Franco alone that 'knew with a magnificent gesture and unwavering determination how to change the fate of the Spanish nation' as he found himself in a position 'appointed by providence in defining moments for the salvation of the *Patria*'. He was, in short 'Franco, Caudillo' he that 'directs resolutely the Hispanic destinies'.¹⁴⁵ It is clear therefore, that *falangista* discourse went to great pains to present Franco as the man outlined by José Antonio.

In addition to this role of great leader, hardly exclusive to the Falange in Spanish right-wing discourse, Franco's position became more and more affiliated with the Falange ideology. In keeping with the slogan '*Patria, Pan y Justicia*' (*Patria*, Bread and Justice), *La Nueva España* in September 1938 stated that 'Franco will give us peace, and with it the Bread and Justice', while *Amanecer* (Zaragoza) stated that Franco would provide 'white bread on every table'.¹⁴⁶ He was not just 'Caudillo of the People and undefeated Head of the *Falange Española Tradicionalista de las JONS*' but 'at the same time the marrow and essence, body and engine of the national-syndicalist revolution'.¹⁴⁷ His support for the revolution was, as we shall see in the following section, less than effusive, but given that he was the leader of a fascist movement whose ideological programme was geared towards creating a national-syndicalist state, ideology demanded he was portrayed as central to it within Falange propaganda.

However, despite the fact that Franco was now the centre of the rebel polity, taking on the role that José Antonio had specified, as well as being suited to the position of Joaquín Costa's 'Iron Surgeon' that had so inspired the young Primo de Rivera, he was not the Falange's leader by choice. He had not been elevated by the party, but through external forces, and despite being head of the FET y de las JONS had his own political agenda. Moreover, this agenda, although it overlapped greatly with that of the original *Falange Española*, was not that of the Falange. Franco was a nationalist, a believer in Empire, a supporter of traditional Catholic values and their importance to Spanish culture and had corporatist leanings, but he did not share the *falangista* desire for a national-syndicalist

¹⁴⁵ *Amanecer* (Zaragoza)..., 1 October 1938, p. 1.

¹⁴⁶ *La Nueva España*..., September 1938, p. 15; *Amanecer* (Zaragoza)..., 1 October 1938, p. 1.

¹⁴⁷ *Amanecer* (Zaragoza)..., 1 October 1938, p. 1.

revolution which would transform society nor was he willing to subsume the influence of the military to the FET y de las JONS. Yet Franco's assumption of power meant that there was ideological need to legitimise his position, especially in propaganda. He was the unquestioned leader of the State, the Military and the Party and needed to be presented as if preordained for the post. The solution was to embrace the concept of *caudillaje*. Described by Paul Preston as the Spanish equivalent of the *führerprinzip*, although not a falangista concept, *caudillaje* was in effect an ideology that presented the Caudillo as the director of Spain's 'Unity of Destiny in the Universal', legitimising his position without the necessity for Franco to achieve any form of charismatic authority, instead it was constructed around him.¹⁴⁸ Still in its early ideological stages, *caudillaje* was presented to Falange soldiers in *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo* as perfectly suited to Franco's military skills; as his ability and the authority he deserved as a military leader writ large across every facet of the *Patria*. Franco, after all, according to Eugenio Montes, was 'a great politician, on par with his generalship'.¹⁴⁹ It is worth noting that this was not the definitive version of *caudillaje*, none were, as it was a phrase which took on a variety of forms throughout the Franco era. What is presented here is the form which was presented to *falangista* soldiers in the publication *Los Combatientes* and its accompanying booklet *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo*.¹⁵⁰

According to *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo* the task of Caudillo was pivotal to everything; the only way that the common purpose could be realised was if 'one hand move and drive this complex machine, one hand and one head and one heart'.¹⁵¹ He was a necessity for the *Patria*, for when a country had 'awareness of its decline, of its crisis and aspired to repair this state, that is when it feels the necessity for *caudillaje*'. The current conflict was such an occasion and therefore a Caudillo was needed, a man of 'the highest authority and the greatest responsibility, recognizing the yearnings of men'.¹⁵² Furthermore, the role demanded the complete support from the people for their leader, it was therefore necessary that:

¹⁴⁸ For a complete explication of *caudillaje* as defined by Francisco Javier Conde see Reig Tapia, 'Aproximación a la teoría del caudillaje en Francisco Javier Conde...', pp. 61-81; Preston, *¡Comrades!...*, p. 136; Stanley G. Payne, 'Franco, the Spanish Falange and the Institutionalisation of Mission' in *Charisma and Fascism in Interwar Europe*, eds. António Costa Pinto, Roger Eatwell and Stein Ugelvik Larsen, (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 56-62.

¹⁴⁹ Montes, *La Hora de Unidad...*, p. 12.

¹⁵⁰ A more detailed analysis of the variations in interpretations of *caudillaje* can be found in Ismael Saz, 'Franco ¿caudillo fascista? Sobre las sucesivas y contradictorias concepciones falangistas del caudillaje franquista', *Historia y Política*, (January-June 2012), pp. 27-50.

¹⁵¹ *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo...*, p. 8

¹⁵² *Ibid...*, p. 12.

...all men, tiered among the various services, from the minister and General to the lowliest constable or most ignored soldier, are animated by a faith in one who commands and directs. It is necessary that the person who crowns this structure of all organisms, hosts and services has a representation, means "something" that is more than human, that his name is more than that of an ordinary man, that only to name moves the ones that obey him, and need to know to him at the head of all requires in each one perfection in all their acts and deeds.¹⁵³

The role of Caudillo, therefore, was fundamental to the New Spain that was being fought for. Consequently the 'highest task could not be given to just anyone', as in keeping with the Falange discourse on hierarchy and discipline, it was made clear that each man should know his own personal limitations, that 'there are good reasons why some command and others must be commanded but that also 'some men possess more knowledge, more understanding and more clarity of powers to command'.¹⁵⁴ The role was only suitable for one man.

As we can see, this ideological framework was very similar to that outlined by José Antonio, the main difference being that *caudillaje* was specifically geared towards enthroning Franco. This was made very clear with the assertion that Spain needed Franco specifically:

Spain needed to be conducted by a CAUDILLO, and it is not possible for him to be any other than Franco. Long before the war, FRANCO was the hope... But not only this: there is a further reason, and it is his work. FRANCO saved war and straightened up the weapons of Spain to triumph; FRANCO saved the rear, joining political groups into a single beam; FRANCO assumed responsibility of the government, becoming head of state.¹⁵⁵

The very actions that undermined his claims to be *jefe* of Falange, namely his assumption of the position of leader and the ideologically questionable Unification, were instead presented as virtuous actions taken by a leader who knew what was good for the *Patria*. He had 'assumed responsibility'. It is here that the very ideology of the Falange is used to undermine any form of dissent for Franco's position. It had, after all, always been a clear part of the Falange's own ideology that the *jefe* would act how he saw fit, even if the people disagreed with his decision. Ridruejo would reiterate this, stating that 'a leader is free to interpret and

¹⁵³ *Ibid...*, p. 8.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid...*, p. 6-8.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid...*, pp. 17-18.

recreate doctrine'.¹⁵⁶ To this end, Franco, by 'making himself spokesman, symbol and director' of the nation, had acted decisively and his successful leadership meant that this could not be criticised, despite the fact that he had done so initially from outside of the movement.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, by unifying the various political groups in the rebel zone and eliminating any form of political rivalry, he had organised the *Patria* into a 'Unity of Destiny'. The argument was put forward that despite the fact that there was 'some difference' between *falangistas* and *requetés* they were, in fact, 'all equally soldiers of Spain and Franco' that died 'with the same faith and enthusiasm'. Having 'convened in a single beam all the healthy elements of Spain', Franco had created 'the only political party that is not a 'party' but a unanimous movement' and succeeded in 'making [them] brothers again'.¹⁵⁸ According to *Los Combatientes*, therefore, Franco was the ideal Caudillo, a man of action who could lead both militarily and politically and ignore the vacillations of political opinion in service of the universal mission. *Amanecer* (Zaragoza), as part of its special edition for the *día del Caudillo* of 1938, would support this, stating that in Spain:

A man was needed at the head of the National Uprising, possessed of divine inspiration, equipped with highest judgment of serene spirit of proven worth, of ardent youth, political virgin, that had something of the monk, virtue, and of the soldier, honour.

This man, unsurprisingly, 'by highest design, was given completely in the person of Francisco Franco Bahamonde'.¹⁵⁹ *Caudillaje* was the perfect way of placing Franco as the head of the FET y de las JONS, as it simply had to find a means of rationalising what he had already done. He was unassailable and consequently an ideological and rhetorical artifice could be created that complimented the manner in which he took power, provided it played up to the expected characteristics of a *jefe de la falange*. *Caudillaje* managed this through an evocation of the facets of leadership that José Antonio had described in 1933 (namely unilateral action for the good of the *Patria* and a disdain for 'systems') thus allowing for Franco to become an ideologically acceptable *falangista* leader, albeit after the fact.

While Franco was being presented as the perfect candidate for a position he already held, José Antonio also received a great deal of veneration in his new role of *el Ausente* (the

¹⁵⁶ *F.E.: Revista mensual...*, No. 3, April 1938, p. 36.

¹⁵⁷ *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo...*, p. 12.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid...*, pp. 18-20.

¹⁵⁹ *Amanecer (Zaragoza)...*, 1 October 1938, p. 1.

absent one).¹⁶⁰ The rhetoric surrounding José Antonio was generally focused on his role as founder of the Falange as well as the creator of its political programme, not as a rival *falangista* leader. He was the one who had ‘crystallised in the yoke and arrows the immortal essence from an historical past’.¹⁶¹ It was his ideology that had ‘made us all... members of a new community, whose latest path was the salvation of the *Patria*’.¹⁶² Unlike in the presentation of Franco, discourse on José Antonio’s role as *jefe*, when mentioned, was focused not on permanent parts of his character that were suited to leadership, but instead distinctly rooted in the context of the pre-war period. *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo* praised his ability to ‘command those first squads... for the voice of José Antonio was the voice of truth’.¹⁶³ Even here, his leadership is secondary to his ‘voice’, which was now enshrined in his ideology. José Antonio’s role as ideologue and founder of the Falange, as opposed to leader, was further underlined in a 1938 biography of him by Sancho Dávila. In it was published his own admission that he felt he ‘would serve as anything except a fascist Caudillo’.¹⁶⁴ This was perhaps the most brazen of the re-categorisations of José Antonio to ideologue, prior to his ultimate ascension to martyr. The hierarchical representation of the two was made clearest in an article in *Auxilio Social*, in which the author, contemplating a group of young *falangistas* singing the Falange anthem *Cara al Sol* (face to the sun) casts his eyes up to the ‘portrait of José Antonio who contemplates it all with his immense, serious and clear gaze, then up to the face of Franco, who smiles’.¹⁶⁵ Here the political order is clear, at the bottom, *falangistas* and then to José Antonio, in a position of honour, but ultimately below the Caudillo.

José Antonio’s death was greeted with widespread grief, with Franco leading the mourners.¹⁶⁶ In a speech at a service in Burgos the Caudillo would reiterate his role as the ideologue of the Falange, calling his young predecessor:

Soldier and poet, he felt the noble desires of our youth, the holy concerns for the greatness of the *Patria*. José Antonio is the mirror of that holy Spanish impatience of gilded centuries.

¹⁶⁰ The moniker of *El Ausente* was created by the *falangista* prince and editor of *Arriba España*, Fermin Yzardiaga Lorca, Alejandro Corniero Suárez, *Diario de un rebelde: La República, la Falange y la Guerra*, (Madrid: Ediciones Babarroja, 1991), p. 224.

¹⁶¹ *La Nueva España*..., October 1938, p. 11.

