



## Research Article

# The Rebellious Army and its Combatants in the Spanish Civil War (1926-1939)

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### Abstract

The article aims to show the measures developed by the rebel army during the Spanish Civil War. Some measures that were progressively hardening, until reaching its point with the first Francoist government. These policies were based on integration, surveillance and punishment. Surveillance and punishment were applied because the troop was not homogeneous socio-politically. For this reason, knowing the measures of coercion and cohesion, the social attitudes of the conscript soldiers were studied, most of them within the insurgent army. Various attitudes and that in all cases should not be understood in an ideological way, but product of a physical and mental fatigue towards war. Especially the second, because in the civil war the forced soldiers were victims and executioners.

**Keywords:** Combatants; Punishment; Rebel army; Spanish civil war; Surveillance; War experience

### Introduction

The objectives of this article are divided into two blocks. On the one hand, explain the measures of control and surveillance carried out by the rebel army from the fracas or the coup, while on the other, to analyze the opinions, behaviors and attitude is social is of their fighters on the front, turning it into study subjects [1]. Two aspects that are intrinsically related, since the type of framing measures serves to understand the idiosyncrasy of the members that made up the coup militia. They were fighters who came from a complex and heterogeneous civil society in all factors of life [2]. The way they had to fit in their ranks recruits with disparate socio-political identities, concerns or affinities, especially those defended by those who recruited

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them as they recorded it in the press controlled by the Spanish fascist party, Spanish Falange and the JONS [3]. Consequently, the leitmotif of his investigation is check if succeeded the measures of the military coup, considering that it was a civil war where support was not defined by lines controlled each side [4]. The investigation techniques and methods to achieve this objective have been the analysis through files of military and civil archives, oral sources and written memories. Geographically the territory in which more attention has been paid was Galicia, because it is a great test, to being one of the area s of those who first seized the coup, remaining hypothesis that the experience gained was used to apply the in other places. Also in this territory develop the four pillars of the insurgent side during the year 1936, the initiated the forced recruitment, the creation of civilian militias, propaganda and the harsh political repression intrinsically linked to the course of the war.

After the coup d'état, factories, telecommunications, media and hospitals were militarized. From day 8 August 1936 forced recruitment forcing a whole began to generation to live one of the most traumatic experiences a person can experience [5]. To carry it out, the legal springs were used, which was used by the Second Republic before the coup, because in the beginning, these soldiers were called to do the mandatory military service, the first time it was imposed in -a territory- of Spain. This led to a social army, politic or culturally heterogeneous. For this reason, first the General Staff of the State Technical Board and the Generalissimo's General Headquarters later, they were concerned with developing control, surveillance and punishment measures to win the war, the only insurgent objective. This aspect forces us to study the relationship between the institution in which they are integrated and the behavior and social attitudes of combatants. For this reason, the article is divided into two sections where the voice of the soldiers will be present in both, as well as the policies implemented by the institution.

The Spanish case, and general, differs in some points with the Nazi Germany or Fascist Italy his closest concerning comparative [6]. In Spain, there was no process of acculturation and repression until the coup d'état. Previously existed a political context different, in which the opposition had not yet been decimated and coexisted, not free of conflicts, different ideologies and sociopolitical organizations. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a complex and increasingly active civil society was forged, which was reflected in growing and diverse associations [7]. In the rural world there was a prolific and heterogeneous associative movement, both conservative and progressive. A reality similar to that produced in the urban world, where, as the Republic advanced, an important labor movement coexisted with counterrevolutionaries who were gaining strength [8]. Traces of a social awakening that influenced the whole of society to a greater or lesser extent. The experience of war in a way depends on the process of prior socialization, which does not have to have ideological connotations, but refers to a way of living, interpersonal relationships, a way of organizing socially and politically within a determined community that after the war was destroyed [9].

As in all total wars, it is known that the rearguard, in the territories where he triumphed on July 18, the copyists launched a war machine based on the mobilization of all material and human elements. However, it received little historiographical attention, as the civil war was exclusively analyzed from the perspective of traditional military history. The violence was analyzed, but exclusively that perpetrated in the rearguard due to the terror developed by both sides. On the front, the new sociocultural analyzes were ignored from the research, with the exception of researchers such as Javier Ugarte, Xose M Nunez Seixas, Javier Rodrigo, Machael Seidman or James Mathews, published recently. Something that contrasts with the historiographical tradition that in other countries has European countries, where the combatant is the subject of study and received the battle front and its protagonists, subject of study of this story.

