

Volume 6, Issue 5, July 2024 | SDGs: 4 | 10 | 16 | 17 | DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.12683328

A Particular Interpretation of the History of Spain

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EN | Abstract:

Franco's speeches are loaded with anti-liberal rhetorical arguments, peppered with anti-communism, anti-Semitism, and anti-Masonry. Many examples can be given. In them, he presented his particular interpretation of the history of Spain, a rhetorical model on which the revisionist theses would later be based. In this sense, we will study, as inspiring sources of the revisionist positions in the study of contemporary history, some examples that reflect his particular analysis of the history of Spain, which will be based on his oft-repeated theory of the Jewish-masonic-communist conspiracy.

Keywords: Franco, History of Spain, Spanish Civil War, War Crimes, Repression of Spanish Freemasons, Masonic Studies, SDG 4, SDG 10, SDG 16, SDG 17.

ES | Abstract:

Los discursos de Franco están cargados de argumentos retóricos antiliberales, salpicados de anticomunismo, antisemitismo y antimasonería. Son muchos los ejemplos que pueden aducirse. En ellos expuso su particular interpretación de la historia de España, modelo retórico en el que se basarán posteriormente las tesis revisionistas. En este sentido, vamos a estudiar, como fuentes inspiradoras de las posiciones revisionistas del estudio de la historia contemporánea, algunos ejemplos en los que se reflejan su particular análisis de la historia de España que se basará en su tantas veces repetida teoría de la conspiración judeo-masónica-comunista.

Palabras Clave: Franco, historia de España, Guerra Civil Española, Crímenes de Guerra, represión de los masones españoles, estudios francmasónicos, ODS 4, ODS 10, ODS 16, ODS 17.

A PARTICULAR VISION OF THE HISTORY OF SPAIN

Some highly significant examples of Francoist Spain's particular vision of history are reflected in numerous speeches delivered by Franco in various circumstances, practically until his death on November 20, 1975. In this regard, we can cite some examples as an inspirational source for the revisionist positions in the study of contemporary history.¹ One such example is this excerpt from Franco's speech delivered on July 18, 1937, marking the first anniversary of the Spanish Civil War. This speech summarizes some of the repressive Francoist themes, which were repeatedly emphasized throughout the war and subsequently during the Francoist regime until the dictator's death²:

Imperial Spain, the one that engendered nations and gave laws to the world, seemed to succumb at the dawn of July 1936, when the levers of power were seized by the hidden forces of revolution, and the only horizon that appeared was the intensely tragic one of witnessing the destruction of the most invaluable treasure: the spiritual values of a people.

Constantly defiled laws, denial of honor, insults to the homeland, apology for all crimes, dismemberment and parade of territories, insults to the army in ceremonies and parades, burning of convents and temples, murders of businessmen, red gangs collecting taxes on roads and paths, foreign powers presiding over the destinies of Spain, exploitation, ruin of the working classes, inciting them to despair and crime, absolute lack of honesty and sensitivity, enthronement of the "black market" in the councils and town halls as a reflection of a scandalous administration, organization of militias for the execution of the red revolution, clandestine distribution of weapons directed by the government, slow suppression of military commanders to the insurgents of the 34 revolution (...)

Such was, in synthesis, the social and political scene that Spain offered distressingly, as the people, looking at their army, blamed it for passivity, seeming to have no echo those exclamations so full of pain as revealing the pride of a people that does not resign to succumb: "We must save Spain!" it was said; "It is preferable to die with honor than to contemplate the destruction of our homeland (...).

In the early morning of July 13, a van leaves the Ministry of the Interior occupied by agents of authority, with which, upon reaching Velázquez Street, they tear from his home a prominent patriot (José Calvo Sotelo), whom they kill, and whose corpse they abandon in a cemetery. This state crime shocked Spain; there was no room for submissions, obediences, or hopes. The communist revolution, fostered from the

1 Of some revisionist historians who rely on Franco's "theses" to explain the Second Republic, the Civil War and Francoism itself -without being exhaustive- it is worth mentioning, by way of example, the following authors and some of their works: Ricardo De La Cierva, 1939 agonías y Victoria, Barcelona, Planeta, 1989; Ricardo De La Cierva, Franco, la historia: después de la venganza, la mentira, la calumnia y la incompetencia, Madrid, Fénix 2000; Ricardo De La Cierva, Historia de la guerra civil española, Madrid, Fénix, 2006; Pío Moa, Los mitos de la guerra civil, Madrid, La Esfera de los libros, 2022; Arturo Pérez-Reverte, Una historia de España Barcelona De Bolsillo, 2022; César Vidal, Recuerdo 1936. Historia oral de la guerra civil, Madrid, Anaya, 1996; and César Vidal, La guerra que ganó Franco, Barcelona, Planeta, 2006.