¹⁶² *Proa*..., 17 July 1938, p. 5.

¹⁶³ *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo*..., p. 29.

¹⁶⁴ Sancho Dávila, *Hacia la historia de la Falange*, (Jerez: Jerez Industrial, 1938), p. 24.

¹⁶⁵ *Auxilio Social*, November 1938, p. 5.

¹⁶⁶ The majority of grieving was postponed until a year later, when his remains were transferred from Alicante to El Escorial in a choreographed ten day long procession.

For he lives among us and our youth know him as a symbol of its concerns and precursor of our movement... With his glorious blood the destinies of the New Spain have been written, that nothing nor nobody will be able to twist.¹⁶⁷

Following the announcement of José Antonio's death any and all lingering doubts about the order of authority within the Falange were put to rest. Franco was the sole leader of the Falange and José Antonio ascended to the position of martyr of the Falange and the *cruzada*. His name would become synonymous with the nationalist dead, and around him the cult of the fallen of the war would develop – his remains eventually being interred at the *Valle de los Caídos* upon its completion in 1959.¹⁶⁸

Franco's position as head of the Government, Armed forces and FET y de las JONS was unassailable. However, this did not mean that it did not have to be rationalised through the ideology of the political groups that he dominated. As we have seen, he was portrayed as a common-born King to *requetés*, fulfilling all the actions that were expected of that third of the *trilema*. In regards to the Franco and the Falange no ideological regicide was necessary, merely a framework that permitted for him to replace José Antonio. Conveniently the public image of Franco fit that of a Fascist chief well and with some *post hoc* legitimisation via the ideology of *caudillaje*, Franco as the Caudillo of the FET y de las JONS was not a difficult situation to promulgate. José Antonio's redefinition first as an ideological pioneer allowed for Franco to adopt the mettle of leader and, following the announcement of the death of José Antonio any questions of leadership were put to rest.

¹⁶⁷ *Unidad...*, 16 November 1936, p. 1.

¹⁶⁸ *La Nueva España...*, November 1938, p. 1. For more on José Antonio as a martyr of the regime see Zira Box, 'Pasión, muerte y glorificación de José Antonio Primo de Rivera', *Historia del presente*, no. 6, 2005, pp. 191-218. Giuliana Di Febo, 'I riti del nazionalcatolicismo nella Spagna franchista. José Antonio Primo de Rivera e il culto dei caduti (1936-1960)' in *Rituale civil. Storie nazionali e memorie pubbliche nell'Europa contemporanea*, (Rome: Gangemi Editore, 2006), M. Ridolfi (ed.), pp. 189-202.

The National-Syndicalist Revolution

One factor that set Falange wartime rhetoric apart from the ‘generic’ Crusade was the concept of revolution. Although the Francoist state was supportive of some corporatist reform and even adopted the phrase ‘national-syndicalist revolution’ from time to time (the idea was cited in the Decree of Unification), it did not compare to the clamour for a far reaching revolution that would re-model Spanish society along corporatist lines.¹⁶⁹ Nevertheless, this remained one of the key points of Falange discourse from the beginning of the conflict to its conclusion. The following section is an examination of how such a fundamental part of Falange ideology was presented to the soldiery over the course of the war, despite the lukewarm feeling towards it in official circles. Following this, the section will examine the presentation the Carlists to the soldiers of the *banderas* and how the Unification itself was justified. The aim of this section is to establish how the political situation that developed during the war was rationalised to *falangista* soldiers.

The rhetoric on the revolution in the wartime press would never match that which preceded it prior to the outbreak of war in ideological intricacy but nevertheless remained an integral part of the Falange’s early wartime discourse. In the very first weeks of the war, *Yugo y Flechas*, in discourse reminiscent of anarchist literature from early on in the conflict, made a case for wholesale revolutionary change, stating that:

Only a doctrine can overcome Marxism, and this is the doctrine of the Falange. The putting of it into practice is to us a matter of honour, if not, someday our dead will rise from their graves and they will demand an account of how we have managed their sacrifices.¹⁷⁰

The ideology of the Falange was not merely any non-democratic system, it was a wholly new manner of politics. It was, in the words of *Proa*, ‘a new way to feel and understand the *Patria*’.¹⁷¹ The revolution, through its restructuring of society, would provide ultimate national unity, meaning there could be no return for Marxism as it would, in the words of *Yugo y Flechas*, ‘implement a relentless and exquisite social justice that incorporates all Spaniards, workers, the bourgeoisie and aristocrats to the same illusion of Imperial Spain that

¹⁶⁹ *La Ametralladora...*, 2 May 1937, p. 1.

¹⁷⁰ *Yugo y Flechas...*, 10 February 1937, p. 3.

¹⁷¹ *Proa...*, 24 November 1936, p. 1.

shall be the honour and glory of the world'.¹⁷² According to falangista theory, without class struggle, Marxism would be robbed of its sustenance and would simply wither and die.

While anti-Marxism was integral to Falange identity, there was also a revolutionary anti-capitalism that was integral to early the national-syndicalist presentation of the war. Capitalism was viewed with the same antipathy as democracy and liberalism as it had permitted for Marxism to proliferate. Yagüe, in a speech to Ceuta's *falangistas* in February 1937, felt it was 'selfish and cruel' having harmed the *Patria* through industrialization, the creation of factories having meant that 'the craftsman died, he was one of the strongest pillars of the State, and the proletarian appeared, the master died and the employer emerged, love disappeared and hatred began to hatch'.¹⁷³ The revolution would, through its restructuring of the state, do away with these cruel labels and the conflict that went with them and allow for each strata of society to strive in the same direction: that of the *Patria*.

Fervour for a revolutionary change in the political formation of Spain was such that in the early stages of the war there was clamour for all politicians, of any stripe, to be, in the words of *Yugo y Flechas*, 'impeached' for their supposed crimes against the *Patria*.¹⁷⁴ Politicians were not merely incompetent, but a national malignance, their constant talking in parliament solving nothing; Spain needed strong leadership, not endless discussion. Criticism was not solely aimed at the Republican and Socialist parties, but also the 'legitimist' parties of the Right that had engaged in the democratic process and their rich, *cacique* backers. These groups were the same ones that had criticised the Falange at its inception, having once baptised the movement 'with the name of "poor fools", who pursued an unrealizable ideal'.¹⁷⁵ Consequently, their mere selection of the correct side was not enough, as this was the recourse that any Spaniard would have taken, what was needed was a complete renunciation of their old ways:

The whole setup of the old politics, with their *cacique*, their secular favouritism and their vicious and petty struggles; those who today, when so much young blood is poured by the New Spain, believe can continue as before, as always, taking positions in a system riddled with failure and ineptitude...

All, all of them, seek something different, something that cannot fall within our style... they need to abandon personal ambition, party interest, the bastardy and old skills of politicians for the sake of a New Spain, if they do not want to know the

¹⁷² *Yugo y Flechas*..., 15 August 1937, p. 3.

¹⁷³ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 10 February 1937, p. 3.

¹⁷⁴ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 12 January 1937, p. 1.

¹⁷⁵ *Yugo y Flechas*..., 15 August 1936, p. 2.

aggressiveness of our accurate, straight and righteous arrows, unbeaten and imperial.¹⁷⁶

The sentiment here was clear, that any and all parliamentarianism needed to be dispensed with. There was no other solution than the complete sweeping away of all vestiges of the old system even the ones who proclaimed affinity with the uprising. Such was the cancerous entrenchment of some of these careerists, that ‘it was no longer possible to evict them of their positions apart from with a revolution’ and the reconstitution of society along national-syndicalist lines.¹⁷⁷

Following Unification, a slow change began in the rhetoric of the revolution as its necessity to the future of Spain was downplayed. Certain revolutionary ideals continued, such as the belief that the liberal order could not return and an opposition of Anglo-Saxon capitalism. *Unidad* in June 1937, in its criticism of capitalism, presented a very similar argument to that seen in Yagüe’s speech four months earlier, albeit more pointed towards ‘high’ finance. The article stated that national-syndicalism was ‘against mathematical and cruel abstract capitalism with its dividends and its confusing domination’, the same capitalism that had ‘ended craftsmanship and the small producer, which finished with the person to make of him a number’.¹⁷⁸ *Jerarquía* echoed the belief that it was a harbinger of Marxism, stating that through Capitalism ‘free and cheerful peoples are made grey, grim, herds in daily bondage of smoky machines and sirens... Communism is the only logical form of the capitalist system already mature in our time’.¹⁷⁹ Yet as the war progressed the same revolutionary criticisms were presented without the calls for the reconstruction of society. This echoed the approach to the idea of ‘revolution’ in the overarching Crusade discourse. *La Ametralladora*, when it used the term, employed it as another means to state the aims of the war, rather than anything more ambitious. It simply claimed that the ‘National Revolution’ was the ‘time to redeem Humanity, downtrodden and poisoned by the farce of democracy and the tragedy of Marxism’, nothing more.¹⁸⁰ Examples of this trend in Falange discourse are also evident; *La Falange conmemora a los mártires de La Tradición* stated that soldiers continued to ‘loyally fight against any bastardy and all careerism’, yet given that the

¹⁷⁶ *Yugo y Flechas...*, 5 March 1937, p. 2.

¹⁷⁷ *Yugo y Flechas...*, 15 August 1936, p. 2; Interestingly, *caciques* themselves, if fearful for their positions, simply joined the Falange to maintain their influence and this went some way to undermining the Falange’s revolutionary fervour. Seidman, *The Victorious Counterrevolution...*, pp. 218-9.

¹⁷⁸ *Unidad...*, 19 June 1937, p. 2

¹⁷⁹ *Jerarquía...*, no.3. 1938, p. 38.

¹⁸⁰ *La Ametralladora...*, 2 May 1937, p. 1.

likelihood of the career politicians returning had greatly diminished, the statement was not accompanied by a call for a political restructure and it became merely a comment on the decadence on the Republican period.¹⁸¹ The idea of the revolution still remained, yet was never presented with any of the urgency that it had previously been afforded. This was best evidenced in a *Proa* article from July 1938 which in an interesting parallel of the Republican ‘war versus revolution’ debate, spoke of the necessity to win the war before the revolution could be considered. The revolution could only happen afterwards, when ‘the value of the fundamental things is known, the significance of life and death, and the seriousness of the work, and the honour of the military, then the revolution will create a new order in the being of Spain’.¹⁸²

There were further parallels with the Republic, as from time to time the *falangista* revolution was evoked in a manner similar to the way in which the anarchist revolution was presented to CNT affiliated soldiers following the summer of 1937: as a process that had already been achieved. *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo* would present Spain under Franco in such a way, stating that the ‘reactionary forces’ that had acted against the interests of the *Patria* had now been ‘subjected to the supreme national interest’ and that Franco had ‘mobilised all Spaniards and led them to contribute economically and spiritually to the welfare of those who fight and their families’.¹⁸³ A further example came in 1938, in *Auxilio Social*, which stated that through the organisation’s ‘social work in the immortal Spain’ terrestrial concerns were forgotten and thoughts of ‘differences [and] privileges’ had been forgotten and all thought of nothing else ‘than that which is condensed in the three words of... UNITY, GREATNESS, FREEDOM’.¹⁸⁴ The argument made by each is that an overt restructuring of society was not needed as a unity of destiny had been achieved through Franco’s rule and poverty and suffering readily assuaged through the charitable work of *Auxilio Social*.¹⁸⁵

However, despite the changes in rhetoric regarding the revolution and the attempts made to convince that it had already occurred, the topic was never fully renounced like in the anarchist case. It remained part of Falange discourse until after the war and was supported by

¹⁸¹ *La Falange conmemora...*, p. 25.