The power of the coup leaders on the front was built under the foundations of integration, discipline, vigilance, punishment and self-imposed guilt for the experience and actions they were perpetrating. The rebels, aware that the war is won through the paralysis of elements of the enemy, encouraged the integration of soldiers, but not without first extracting the military and social information they could from the Republican side [10]. Complementary measures to propaganda and socio-political repression carried out in rearguard [11], which served as a warning to the soldiers: if they did not diligently fulfill their obligations, the penalty would not fall only on them, but on their family, thereby seeking that the troops did not think of carrying out resistance actions. Surveillance measures and punishment were perfected to the looming rise the sublevada victory. From the first Franco government, they were fully developed and were fundamental to perpetrate the post-war political repression, the basis of the Franco regime. For her part, the guilt of perpetrating violence on the part of the troops is a factor that Joanna Bourke has pointed out as fundamental to understanding certain behaviors of the combatants, since it caused the soldiers to lose the courage to make a decision contrary to that indicated by your controls [12]. On the war front, the victims were the same as the executioners: "Franco's soldiers." For coercion to succeed, the new authorities had to use the forced collaboration of their recruits. This generated a complex and contradictory memory that needs to be addressed historiographical.

With all this, it can be said that there is not a single experience of war, but several and changing in that process of recalling the lived past, which influences its past, its destiny at the front and its demobilization. In the vanguard army there was a variety of behaviors and attitudes ranging from militancy to resistance [13], but based on a silence imposed by discipline, fear and shame of being part of those atrocities. The combatant had a mission: kill to survive, a lesson they learned since they were assigned to the front and began to understand the reality of the war, where ideology, propaganda, the speeches heard in the rear lost all meaning [14]. On the front, all were victims, victimizers, and witnesses of the viol gum depending on the scenario in which they were found. Therefore, it is not possible to discern which attitudes were deliberately ideological. We must add the complexity of political loyalties, which fluctuate depending on the social framework in which individuals interact. Sociopolitical identities are not fixed, nor are they assumed consciously or dogmatically, but are influenced by the space for socialization, personal relationships with local and state politics and even inter and extra-community conflicts transmitted through memory. In addition, there are sectors of society, difficult to specify in quantitative terms, that do not participate in political

life, or do so on rare occasions, without this implying ignorance of the public debate that they can access through their daily relationships and from which they receive an unconscious influence [15]. Because, after all, most of the fighters did not want to be the protagonists of this story. For this reason, the soldiers' attitudes will be exposed first and then the measures they had to develop to control their troops.

## Popular Opinion, Behavior and Social Attitudes of the Combatants of the Rebellious Army

Recent sociocultural studies of contemporary wars pay attention to the body in which the soldiers were integrated and their relationship with it, something fundamental to analyze their opinion, behavior and attitudes [16]. Reference is made to an army that, as specified above, aims to control all movements of its subordinates. It is intensified by the force of the context: a total war, where all available resources were mobilized. It is convenient to emphasize that in world wars the debate was brought to the national plane against its "enemies", however that in the Civil War within. On a discursive level, the confrontation focused more on the political, for this reason, it is underlined that the subordinates to the insurgent army had different social pasts and political thoughts, hence the difficulty in having the troops framed. However, despite the claims of the prevailing historiography, which gave the ideology and power of propaganda the cohesion capacity of the rebellious troops as sufficient motivations to fight "their" enemy, it is a nuanced statement. It is considered that despite the authoritarian capacity of an institution, cracks always appear where different attitudes and behaviors can arise, in them it is in which you have to investigate to make a more complex account of the war front [17]. Despite everything, the general attitude in Galicia was to enlist without opposition. However, it should be noted that there were different realities behind each person, own, as noted, of a society with diverse experiences and identities. The war diary for which Faustino Vazquez was sentenced to death reflects this argument when he states that: we soldiers follow them like corpses, although we understand all the evil that we are going to do; some are happy because they believe that this is the only means of achieving a future, others are going meditabundos, we are thinking of the men who will fall under our rifle, in those men who have not done us any harm and that we had to kill for the enjoyment and joy of the vile rogue militarist [18].

Words that represent the universe of complex, diffuse, porous and changing social attitudes, which contrast with those shown by insurgent propaganda. It cannot be denied that due to the context of growing political hostility, there were social supports [19]. As the enthusiasm that two carabineers exhibited in a letter addressed to the Military Governor of A Coruna, on September 16, 1936 to be sent to the front, in which they emphasize their ardor warrior for the "Homeland" [20]. A patriotic exaltation as remembered in his memoirs by the member of the Brotherhood of Volunteer Sailors of the Crusade, Ignacio Canal [21]. The rampant criticism of the Popular Front by some sectors, especially conservatives and Catholics concerned about the future of the Republic, as a Catholic weekly points out when stating that "the government was surrendered to the forces of the revolution and obeying them without scruple" [22]. As well as the patriotic apology and obligation to the "Movement that records a war mutilated in a letter who asked for a destination for surveillance services because he wanted to" justify the salary he received" [23]. The religious conflict is the reason that an ex-combatant used in an interview to explain why he joined the Youth Front [24] or the one narrated by José de Arceche,

member of the Basque Nationalist Party [25]. Different examples, voluntarily attached to the best-known clichés, in which an association between action and the ideological commitment that many of the protagonists had, can be found, at a time when voluntary militias were being formed in the rear of the hands of the party only [26]. However, the reality in a war is more complex.