2 Heraldo de Aragón, Zaragoza, July 20, 1937. Second Triumphant Year.

heights of power, had exploded, and the army, interpreting the sentiment of all honorable Spaniards, in fulfillment of a sacred duty to God and Spain, decided to launch itself into its salvation (...) A few weeks, a few days later, everything would have been useless before the overwhelming impetus of a triumphant communist.

In the afternoon of July 17, when they were close to being imprisoned, the officers of Melilla rebel, and as one man announce to the remaining garrisons the salvation of Spain. The army, supported by the people and militias, rose against an unconstitutional, tyrannical, and fraudulent government, and in compliance with what perpetuates our military constitutive law, it stands as the defender of the homeland, defending it from its external and internal enemies (...)

The lodges, then thriving, call their affiliates, and it is Martínez Barrio, the Grand Orient, who consummates the betrayal. It appeals to the Masonic military chiefs, to the lukewarm hesitants, it gives reason to the army and its patriotic conduct, it puts them in an orderly government, it instigates them to withdraw the troops to the barracks, and when some chiefs, with punishable naivety, let themselves be convinced, they are also victims of the mobs of criminals that the government had armed.

The Popular Front government opens the prisons, delivers the weapons of the military parks to murderers and thieves, excites their low instincts, and impels them to crime and looting. And in such a way, a government, calling itself legal, handed Spain over to the most terrible revolution recorded in history. Glorious epic of the passage of forces through the air, the reconquest of Andalusia, the assault on Badajoz, the heroic conquest of imperial Toledo, the liberation of martyr Oviedo; the victory of invincible Mallorca. The capture of Málaga and, later, of Bilbao, are stages of glory. The superiority in the air, on land, and at sea follows the uprising of the armed institutions; here is the balance of a year.

Franquist Theory Of The "Anti-Spanish" Conspiracy

It will be in the speech of July 18, 1938, where Franco will offer his peculiar condemnation of the last third of the 19th century, "a century of old and decadent customs, of party regime, of futile efforts, of political irresponsibilities, and internal struggles that stimulated the division and fragmentation of the homeland." His particular analysis of the recent history of Spain will be based on his oft-repeated theory of the Judeo-Masonic-Communist conspiracy³. Among other things, the Caudillo will say:

In celebrating today the commemoration of the National Uprising, we do not only glorify an event significant to the life of Spain. It is a phase of World History that crowns the process of the Bolshevik revolution, which, having our land as the stage, assigns us the role of champions of a faith, a civilization, and a culture gravely threatened by red-communist principles. The episodes of our war are a continuation of those bloody revolutionary events of 1934, characterized in Asturias by libertarian excess and in Catalonia by a clear and decisive attempt at secession. Both instances

³ Juan José Morales Ruiz, Palabras Asesinas. El discurso antimasonico en la guerra civil española, Oviedo: Masónica, 2017: 513-519.

constitute the clearest demonstration of the intentions that later inspired those who formed the ill-fated Spanish Popular Front (...).

While this happens in public view, secret conspiracies agree on everything satanic and criminal to escape the vigilant attention of foreign informers. Thus, the greatest offensive recorded in History is prepared against the sovereignty and regime of other countries, exploiting a decaying liberalism that allows, in the strongest nations, a group of heartless individuals to betray their homeland, becoming servants of the Russian Komintern, working to the detriment of their country and in favor of the red imperialism they temporarily benefit from.

The new tactic achieved unprecedented successes in our nation; those who failed in 1934 in their attempts to seize public power through a bloody armed insurrection peacefully managed, in February 1936, to take control of the Government, offering Russia the Bolshevization of Spain (...).

The Reds can expect nothing from the fight on the front, having been defeated a hundred times. Therefore, in their desperation and delusion, they aim their attacks at what they perceive as weak points in our rear, exploiting the chivalry that governs our towns and cities. Orders for infiltration into our organizations, vile directives for our rear, flattering passions, cunningly capturing base ambitions, all the machinations of subtle propaganda crash against the firm roots of our Movement and the good sense of the popular masses. This behavior of the enemies of Spain's unity and greatness will not disappear with the war; on the contrary, they consider peace their medium, where they find their work less dangerous and more advantageous due to occasions of weakness and lusts. Therefore, our vigilance and the care for the purity of our creed must be greater (...).

And Franco takes the opportunity to redouble his attacks against liberalism and democracy:

To the system of appetites and political clientele, the National Movement opposes the disinterest and austerity of its members; to the political irresponsibility of the liberal parties succeeds the unity of our Crusade, organically constituted; a neutral and idealess State is replaced by the missionary and totalitarian one, which guides the people, pointing the way without hesitation or setbacks, unlike the formless mass represented by liberal manifestations, which are much like a bazaar, a muddled pilgrimage, where the directions multiply and halt and stumble (...).