¹⁸² *Proa...*, 17 July 1938, p. 24. The similarities with the Republic ended here, as, given the overwhelming respect for all things military and hierarchical, there would be no drawn out public debate between the Falange rank-and-file and the leadership over the merits of this policy.

¹⁸³ *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo...*, p. 19.

¹⁸⁴ *Auxilio Social...*, October 1938, p. 10.

¹⁸⁵ For more on the charitable endeavours of *Auxilio Social* see Rodríguez Barrera, Óscar, “Auxilio Social y las actitudes cotidianas en los años de hambre”, *Historia del Presente*, No. 17, (2011), pp. 127-147.

prominent Falangistas in attempted legislature.¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, despite Franco having little intention of implementing a thorough social revolution, this was never made explicit over the course of the war and many Falangists held onto the hope that it would begin following the conflicts resolution.¹⁸⁷ Therefore, while the rhetoric's intensity subsided, it never totally stopped, and at the end of the conflict this confusion over the timing of the implementation of the revolution would continue. As we shall see in the final section of this chapter, it remained a bone of contention for some *falangistas*. This confusion and frustration was seen within the soldiery as well; for as the Spain for which they fought took shape, it began to resemble the Spain for which they had taken up arms less and less – this was best exemplified by the Unification with the Carlists.

The presentation of the Unification with the *Comunión Tradicionalista* to the soldiers of the *banderas* was very similar to how it was presented to *requetés*: a providential union of two complimentary groups for the ultimate benefit of Spain. Decree 255 was presented with relatively little fanfare, a matter-of-fact occurrence, *Unidad* declaring on its front page 'a transcendental decree: integration of *Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las J.O.N.S.*'¹⁸⁸ Underneath the headline was an article entitled 'The 26 points of the Falange will be its programme' which was simply a transcript on Franco's speech from the day before – the title functioning a means to assuage *falangista* concerns over a drastic change in political policy. The praise for the Unification continued through the following week with the publication of telegrams from across the country congratulating the Caudillo for his 'noble idea of unification between brothers'.¹⁸⁹ Tradition was presented in this first week as fundamental to the *Patria*, a forerunner to the Falange, who were simply 'traditionalists on a grand scale' that shared the same beliefs and were '[rooted] in the same Spanish Soul'.¹⁹⁰ Almost a month later *Imperio*, would describe it as a 'fully achieved desire for unification', stating that the new-born FET gave a 'dashing and youthful verve' to the New Spain.¹⁹¹

The reportage of the Unification was perhaps the first concerted effort to engage with Tradition by the *falangista* wartime press. Before the Unification the Carlists had been of very little political concern for the Falange, references to them were rare and when they did occur they were often only in passing. The most substantial reference to the Carlists came in Yagüe's February 1937 Ceuta speech, in which he praised *requetés* as 'knights of an ideal'

¹⁸⁶ Preston, *Franco...*, p. 299.

¹⁸⁷ Seidman, *The Victorious Counterrevolution...*, p. 36.

¹⁸⁸ *Unidad...*, 20 April 1937, p. 1.

¹⁸⁹ *Unidad...*, 21 April 1937, p. 8.

¹⁹⁰ *Unidad...*, 23 April 1937, p. 1.

¹⁹¹ *Imperio...*, 15 May 1937, p. 1.

and praised their ‘prestige’, their ‘body strengthened by an ideal’.¹⁹² Ultimately this would set the tone for their presentation later in the war, as antiquated yet nevertheless committed patriots, the forebears of the *Falange*.

What must not be forgotten, of course, is that the Unification led to a crisis in the upper echelons of the Falange and it was in reality nothing like the providential union that it was portrayed as by the press of all sides. As we have seen, Manuel Hedilla and his allies were quickly dispatched for their opposition to Franco’s assumption of the leadership of the Falange. Moreover, Hedilla did not appear in any Falange wartime discourse following his charge, effectively removed from every aspect of the FET y de las JONS and thereby offering an unspoken deterrent to those who criticised the Unification.

Following the Unification there appeared three works that outlined the official presentation of the Carlists to *falangista* soldiers; one was 1937’s *La Hora de le Unidad – tanto monta, monta tanto, Requeté como Falange* by Eugenio Montes, the second a 1938 book published by the Seville Falange called *La Falange conmemora a los mártires de La Tradición* and the final a 1939 collation of Ernesto Giménez Caballero’s articles from *Los Combatientes*, entitled *Camisa azul y boína colorada*. In each of these books the Unification was presented as a great political achievement, a great step in Spain’s political development following its liberal malaise.

The presentation of Carlists in each of these works was very similar; they were presented as guardians of *Hispanidad*, links to Spain’s tradition of historical and religious pre-eminence. For Montes, the *requetés* were made from the ‘Spartan hardness of Christ’, made all the more alluring by ‘the romantic beauty of lost causes’ that defined their movement but nevertheless drawn from the ‘heroic lineage who earned nobility winning battles’.¹⁹³ Giménez Caballero’s style was more abstract, although the sentiment was much the same, as he claimed the red beret represented ‘the flame of Pentecost’ that would help to recover ‘the lost Imperial blood’; it was ‘the very heart of the embers of Spain... the ardent flame of Hispanic tradition’.¹⁹⁴ The anonymous author of *La Falange conmemora a los mártires de la Tradición*, as was the book’s remit, presented the Carlists as representative of a long line of ‘healthy rebellion’, the spiritual forebears of the current uprising, that ‘sought the supreme reason for justice... exalted by the dream of a *Patria* with honour’.¹⁹⁵ When Spain suffered in ‘the face of the decadence and mediocrity of liberal errors’, it was in Tradition

¹⁹² *Yugo y Flechas*, 10 February 1937, p. 3.

¹⁹³ Montes, *La Hora de Unidad...*, p. 12.

¹⁹⁴ Giménez Caballero, *Camisa azul...*, pp. 47-48.

¹⁹⁵ *La Falange conmemora...*, p. 11.

that ‘the authentic – the eternal – values of the *Patria* found a permanent guardian’.¹⁹⁶ Furthermore, the very celebration of Carlists martyrs was itself a sympathetic act to not only the sacrifice of their allies’ forebears, but also their traditions, given that the *Fiesta de los Mártires de la Tradición* had been celebrated by Carlists on 10 March since 1896.¹⁹⁷

Much like in the work of Wenceslao González Oliveros, the Unification represented the joining of two groups that were two sides of the same patriotic coin; the Falange representing the present and the future, the Carlists Spain’s past, its traditions. *La Falange conmemora a los mártires de La Tradición*, eschewed any grandiloquence in describing the union and followed the party-line to perfection, simply repeating Franco’s own description of the ‘transcendental decree’ FET y de las JONS on 4 August 1937. The Union was ‘the heroic foundation of the state, the Traditionalist Communion, ensuring historical continuity, and the Spanish Falange de las JONS, vocation, form and style of the National Revolution, integrated into a single force’.¹⁹⁸ Giménez Caballero, meanwhile, in explaining the uniform of the FET y de las JONS expressed the significance that each side brought to this great new organisation:

The beret is a symbol of yesterday, with which it affirmed those same principles. The red beret, affirming them by carrying them for one hundred years and by its special contexture, brings a more Spanish accent, more local than the shirt, which, instead, puts this Spain of ours in a more universal range and of our time than the beret.¹⁹⁹

This Unification was seen as a great progression for all concerned. The values of Tradition were honoured as Spanish values were presented as having spent the previous hundred years taking ‘refuge in the lands of Navarre’, being denied a place on the national stage until now. While the pre-war Falange was presented by Giménez as ‘the mystical, juvenile’ stage of the Falange’s existence, the ‘blue dawn’ that preceded the bright day of the FET.²⁰⁰ The result was that now that ‘the two symbols were unified in their military dress’ they now ‘covered themselves in the glory of a new sense of Hispanic mission’ that they had individually

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*..., pp. 31-2.

¹⁹⁷ See Chapter Five.

¹⁹⁸ *La Falange conmemora*..., p. 11; for a full transcript of the decree of 4 August 1936 see *Unidad*, 6 August 1937, p. 4.

¹⁹⁹ Giménez Caballero, *Camisa azul*..., p. 32.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*..., p. 45; p. 26.

previously lacked.²⁰¹ Montes likened the Unification to the union of the greatest figures of the Spanish Imperial age, placing it in the same historical context:

For us, only the eternal matters. Reality has been made forever and by accomplishing something great in the world, like the love of Isabel and Fernando... What is the point of maliciously asking who gave to whom? In love the lovers are ennobled. Falange gives to Tradition its modern dynamic technique, the panache, the accuracy of its style and its fertile proselytizing ability. And this technique receives at the same time the experience of centuries, with the benefits of calm. Nobody loses, nobody is superimposed.²⁰²

The matrimonial metaphor was a useful one, the new unification of the two groups becoming a partnership into which each gave its values and from which a union greater than the sum of its parts was made. It appears, therefore, that despite minor differences in style and approach, the Unification of the Falange and the *Comunión Tradicionalista* to Falangist soldiers was presented as almost inevitable, given the complimentary nature of the two groups.

Finally, in a follow up to the matter-of-fact reporting of its announcement, there was a sense within the *post-hoc* presentation of the Unification that this union was now reality and was never to change. The similarities between the groups were presented and the arguments in favour put forward, but there remained an underlying understanding that following this, there would be no further questions. This is perhaps best typified by the statement at the end *Camisa azul y boína colorada*, where the very idea of questioning the ascension of the Red Beret to national status was met with the following:

And woe to him that murmurs of the red beret and wishes to, rather than nationalize it, to localize it in a reactionary way, spitefully, in a separatist manner, with the cruelty of Cain!

And woe to him who does not understand this! For that, he shall not be Spanish nor shall he be a Falangist. For that, he would be a sheep or a wretch. A fool or a Mason. A servant unaware of the enemy or a traitor.

And if he is a fool he does not need a beret for a head that he does not have. And if Mason or traitor, either, because although he has a head, it is a head that will disappear at once.²⁰³

²⁰¹ *Ibid...*, p. 33

²⁰² *Ibid...*, p. 14.

²⁰³ Giménez Caballero, *Camisa azul...*, p. 48.

The threat here is clear, that those that refused to accept the Unification, to embrace the ascension of the Red Beret (and by extension, the Communion) to national prominence were not welcome in the rebel camp. For they were either fools or sheep, lacking the mental and spiritual fortitude needed by the virile and strong Falange, or were the enemy, traitors and Freemasons. Overall, it appears that the presentation of the Carlists to *falangista* soldiers was very similar to their presentation to *requetés*, as political brethren whose Unification was for the benefit of the *Patria*. Of course the myriad problems that this union would bring, the political spats, the rivalry for posts and the dismay at a loss of individual identity were ignored completely in favour of a wholly positive presentation. Moreover, this positive interpretation was accompanied by a prevailing undercurrent of predestination, that any and all political reorganisation did not involve any necessity for discussion nor criticism.

One thing that must be understood, however, when understanding the presentation of the revolution and the Unification is the Falange's respect for the concepts of discipline and hierarchy. As we have seen, there could be no criticism of superiors unless they were in 'flagrant disobedience' of the National Chief. This meant that criticism of the Unification and the speed at which the revolution were being implemented was incredibly difficult for *falangistas*, as it contradicted the concepts of hierarchy and obedience to the *jefe* that were such bedrocks of the wartime ideology. Regardless of how important the independence of the Falange and the restructuring of society were to undermine the war effort through questioning authority was antithetical. Furthermore, any criticism needed to be weighed up against the fact that even without a social revolution; the main motivational themes of the Falange were almost exactly the same as the overarching Crusade. To criticise the leadership and political structure now in place and jeopardise the freedom of a rejuvenated *Patria* from malignant foreign influence was a bold move. Herein lay the strength of the Crusade in comparison to its Republican counterpart: not only were its adherents drawn from ideological groups for whom a militaristic obedience to authority was fundamental but they also shared key, not peripheral, values which they were less likely to risk through open opposition. As we shall see in the following section, these ideological millstones did not completely quell all dissent in the Falange, but it went to great lengths in doing so.