In the memoirs of Jose Arteche himself appear those contradictions that are to be highlighted, inherent to the human being, by reprimanding actions committed by his companions or orders received by his commanders. During the postwar period, he asked Luis Martín Santos, an important writer and psychiatrist, author of *Time of Silence*, to read and give his opinion on the manuscript of his memoirs, before publishing them. The writer and friend of the former Franco fighter and a member of the PNV, in addition to praising the protagonist's experience, points out something fundamental and that also appears in the extract from Faustino Vazquez's newspaper quoted above, and that is that the forced soldiers are at victims and victimizers [27]. Luis Martín points out that after reading it seems that the author wants to emancipate himself from his own experience, as if he were not the one who wielded a rifle, and instead saw the events from the sidelines [28]. For his part, Faustino Vazquez wrote openly about the deaths he was going to perpetrate as a soldier. None of the ex-combatants interviewed throughout this investigation talk about the act of killing in the first person because of the shame they still produce remembering. On the battle front, the anonymity of the group established took away the blame for their actions.

To the vigilance and the punishment it is necessary to add two reasons for which many people became actors of the terror: the pressure of the group and the trivialization of the violence [29]. Within all societies there are violent people or groups and the war was an opportunity to commit actions that in times of peace would be criminally and ethically penalized. An ex-combatant remembered how other comrades murdered, robbed and raped when they occupied a town. Although critical, he affirmed that "they are things of war" [30]. Acts that should have been common during the first month of the war, since in May 1938 the "army was ordered to act with care to avoid suspicions and the Movement to triumph. It is necessary to save the population from vexation and not add more pain than that produced by a war [31]. Despite this, the violence continued and the army involved its soldiers in it. Due obedience, that is the mandate of a superior, is also used as a self-righteous tool. Following Hannah Arendt's thesis, when the whole group became a participant in the violence, the guilt was minimized, making day-to-day more bearable at the front [32]. All the soldiers had to be stained with blood to ensure the cohesion of the military units in an embarrassing way.

Within the rebellious army there were soldiers who were aware of and opposed to the actions they perpetrated themselves, but they only had two exits: desert and condemn their relatives, or remain silent. A former combatant in the 1980s said: There were many of us who talked. That the government should win the war. Because what the government had to do was to ally with France, which were on the left, and with Russia, and to arm Spain in Europe with war [33]. Same memory that I had a member of the communist party, who complained that they could only speak in circles and with people of great confidence. However, only through memory do we have these stories today [34]. It is applied as the theorizing of James C. Scott in that all people have a public discourse, which is what is expected to

be heard in a particular social context, and a private one, which has other uses of language sometimes more colloquial and that employed before other auditoriums, where there is a more entrenched trust relationship [35]. In the war, the public discourse would be those conversations they had with the commanders or favorable soldiers, the rites and chants used by the rebel army. The private discourse was the one they used among friends, who could be critical, scathing, complaining and language, and who did not leave that circle. Therefore, these phrases spoken in interviews years later represent, despite the scant sample, that private speech that many fighters used at the front. However, in this scenario of violence, vigilance, punishment and death, they endorsed the words of many others: the important thing was to survive another day, in the war «kill or be killed, there is no other law and participate in rites promoted by the army and militias so that they and their families were not persecuted.

One of the dissonant social attitudes to the prototype of the Martyrs of the Crusade», with which the propaganda of the coup plotters branded them, and difficult to catalog in socio-political terms, is the creation of myths and rumors. In all social groups there are spaces in which a dissident subculture is formed [36]. In several interviews, several soldiers claimed that the commanders behaved well with the troops because "we were armed and were afraid that we could shoot them in the back" [37]. It is, due to the implausibility of the story, a thought of resistance with its past in the front. Along the same lines, a soldier escaped from the insurgent camp recounts in an interrogation carried out by the republican SIM "that on the front line there was a constant rumor that Franco was kidnapped" [38]. Another evaded in 1938 went further, stating that they believed he was "dead" [39]. This investigation interprets that they were exhaust valves for people who wanted the end of the contest. One of the main fables was that of the leader's homosexuality, a condition considered pejorative at that time, and observed in several interrogations of evaded from the insurgent camp [40]. It is a resistance of low intensity and that had no connotations for the future of war.