And if some, in the covert service of the enemies of Spain's unity and greatness, or infiltrated with the liberal virus, murmur that this is not national or that it is pagan, we offer them the record of the Spanish State of our golden centuries, with its missionary character and its chain of ideals, which were the foundation of its empire, which falls and collapses when sublime aspirations are lost, when the State becomes indifferent, and when the deliberative assemblies of irresponsible men replace the thinking head of the Leader, in which foreign influence takes over Spain, and is the cause of our decline (...).

Therefore, we will remove those who persist in the vices of the old system: the "united and orderly" Spain, which had the yoke and arrows as its emblem, the Spain of a

responsible Leader and missionary character, is the great Spain of our traditions with distinctly Spanish characteristics, which today are adopted by nations that care for their imperial future (...). We must weld the people, divided by parties; we must unite half a century of separations; we must erase the prejudices of class struggle; we must do justice; we must educate a people and separate our youth from liberal remnants; we must elevate the principles of the Movement, so contrary to those that surrounded it in its adolescence, and therefore, to save Spain, we must take a firm hand against the deviations of the youth if anyone strays from the marked Line (...). Only the values, sources of energy, and virtues of the race of the old State should be saved (...).

The spirit of criticism and reservation is a liberal thing, which has no roots in the field of our Movement, and I repeat once again that its tone is military and monastic, and to the discipline and patriotism of the former must be added the faith and fervor of the latter (...).

In this same vein, we will focus on two speeches by Franco, delivered on May 19, 1939, on the occasion of the "Victory Parade." The Caudillo received the Laureate Cross of Saint Ferdinand, and notably moved, amid tears, Franco explained to his comrades the programmatic keys of what he wants his government to be. And once again, he will settle accounts with the recent historical past of our country.⁴

"We have paused in the battle," he tells them, "but only a pause in the battle; we have not finished our endeavor. We have not made the revolution. The blood of our dead has not been shed to return to the decadent times of the past. We do not want to return to the soft times that brought us the sad days of Cuba and the Philippines. We do not want to return to the 19th century. We have shed the blood of our dead to make a Nation and to forge an Empire (...).

We must forge the Unity of Spain, a better Spain, full of greatness and political content; we must do politics, gentlemen. A lot of politics. And I say politics with my heart filled with the word. Not the bad politics of the 19th century. Not the liberal politics that pitted brother against brother. Not the politics of division of our classes, which aroused your contempt and justly entrenched you in the barracks, but the politics of the Unity of Spain. For you must know that those Golden Centuries of our History, those centuries we look upon as the foundation and bedrock of the Spanish Nation, the centuries when Isabel and Fernando carried their banners across Spain, are brothers to the one we now illuminate (...). We do not want an easy and comfortable life. We want the hard life, the difficult life, the life of virile peoples (...).

A few hours later he launched his darts against "the enemies of Spain", in the speech he made through the microphones of Radio Nacional at the end of the never-ending "Victory Parade", clearly showing his anti-Semitic ideology⁵:

"I cannot hide from you today," he declares, "the dangers that still threaten our Homeland. The war front has ended, but the struggle continues on another field.

4 Delivered in Madrid on May 19, 1939, through Radio Nacional de España. Francisco Franco Bahamonde, Palabras del Caudillo, Madrid: Vicesecretaría de Educación Popular, 1943: 99-103.

5 Juan José Morales Ruiz, Franco y la Masonería, Un terrible enemigo que no se rinde nunca, Oviedo, Masónica, 2022: 444 to 446.

Victory would be in vain if we did not continue with the tension and unrest of the heroic days, if we allowed the eternal dissenters, the resentful, the selfish, the defenders of a liberal economy that facilitated the exploitation of the weak by the better endowed, to act freely.

Let us not deceive ourselves: the Judaic spirit that allowed the alliance of big capital with Marxism, which knows so much about pacts with the anti-Spanish revolution, cannot be eradicated in a day, and it lingers in the depths of many consciences. Much blood has been shed, and it has cost Spanish mothers a great deal in our Holy Crusade, so we cannot allow Victory to be jeopardized by foreign agents infiltrated in businesses or by the foolish murmuring of petty and short-sighted people (...). For this great stage of rebuilding Spain, we need no one to think of returning to the previous normalcy; our normalcy is not the casinos or the small groups, nor the partial pursuits. Our normalcy is the selfless and hard work of each day to make a new and truly great Homeland (...).

Thus, the easy and frivolous days, when one lived only for the present, are over; we will live for tomorrow; the phrase about our Empire is not hollow and without content, it is where we are headed; but we will only achieve it with renunciations, with sacrifice, with austerity, and with discipline.

The Speech Of December 31, 1939.

