

ERASMUS

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Iria G, Sergio T, Mateo V, Maria L.

GROUP 1: FROM DICTATORSHIP TO DEMOCRACY

HOW WAS DEMOCRACY DEFEATED ?

Francisco Franco

Francisco Franco Bahamonde was a Spanish soldier and dictator. After the failed coup d'état of July 18, 1936, a dictatorship was established that was called: Francoism, which began in 1939 and ended when Franco died in 1975. Francisco Franco continued under different political systems: under the dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera (1923-1930) he directed the General Military Academy of Zaragoza; participated in the repression of the Asturian Revolution with the Second Republic (1931). -1936), was commander in chief of the Spanish Army in Morocco (1935) and chief of the Central General Staff (1936). The Popular Front government dismissed him from the Canary Islands Command, a position he held at the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War.

In conservative thought, Franco valued order and authority above all else. Franco instituted a new regime in Spain, initially allied with Hitler's Nazism and Mussolini's fascism, the latter being his ally and inspiration. Even so, it did not fully involve Spain in World War II. His regime suffered from a degree of diplomatic isolation but managed to persevere in the context of the "Cold War" using its radical anti-communism.



The Second Republic

The second Spanish Republic that lasted from 1931 to 1936 is usually divided into 3 stages: The first biennium lasted 2 years, during which the socialist republican coalition carried out various reforms that sought to modernize the country. The second biennium that lasted 2 years, called the radical biennium, during this biennium the most serious event occurred, the insurrection of the army. The third biennium is marked by the victory of the left-wing coalition known as the popular front in the 1936 elections, which was able to govern in peace for 5 months due to a coup promoted by part of the army that led to a civil war



The Rise of Mussolini

Benito Mussolini was born on July 29, 1883 in Italy. His father was a socialist, so he raised little Benito with socialist values. He was very good at school, and when Mussolini was eighteen, his good grades enabled him to become an elementary school teacher. For many years Mussolini and his supporters asked Rome for funds and support. Finally, Mussolini marched in front of the prime minister of Rome. He took power from the king, and a new government began. In the fifteen years preceding the Second World War, Mussolini solidified his power. He made laws that calmed all political parties in Italy. In this way, Mussolini gained great support. In everyday life, Italians were reaping benefits. Meanwhile, Mussolini was taking over.

Mussolini indoctrinated young Italians to think like him. Like Mussolini, the ideologies children learned at a young age were difficult to change. He slowly changed the laws to give him more power. He gained control of most of the businesses in Italy and throughout the government. He

supported his economy, and therefore his power, by convincing Italians to buy only Italian products.

He was officially the prime minister from 1922 to 1925, where he abandoned the pretext of democracy and officially became the Duce. He did so with propaganda that made him look like the benevolent father of Italy.

In 1927 he created a police state, where he had the power to do whatever he wanted. This was the beginning of Italian fascism, and Mussolini used emphatic nationalism, strict one-party government, and tough military force to create a society he thought was perfect. For many people in Italy, it wasn't perfect. Despite what the "white phone" propaganda films showed, many people suffered. In 1945, Mussolini was captured and killed.



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GROUP 2: FROM PEACE TO WARTIME

HOW DID LIFE CHANGE IN WAR TIME ?



Gijón bombings in the Spanish civil war

In the XX century Gijón suffered bombings from the Germans due to the Spanish civil war.

During 1936 and 1937 the city of Gijón suffered several bombings due to the civil war in Spain. The bombings were executed by the Germans who were the allies of Francisco Franco, who was part of the Nationalist group who were fighting against the Republicans.

The German Condor Legion and the cruise "Almirante Cervera" were the 2 forces involved in the war.

During the bombings people took refuge in anti-bomb bunkers that were scattered all over the city, nowadays some of them stay as they were before, the bombing lasted hours so they were very useful in that time, for the citizens.

500 days after the first bombing the 20 of October 1927 the last bomb was dropped and taken by the Nationalists. The city was completely ruined, and 2 years after in 1929 the dictatorship of Francisco Franco started when the Nationalist won the Spanish Civil War.