Part Two: Falangista Motivations

As has been made somewhat clear throughout the chapter it appears that, on a number of issues, there was not a great deal of difference between the presentation of the conflict to *falangistas* and the ‘generic’ Crusade. It may have been called the *gran empresa* as opposed to the *cruzada*, but the difference in name belied a similar set of values. Effectively, the Army rose against the hated Republic to save the *Patria* and the values that it supposedly represented. Falange wartime propaganda shared these sentiments and points of ideological departure from the overarching programme were not as pronounced as in the Carlist case. The motivations of the *falangista* soldiers, as we shall see, generally followed the framework set out and few, even in the face of the Falange’s political emasculation, felt the need to criticise the current situation.

The most important aspect of the conflict for *falangistas* was the redemption of the *Patria*. Even without the promises of a New Imperial Spain and the ill-defined territorial aggrandisement that accompanied the idea in the wartime discourse, this would have remained the prime motivation for *falangistas*. Strident nationalism was the fundamental pillar of the party’s pre-war ideology, an unwritten pre-requisite for membership. The war was consequently viewed by the soldiers as a fight in which they were fulfilling their patriotic duty and ‘saving Spain’.²⁰⁴ *Falangistas* leapt from trenches shouting the nationalist slogans of the movement as battle-cries; ‘*España Una, España Grande y España Libre*’ and ‘*Arriba España*’ being the most popular.²⁰⁵ Several *falangistas* in letters home stated their enthusiasm to give their lives for the *Patria*, one soldier, writing to a family friend, stated that he felt that he could only ‘serve the *Patria* with a rifle in hand, giving to it [his] life’.²⁰⁶ Miguel Vara del Rey of the Fifth *bandera* of Navarre stated that the Falangist volunteers were of ‘high spirits and glowing patriotism... ardent patriotism that shines as a star of the first magnitude’.²⁰⁷ While José Antonio Martínez Barrado claimed soldiers of the Falange ‘gave [their] blood and lives for the Eternal Spain’ as they believed with ‘blind and unwavering faith in the dawn of Spain’.²⁰⁸ Chaplain Sisinio Nevares Marcos of the *Primera bandera de Castilla* stated that

²⁰⁴ Carlos Elordí, *Hoy por Hoy presenta: Los años difíciles de los protagonistas anónimos de la guerra civil y la posguerra*, (Madrid: Aguilar, 2002), p. 57.

²⁰⁵ Nevares Marcos and Yturriaga González-Jurado, *La primera bandera de Castilla...*, p. 31; García Fernández, *Diario de Operaciones...*, p. 85; p. 55.

²⁰⁶ Juan Alonso Ortiz, *En el Sollube – 2ª bandera de F.E. de la Coruña*, (Santiago de Compostela: Imp. de Seminario), p. 52.

²⁰⁷ García Fernández, *Diario de operaciones...*, p. 12.

²⁰⁸ Martínez Barrado, *Cómo se creó...*, p. 7; p. 22.

soldiers sang songs claiming that the war was their own personal ‘destiny’, part of the road ‘towards the national destiny’.²⁰⁹ Songs sung by the *banderas* were often patriotic in nature. Aside from the national anthem and *Cara al Sol* soldiers sang a variety of other nationalist songs such as *Yo tenía una camarada* the chorus of which extolled the ‘Glory, Glory, Glory and Victory’ of the *Patria*, and whose final verse ended with the repetition of the phrase: ‘I will die for Spain’.²¹⁰ The war as one to save the *Patria* was therefore the primary conception of the conflict for *falangista* soldiers.

What, though, of the *falangista* revolution that was to transform Spain? Was it a primary concern for many *falangistas* and did these attitudes mirror those of the propaganda, that the revolution was either impending or already in motion? The answer is that, for many soldiers affiliated with the Falange, this particularly *falangista* ideal was not a primary motivating factor. In the sources analysed, it was rarely mentioned in many and never in great detail, instead the war was seen as a Manichean conflict that needed to be won to ‘save the *Patria*’. Those *falangista* soldiers who felt ideologically betrayed by the Falange’s abandonment of its pre-war doctrine will be analysed in the following section, but for the majority of volunteers any and all transformative discussion revolved around the positive effects brought through ridding the *Patria* of its enemies rather than the restructuring its economic and social arrangements – political nuance was seemingly buried under the nationalist rhetoric.

In regards to the conception of the enemy, it is here we see the influence of the discourse as the attitudes displayed accurately reflected Falange propaganda. Those who fought for the Republic were referred to by *falangista* soldiers variously as foreigners, godless atheists and traitors or simply as ‘Marxists’ or ‘Reds’.²¹¹ There was a willingness amongst *falangistas* to embrace the monikers assigned to the enemy as well as the pejorative connotations these entailed. For José Antonio Martínez Barrado the ‘Marxists’, as he referred to them, were ‘criminals and traitors’ whose ideology was ‘anti-national and inhuman’.²¹² The song *La Trapera*, popular with *Tercera bandera de Castilla*, referred to the Republicans as ‘sons of Lenin’.²¹³ While Alejandro Corniero Suárez saw the war as the result of foreign and Marxist machinations, of ‘Russia and its minions... stoking the embers of hatred’.²¹⁴ The

²⁰⁹ Nevares Marcos and Yturriaga González-Jurado, *La primera bandera de Castilla...*, p. 33.

²¹⁰ Pedro Morey Gralla, *Infantería: Memoria de la 3ª Bandera de Castilla del Diario de Operaciones*, (Toledo: Imp. Patronato de Huérfanos de Infantería, 1939), p. 97.

²¹¹ Colmegna, *Diario de un médico...*, p. 16. Elordí, *Hoy por Hoy...*, p. 57; 105;

²¹² Martínez Barrado, *Cómo se creó...*, p. 38; p. 70.

²¹³ Morey Gralla, *Memoria de la 3ª Bandera...*, p. 101.

²¹⁴ Corniero Suárez, *Diario de un rebelde...*, p. 371.

presentation of the enemy in the discourse presented to soldiers can therefore be understood to have gained traction amongst the soldiery. There were some, such as Nevares Marcos, who attempted to make a distinction between the leaders and the soldiers of the Republic and highlight the Christian necessity to forgive the latter for having been duped by the former, but this was rare.²¹⁵ For the majority of *falangistas* the ‘reds’ were a catalogue of the various nemeses that *falangismo* prescribed the downfall of Spain to and there was never any real effort to understand these ‘disciples of Lenin’.²¹⁶

As has been stated in this chapter and throughout the thesis, the common factor that initially united all the various political factions that would eventually converge under Franco was their opposition to the Republic. Soldiers affiliated with the Falange were no different, as the overthrow of the current regime was a key factor in their motivation for taking up arms. For *falangistas* the collective memory of the Republican experience was one of strife and national degradation and a desire for it not to return was a key motivator. The war had brought on the supposed ‘foreign invasion’ and the necessity to defend the *Patria* from external enemies, but that did not negate the fact that the Republic, which had preceded it and was now allied with the invaders, was no better. As outlined in the discourse, it was these liberal, democratic ideas that had brought the Communist menace to Spain. For Miguel Vara del Rey the politics since 1931 was unconcerned with the *Patria* and ‘patriotism [was] not presided over in the actions of the government’. In the place of patriotism the Republic had instead ‘ignited class struggle and hatred among Spaniards’. During the Republic ‘social malaise was relished, the national economy sank [and] the foundation of our *Patria* and the nation was demolished by fear’, there was no other option, in his eyes, than its total destruction.²¹⁷ Furthermore, the Republic’s entire ideological basis was flawed. The ideals that it supposedly represented, the liberty it espoused, were, in the words of Sisinio Nevares Marcos, no more than ‘cursed freedoms, freedom for evil, for the engenderers of crimes, for the corruption of morals, for slander against everything holy and good, for injustice and tumult’.²¹⁸ José Antonio Martínez Barrado felt freedom was not the problem, but the very opposite, as it was instead ‘slavery that they subjected the lands and peoples’ of Spain to, leading her to ‘bankruptcy’.²¹⁹ Putting aside of the exact amount of freedom the Republic represented, it was nevertheless seen as completely immoral. A soldier of the Second

²¹⁵ Nevares Marcos and Yturriaga González-Jurado, *La Primera Bandera de Castilla...*, p. 164.

²¹⁶ Martínez Barrado, *Cómo se creó...*, p. 27.

²¹⁷ García Fernández, *Diario de operaciones...*, p. 8.

²¹⁸ Nevares Marcos and de Yturriaga González-Jurado, *La primera bandera de Castilla...*, p. 57.

²¹⁹ Martínez Barrado, *Cómo se creó...*, p. 69; p. 24.

bandera of Seville showed his disdain for previous five years of government through a satirical ‘Ten Commandments of the Republic’ that he recited to José María Escalera, the war correspondent for *F.E.*, which accused Largo Caballero of cronyism, the Assault Guards of treachery and cited that the Republic had only won its elections through female votes.²²⁰ The (relatively) prominent role of women was often open to ridicule amongst *falangistas*, who, given their ideology, were far from enthusiastic about female involvement in politics.²²¹ Communist leader Dolores Ibárruri, often referred to by her sobriquet ‘La Pasionaria’, was the butt of many jokes, including a song, sung to the theme of *la cucaracha* which promised to use her topknot ‘to sweep the latrines of the *Falange Española*’.²²² It is clear that for patriotic, macho *falangista* soldiers, the Republic represented nothing of the masculine ‘real Spain’ for which they fought and its return was unthinkable.²²³

The role of religion in many *falangistas*’ interpretation of the conflict can perhaps be best understood as important but not definitive. As previously stated, a great number of soldiers were religiously inclined, attending mass and praying the Rosary. There were, of course varying degrees of piety amongst *falangistas*, but there was certainly a latent respect for the Catholic Church within each of the *banderas*. However despite this, for most *falangistas* the war was not being fought to win Spain for God. The soldiery of the Falange certainly still believed that God was on their side, some even conceded that the war could be considered as ‘the last holy war of world history’, and given the anti-clerical violence of the enemy, which appalled *falangistas*, it would be difficult for a religious person not to.²²⁴ Yet none intimated that the religion was their primary motivator. It was instead a war where religion played a role for the soldiers, a source of succour, rather than a motivation. While soldiers’ accounts never made the ideological hierarchy of the role of religion explicit, its position within Falange ideology as defined by the wartime discourse is still determinable. God was not conveyed as a singular motivating factor for *falangistas* in the consulted

²²⁰ Escalera, *Banderas Victoriosas...*, p. 43.

²²¹ José Antonio had little time for female involvement in politics, stating in an interview in 1936 that he was not a feminist nor in favour of giving women the vote. *La Voz*, 14 February 1936 cited in *Obras Completas...*, pp. 767-8; Furthermore his attitude towards women’s social roles was decidedly strict, citing the various evils of divorce, abortion and the birth of children out of wedlock in his *Carta a los militares de España*, Primo de Rivera, *Obras Completas...*, pp. 670.

²²² Elordí, *Hoy por Hoy...*, p. 57. Hector Colmegna also refers to her as ‘a woman without any culture’, *Diario de un médico...*, p. 102.

²²³ Nevares Marcos and de Yturriaga González-Jurado, *La primera bandera de Castilla...*, p. 164.