Franco always took advantage of the year-end holidays to address the Spaniards, remember those who fell for God and for Spain, and launch his monotonous proclamations against Spain's enemies. His speeches were endless and quite incomprehensible due to the Caudillo's peculiar tone of voice. On this occasion, it was his first speech after the war ended. It was read at 10:30 p.m. on December 31, 1939, through the microphones of RNE⁶. Franco again recalled the civil war, seizing the opportunity to blame the defeated side for the country's destruction and the dire economic situation. This speech interests us because it very well reflects his particular exercise of memory and his ability to manipulate the history of Spain, as we will see below:

The war of liberation has posed unprecedented problems for Spain: immense material destruction, annihilated spiritual values, a systematic plundering of public and private economic goods, and a unity threatened by the remnants of a political system with its groups and factions. The defeat of the Marxists inevitably left fermenting seeds of dissolution and rebellion within the national body among the mass of defeated enemies, exemplified by that wealthy Marxist leader who publicly advocated abandoning the nation to its stripped and ruined state.

An imperative of justice, on the other hand, imposes the necessity of not leaving unpunished the horrendous murders committed, whose number exceeds one hundred thousand; nor without correction those who, without being the material executors, armed the hands and instigated the crime, thus creating the duty to confront the

⁶ Ibidem. Páginas 369 a 383.

problem of a large prison population, tied by family bonds to a significant sector of our nation (...). The war, with its inseparable consequences, was the only path of redemption offered to Spain, lest it be plunged, for centuries, into the abyss of barbarism and anarchy in which other martyr nations of northwestern Europe are unfortunately struggling today. War has always caused a state of depression in economic life, from which even the strongest and most powerful nations have not escaped. Thus, Spain, which suffered the most terrible of known revolutions, must now go through a period of scarcity and limitations, in which the bad faith of hidden enemies finds favorable ground for their intrigues.

The Battles Of Peace

I have been warning good Spaniards, from the very day of Victory, to prepare for these battles of peace, to meditate on what their duties are towards a State that has cost so much pain to create, and to close ranks against the enemy. It is necessary to counter insidiousness and slander; to silence the mouths of the defamers. The tree is known by its fruits, and where there is a murmurer, a sower of alarms or insidiousness, there is always a traitor. All Spaniards, be on guard! Alert the Falange! What a place of honor it occupies in this struggle!

We must not underestimate our enemies because they seem small. It is evident to all that we are living through the most interesting political moments of our history, and in these moments, the internal enemies of our nation must unite with the eternal anti-Spain, among which stand out those small groups of cretins who parade their physical and moral misery, alternating between frivolous gatherings and places of debauchery, to pour out the instructions sent to them from abroad. They do not hesitate to seek an audience even in those sectors of the population affected by the penitentiary system, attempting to cast upon the regime they seem to sponsor the stigma of associating it with monstrous impunity for the crimes of our brothers (...). It is necessary for you to understand the magnitude of the situation, for the vandalic destructions by the Reds, with the theft and disappearance of the Spanish treasure and so many national assets, grievous as they are, would not contain so much harm if our previous economy had been strong and we were not suffering the consequences of several decades of neglect.

Damage caused by the Reds and by the war

If we add to this situation the systematic destruction carried out by the Reds of the national cabin, almost disappearing from the territory they dominated; the lack of planting in the occupied zone, which forced the whole of Spain to live off the provisions and harvests of the territory controlled by the nationals; the disappearance of raw material deposits, valued at many hundreds of millions in foreign currency; the systematic demolition of all the bridges in the area affected by the war, which number several thousand, many of which had been the dream of many generations; the disappearance of a large part of the railway material, reduced to scrap in many cases; the flight across the Pyrenean border of all the automobile material from the Catalan

region, of which we only recovered in a pitiful state, a miserable part; the theft and delivery to Russia of a significant part of our merchant fleet, amounting to 48,000 tons, still in the hands of the Bolsheviks; the ships lost in the ports that were red, of which in eight months we have saved more than 48,000 tons, with a current value of 200 million, an admirable work of our Salvage Commission; can anyone, in this situation, be surprised that bread may be scarce one day or that milk may be lacking or that transport does not function with the regularity of normal times? (...)

The new Spain cannot accept the type of unscrupulous trader or producer who speculates with the misery of others (...) I invite honest traders to reduce this sector of unscrupulous shopkeepers who, exploiting scarcity and speculating with goods, create in society an unfavorable atmosphere towards commerce, to the immediate detriment of their own interests, as by disturbing the reestablishment of normality and causing a great imbalance in the budget of modest classes, they accentuate their misery and delay the economic progress of the nation, of which commerce is the main beneficiary.