Among these intermediate attitudes the contact between trenches stands out because it was the one that had the most social diffusion during the postwar period. Starting in the 1960s and especially in the Transition to Democracy, a public discourse was built on the kindest war in which everyone was guilty. Its main exponents were the humor of Miguel Gila or the plot of the movie *La Vaquilla* by Luis Garcia Berlanga based on presenting a sweetened, affable and sympathetic vision of the war. In some way, the contest that both artists projected were in which they wanted to see themselves reflected a relevant part of the ex-combatants. So these acts without having, at the time of being carried out, an ideological component, did have social and political consequences decades later. In some interviews they relate how they related to exchange tobacco and smoking paper. In others even the jokes that shouted or even asked if there were soldiers from any specific location [41]. In a postal telegram written to all military units from the Franco Barracks on September 21, 1938, contact between sides was strictly prohibited. In that writing they reflect a story similar to that of the Valencian filmmaker: In a village in Guadalajara the fighters on both sides fraternize in the most absolute way, coming to play a game of Basque ball [42]. With the end of the war, this type of contacts had to multiply, since a December 1938 report warns that in sectors of the front: "Our soldiers have conversations with the

enemy” [43]. Some combatants opted for self-mutilation as an escape mechanism from the front, also as an act of resistance to the rebel army. It consisted of amputating a member of the body that incapacitated him to provide active services but not for a normal life. It should have become a more frequent practice than the military commanders wanted, since on January 17, 1937 it was classified as a crime of Auxiliary Rebellion. They completed the sentence at the end of the war, which involved a triple punishment: amputation, being sent to the front and later serving the sentence imposed by a military court [44]. A neighbor from Santiago tells the story of her cousin, who was wounded in the war and, not to return, she tried to infect the wound, something that ended her life [45].

Among all acts of active resistance desertion stands out [46], which is necessary to point out that it did not always have an ideological component, but sometimes as a way to get out of the context of violence. The propaganda tried to avoid these acts highlighting in the press and radio the masculinity of the soldier, ridiculing the cowardice of the deserters [47]. In the weekly *The Machine Gun*, numerous satires of the generals Red and Miaja appear fleeing from the rebel army attack with their corresponding disqualification on their manhood. Soldiers were expected to be brave and fearless because they represented the homeland in arms. Both sides, in a prominently macho society, tried to link the soldier with the supposed values that defined a man. The deserters were children, cowards, timid and effeminate. This was also a form of social control, because in the mentality of the time being branded as homosexual was an affront and a disgrace to whoever received that name [48]. At the legal level, the Code of Military Justice distinguished two forms of desertion: simple desertion and those that were passed on to the enemy [49]. Simple deserters were recruits who were absent from the service without authorization. During the civil war, leaving the battalion involved a four-year service surcharge and was assigned to a punishment unit. The crime of treason punished with the death penalty was applied to combatants who consummated defection to the enemy camp. The soldier who decided to defect was mostly shot without opening a file. A deserter affirmed, in a report collected when he arrived in the Republican camp, that: “80% of the troops are leftist, but that they cannot make any demonstration because they are shot”. An exaggerated percentage, but the reference to the executions is constant in the interviews to which the soldiers who came from the rebel army are subjected [50]. In addition, families were being hunted down in the rear, which is why many opposing soldiers stayed in line. There are many reasons behind each simple defection, because it is noted that it is impossible to achieve the number of defections to the Republican camp. The ideological explanation would simplify the reality of this study. Fear, the duration of the conflict, and physical and mental exhaustion, could have been the consequence of the considerable number of escapes to the rearguard during the war. In the Mérida Infantry Regiment number 35, a total of 3,174 simple defections, delays to incorporation, and lack of incorporation and abandonment of a total of approximately 15,000 recruits who were assigned there during the period 1935 - 1940 were counted. The cases were soldiers returning to their homes to see their relatives, disconnect from military life and, above all, recover a sense of normalcy that the war had taken away from them. The weariness and weariness produced by the duration of the war was the main cause of this attitude.