²²⁴ Corniero Suárez, *Diario de un rebelde...*, p. 353; Colmegna, *Diario de un médico...*, p. 32; p. 76. Nevares Marcos and Yturriaga González-Jurado, p. 68.

sources, the war was either for *Dios y Patria* or simply the *Patria*, never solely for God.²²⁵ Furthermore, unlike *requetés* who would praise God as they went into battle, shouting *¡Viva Cristo Rey!*, *falangista* battle-cries were generally nationalist.²²⁶ The content of songs also betrays the importance of religion to the soldiers of the *banderas*. While there were various songs that praised the *Patria*, the Falange itself, individual *banderas* or battalions and Franco, there were no overtly religious songs, although God was mentioned occasionally.²²⁷ Religious singing was confined to religious practice and this was indicative of the role religion assumed in the motivations of *falangista* soldiers. Mirroring the discourse presented to them: religion played a role in the conflict, but it did not define it.

A further area where Falange soldiers' attitudes reflected the propaganda they were exposed to was in their respect for the military as a national, political institution. The Army represented 'the heritage of all Spain'; they were not simply an armed force but the 'patriots of the honoured military'.²²⁸ Often the wishes of the *Patria* were assumed to be analogous with those of the Army, as 'to defend the *Patria* is axiomatic in the military'.²²⁹ It was a part of the duties of the Army 'to stand up for Spain against its enemies', who in this case 'were the rulers themselves'.²³⁰ Consequently, for some soldiers it wasn't simply the Army that rebelled against the Republic in July 1936 but in a wilful misunderstanding of events it was instead 'the *Patria* [that] rose against the traitors that oppressed them'.²³¹ For the majority, the adoption of the martial ideals of discipline and sacrifice was done with enthusiasm. Obedience to authority was viewed by many as a virtue: Miguel Vara del Rey praised the 'great spirit of combativeness and discipline' that he witnessed in the soldiers.²³² Furthermore, there was little desire to romanticise the structure of the militias within the Falange. They did not have the same mythic, rebel quality that the *Tercios* had for Carlists and acceptance of militarization and proper military rule was welcomed. According to Sisinio Nevares Marcos militarization was a necessity for the *Primera bandera de Castilla*, which needed 'intense discipline and instruction... precise ideas and training in movements and formations, in the handling of weapons and hand grenades, in the use of the land and the

²²⁵ A good example of the two being put together can be seen in Ortiz, *En el solluble...*, p. 54. 'God and *Patria* claim me and we must put them before everything'.

²²⁶ See the 'Dios' section of Chapter Five.

²²⁷ Of the numerous *falange* songs consulted in both Morey Gralla, *Memoria de la 3ª Bandera...*, and *Recopilación de Himnos Patrióticos...*, none were primarily about religion and none identified the war as a religious conflict.

²²⁸ Colmegna, *Diario de un médico...*, p. 8 Martínez Barrado, *Cómo se creó...*, p. 14.

²²⁹ García Fernández, *Diario de operaciones...*, pp. 8-9.

²³⁰ *Ibid...*, p. 9.

²³¹ Martínez Barrado, *Cómo se creó...*, p. 15.

²³² García Fernández, *Diario de operaciones...*, p. 21; p. 82.

means of action in offensive and defensive combat'.²³³ The respect for martial values was such that the perceived lack of military discipline within Republican ranks was used as a reason to ridicule the enemy. Antonio Cobos, Alejandro Corniero Suárez, José Antonio Martínez Barrado and Miguel Vara del Rey each commented upon the disorganized nature of their enemy, with the latter recounting a story where some *falangistas* had been caught behind an advance, but the enemy, with 'confusion as great as their disorientation', failed to recognize them and merely asked to which unit they belonged.²³⁴ One further martial value that had a great deal of currency amongst *falangista* volunteers was their attitude towards death and sacrifice. Much like their comrades in the Requeté there was, superficially at least, an enthusiasm to offer one's life for the *Patria* amongst Falangist volunteers. Soldiers were said to have attacked readily, attacking enthusiastically, while others that were wounded were said to have borne their lot with stoic resolve 'happy to have given their blood for their *Patria*'.²³⁵ While the reality on a personal, private level may have been different, the cultural expectation and outward expression of this was clear – it was an honour to give one's life for the cause. One *falangista* recalled that his thinking with respect to 'war, death [and] life' had been influenced by José Antonio's mantra that 'death is an act of service'.²³⁶

Franco's role in soldiers' motivations was not primary yet he was afforded a great deal of respect by *falangista* soldiers. He was mentioned across the consulted sources with a regularity that invites little comment, considering his position as not only leader of the armed forces and head of state but also as the head of the FET y de las JONS. He was referenced in songs and his name was shouted at the front as a means to infuriate the enemy, he was rarely not absent from *falangista* consciousness. While many of the references were everyday, some were more noteworthy. Pedro Morey Gralla, writing in 1938, stated that 'if ordered by Franco, I would reach and conquer the moon' while Sisinio Navares Marcos recalled Franco being referred to as 'our Caudillo – chosen by God to be the saviour of Spain'.²³⁷ Effectively, one must observe that this form of hyperbole accompanies dictators, especially those that cultivate a cult of personality as carefully as Franco. Nevertheless, it is important to show that through his presence within *falangista* memoirs and letters, Franco was a constant figure

²³³ Navares Marcos and Yturriaga González-Jurado, *La primera bandera de Castilla...*, p. 194.

²³⁴ Carlos Elordí, *Hoy por Hoy...*, pp. 107-8; Corniero Suárez, *Diario de un rebelde...*, p. 192; García Fernández, *Diario de operaciones...*, p. 17; Martínez Barrado Fernández, *Diario de operaciones...*, p. 21; p. 82.

²³⁴ Navares Marcos and de Yturriaga González-Jurado, *La primera bandera de Castilla...*, p. 194., *Cómo se creó...*, p. 38.

²³⁵ Colmegna, *Diario de un médico...*, p. 35.

²³⁶ Bullón de Mendoza, *Historias orales...*, pp. 52-3.

²³⁷ Morey Gralla, *Infantería...*, p. 47; Navares Marcos and Yturriaga González-Jurado, *La Primera Bandera de Castilla...*, p. 54.

whose position was not questioned. Only in exceptional cases (which will be analysed below) did he elicit a negative reaction from *falangista* soldiers. On the most part Franco's role was that of unquestioned leader of the Crusade, one that commanded a number of positions, head of the Army, the State and the Falange, which were greatly respected by *falangistas*.

In regards to the other political appendage that the Falange found itself forcibly connected to over the course of the war, the Carlists, attitudes were mixed. There is some evidence of *falangistas* seeing the relationship as a good one. Hector Colmegna, claimed that at the front 'the Falange and [the] Carlists are brothers and we fight for the same patriotic ideal'.²³⁸ While, José Antonio Martínez Barrado, stated that the *Patria's* 'best children... always died [wearing] a red beret or a blue shirt' and that 'the single movement with a single flag and unique program' was the best 'means of contributing to the greatness of the *Patria*, of unifying life'.²³⁹ Yet, as outlined in Chapter Five, there was a degree of conflict between the two groups at a ground level and, as we shall see in the following section, some *falangista* soldiers were not best pleased with the Unification. However, the antipathy that informed this discord was pronounced amongst *falangistas*, whose attitudes towards Carlists, unless specifically challenged by *requetés'* conduct, was often limited to talk of their bravery on the battlefield.²⁴⁰ The reasons for this may have been down to the senior nature of the Falange's role in the political union and the consequent dominance enjoyed by the Falange over the Carlists on most issues.

From the sources analysed, it appears that the majority of volunteer *falangista* soldiers were sufficiently motivated during the conflict. The reasons for this lie in the fact that the majority of their concerns were being addressed by the political programme presented to them and many overlooked the missing ideals such as the 'revolution'. They were, in their eyes, fighting a patriotic war against an enemy that represented all that they hated. There was limited focus from many of these *falangistas* on the political machinations on the rebel side, with most focussing instead upon the military task at hand. However, there was an element of the Falange that rejected the new pragmatic arrangement and remained committed to doctrine – for them the sacrifices made in April 1937 were not ideologically acceptable.

²³⁸ Colmegna, *Diario de un médico...*, p.53.

²³⁹ Martínez Barrado, *Cómo se creó...*, p. 69-70.

²⁴⁰ Bullón de Mendoza, *Historias orales...*, p. 52. Here a *falangista* talks of how he had always respected *requetés* as 'very brave guys, who always went first and they were the best we had in Spain' until a group took it upon themselves to brutally attack their comrades from the Falange over political gripes.

Too *falangista* for the FET – criticism of the New Spain from within the Falange

During the war itself, as we have seen, it is clear that both the leadership and soldiery of each political affiliation were, through ideological inclination, prepared to sacrifice certain political ideals in the pursuit of victory. This was the case for the Carlists, the CNT and even the PNV. The Falange were no exception, however, much like the other groups, simply because the majority accepted the political bargain that had been proposed, it did not mean that the entirety did. In the following few paragraphs we will see that although the alliance held throughout the war it did not mean that *falangista* ranks were bereft of disquiet, especially over the Unification and the failure to sufficiently embrace the national-sindicalist revolution beyond lip service. There existed vocal critics of the political realities of Francoism, *falangistas* who felt that the political bargain accepted was not in keeping with *falangismo*.

One such critic was Lluís Pagès i Guix, a Catalan *falangist*, whose criticism of the Francoist political alliance was published in his 1937 work *La traición de los Franco* by Republicans first in *castellano* in Madrid and a year later in Catalan in Barcelona.²⁴¹ The reliability of a source used as propaganda by the opposite side would normally be somewhat suspect, however the Pagès i Guix's *falangista* outrage remains, offered up as evidence for Franco's duplicity even to his own followers. Furthermore, in the preface to the Catalan version, Pagès i Guix is mocked as a 'lover of historical hyperbole, a friend of the invented terminology of Giménez Caballero' and in his naïveté he 'suffered a cruel disappointment' by believing in Franco and his allies, who had been 'the reactionaries of always, the old, soulless landowners, exploiting the misery of ten centuries of Spanish life'.²⁴² Pagès i Guix's criticism of the Franco regime, followed these lines, claiming that it eschewed all the features that characterised an authentic fascist regime. For Pagès i Guix a 'fascist regime is characterized by dynamism and the speed of its works and performances' while under Franco it was a ponderous, typically 'cacique' affair, taking months to create committees and commissions and to mobilise the population. The *Nuevo Estado* was, in his estimation, nothing more than 'staged Fascism'.²⁴³ Moreover, it was not only technically poor at implementing fascist ideology, but actively worked against it, it was 'a fascist government formed by antifascists which prohibits the establishment of fascist unions, which imprisons, pursues and shoots

²⁴¹ Lluís Pagès i Guix, *La Traïció dels Franco – Revelacions d'un falangista que ha viscut de prop la incapacitat i el terror del general rebel i el seu germà Nicolau i l'absència total de govern i organització en la zona salmantina*, (Barcelona: Comissariat de Propaganda de la Generalitat de Catalunya de Catalunya, 1938); Lluís Pagès i Guix, *La traición de los Franco: ¡Arriba España!*, (Madrid: Imprenta de Sánchez, 1937).

²⁴² Pagès i Guix, *La Traïció dels Franco...*, p. 6; p. 9.