Now you will understand the reasons that have led various nations to combat and remove from their activities those races in which greed and self-interest are the stigma that characterizes them, as their predominance in society is a cause of disturbance and danger to the achievement of their historical destiny. We, who, by the grace of God and the clear vision of the Catholic Monarchs, freed ourselves from such a heavy burden centuries ago, cannot remain indifferent to this new blossoming of greedy and selfish spirits, so attached to earthly goods, that they would rather sacrifice their children than their murky interests. Everyone must be convinced that there can be no serious work or economic progress without price stability; and in the battle to achieve this, I expect the collaboration of all Spaniards, who must help us with their civic courage in the inexorable correction of those who attempt to trade with the misery of others (...)

The agents of anti-Spain

This Revolution that so many desire, and which must be the foundation of our progress, has powerful enemies; the same ones who, over the years, have been shaping our decline; it is the sad legacy of the liberal century, whose remnants attempt to revive and propagate in the dark, fostered by the eternal agents of anti-Spain.

They are the ones who, under Carlos III, introduced Freemasonry into our nation on the back of the Encyclopedia; the Francophiles, during the Napoleonic invasion; those who, with Riego, dealt the death blow to our overseas Empire; those who surrounded the Regent Queen when she decreed the extinction of religious orders and the expropriation of their goods, under the inspiration of the Jew Mendizábal; those who, in '98, signed the clumsy Treaty of Paris, which graciously united the loss of our Antilles with our Philippine archipelago, many miles from the theater of war; those who, in barely a century, made the grandest of Empires succumb, under the sign of the liberal and parliamentary monarchy; the same ones who, in our Crusade, serving foreign interests, issued the mediation directives and tried to spread discontent in our rear.

This is the record of an era and the stigma of a system that must be engraved in the minds of Spaniards. The generations that, in recent years, suffered its consequences with the miseries and the limited horizon of Spanish life still live, in which only the brief period of command of General Primo de Rivera offers a glimmer of hope, but the same ones who had been the authors of our decline in contemporary life were responsible for overthrowing him with their intrigues, and for the loss of the opportunity Spain had for its rebirth.

Do you not see analogous designs in our days? Do you not perceive how insidiously and malevolently attempts are made to sow doubts and foment distrust inside and outside, against our Movement, while rumors of anachronistic military dictatorships or the restoration of old powers are being spread, attempting to create an environment for the two-headed system that sterilized the work and facilitated the fall of General Primo de Rivera? Do you not perceive how they would like to turn our Revolution into a parenthesis that, betraying the sacrifices made, would allow them to return to the political farce, forever fallen? Do the authors of these claims think that Spain is still a country of serfs, in which some coffeehouse murmurs or the intentions of some opportunists can change the course of a historical Revolution for which so many of the best have died, without those who sacrificed so much defending this sacred inheritance with their lives?

Nothing and no one can divert our path, for the determination we put into the hard battles of the war we must surpass in those imposed by the realization of our national Revolution (...)

It is necessary to put an end to the hatreds and passions of our past war, but not in the liberal style with their monstrous and suicidal amnesties, which involve more fraud than forgiveness; rather with the redemption of the penalty through work, with repentance and with penance; anyone who thinks otherwise, or sins out of unconsciousness or betrayal. The damages caused to the Homeland are so many, the ravages caused in families and morals so severe, the victims demanding justice so numerous, that no honest Spaniard, no conscious being, can shirk these painful duties.

But justice is one thing and passion is another; justice must be serene and generous. It must not exceed the limits that decorum demands and exemplarily requires, and this is incompatible with satisfaction in the punishment of others, with rancor and hatred, with bitterness towards the defeated, which, if not admitted by Christian charity, is also repugnant to a patriotic imperative (...). This is how we felt and proclaimed it when our volunteers were heading to the fronts, this is how we affirm it over the warm blood of our Fallen, and this is what the deeply Catholic sense of our Movement demands.

Franco's enemies

And during the dictatorship, although with varying intensity, Franco combined his anti-Masonic and communist rhetoric with repressive actions of implacable harshness, directed against "the Reds", whom he considered "the permanent enemies of Spain", taking into account that this term included Republicans, communists, anarchists, Jews, Masons, Protestants, atheists, liberals, and all those citizens who might lead a simply different kind of life. The mere

existence of these "enemies" was incompatible with the traditional Spain - Catholic, rural, patriotic, and right-wing - on which Franco's dictatorship was based. Francoism found it necessary to improvise an ideology that would bring together the different political groups that made up the rebel side, and whose dominant feature would be the "exaltation" of Victory, and the justification of the Crusade (it was never called a civil war).