Strategic bombing during World War II

1939-1945

An aerial bombardment is considered “strategic” when it is not directly related to the operations taking place on the battlefields and its purpose is not to force the enemy to cease the war by defeating the armed forces, but rather by hitting the source of its military power

Bombings in Italy
Italy, after the declaration of war on France and Great Britain, was made the object of some bombings. On 13 July 1943 the Royal Air Force with a night bombing caused 813 deaths in Turin. At the same time the Armée de l'air carried out various attacks in Italy causing 45 deaths. Among the heaviest bombings, that of July 19, 1943 on Rome, Naples and on Mila

The strategic forces

The strategic air forces that attacked Italy were the same as those employed against Germany and France: RAF Bomber Command and VIII US Air Force, and the XV US



Air Force from bases in Italy.

The tactical air forces, employed against Italy and France, consisted of the RAF based in the Middle East and Malta, to which were added from the end of 1942 the IX US Air Force.

The life during the war

During the bombings people took refuge in the countryside. The bombings could last all night or day and struck suddenly often taking aback the population that had to rush for cover.

Another problem was the lack of food: the bread wasn't edible and everything from milk to soap cost much more to support the costs of the war.

People bought many small animals such as guinea pigs and chickens to get meat.



GROUP 3: SLEEPING STONES AND MEMORIALS

HOW ARE THE VICTIMS REMEMBERED?

Stepping stones in Gijón

The Centro de Cultura Antiguo Instituto de Gijón presented yesterday an exhibition on the Nazi Holocaust in which the Jewish genocide is made known in a visual and didactic way. Hand in hand with the Ateneo Obrero and with the support of the Asturian Agency for Cooperation, the exhibition can be seen in all the centers that request it and will tour different Asturian institutes. The Holocaust, also known as the Shoah, was the genocide of European Jews during World War II. Between 1941 and 1945, Nazi Germany and its collaborators systematically murdered some six million Jews across German-occupied Europe; around two-thirds of Europe's Jewish population. The murders were carried out in pogroms and mass shootings; by a policy of extermination through labor in concentration camps; and in gas chambers and gas vans in German extermination camps, chiefly Auschwitz-Birkenau, Bełżec, Chełmno, Majdanek, Sobibór, and Treblinka in occupied Poland.

Commemorative monuments for the victims of the holocaust

Nunca más

This is a monument placed in a route, in Gijón, called <<nunca más>>, build to remember the asturians that were arrested and send to the concentration camps.

Solpersteine

The German artist Gunter Demnig placed in Gijón the first six ‘cobbles-tones of memory’ - in the form of a ‘stolpersteine’ (a stone on the road that can cause tripping) - of the 34 that are planned to be installed in different streets, in front of to the places where so many Gijón victims of Nazism lived or worked. The father of the historical memory recovery project that began in Germany in the 1990s will be accompanied by the descendants of the honorees, who will lay a white rose on the ‘stolpersteine’. The first plate with the name, date of birth, deportation to the concentration camp and release or death will be that of the only woman among those 34 names: Olvido Fanjul, on Rufino García Sotura street. It is expected that his son Manuel will be present at that act and will say a few words. The next plaques to be placed will be those of Víctor Cueto and Manuel Cortés, both on Avenida de la Constitución; that of Evaristo Rebollar, on Aserradores street, in Rocés; that of Aurelio Acebal, in Marqués de Casa Valdés, and that of Alfredo Andrés, in Manuel Llana. They remember people from Gijón who were arrested -practically all of them in France- and deported by the Germans to concentration camps.



GROUP 4: WOMAN FIGHTING FOR DEMOCRACY

HOW DID WOMEN STRUGGLE FOR CHANGE ?

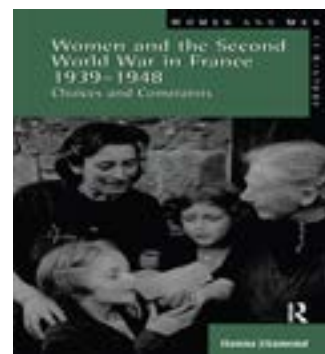
France second world war how women lived

In France resistance the women played a very important role to distract and occupy the German forces to invade France.

Women were 15% of the total soldiers of France; also they were 15% of political deportations of the concentration camps of Nazis; also they were degraded to the underground roles of the French resistance, women fought in the armed battles and where anti-German forces and declaring publications in counter of all Nazis, women organized demonstrations of housewives in 1940, and ever present withencouragement and material aid for strikers, as in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais in May 1941, as well as supporting the maquis. They were indispensable as typists, and above all as liaison agents.