On January 10, 1937, a summary trial was opened to determine the whereabouts of the Asturian soldier L. Lopez Murias accused of

treason. After the investigation it was found that the lieutenant of his unit had granted him 15 days of permission but that he took the opportunity to stay longer at home [51]. The case was dismissed and the soldier sent to his military unit. AB Crende ran away from his unit returning to his hometown in July 1938, staying there for more than a month. In the cause the lieutenant of his unit intervenes giving very good references of the soldier. They finally found him at home and claimed in his defense that he was ill, something he could not prove [52]. King Bust was a soldier who made the entire war in the rebel army, however, on the occasion of his disappearance in February 1939, reports came to the regiment that he was a member of the Communist Party, which contrasted with those he presented his unit officer saying of him that he was “subordinate and showed loyalty to the army.” Finally he shows up, after spending some time in the rear to visit the family [53].

This lack of “enthusiasm for war and a desire to return to normalcy” was also appreciated by Antonio Cazorla in his compendium of Letters to Franco of the Spaniards on foot. Since 1938 there have been numerous requests for permits or a change of destination [54]. A qualitative interpretation that can be reinforced with the figures obtained from the open trials in the Mérida 35 Infantry Regiment. During the years 1938 and 1939, simple desertions, absences and delays in joining the ranks increased by 80% compared to the period of 1936 and 1937. These acts of resistance, although they had political consequences, cannot be said to harbor an ideological drive. It was a social behavior based on a search for the cessation of violence. Franco’s own army was aware of this reality, as recorded in a document dated January 10, 1939 when the war was ending: People remain like this after the passage of our columns, more than the joy of liberation, the resentment of the damage received and therefore a lasting malaise because the damage is not recoverable in a short period of time. Misgivings can hinder the establishment of a sincere and definitive national unity [55].

In a context of extreme violence and with the imposition of a constantly vigilant power, acts of resistance have been individual or in small groups. The opportunity becomes a determining factor to decide which way to act. There are few documentary cases of massive desertions such as the one that occurred with the war ended, of sixty recruits from the fifth of ‘41 [56]. On other occasions, the context or the personal relationship of the soldier with his superiors or with the person in charge of organizing the guards, could influence in deciding to escape, since his actions had influence on a third person who could consider him friend or companion without prejudice to ideology. That professed, in tune with what Sonke Nietelz and Harald Welzer think, who believe that the political thinking of combatants must be eradicated to understand their performance in war [57]. That is why one of the usual methods to defect to the enemy camp was to pretend to be a prisoner [58]. It can be said that in these cases there is a component of political resistance. Especially during the first two months of the conflict. An example is the process brought against 19 deserters who fled in a speedboat in 1936. The 19 accused were activists and public officials from the towns of Boiro, A Pobra and Vilagarcía (Galicia) [59]. The available sources prevent the presentation of quantitative data on the volume of ideological defectors. However, in qualitative terms the information service reached the same conclusion in January 1938:” It is striking the repeated cases of desertions of individuals who have been in the ranks for a long time, observing good behavior and some of whom have been wounded in combat. Looking

for reasons outside the military order, he could find himself in the political conduct of the referred [60]. On the Asturias front, according to the information service, “communist propaganda was distributed in some trenches” [61]. The scope of these practices is unknown, but the order requires that the retaliation be “read in all units”, so it can be assumed that it was not an isolated event [62]. The creation of a surveillance and punishment machinery responds to this concern, but which must be weighed by the possible exaggeration that the information services could have.

Desertion in a civil war is a two-way street. In this case we also find different motivations among Republican soldiers who decide to go over. The existence of relatives in the area controlled by the insurgents is one of the answers. However, it highlights the political radicalization of the ruling power on that side, which became unbearable even for active anarchists, socialists or members of the POUM. As well as personal revenge as a stimulus to desert from the trenches, a situation that the nascent regime took advantage of to create a repressive apparatus in the postwar period. An individual residing in Catalonia asked to enter the information services because his family had been murdered and he knew those responsible [63]. Another cause was to circumvent a possible repression after the end of the contest and normalize its situation, as happened to the Valencian soldier Luis Ballester B. He was denounced on August 10, 1939 by the Falangist group of Alicante to the Military Governor of Vigo for to be: son of the socialist leaders of Baneres and fled. Mainly guilty, not only of the crimes that have been committed during the red era, holding the position of mayor from 1931 until the liberation of the people. But according to the declarants of the cause, he went to the insurgent camp, with good reports from his Regiment Captain. The trial was dismissed because the judge acknowledged that “he is one of many who recognized his parents’ mistake and then embraced religious faith” [64]. A singular case, but one that represents that opportunity that many Republican soldiers tried to embrace in the last months of the war.