A long journey through the History of Spain

The Generalissimo came back repeatedly with the same refrain a few years later, in the Spanish Parliament, on June 3, 1961. It was the opening speech of the VII Legislature of the Spanish Cortes. Franco tried to demonstrate the legitimacy of the dictatorship by making a long tour through the History of Spain and recalling again July 18, 1936 and the "Crusade" and the "Victory":

The greatness of the Crusade, which only short-sighted people have failed to see, lies in having achieved the active and mutual participation of all good Spaniards, without distinction of nuances, in the most glorious epic of our History, with a heroism, generosity, and patriotic fervor that will never be forgotten. A nation at war is an unappealable referendum, a vote that cannot be bought, an adhesion that is signed with the offering of one's own life. That is why I believe that there has never been in the History of Spain a more legitimate, more popular, and more representative State than the one we began to forge almost a quarter of a century ago. (...)

In accordance with our historical destinies, on July 18, 1936, we once again became protagonists of an enterprise of supranational significance. On our soil then began the great struggle to save the fundamental values of Christian civilization. To this end, we devoted ourselves, willing to burn even our own existence for the unyielding cause of faith, law, and real freedoms, in the face of the denial that the materialistic conception of life and history, so inherent to liberal capitalism as to its ultimate and legitimate consequence, Marxism, represented for true freedom, law, and morality, which is now prevalent in most places at the service of Soviet Pan-Slavic imperialism.

That is why any interpretation, be it military, legal, philosophical, or literary, that seeks to frame our war within the classic and narrow limits of mere civil wars is an affront to reason and reality. What was at stake was Spain's very existence, the essence of tradition, and the Christian future of one of the noblest peoples of the Old Continent, and something equally decisive for the European lineage, so naturally, the rest of the countries could not remain indifferent.

Thus, the depth, dimensions, and significance of our War of Liberation transcended the Spanish territorial area from the very beginning, and due to its most radical motivations, its religious content and spiritual sign, its explicit will of militant service to what Christianity universally is and represents, it was authoritatively defined as a Crusade, the just war par excellence.

At the height of this quarter-century elapsed since 1936, the most dramatic period of the contemporary age, it presents itself to us as an overwhelming evidence, whether its origins and results are analyzed from the Spanish angle or considered on an

international scale. Without our Victory, the whole of Spain would be communist, and the Iberian Peninsula would have constituted in the last five decades the most effective and stimulating factor for the projection of communism over Latin America and the launch base of international Marxism over the African Continent, as documented in the texts of the Comintern on the successive phases planned for the expansion of Russian communism, which, being defeated in Spain, was forced to revise its logistical bases and operational schemes (...)

We knew beforehand that the price of our Victory, which we never doubted even in the most difficult moments, included the permanent and relentless offensive of international communism, and even of others whose salvation is still possible precisely because of the holocaust of our martyrs and fallen.

It is certainly the incomprehension of these others that most deeply wounds the sensitivity of the Spanish people; but this incomprehension will never be considered by us as a sufficient reason to confine ourselves exclusively to the Numantian defense of our fruitful internal peace, watching impassively the struggle waged across the globe, in which the dignity and freedom of men and Christian peoples are at stake (...)

Continuity and political stability

Now you see why we affirmed that the Regime born from the Crusade entered, from its inception, into the broad field of History. To be in it is to make it day by day, living with the guidance of correct decisions and exemplary conduct. In the face of the nostalgic, we are of our time; in the face of the iconoclasts and the uprooted, we are continuators of active tradition; in the face of the merchants of politics, we are servants of ideals; in the face of critical and sterile intellectualism, we are achievers; in the face of the skeptics, we are believers; in the face of the pragmatists without principles, we are loyal to a doctrine; in the face of liberal anachronism, we are current.

Our goal is to make possible, with example and indispensable institutional foresight, the continuity and political stability in the long term, which allows the accumulation of the effort of generations and the prosperity and peace necessary for the strength of the Homeland. ¡Arriba España!

Family demons

Another clear example of Franco's constant recourse to evoke the past in a way that benefited him is this speech delivered on November 22, 1966 in the Cortes:

It seems an opportune occasion, the thirtieth anniversary, to recapitulate on what has been done, examine what has been achieved, and meditate on the future (...) Thirty years constitute a long period in any historical context, but very especially in the times we have lived. In this generation, indeed, changes have occurred that in other less dynamically revolutionary eras would have required centuries.

In these decisive years, the global balance has been altered, international structures have been transformed, the world has experienced an unprecedented scientific and technical revolution, ideological and cultural assumptions have changed, and Humanity

aspires to new economic, social, and political formulas. If we look at our nation, the transformations have been no less: after our Crusade ended, we endured the sieges and threats of the great universal conflict; several times the dangers of war knocked forcefully on our doors, but without the gates of our homeland opening to the pressures from one side or the other.

God willed to give us the necessary strength, the precise foresight, so that this would be so, to the benefit of our people, dedicated to the honorable task of rebuilding their shattered home, until elevating it to a height it had not seen for nearly infinite times.