²⁴³ *Ibid...*, p. 48.

fascists'.²⁴⁴ The 'New Falange was fed the old *cedismo*' by a regime that was committed to nothing less than the re-imposition of *caquismo*. According to Pagès i Guix, the end of the war would only spell a return to 'the flattening days of decadence' allowing for 'Franco to govern with omnipotence, assisted by a cohort of rich aristocrats without conscience of Spanish civil dignity'.²⁴⁵

These criticisms were not limited to the civilian sector as many Falangista soldiers felt themselves to have been disappointed by Franco's *Nueva España*. A fine example is Alejandro Corniero Suárez, a *Camisa Vieja* from Palencia who volunteered at the outbreak of War.²⁴⁶ In Corniero Suárez's opinion, the Post-Unification Falange had abandoned its ideals in exchange for a share of political power. He felt that 'the vain desire to look, figure and command [had] invaded all these hierarchies of the Falange' and that by taking Franco's deal the movement's 'sense of sobriety and austerity appear[ed] to be yielding to the tempting voices of sumptuous accommodation and official cars'.²⁴⁷ On the case of José Andino, the former car mechanic and provincial chief of the Burgos Falange who now experienced the trappings of power, Corniero wondered:

Will he endure the consequences of change without being dazzled? Will he be able to remain independent and true to our spirit? Will he know to say no, if he ever must say it? Will he be willing to return to his garage if it reaches his dignity to demand? Will he not have become – like all or nearly all others within hierarchies – a puppet?²⁴⁸

In regards to Franco himself, Corniero Suárez, a keen admirer of José Antonio, saw the general as a less than impressive Caudillo. He questioned his moniker, calling it an 'inadequate imitation of the Führer and the Duce', stating that it did not suit Franco as 'a Caudillo has to have a hook and personal appeal, physical good looks, which are absent in Franco'. To Corniero Suárez, despite Franco being 'a great general' did not have the qualities to be a Caudillo as a 'Caesar... is born, not made'.²⁴⁹ The Unification, in the eyes of this *Camisa Vieja* had undermined his party's ideology and identity. It was not the party he had joined nor did it stand for the ideals that he had joined up for nor was it led by a man he

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*..., p. 49

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*..., p. 35.

²⁴⁶ Corniero Suárez, *Diario de un rebelde*..., p. 180.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*..., p. 234.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*..., p. 234.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*..., p. 296.

politically respected; he therefore took the decision to resign his membership from the Falange:

And I have sworn to myself – because I believe that the Falange of José Antonio has died indefinitely – never again to wear blue shirt, nor to take part in public events where you have to sing *Cara al Sol* and raise the arm. For me, those things are sacred relics, from whose desecration I will move away. Henceforth, no politics.²⁵⁰

Yet despite his resignation from the Falange, Corniero Suárez remained a soldier in the Army and had no desire to resign, the reasons he provided will be examined in a few paragraphs. However, we must first consider the wider implications of disillusioned *falangistas* as a whole.

It is therefore safe to assume, given Corniero Suárez's verbose testimony, that at least some Falangist soldiers were not the automatons they were portrayed as by the Commissariat. They had political ambitions for Spain, the very reasons they took up arms, and these could conflict with that of the ruling elite.²⁵¹ While for many Franco was the national saviour, for others, as we have seen, he was not the Falange's true Caudillo. However, despite the disappointment in Franco's failure to fully embrace *falangismo*, soldiers remained affiliated to the ideas of the Falange. Even they who left the party, such as Alejandro Corniero Suárez, could not abandon their commitment to the values of the movement simply through dissatisfaction with its current political trajectory. In this context the strength of the Falange's motivational programme can be seen. Through its emphasis of strong immutable ideals, those of the *Patria*, anti-Marxism and religion, dissent was weakened. The evocation of these values trumped the ideological importance of political questions as they were more fundamental to the war effort. For example, in both the wartime discourse and soldiers own interpretations, the redemption of the *Patria* was more important than the imposition of the national-sindicalist revolution. The discourse presented to soldiers emphasised this, *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo*, for example, rationalising the unquestioning obedience to authority as 'geared to the high service of the *Patria*'.²⁵² Therefore, even if a soldier was dissatisfied with his political lot, this did not mean he would abandon the war effort as the

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*..., p. 244.

²⁵¹ As Parejo Fernández in *Entre la disciplina...*, p. 186, states, the various expulsions in the Republican period, such as that of Ramiro Ledesma Ramos, are testament to not all *falangistas* being unquestionably loyal to the leader.

²⁵² *Los Combatientes y el Caudillo*..., pp. 29-30.

entire motivational programme was focused on emphasising ideas which were fundamental to his political identity and rejection of these would have represented a worse betrayal than the abandonment of the national-syndicalist revolution.

Therefore it is in the face of criticism that we see the strength of the Crusade as an overarching mobilising framework, especially when applied to *falangistas*. Despite its presentation, it was not a monolithic programme that could to be taken or left in its entirety. The regime's refusal to embrace the full programme of the Falange could be easily criticised by *falangistas*, yet certain facets, such as the reverence for the *Patria* and the strident anti-Marxism, could not. The success of the Crusade model lay in the fact that its simple programme managed to suitably entice and ensnare almost the entirety of the Spanish Right, whether they were reactionary or revolutionary. By creating such a Manichean discourse, an 'us versus them' mentality, and backing it up with extreme, often lethal, force (in which those who opposed the will of Franco were severely punished, even if they were not leftist) the programme succeeded in making all the political groups of the rebels supporters of it.²⁵³ It engaged with positive attitudes sufficiently to create a relative level of consensus and dealt with sedition by either evoking the most important ideological aspects of the programme or through violence.

The examples from the previous paragraph show the explicit ways in which *falangistas* were admonished for criticising the decisions of leadership and tempted to support it through appealing to various other fascist concerns. In those particular cases, the necessity of unquestioning obedience to hierarchy was rationalised in order to save the *Patria*, but there were myriad other ways of ensuring a disenchanted *falangista* continued fighting. The experience of Alejandro Corniero Suárez, who himself had never been convinced by the cult of the *Caudillo*, shows how this concept worked in practice. In his case it was achieved by appealing to his fascist strength of feeling towards the very act of combat. Corniero Suárez, despite all his political objections, continued to fight in the war even after his resignation, he gave up his involvement in the political machinations of the Nationalists, but never abandoned his post at the front. He stated in his diary that he would 'continue to fight for elegance and honesty', which is what he felt the Crusade still represented, even if he now felt that the Falange were doctrinally compromised. However, he also gave a personal reason which highlighted the effect that the machismo of fascist politics had had upon him. He asserted that he would continue to fight for the reason that 'if one day I have sons and

²⁵³ Hedilla, Fal Conde and José María Gil Robles serve as high profile examples of rightists who fell afoul of Franco during the war.

they ask me what I did in the war I want to be able to naturally answer them; I was at the front, to the end'.²⁵⁴ This extract from Suárez shows the strength of the *falangista* programme, as despite his resignation from the Falange because his political values had been compromised, as a man who had previously devoted himself to the chauvinistic and bellicose Falange, one which celebrated its own commitment to violence, he could not alter his fascist morality. He had, before his resignation from the movement, criticised members of the Falange's Press and Propaganda Commission for their reluctance to take part at the front, such was its importance to him.²⁵⁵ His experience of the *falangista* military-political milieu, which celebrated the martial above all else, meant the idea of disobeying military orders or abandoning a post at the front was not only antithetical but anti-masculine, and therefore morally repugnant. The abandonment of the role of the soldier, in an environment where the military was so revered, would have been unthinkable. Add this to his previously noted disdain for the enemy as well his religious feeling and Alejandro Corniero Suárez, more or less following his co-option into the armed forces, was to all intents and purposes fully committed to the Crusade until its resolution. The die was set once he signed up in Palencia – he was morally committed to fight until the end.

While Corniero Suárez's experience was his alone, it highlights the moral obligation that the Crusade constructed for *falangistas* with grievances. They were not individuals in a conflict fighting for their own agendas, but members of the Falange and consequently they were not masters of the exact political programme for which they fought. They would have had their own ideas about what they fought for when they signed up, many of these coinciding with the Falange's, hence their membership; however, given the intolerance of dissent as well as the cultural emphasis on hierarchy and obedience, they had no input into the programme itself, especially after Franco's leadership. Consequently soldiers who had reservations were given the option of accepting the situation or face abandoning the ideals which the Falange still maintained, many of which, as stated, were fundamental to the political identity of all *falangistas*, *Camisa Vieja* or no. Furthermore even those who were brave enough, like Corniero Suárez, to make a stand against the Falange's metamorphosis, did not stop fighting in the Crusade. He remained opposed to the Republic and he remained personally committed to the fascist morality of the virtues of the martial and therefore remained at the front. He may not have been a Francoist, but in strictly military terms his

²⁵⁴ Corniero Suárez, *Diario de un rebelde...*, p. 244.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid...*, p. 243.

political conversion was an irrelevance, as he remained a soldier at the front willing to do what was asked of him.

Falangists fighting in the Crusade

Much like the one that preceded it, this chapter set out to answer two important questions: the first asked how *falangista* wartime discourse fit with the overarching Crusade framework. The second questioned the success of this discourse in motivating *falangistas* to fight and die in the Crusade? In answering the first question the chapter looked at the themes of the Falangist '*gran empresa*' and found that on the most profound points of the war, they differed very little from those of the overarching Crusade framework aside from an additional revolutionary, fascist rhetoric. They were presented in more fascist terms and given a palingenetic twist, but the key themes of *Patria*, anti-Marxism and religion were all key pillars. There were points of departure, however these were explained away through clever rhetoric, as was the case with Franco's assumption of the leadership, or scaled back as the war progressed, as was the case with the revolutionary rhetoric. In regards to the second question, the answer is more complicated, but the overall conclusion was that they were sufficiently motivated to fight in the conflict by the rhetoric with which they were presented.

It cannot be forgotten that the initial motivation for *falangistas* was first and foremost the redemption of the *Patria* through the removal of the Republic. This was the case even for the most vociferous critics, Lluís Pagès i Guix stating that the very revolution he so wanted the Falange to implement was to undo 'the fraud of April 14'.²⁵⁶ This was also a primary aim outlined in Falange wartime discourse: there was no chance of the Republic ever returning if the rebels won. Following this there was the wish to impose a regime that embodied their values (if not a national-syndicalist state). This proved almost as straightforward, as many of the Falange's ideals were already included in the Crusade discourse: nationalism was the primary concern of the conflict, religion was honoured and a virulent opposition to democracy and its allies permeated almost all aspects. In addition to this and on a more pragmatic political level, the Falange was now the party of the State and its higher-profile members had a direct influence on government policy. However, despite the commitment to national-syndicalism in the early stages of the war, following the Unification the revolutionary aspects of the party's programme were gradually distanced from the core of the rhetoric, either ignored or spoken of in abstract terms rather than as tangible concerns. Yet despite this retreat, for almost all *falangista* soldiers the issues that the wartime martial-political programme emphasised proved sufficient for them to fight. The Falange may have

²⁵⁶ Pagès i Guix, *La Traïció dels Franco...*, p. 46.

sacrificed its independence, but it had also gained a great deal – that was made abundantly clear to the soldiery. To put it in contemporaneous context, if the Unification could be seen as bargain (inasmuch as anything forced upon an entity can be), the Falange had come off a good deal better than their newfound allies in the Requeté, who, despite some conflagrations, were some of the most committed combatants in the conflict.

Furthermore, even some of those who were politically disillusioned remained militarily committed, such was the strength of the ideals evoked. By creating a narrative where the conflict was one between good and evil, one in which participation was a measure of masculinity, the Falange's programme managed to maintain continued military support even from those who were, to an extent, politically opposed to it. In simple terms: despite their political reservations, Alejandro Corniero Suárez and his ilk remained at the front. Moreover, we cannot ignore the scope of this thesis. The aim was to see how soldiers were motivated to fight in the war, not whether or not they were all made into lifelong Francoists. In regards to this, the programme must be seen as relatively successful. Falangists, on the main, stayed at the front and although there were cases of desertion, these were few, especially when considered against the statistics of their Popular Army equivalents.²⁵⁷ Many remained fiercely committed to securing the ideals that remained 'in play' under Franco, those outlined in the previous section: *Patria*, Faith, anti-Marxism. The forced Unification with the Carlists and a lack of movement in regards the revolutionary programme did not take away from the fact that the Republic stood for none of these things. The choice was therefore very simple.