### **Military Framing Measures: Integration, Discipline, Vigilance and Punishment**

From August 8, 1936 until January 1939, a process of forced recruitment of several generations began, with harsh penalties for escapes, their families and the local authorities in charge of enlistment, as established in the previous laws. The goal of the insurgents, both to form an army and to develop political repression, was to give a veneer of legality, using the spring s employees during the Restoration and the Second Republic. The fundamental was the declaration of the State of War, by which the army had all the powers of public order, from justice to the recruitment of soldiers. For this reason, in this first decree they included those who were exempt. Twelve replacements were enlisted until January 7, 1939. The result was heterogeneity inherent in society and as a result of compulsory military recruitment; the rebel army was more diverse than the historiography and public discourse of the past have indicated. It was not formed exclusively by Falangists, Africanists, rightists, monarchists, Carlists and Catholics, but in its ranks there were also people with other ideologies, as well as some without a defined political identity. For this reason, the rebellious army implemented strong control and surveillance measures in order to unite the military units and avoid desertions or seditions, in order to win the war. For this, a strict military discipline was imposed; the recruits were inoculated with the fear of being retaliated against if they acted in a different way from that indicated by the commanders, but also if one of their colleagues did so. As one ex-combatant pointed

out years later, a sense of constant vigilance was implanted and finally they were forced to participate in the atrocities that the army perpetrated as it took up positions. They were forced to be part of firing squads of both civilians and prisoners, to loot cities or to be silent if they saw a comrade or superior committing a despicable act. In this way, many combatants participated, unwittingly, in the coercive machinery of the coup plotters. After being recruited, were integrates two in a “total institution”, a center where they have controlled all activities of individuals and islados civil society, with severe workouts that lasted morning and evening. The mornings were dedicated to physical aspects or combat techniques. During the afternoons they taught military tactics classes and learned the punishments that would be imposed on them for not obeying orders given as established by the Code of Military Justice. Among the classes that were taught there was some propaganda, such as the one dedicated to explaining to the recruiting in formation, the “why of the National Movement”, although of the thirty days of preparation only seven hours were focused on these issues. Because the important thing was the tactics, the technique and learning to be good soldiers, that is to say to kill. To try to subdue them, routines were imposed, such as wearing a uniform or asking permission even to go to the service, they also had to comply with strict schedules and rituals such as raising and lowering the flag. After their training they were sent to the front where without being a “total institution” it had the same characteristics.

On December 2, 1936, the Generalissimo’s General Headquarters drafted the instructions for the organization of a Secret Police with presence both on the front and rear. The reason was to unify and hierarchize the control and surveillance tasks under the command of the army due to the existence of similar bodies in the Carlist and Falangist militias and even the existence of some called “Imperial Police”, as Ramón Franco points out in a report by early 1937. The problems produced by the number of existing ambushes were attenuated, as evidenced by the reports written after the conquest of Santander, Bilbao and San Sebastian. Also impose a strong discipline, because during the first months it was not what they wanted. An evade in an interrogation made by the Republican army in February 1937 states that: “between the soldiers of different ideologies frequent discussions occur”. It is in tune with the story of an insurgent ex-combatant, but of communist ideology that called these talks “radio macuto”. He wanted to avoid acts of this importance if he wanted to win the contest. According to the order, the new Secret Police must have been made up of highly trustworthy personnel and “under the command of a Chief and Officer of the Civil Guard or the former Moroccan police Mias”, evidence of the influence of the African experience in the development of coercion measures. The lead agency was the Burgos Military Information Service and was divided into espionage and counter-espionage. The second was responsible for monitoring the soldiers suspected of defecting or transmitting information to the enemy, especially those who were integrated from territories of the Republic. He also had the obligation to arrest those who expressed dissatisfaction with the service and questioned the veracity of the information they received. The military hierarchy initially does not mark the procedure of action of this body, although it is deduced by the first paragraphs of the instructions that each unit could proceed with some freedom while notifying the central service: “Espionage is an art. Like all arts, it has few rules and a lot of execution. The rules are simple, the execution difficult, extremely varied and with inexhaustible resources. As with the arts, with the rules you learn little, only continued execution teaches.