During these thirty years, I have dedicated all my will, all my work, and all my energies to the cause of Spain. And the distance separating the starting point from the imposed goals was so great that only faith and God's help gave me the strength to accept the high and grave responsibility of governing the Spanish people. Convinced that anyone who acquires this responsibility can never seek relief or rest; rather, on the contrary, he must consume himself in the completion of the enterprise begun, in the improvement of the chosen system, and in the completion of the task for which he was called by those who rose to save the Homeland, and which has been ratified before the world by the voice and adherence of our people for thirty years (...)

What was Spain like before our Crusade? A poor nation fallen into decline, so much decline! A noble country that centuries of decadence and servitude, always trailing behind foreign interests, had plunged into the most bitter disappointment. The Spanish people, so rich in virtues, had come to lose faith in themselves and had painfully taken refuge in the resignation of those who expect nothing, without being moved from it by voices or gallant attitudes, sporadically emerging here or there. The Spain of 1936, ruled by a Republic in which no one believed, except as a bridge of transition to chaos or to communist dictatorship, was a Spain in a state of agony (...)

Spaniards should remember that every people always has its familiar demons lurking, which are different for each one. Spain's are called: anarchic spirit, negative criticism, lack of solidarity among men, extremism, and mutual enmity. Any political system that harbors the promotion of these defects, the liberation of these familiar Spanish demons, will sooner or later, much more likely sooner than later, undermine all material progress and any improvement in the lives of our compatriots (...) Corresponding to the trust you have so often and effectively confirmed in me, I have dedicated my entire life to serving and making possible a political order of unity, authority, justice, and progress (...)

Franco's Speech on the occasion of the 1966 Referendum

On December 12, 1966, he asked Spaniards to vote "YES" in the National Referendum held on December 14, two days after his speech, reviewing the 27 years of peace since the end of the civil war. And among other things he said⁷:

⁷ Discurso de Franco pronunciado el 12 de diciembre de 1966.

You all know me. The older ones, from the times in Africa, when we fought for the pacification of Morocco; the now mature ones, when, amidst the disasters of the Second Republic, you placed your hope in me as Captain for the defense of the threatened civil peace; the combatants of the Crusade, because they cannot forget the emotional hours of common efforts for victory over communism; those who suffered under the yoke of red domination, because they will always evoke the infinite joy of liberation; those who have remained loyal to my Captaincy since then, because you are part of that victory over all the conspiracies and sieges that were laid against Spain; those who have lived through the incomparable peace of these twenty-seven years, encouraging our people with your songs of faith and hope, because you all know well how I have always kept my word.

I was never driven by the ambition for command. From a very young age, responsibilities beyond my years and rank were placed on my shoulders. I would have liked to enjoy life like so many Spaniards; but the service of the Homeland took up my hours and occupied my life. I have been steering the ship of the State for thirty years, protecting the Nation from the storms of the current world; but despite everything, here I remain at my post, with the same spirit of service from my younger years, dedicating what remains of my useful life to your service.

Is it too much to ask that I, in turn, request your support for the laws that, for your exclusive benefit and that of the Nation, are to be submitted to a Referendum? I wanted to remind you in these last hours of the exact scope of the question you are going to answer, because I believe it is a unique occasion for your citizenship to set an example to the world, a lesson to future generations; it should constitute a political capital of impressive wealth. Spaniards: Your Yes on this occasion is the most dynamic, significant, and effective. Long live Spain! and ¡Arriba España!

The Future Is Secure

It stands to reason that, as Franco grew older, he would⁸ think about what might happen "in the future." This concern was also shared by his circle and his supporters, especially because the dictator's health was failing, and Franco was no longer the man he once was. Although it was always said that Franco had "iron health," the truth is that he had had three serious accidents—apparently without sequelae—and had to undergo surgery.

He was wounded in the Battle of El Biutz: it occurred between June 28 and 29, 1916, near Ceuta. Franco was 23 years old. He was captain of the Second *Tabor de Regulares* (indigenous troops) who always fought in the most dangerous positions. Years later, in 1935, in Salamanca, the vehicle in which Franco and his wife were traveling ran over two cyclists and overturned.

In the accident, one cyclist died, and Doña Carmen and the driver were injured. Franco emerged unscathed. On Christmas Eve 1961, when Franco was hunting with his daughter in the mountains of El Pardo, the barrel of his shotgun exploded. The accident caused an open fracture of the second metacarpal and the index finger, and injuries to his right hand. Until

⁸ Franco was born in Ferrol (La Coruña), on December 4, 1892.

1963, at 71 years old, his health could be said to be unbreakable, only marred by dental problems.