There were numerous women in the Resistance who married and had children entirely clandestinely, without interrupting their Resistance struggle. Some saved the lives of their husbands, also some of them were kidnapped by the German army and later executed by them. There are

few monuments honouring the actions of these women. One of the exceptions is the city of Riom, which has honoured two of its citizens with a specific monument. Marie-Hélène Lefaucheur. Others shared their struggle up to torture, deportation and death, such as Madeleine Truel. A famous deportation convoy, on January 24, 1943, included many communists and widows of men shot by the occupation regime, including Mai Politzer, wife of Georges Politzer, or Hélène Solomon, daughter of the great scholar Paul Langevin and wife of writer Jacques Solomon. Also a book was written about this theme, the book was called *Women and the Second World War in France 1939-1948: Choices and Constraints*, was written by Hanna Diamond on London 1999.



LAS TRECE ROSAS

1939

Las Trece Rosas. 13 young Socialist women who were imprisoned, tortured and summarily executed by a Franquist firing squad four months after the end of the Spanish Civil War. "I'm killed innocent, but I die as an innocent should."

THE STORY

During the Spanish Civil War and especially during the dictatorship of Francisco Franco, the defeated faction suffered much violence from supporters of a "New Spain". In fact, many Republicans were imprisoned and often executed by the new regime, which considered them an inhuman and dangerous enemy worldwide. However, women, also victims of Franco repression and whose stories have often been hidden and even forgotten. The summary execution on 5 August 1939 of a group of thirteen women, known as "The Thirteen Roses" or "The Thirteen Minors", after a quick partial trial. Perhaps today is the episode of violence perpetrated by Francoism against republican women most remembered in the collective memory of the country. In fact, every year in the Almudena cemetery in Madrid the anniversary of his death is celebrated.

THE ASSOCIATION

Similarly, members of the Spanish left created the Thirteen Rose Foundation in 2004 with the aim of fighting for equality and social justice. This drama seems to have passed through the years, while others, although similar in their violence, have been completely forgotten with the passage of time.

One might even say that these thirteen women, because of their detention and their unjust death, have been subject to a process of mythologisation; that is, they are now part of the country's timeless cultural heritage.

WHO ARE THEY?

Las Trece Rosas is the name given to the thirteen Madrid women of

the prison of Ventas who were shot by the Franchists on August 5, 1939. They represent the female victims of the regime for various reasons. First, according to Alicia Ramos Mesonero, they were all young, and some of them were even under the age of 21 (the majority then):

"Virtudes Gonzáles García, Luisa Rodríguez de la Fuente and Victoria Muñoz García were 18 when they entered Ventas; Adelina García Casillas and Julia Conesa Conesa, 19; Dionisia Manzanero Salas and Elena Gil Olalla, 20; Ana López Gallego, 21; Martina Barroso García, 22; Joaquina López Laffite, 23; Carmen Barrero Aguado, 24; Pilar Bueno Ibáñez, 27; and Blanca Brisac Vázquez, 29"

In addition, all were of humble social class: some, like Pilar Bueno Ibáñez or Carmen Barrero Aguado, were seamstresses, others were housewives or worked in the canteens of the Auxilio Social. Now, remember that most of the women who were imprisoned during Francoism were middle/low class.

The Thirteen Roses, contrary to what was claimed during the trial, "lacked political significance" except for Pilar Bueno Ibáñez who "held a position of considerable responsibility in the embryonic structure of the clandestine PCE as head of the Organization of the Provincial Committee of Madrid" and Carmen Barrero Aguado who "had been commissioned by the leaders of the National Clandestine Committee to draw up a political work plan for women". The only political commitment some of them had in common was their affiliation with the Unified Socialist Youth.

Another thing they had in common was the cause of their entry into the prison of Ventas: it is known with certainty that all, even if they did not know each other, were denounced.





How the episode of “the thirteen roses” became a myth?