All a declaration of intent for the controls, which had wide sleeves to act as they saw fit. For this reason there are different forms of action on the part of the commandos in the front, from the most intransigent to those who preferred, for the good of the unit, to be more lax. In March 1937 they opened a trial to a soldier for exclaiming “well, well, maybe they were and blamed the others”, after reading a story in the newspaper in which they alluded to the burning of a church. The words uttered by the soldier, according to the judge, led him to be sentenced or with a four-year service charge and sent to the front line of combat. For his part, the soldier from Oleiros (A Coruna) F. Agra Pan was accused of saying “insulting words against the army” and after being in preventive detention, the case was dismissed. The authorities implicated in the summary trials the companions of the accused as declarants so that, together with the punishment, it would serve as an apprenticeship for the rest of the troops. According to the operations newspaper of Battalion number 5 of the Zamora 29 Mountain Regiment, three fighters deserted due to “the fault of the soldier empowered Cabo Ramón R.” I was on call. He was shot by his companions in front of the entire Battalion the next day. A story similar to the one told by the Galician soldier Faustino Vazquez Carril at the front about the murder of a union member. Record, that the narrator of that story assured them that they sent their friends to kill him on the wall and that the sergeant’s face before ordering the execution “looked like a face just painted white”. Distant or s ways of behaving by officialdom but have a common goal: “straightening behaviors through disciplinary power. In the same way, another is observed in developed measures by the controls on the front, making participles to fellow dissident defector or punishment. It was they who shot him or who testified against him, knowing that otherwise they would suffer the same fate. The same was true of deserters on the other side, of whom the Military Information Service did not have good reports, as they were immediately killed by those same forced-recruit soldiers. This generated a cohesion based on the fear that if they deserted or were taken prisoners they would suffer the same fate and on guilt and shame for the acts they perpetrated that prevented them from adopting any option other than obeying.

The duration of the war forced the insurgent army to modify its structure because the military contingent was increasing. To the prisoners and escaped from the republican camp, all the individuals belonging to the mobilized replacements were added who had the obligation to present themselves when they occupied their locality. The great measures on the detention centers coincide with the bureaucratization of the concentration service, as Javier Rodrigo remarks. The turning point was the fall of the northern front, with the taking of Gijon on October 22, 1937, they begin to make war differently if they want to take Madrid and win the war, and take the opportunity to lay the foundations of what that at that time they wanted it to be the “New State.” It is essential to note that in November the Military Police and Information Service (SIPM) was in charge of espionage, counter-espionage and public order tasks until the end of the war. This organism was under the command of Lieutenant Colonel of the General Staff Jose Ungria and from this moment on, progressively, control over the “Franco soldiers”.

As of this moment, lists of soldiers considered dangerous by their political past are drawn up. This work was carried out by the SIPM in collaboration with the Civil Guard and the Civil Governors of each province. However, they maintained an integration policy as long as they complied with military orders. It is seen in the story of a former

Franco Army combatant, a member of the Communist Party, related how they watched him after spending the day in Talavera without permission. It is in line with a letter from this organization from January 1938 in which it ordered how to behave with soldiers who could be suspected: “Well, except for events after the movement that indicates disaffection to our cause, it should be borne in mind that, although there are unfavorable political backgrounds, these are soldiers who defend us with weapons in their hands and with their current good conduct they must and can expect we forget your political background.

The combatants knew that as long as they maintained a correct attitude they were not going to be subject to punitive sanctions despite defending ideology contrary to that shown by the propaganda. The knowledgeable controls, as they leave reflected in writing, of the penalties suffered in a war, they allowed a certain degree of freedom that was perfectly delimited. If exceeded, an exemplary punishment was applied, usually the execution. On October 22, 1937 Franco’s Headquarters ordered that: individuals difficult to monitor should be assigned to Workers Battalions, with the recommendation that they be closely monitored to “punish the smallest fault they commit”. Sometimes the investigation of his socio-political affiliation is abundant and significant for the lightness of the decision that the commanders make with the combatant. In a wide list of dangerous soldiers they wrote down the names, the destiny and their political affiliation. The combatants are shot, sent to a battalion of workers or retired from the first line of combat indiscriminately, without a pattern. In the case of the retired from the front line of combat, no information was obtained on their final whereabouts and it is possible that they were punished in the second line or in the rear, where the new power, which arises from the ashes of war, used an implacable force. It is representative to cite the case of a Galician recruit who decided to return to his home in June 1937 and when he was found by the Civil Guard, he murdered him with two shots, without mediation, at the door of his house.

The measures adopted by the rebellious army became more relentless as the end of the conflict approached. In January 1938 the formation of the first Francoist government was approved with an important Falangist presence. It is not surprising that months later, in April, the SIPM became an organ directly dependent on Franco. Intensify in August or the fundamental surveillance for the implementation of the developed political repression in the postwar period, because the information service com ENZO have more powers. By the new order of October 1938, three groups were created dedicated to the investigation of seditious acts in their own field, to enemy espionage and to anti-extremism and propaganda. Likewise, it is ruled that within each unit they have a file with information of all their personnel to know their social and political background, if they have committed criminal acts, residence of their relatives and in general, all the data deemed necessary to complete the personal file and tighten surveillance of those fighters in their own army that they considered dangerous. This greater control entailed the formation of punishment units that were not related to the Francoist prison system. The order of August 28, 1938 said that a Punishment Unit should be formed in each Military Division with the aim of: “removing the combat units from the class personnel and incorrigible soldiers, suspects and denounced”. Inmates were forced to carry out fortification work in the places of greatest risk and to sort corpses on the battlefield. These units were organized into platoons, batteries, companies or units depending on the number of convictions. They remained for a period of between

two months and fifteen days in the case of the Disciplinary Unit of the Galician Army Corps. These punishments were justified in a small document where the motives were as diverse as misbehavior, suspicions, failure to fulfill their duties or being branded as incorrigible, without the need to initiate a judicial process within the battalion. It was a sanctioning instrument and served as a deterrence model for his peers. They accompanied the military units at all times, so the rest of the troops saw their scanty ranch, their long hours of work and their dangerous task.