But in 1964, he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. As a consequence of this illness, Franco suffered a significant physical decline, which became evident in the speech Franco delivered on April 9, 1964, before the National Council of the Movement, on the occasion of the celebration of the XXV Years of Peace.⁹

The Caudillo insisted on enumerating the achievements accomplished over all this time, but his words were barely comprehensible. These were the first ostensible symptoms of his illness. Franco was unable to keep his eyes open. As a consequence of Franco's severe physical deterioration, the government initiated a campaign about the "excellent state of health" of the Caudillo. Dr. Vicente Gil, who was his personal physician for 40 years, made numerous statements asserting that Franco was in excellent condition. TVE and the NODO showed him playing golf, fishing, or hunting.

The situation became increasingly evident in some speeches delivered by Franco, for example, the speech of November 22, 1966, on the occasion of the presentation of the Organic Law of the State to the Cortes. When he was applauded upon entering the chamber, Franco had a disoriented look, was only gesturing with his right arm, and had his head tilted forward. His speech was read with a muted volume, without rhythm or intonation.

His illness was an open secret and was not acknowledged by the regime until July 1974. It was kept in the utmost secrecy for ten years, although the tremor in his right hand evidenced the reality to the citizens. It was not made official until a few weeks later, as recounted in his memoirs by Dr. Pozuelo, the second official physician of Franco after the dismissal of Dr. Vicente Gil. He relates that on July 31, 1974, the date on which he had just taken up his new position, in a meeting of doctors with the Franco family, a medical report was read in which, for the first time, it was stated that His Excellency suffered from Parkinson's due to vascular sclerosis.

Speech of December 30, 1969

At ten o'clock in the evening, S.E. the Head of State addressed the nation, through the microphones of Radio Nacional de España and the screens of Televisión Española, in his now traditional end-of-year message, in which he confirmed that he wished to continue in government:

As we now cross the threshold of another decade, before that veil that always covers the designs of God, we trust in continuing to advance, under His protection, along the right path and in covering new stages of the life and progress of the nation (...)

⁹ Javier Freundlich, El Parkinson "secreto" de Francisco Franco, NEUROfriendly, 29 agosto, 2017

Regarding the succession to the Head of State, about which so many malicious speculations were made by those who doubted the continuity of our Movement, everything has been secured, and well secured, with my proposal and the approval by the Cortes of the designation of Prince Don Juan Carlos de Borbón as successor with the title of King.

Both inside and outside Spain, the prudence of this transcendental decision has been recognized, both with applause and with silence. Our descendants will verify that the new Spanish Monarchy has been established by virtue of two popular votes repeated over twenty years, in the national referendum of 1947, which approved the Succession Law, and in that of 1966, which endorsed the Organic Law of the State (...)

As I said in the memorable session of last July 22, the succession to the Head of State will constitute in the future a normal event imposed by the perishable condition of men. If God continues to grant us His protection, of which we have such significant signs, the decision made on that day as a prudent foresight of the future accepted by the nation will free Spain from the doubts and hesitations that could arise when my Captaincy is no longer with you.

The unalterable permanence of the Principles of the Movement, the solidity of the State's institutional system, and the designation and oath taken by the Prince of Spain, whose loyalty and love for the Homeland he has abundantly demonstrated, are firm guarantees of the continuity of our work. With the help of God and the goodwill of the Spaniards, our children and grandchildren have their political stability assured (...)

As long as God gives me life, I will be with you, working for the Homeland. ¡Arriba España!

Some essential ideas of Franco's thought

The ideological basis of Nationalist Spain can be summarized in a simple outline: Spain, the traditional, the Imperial, the eternal, has triumphed over anti-Spain, the enemies of the Homeland, in a Crusade led by the glorious Caudillo. Among Franco's "essential ideas," Juan Pablo Fusi highlights:

A national-militarist theory that made the Army the embodiment of patriotism and the ultimate guarantee of national unity, in a context where the liberal monarchy of 1876-1923 was identified with the historical decline of Spain, manifested in the defeat of 1898 against the United States.

The belief that military action in Morocco would restore the Army's prestige lost in 1898 and revitalize the ideals of Spanish patriotism.

The idea that Spanish history legitimized military interventionism in defense of national order and as the ultimate safeguard of the "survival of the Homeland."

CONCLUSIONS

According to Franco's particular historical vision, the permanent struggle against the enemies of Spain (those of the Judeo-Masonic-Communist conspiracy) justified everything: the terrible harshness and the prolongation of the civil conflict—even after the war ended on April 1, 1939—the brutal postwar repression, rationing, the cold, tuberculosis, the international "harassment"—especially the press campaigns against the dictatorship—and his prolonged but—for Franco—absolutely necessary stay in power, etc. Some authors have relied on these ideas to justify their revisionist positions.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thanks to all those who have contributed to the production of this paper.

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