Robert Fraser's *Blood of Spain* has a fine example of the ideological compromises of a Falange soldier in the conflict. Albert Pastor, a *Camisa Vieja* from Valladolid, had been a committed revolutionary in the days of the Republic, he was firmly behind the national-syndicalist revolution which to him meant:

re-distributing part of the wealth of the country in a new, more just manner; it mean[t] everyone would have to work – but work in harmony together; it was pure evangelism, the doctrine of Jesus Christ that everyone should live better, not that some should be well off and others poor'.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ Seidman, *The Victorious Counterrevolution...*, p. 74.

²⁵⁸ Fraser, *Blood of Spain...*, p. 87.

However, when discussing the conflict itself, this idealism was nowhere to be seen and Pastor adopted a far more hard-nosed approach:

We were there to fight a common enemy, when the war was won there would be time enough to settle our differences... Although the Falange command in Valladolid opposed me, I imposed collaboration with *requeté* units. It was the only way to win the war.²⁵⁹

Pastor's pragmatic choice, while not characteristic of all *falangistas*, is one which highlights the ultimate terms in which soldiers affiliated to the Falange viewed the war – co-operation or defeat. Almost the entire soldiery chose the former, most happily, some at pains, but there was no mutiny in *falangista* ranks.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*..., p. 325

Conclusion

The Spanish Civil War, as established, was not a stand-off between two singular ideological monoliths; what the failed coup d'état of Jul 17-19 1936 instead ushered in was the simultaneous conflagration of myriad agendas along various political axes. In the summer and autumn of 1936 each political group's volunteers marched to the front with the belief that they were doing so in order to making a 'better', from their ideological standpoint, Spain (or *Euskadi*) than the one that currently existed. However, the logistics of having so many competing ideologies allied with the realities of war ensured that either compromise or servility was required from each of these groups. The result was that many previously politically affiliated volunteers were presented with a situation in which the values for which they went to war had now become unattainable. Over the course of this thesis I have set about analysing the strength of each overarching motivational programme in galvanising these soldiers to fight for values which may not have been their original concerns and the success achieved in synthesizing the ideology of each group with these overarching programmes. The immediate conclusion drawn is that the Crusade, with its strong, universally appealing values allied with its malleability, its 'liability to change', was better suited to the circumstances.¹ 'Republicanism', while equally malleable, did not have as varied an arsenal of motivational values, with perhaps only proletarianism rivalling the ideals of the Crusade in its emotive capacity. However, the conclusions drawn are not this simple as we have seen that the Crusade was not a complete and unequivocal success, nor 'Republicanism' an abject failure.

The differences between the two motivational programmes, in content and delivery, were often great and these disparities have been emphasised throughout the thesis. However, alongside these divergences a number of similarities have also arisen that, in this concluding section, are worthy of further examination. Perhaps least surprisingly, each programme emphasised the wickedness of their enemy, resorting to *ad hominem* attacks on leaders and listing their supposed atrocities. Moreover, both professed to be the 'true Spain' and that the enemy was a foreign invader, with those who could not be immediately labelled *extranjeros* instead branded as traitors. From time to time each even employed the same national myths, with the War of Independence being a popular shared historical reference, alongside the legend of *El Cid*.² Both sides criticised the perceived military approach of the other as the

¹ García Pelayo, *Los mitos políticos...*, p. 20.

² For references to *El Cid* see *La Ametralladora...*, 11 April 1937, p. 5, *Solidaridad Obrera*, 20 November 1936, p. 1; Núñez Seixas, *¡Fuera el invasor!...*, p. 205.

‘popular’ nature of Popular Army was ridiculed by the rebels and the ‘inhuman’ approach adopted by the rebels acted as a strong theme of Republican discourse. Even religion was employed on each side, albeit to differing extents, with its use as a motivating concept being effectively limited to the Basque nationalists in the Republican zone.³ Aside from the general themes certain individual ideas were seen on both sides of the conflict. One interesting example of this is each side accusing the other of stealing or selling national treasures, the rebels stating that the Republicans were offering the gold and artistic heritage of Spain to the highest bidder, while the Republicans accused the rebels of selling the contents of the nation’s soil to their fascist allies. There were even occasional cases of such ideas appearing almost verbatim in the rival discourses, as both the anarchist *Umbral* and the Carlist *El Alcázar* both ran regular pieces with almost the exact same title: ‘That Which Cannot Return’.⁴ The end goal of each was the same however, as both aimed to convince volunteer soldiers that their situation was better than it had been previously or would be if the enemy were to win, offering reassurance that political compromise was not a defeat.

In any comparative study such similarities are expected to be encountered with their discovery often offering interesting historical conclusions.⁵ This thesis is no different as the above similarities point to the larger fact that the motivation of men, regardless of their political stripe, often relied on very similar practices and values. Discourses based in national sentiment and hatred of the enemy, as well as those which emphasised the good that the war had already achieved, all proved to be universally adopted means of motivation. The soldiery of each side accepted them, with nationalism and antipathy towards ‘the invader’ each being prevalent in the memoirs, diaries and letters of the soldiers. From the importance of such issues to almost all soldiers we can conclude that despite the numerous political affiliations on each side, they were all suitably motivated by a sense that they fought for the best interests of the people, relative to the situation, and in the fear that the enemy would impose something alternative. This second part needs to be reiterated for, as we have seen across the discourse examined, fear of the enemy proved to be one of the most employed parts of propaganda.

³ However, it is worth noting that the means by which it was employed differed greatly, for while the rebels’ religious interpretation meant that the war was an apocalyptic Crusade for divine justice the Basque nationalist interpretation embraced the more pacifist elements of the Catholic faith, talking of social justice and a desire to not become brutalized by conflict.

⁴ *Umbral*, 31 July 1937, p. 3; *El Alcázar*..., p. 8 February 1939, p. 6. *Umbral*’s was entitled ‘That Which Cannot Return’ while *El Alcázar* actually ran ‘That Which Must Not Return’.

⁵ John Robertson, *The Case for the Enlightenment – Scotland and Naples 1680-1760*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 44-51; Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors*..., pp. 6-7.

When one looks at the two programmes, stripped of the manner in which they were disseminated, there is hardly a comparison to be made as to which is the more compelling. As stated, the Crusade would employ values that were not only decidedly forceful but also universally appealing to all those on the Right in Spain. Religion, nationalism and counterrevolutionary rhetoric appealed across ideological lines and this triumvirate would prove to be a strong foundation for the Crusade. A further strength was that the National Army could rely on an ideological pre-disposition towards the martial from the men it was charged with motivating. The masculine ideal of martially honouring the *Patria* was celebrated to a far greater degree by those on the Right than by those on the Republican side. Discipline, rather than something that needed to be educated and instilled was embraced, already integral to ideology. While the *milicianos* of the Republic would leave the front at the end of the day and vote on orders, the volunteers of the *banderas* and the *Tercios* would mock them for this. Ideologically speaking, therefore, volunteers affiliated with the Falange and the *Tercios* were more predisposed to being soldiers than their leftist counterparts. The result was that there was an enthusiasm for the martial among both *falangistas* and *requetés*, meaning that military practices such as harsh discipline and the command of officers were readily embraced. The strength of the Crusade was further enhanced by the fact that its key symbols, ideals and themes of identity were sufficiently powerful but also limited enough to create a cohesive programme. How each of the triumvirate of God, *Patria* and hatred for the Republic was presented to soldiers of the *banderas* and the *Tercios* was suitably different but in a superficial interpretation, all the groups of the *Ejército Nacional* fought for these same three values. The importance and ordering of each – *Dios, Patria y Rey* versus *España Una, Grande y Libre* – may have differed between each group, but a campaign led by the Army for the *Patria* against the Republic was unlikely to find any opponents within the Falange or the Communion. Moreover, although there may have been some ideals which were lost at the wayside in the wake of the Unification, it did not completely ideologically compromise either the Falange or Tradition in such a way as the May Days did to the CNT, for example.

In comparison, the task facing the Republic was a harder one. It had neither the power, nor the inclination to issue a political solution as far-reaching as the Decree of Unification that could effectively silence legal dissent, nor did it have as powerful a message as that of the Crusade. The result was that its programme started from a far weaker position than the Crusade and ‘Republicanism’, by its very nature, was a compromise that galvanised very few of the Republic’s political factions on its own. The presence host of different ideas for each group, a hotchpotch of various symbols with no singular coherent ideological

through-line meant that the creation of a cohesive motivational programme proved very difficult. The result was a lukewarm *mélange* of leftism, proletarianism, nationalism and a commitment to social democracy that had none of the motivational potency of a religious Crusade to save the *Patria*. For while they who fought for Franco had the honour of dying for *Dios* and *Patria*, in which an attitude of permissive sacrifice was created, one where ‘death was seen as a tribute to the cause [they] were defending’, no similar fanaticism grew up around ‘Republicanism’.⁶

Moreover, the Republic was hamstrung by a relative lack of militarism and bravado in its constituent coherent groups. That is not to say that it lacked *machismo* – once militarization took hold and women were banished from the front normal martial service was resumed in the Popular Army’s literature as heroism and derring-do were extolled greatly.⁷ It is instead an emphasis upon the fact that there was no comparable reservoir of militarism in the ideology of the Republican units as there was in their rebel counterparts.⁸ This meant that respect for discipline and a willingness to accept traditional military mores (uniforms, saluting officers, etc.) and conditions (rationing, rotation of posts, etc.) as well as the sanctification of the martial, so important in convincing soldiers of the Army’s inherent worth and so ingrained within rebel groups, needed to be built from the ground up. Yet through the Commissariat it managed to create a propaganda system (backed, lest we forget by a comprehensive system of military discipline) that was able to motivate the various groups to continue to fight in a war that, due to a variety of external factors, was never the Republic’s to win.

In the Commissariat the Republic had a well-trained and committed cabal of individuals dedicated to convincing the soldiery of the importance of the conflict along the ideological lines dictated. Furthermore, they managed, through expert understanding of propaganda techniques, the ideological intricacies of the constituent Republican groups and sheer volume of output, to convince soldiers to fight for values that were secondary and tertiary to those for which they originally took up arms. This was made all the greater when one looks at the levels of animosity that were present within the Republic during the war. The

⁶ The attitude of one rebel soldier cited in Bullón de Mendoza, *Historias orales...*, p. 53. The comparative lack of the same zeal is expanded upon too, *Ibid...*, pp. 51-55.

⁷ There was a great deal on heroism as various Republican figures were held up as examples of military brilliance. Durruti was shown to have sacrificed his life for the Republic, Sáinz, *Cartilla Escolar Antifascista...*, p. 13; while Enrique Lister was the subject of a widely disseminated poem, *A Lister, Jefe en los Ejércitos del Ebro*, written by Antonio Machado in 1938 that praised the ‘noble sleepless heart’ and ‘strong fist’ of this ‘indomitable Spaniard’, cited in Aurora de Albornoz, *Poesias de Guerra de Antonio Machado*, (San Juan de Puerto Rico: Ediciones Asomante, 1961), p. 87.

⁸ The exception to this rule was the PCE.

‘May Days’ had seen the revolution that many in the CNT had spent years hoping for crushed, the Confederation stripped of the governmental posts it had sacrificed its ideology for and many *cenetistas* killed by agents affiliated with the PCE. As was detailed previously, there remained among *cenetistas* a level of animosity towards the PCE that never dissipated yet, through the work of the Commissariat, this did not come to bear in military affairs – tensions remained, but they did not conflagrate, a victory in the tinder-box polity of the Spanish Republic at war.