## Conclusion

The failure of the coup d'état sparked the start of a civil war. In territories such as Galicia, violence was experienced as a consequence of brutal socio-political repression and the militarization and recruitment of all young people born between 1907 and 1920. Forced recruitment was the base of Franco's army and the war, the mechanism by that accessed the power and source of its political legitimacy. However, those men were far from the image presented by the propaganda. It was a different army commanders forced the putschists, organize a surveillance machinery and punishment that was refined as the race progressed. An analysis often forgotten in studies of the experience of war and which is essential to understand the behavior of soldiers. After the formation of the first Francoist government, the most efficient measures for the control of combatants were developed. This had a double objective, to ensure military victory and the implantation, through force, of the new regime. The role of these coercive measures was essential to apply the sociopolitical repression developed in the postwar period. The information service generated reports of all the territories they conquered and of the soldiers who joined their ranks. A work coordinated by SIMP, with the help of the Civil Guard, the provincial governors and all the civilians and military who hoped to obtain sociopolitical returns from the new context. During the con tent, the insurgent army to break the bonds of solidarity established in Spain in the first third of the nineteenth century, introduced progressive mind a series of measures integration, discipline, supervision and punishment, to which was added the guilt imposed on fighters for the atrocities of which they were protagonists. However, carrying the implemented rebel army allowed certain levels of freedom while the soldier behaved in a disciplined manner. At first, the integration of soldiers who were ideologically opposed, something known by the commanders and the officers, was allowed. If attempting to defect or perform a dissident act, harsh punishment was applied, such as being sent to a punishment unit or in front of a firing squad. Convictions that was public to be exemplary, because the troop knew the hard working days of the punishment battalions. The desertion firing squads were made up of comrades, and especially friends, from the assassin's unit. In this way, all members of the army of the punitive system were involved. When a trial was opened within a regiment, all the comrades in the battalion testified. In addition, they were forced to participate in the repression that they perpetrated upon entering a locality, so that in this way no soldier would think of deserting. The result was a shameful, guilty memory that caused their silence even on their return home, because the General Staff made them executioners, even if they felt, and in a certain way, were victims of being forcibly recruited. Also, a surveillance system was created that all the soldiers were aware of. In this way, it was intended that the comrades, regardless of their political ideology, became deterrents of discordant attitudes, for fear of reprisals. For deserting or undisciplinatory acts, those responsible were punished, but also their family members and

the trench companions who could have avoided it. In short, the rebellious side developed a system that could not be carried out without the participation, sometimes forced and unwanted, of the members of its army.

The duration of the war forced the enlistment of more replacements, increasing the number of forced collaborators that the rebel army seized. The soldiers would be victims of a war that they did not provoke and to which they were obligatory, and executioners, since they participated in the barbarities that were committed in it. This reality forces us to rethink the way in which social attitudes are analyzed and avoid geographical patriotisms or classifications imposed from a present's analysis. Changing behaviors ranging from active resistance to ideological participation: a variety of social attitudes that should not be labeled with a pattern of behavior, or with a predetermined social group. To the feeling of vigilance, fear, individual, family and collective survival, we must add the guilt of becoming the executors of Franco's orders. These were the tools that Francoism used to settle socially during the postwar period. It can be safely said that the policies implemented by the insurgent army were successful, without forgetting that there was active resistance throughout the war, such as the formation of the guerrillas or desertions to the enemy camp. But in general, the opposition was of low intensity and had no consequences for Franco's final victory. They were rumors, escapes from the front to go home or talks between colleagues, small actions without more relevance than maintaining a dissident personal memory with the army that recruited them, but also with their own experience. This article has sought to give a voice to soldiers silenced by the coercive system and showing a variety of social attitudes that should not be understood, in all cases, in ideological terms. But also to speak of those who actively participated and to whom there was no other remedy and globally how the troops related to the coup army. All of them make up a diverse and contradictory network of behaviors in the face of an extreme situation such as violence in civil war. This article was also intended to give voice to those who have not had it for 80 years.

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