We decided to focus on the thirteen women who seemed at the same time representative of the female victims of Francoism and were also exceptional figures of the cruel repression of the system on their “enemies” (since they were executed less than twenty-four hours after their trial without even waiting for Franco’s confirmation). Another important axis of the present work is the representations that the new regime of its enemy had (and more precisely in this case of republican women seen as enemies who betrayed even their own sex) that, in our opinion, have allowed the realization of a punishment of such violence. The event caused a shock wave in different spheres of society of the time and left an important trace that contributed to the construction of a myth.

THE CONCLUSION

The episode of the Thirteen Roses became a myth representing the violence exerted by the Franco regime on Republican women, because it alone concentrates all the essence of the blind repression of the supporters of a New Spain on the “red”. In fact, the 13 young women are at the same time very representative of the women prisoners of Francoism (for their social class and their conditions

of life in prison), but their death, for their speed and the girls’ youth, stands out for their cruelty. In addition, the event caused a shock wave that was recorded in the various testimonies of the former detainees of the Ventas prison, as well as in some texts written by the compañeras of cell of the Minors or by themselves, like Julia Conesa’s letters to her mother. These written traces contributed to the creation of the myth of the Thirteen Roses as they allowed at the same time that their history did not fall into oblivion and that the readers could, by reading these texts full of emotion, put themselves in their place -as far as possible of course. It seems to us that his story aroused some indignation that fueled the process of mythification. Also, the role played by literature in this process is interesting. Indeed, the employment of minors in art is both a consequence of the mystification of the thirteen young women (the more they become a myth, the more they appear in the cultural heritage of the country), but also one of its causes (giving “flesh” to the Roses, the authors contribute to the creation of different “approaches” on this episode which, as we have seen, are essential for the creation of a myth).

GROUP 5: REPRESSION UNDER DICTATORS- HIPS MASS GRAVES, PRISONS, EXTERMINATION CAMPS

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE VICTIMS?

Franco Dictatorship: Spain under Franco. Repression

Francoist Spain,, was the period in Spain between 1939 and 1975, when Franco ruled Spain after the Spanish Civil War with the title of Caudillo. After his death in 1975, Spain change into a democracy. During this period, Spain was officially known as a States

Months after the start of the Spanish Civil War in July 1936, Franco emerged as a dominant leader and was proclaimed head of state on 1 April 1939, ruling a dictatorship over the territory controlled by the Nationalists. The 1937 Unification Decree, which merged all parties supporting the rebel side, led to Nationalist Spain becoming a single-party regime under the FET y de las JONS. During the Second World War, Spain did not join the Axis powers . The 1947 Law of Succession made Spain a kingdom again, but defined Franco as the head of state for life with the power to choose the person to become King of Spain.

During the 1950s the regime also changed from being openly and using severe repression to an authoritarian system with limited pluralism. As a result of these reforms, Spain was allowed to join the United Nations in 1955 and during the Cold

War Franco was one of the anti-communist figures: his regime was assisted by the Western powers, particularly the United States.

While the regime evolved along with its history, the primitive essence of it remained, underpinned by the legal concentration of all powers into a single person, Francisco Franco embodying national sovereignty and only responsible before God and History. When the civil war ended, Franco was so deeply entrenched that the Falange stood no chance; in this strongly authoritarian regime, there was no room for political opposition. The Falange became partners in the government and, as such, they had to accept responsibility for the regime’s policy without being able to shape it substantially. The United Nations Security Council voted in 1946 to deny the Franco regime recognition until it developed a more representative government.

This party, often referred to as Falange, became the legal party during Franco’s regime, but the term “party” was generally avoided, especially after World War II, when it was commonly referred to as the National Movement or just as The Movement



Life under the dictatorships in other countries involved in our project.

Italy:

Fascism arose after the First World War, as a reaction of certain nationalist groups against the Revolution of 1917 and the trade union struggles of workers and braceros that culminated in the Red Biennium, and in part as a criticism of the liberal-democratic society, which came out battered from the expe-

rience of the First World War.

Greece:

The dictatorship was characterised by right-wing policies, anti-communism, restrictions on civil liberties, and the imprisonment, torture, and exile of political opponents.



Mas graves/fosas comunes. Gijón: Fosa Común Cea-res, Fosas Comunes España.

Common Grave III in Cea-res Cemetery, Gijón, Asturias, Spain. It is estimated that more than 1,400 victims of Francoism are buried in the cemetery.



Site with mass graves in Ayacucho that requires regulated intervention by forensic archaeologists.