However, for all the achievements of the Commissariat, the failings of the overarching concept need to be noted as well. In Chapter Four, the case of the Basque nationalists, the failure of ‘Republicanism’ to appeal to a non-leftist party was laid bare as neither the ideology of the PNV nor the discourse used to motivate *gudaris* was able to weave itself into the broader Republic ideology. The result was that the ultimate disaster for Basque nationalism, the impending fall of Bilbao and an independent *Euskadi*, was met with little more than a whimper as *gudaris* were motivated to fight solely for their cause and not a broader one. The case of the PNV shows that it was too ideologically different from the rest of the Republic – its beliefs and values could never effectively be integrated into the overarching Republican ideology and, as we have seen, their alliance was one of mere capricious political convenience. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning in passing that, given all the praise handed down to the Commissariat by this thesis, it would be erroneous to conclude that the absence of commissars from the *Euzko Gudarostea* was the reason for a lack of Republican sentiment amongst *gudaris*. The absence of commissars was a product of the PNV’s lack of Republican zeal, the product of an alliance between two entities whose ideologies conflicted vastly and had too little common political ground on which to build a functioning alliance. The selection of the PNV as a case study was to address how a left-leaning Social Democratic ideology would be accepted by a conservative, petty bourgeois political group, and the conclusion has proven to be suitably predictable. Ideally, in any further published work based on this thesis, a further chapter on a different Republican group, a more detailed look at soldiers drawn from the UGT perhaps, would offer a more fruitful example of the success of Republicanism as a motivational framework.

The rebels, on the other hand, while not having to face anything akin to the ideological tensions, had nothing comparable in terms of motivational infrastructure. Due to the primacy of the Army and its pre-existing techniques, as well as material shortages, there was a reliance upon traditional means of official motivation and a far from extensive output of printed and broadcast propaganda. The result was that a potent shared ideological

platform, based on nationalism, religion and a desire to see the Republic and all it represented destroyed, was not as strong as it could have been. Animosity and rivalries between the groups, certainly on behalf of *requetés* towards their allies, were permitted to flourish and only dealt with, strictly, when they came to a head, as opposed to assuaged earlier through apposite discourse. Ultimately, however, these shortcomings had little bearing on the conflict itself as the programme of the rebels contained motivational ideals that, alongside macho militarism, were so integral to the ideology of the Carlists and the Falange that that each would agree to extensive political sacrifices in the name of victory.

Overall, despite the shortcomings in practical application, the strength of the Crusade as a unifying ideology was too great for it to be undermined. It lasted until the end of the war and continued to inform attitudes in Spain following the Civil War. The lukewarm, leftist ideas of the Republic, however, had little lasting effect, with the various constituent groups of the Republic resuming their bickering in exile.⁹ This in itself highlights the work done by commissars in convincing politically motivated individuals to fight, as the ideas they were impressing had very little lasting political impact yet, through their efforts proved sufficiently motivational at the time. The motivational frameworks constructed for each Army were expedient at the point use, but needed to be sufficiently tailored to suit each volunteer group. The Crusade satisfied the majority of ideological desires on the Spanish Right and was therefore sufficient to motivate Carlists and Falangists but the lack of a sophisticated means of dissemination meant that it was only effective in motivating them to fight, not in integrating them. Perhaps this is asking too much, but given the myriad points of ideological intersection and their conflation into a singular political organisation, it should have been on the agenda. Republicanism, on the other hand, was as broad as it could be without being diffuse and meaningless. This meant that the framework was able to motivate groups ranging from social democrats to the libertarian communists, it could not, however, appeal to conservative Catholics. The reluctance of the PNV to integrate with their allies was to the ultimate benefit of Franco, and while we can look at a reluctance on the behalf of the Republic to engage with ideas that were more to the Right of the political spectrum, it was the Catholic PNV and its reluctance to present the war as anything other than a struggle for Basque independence that meant that any form of Spanish Republicanism was unlikely to appeal. For *cenetistas*, due to political disappointment, Republicanism came to represent all that they could hope for in the war and the Commissariat went to great pains to emphasise

⁹ For a comprehensive overview of the Second Republic in exile see, Josep Sánchez Cervelló, *La Segunda República en el exilio, (1939-1977)*, (Barcelona: Planeta, 2011), *passim*.

how superior this was to the alternative. This line was neither the most inspirational nor aspirational of approaches, but, as illustrated in Chapter Three, it was sufficient to keep *cenetistas* and others fighting for the Republic on the front line. To put the thrust of this thesis into a succinct point, it is perhaps best to state that while the Crusade was the better programme 'Republicanism' was better delivered.

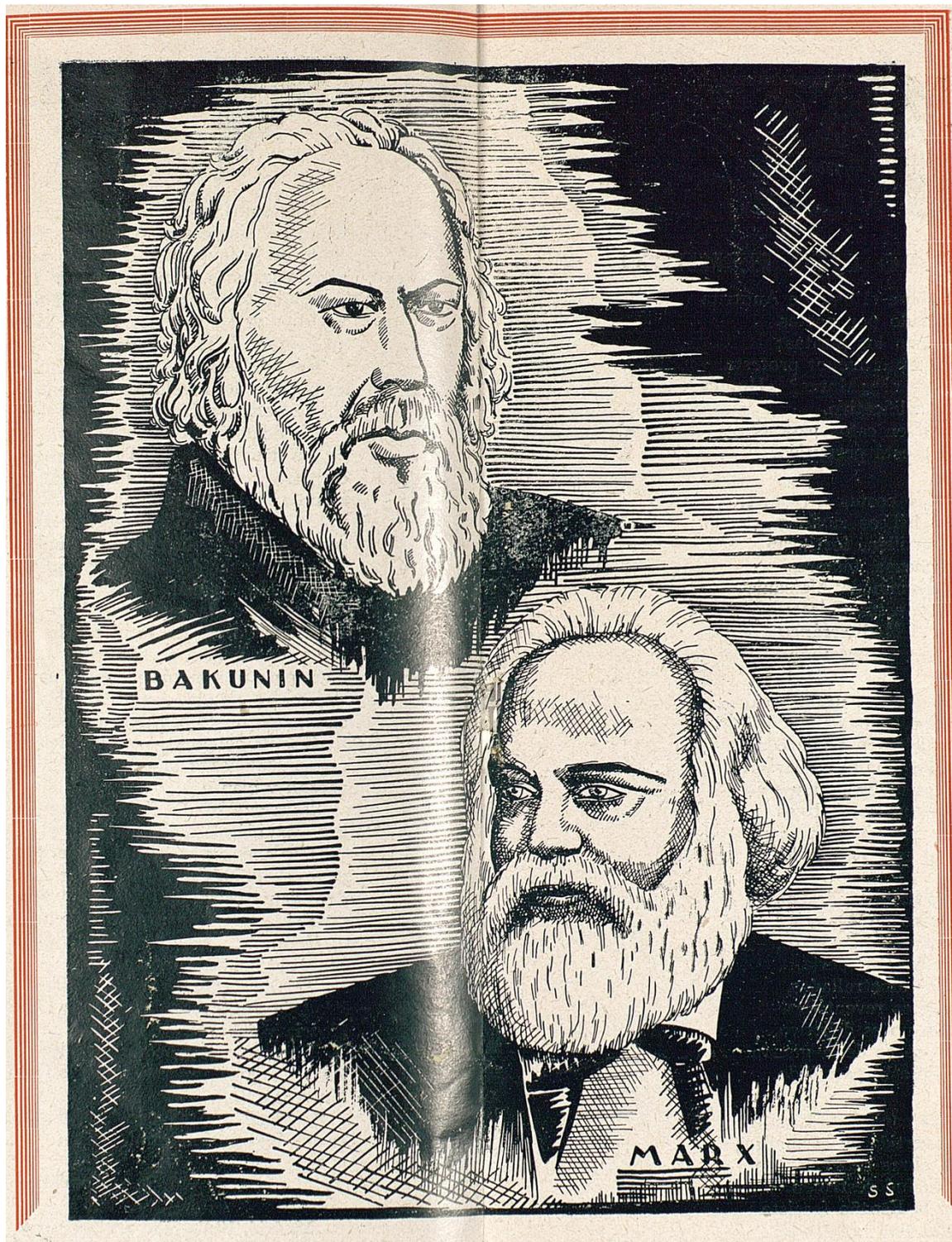
Finally, it is best to end on where next for this thesis. Before it is converted into a manuscript for any future monograph, the hope is to include a further chapter on Republican volunteers, focused on those affiliated with the UGT or the PCE, depending on the material available, which would add a 'median' comparison to the two extremes of the CNT and the Basque nationalists. Further research on soldiers' receptions could be possible, with more archival material mined from archives as yet unvisited, such as the *Archivo del Museo Popular de Asturias*, which could help bring some interesting insights albeit not alter the conclusions drawn. Overall, however, I feel the thesis serves its primary purpose as an original work on the topic of motivation in the Spanish Civil War, albeit one not yet ideally packaged for wholesale academic consumption.

Appendix I: COMMISSAR QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name and Surname(s)
2. Date and Place of Birth
3. Organization to which the Commissar belongs and date of membership
4. Positions held within said organization
5. History as a militant
6. Experience writing and speaking in public
7. Can the Commissar read and write?
8. Is the Commissar in action? In which unit?
9. In what other units has the Commissar provided service?
10. Date of entry into the Army and did the Commissar volunteer or was he mobilized?
11. Military history
12. Is the Commissar fit for service, auxiliary service or unfit for service?
13. If unfit for service, specify the reasons of motivation.
14. *Informe:*
 - a) Origin of the war
 - b) Origin of the Commissariat
 - c) Purpose of the Commissariat
 - d) Work of the Commissariat in the following aspects
 - i) regarding the soldier
 - ii) regarding the officers
 - iii) regarding their organization
 - iv) What must be the conduct of the Commissar in his daily life?

Source: Centro Documental de Memoria Histórica, Delegación Nacional de Servicios Documentales de la Presidencia del Gobierno, SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS-MADRID, 439, 1.

Appendix II: Bakunin and Marx



Subtitle: 'Here are two lighthouses of the wide, rough routes of the world Revolution'
Source: *Espartacus*, 18 July 1937, pp. 6-7.

Appendix III: *Canción del Gudari*

Gudari! Do not you feel
 sorry for the terrible solitude
 in which you left your land
 from the mountains to sand?
 Great Gudari! For your *Fueros*
 for the holy freedom
 of the land you were born,

....

He does not feel like screaming?
 Sound of the river, voice of the sea-
 Gudari: return to my side
 Gudari that for my sorrow
 since you left me
 I am dying of loneliness.
 I've never been foreign
 nor want to be again!
 Gudari: if you are brave
 sharpen the knife well
 do not let them, no, desecrate
 the shadow of liberty
 of the tree of your elders,
 the temple of your ideal.
 Great Gudari! For Vasconia
 free and strong like the sea
 give your generous blood,
 water of a new Jordan
 to wash the shame
 of your country, your home.
 Comrade, my brother
 sharpen the knife well
 and plunge it so boldly
 in the soul of the thug
 who cursed your *Fueros*
 that trod on your freedom!
 Asturias and the Mountain
 fight at your side
 To combat comrade
 To combat without delay
 because your land is nest
 of work and of peace
 for the history of your race
 for the national honor.
 Bilbao is worth your life
 Great Gudari: to fight like lions in heat
 as untamed beasts
 Bilbao is yours until
 from the mountains to the sand!

Bilbao is worth your life.
Great Gudari: to fight!

Source: Centro Documental de Memoria Histórica, Delegación Nacional de Servicios Documentales de la Presidencia del Gobierno, SECCIÓN POLÍTICO-SOCIAL, PS SANTANDER_O, 267, 1.

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