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The Peace of Franco: the Idea of Hierarchy in Postwar Spain

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Mao Zedong's famous assertion that 'power comes out of the barrel of a gun' hangs heavy over the historiography of twentieth-century Europe. The extraordinarily rapid accumulation of power by the modern state and the baleful effects to which such power was put has led to a justifiable concentration on its violent and repressive ends. Such an emphasis is underpinned by theoretical writing on the modern state which maps this process of governing, emphasising the centralisation of authority, the enhanced ability of executive authorities to impose their will and, often, the existence of coercive power as the ultimate basis of all state authority.¹ The conviction that, as Joseph Stalin maintained, whoever 'owned' a territory determined its social and political system informed much, often excellent, history writing. An example is the recent explosion of academic studies of the 'first Francoism' and, in particular, the postwar repression. It is not hard to see why the Franco regime has so commonly been studied as an exercise in the brutal imposition of power.² The violence of the regime was startling, a clear token of the dramatically enhanced capacity of the central Spanish state. The regime's brutality—which far exceeded that of Mussolini's Italy—coincided with the anti-Francoist convictions of many looking to tell its story.³ There is often a moral imperative at work here, one which is most often voiced as the need to return history to the those silenced by Franco's personal convictions. But, underlying the claims of 'memory' is a concern to portray the regime as imposed, unpopular and, in consequence, wholly illegitimate.

Clearly, there is a sense in which the regime was illegitimate.⁴ The generals' coup of July 1936 was both obviously illegal and a classic instance of the breakdown of legitimacy, particularly that aspect of legitimacy which depends on legality.⁵ Taking up arms against not only a constitutional but also a recently elected government rendered the generals' coup illegitimate in a very direct way. For all the tortuous efforts of Francoist apologists, the regime's origins had little, if any, legitimacy, and for those who use legitimacy in a normative sense, this must deny it legitimacy in perpetuity. For many political theorists, military regimes originating in coup d'état always remain non-legitimate, though this does not mean that they are without support.⁶ However, there are other ways in which to understand legitimacy, which

¹ See, e.g. Michael Mann, The Sources of Social Power vol. 2 (Cambridge, CUP, 1993); Gianfranco Poggi, The State: its Nature, Development and Prospects (Cambridge: Polity, 1990).

² To cite just some recent examples: Michael Richards, A Time of Silence: Civil War and the Culture of Repression in Franco's Spain (Cambridge, 1998); Carme Molinero, Margarida Sala y Daume Sobrequés (eds), Una inmensa prisión: los campos de concentración y las prisiones durante la guerra civil y el franquismo (Barcelona, 2003); Julián Casanova, (ed) Morir, matar, sobrevivir: la violencia en la dictadura de Franco (Barcelona, 2002).

³ The subject of the historiographical shaping of the Franco regime has recently been broached by Antonio Sánchez-Cazorla, 'Beyond *They Shall Not Pass*. How the Experience of Violence Reshaped Political Values in Franco's Spain', Journal of Contemporary History 40:3 (2005), 503-20

⁴ It was also clearly wrong, but this is a separate, moral question.

⁵ David Beetham, The Legitimation of Power (Basingstoke, 1991).

⁶ Ibid.

may be more appropriate for historians, concerned as they are with lived experience and the realities of both ruling and being ruled.⁷

The notion of legitimacy has, potentially, a profound effect on our understanding of authoritarian rule. For while such rule may be—and in the case of Franco undoubtedly was—based on the material sinews of power, such power can only operate within a nexus of social and cultural values, which not only confer authority but which also confine it. As understandings of what constituted legitimate rule existed both before individual regimes and independently of them, so they also served to define political power. At some level, the Franco regime had to recognise this if it was to attain some kind of legitimacy—perhaps best understood in terms of a workable social consensus. The regime's resilience—even, at various points in the 40s and 50s, its survival—depended on its consolidation: the garnering of a social base, the acquiescence of many of the uncommitted.

That the Franco regime was not simply imposed, nor kept in power only by military force, is apparent from other historical writings on the regime. The idea of 'consent' in the institutionalisation of the regime was among the earliest explorations of the regime's legitimacy, an analytical device borrowed directly from Renzo de Felice.⁸ Recently, there has also been some interest in public opinion under Franco, an approach which offers the promise of precise statistical analysis.⁹ Yet, assessing public opinion actually entails aggregating divergent and often inconsistent individual opinions. As analytical devices, both public opinion and consent also risk confusing legitimacy with popularity. That the latter is not a reliable guide to the former is shown by those studies which explore Francoism in terms of lived experience and so record the complexity and nuance of feelings towards the early Franco regime.¹⁰ The possibility of opposing the regime in principle while accommodating it in practice, is thus opened up for the historical record.

Such studies help to bridge the disjuncture—so often replicated in the historiography—between the 1940s (repression) and the 1960s (development). For, the processes of consolidation and legitimisation ran throughout the regime. This may become clearer if we distinguish between two separate phases in the construction of the 'New State': the consolidation of victory (by c. 1949) and the consolidation of the regime (by c. 1959). This trajectory has more in common with eastern than with western Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War but, given the inescapable

⁷ My own understanding of legitimacy has developed through my involvement in the European Science Foundation research project, 'Occupation in Europe: the Impact of National Socialist and Fascist Rule' (INSFO), see further, www.esf.org/insfo. The preliminary conclusions of Team 1, which looks specifically at the struggle for legitimacy, may be found in Martin Conway and Peter Romijn (eds) 'Political Legitimacy in Mid-twentieth-Century Europe', special issue of *Contemporary European History* 13:4 (2004), 377-88.

⁸ For example, Carme Molinero and Pere Ysàs, *El règim franquista: feixisme, modernització i consens* (Barcelona, 1992). The notion of consent is discussed in Ismael Saz, *Fascismo y Franquismo* (Valencia, 2004), 171-96 and Antonio Sánchez-Cazorla, *Las políticas de la Victoria: la consolidación del Nuevo Estado franquista, 1938-53* (Madrid, 2000), 201-9.

⁹ Antonio Cazorla-Sánchez, 'Beyond *They Shall Not Pass*'; Francisco Sevillano Calero, *Econs de papel. La opinión de los españoles en la época de Franco* (Madrid, 2000).

¹⁰ See, as a leading example, Ismael Saz Campos, *Fascismo y franquismo* (Valencia, 2004), 184-96 and (if you can find it) Ismael Saz and Alberto Gómez Rodó, *El franquismo en Valencia: formas de vida y actitudes sociales en la posguerra* (Valencia, 1999).

fact, in both cases, of military conquest and the evolution of regimes based on that conquest, such a timescale is perhaps less surprising than it might at first appear.

During the immediate postwar, then, the Franco regime consolidated its military victory. This was the period when, as Stalin had said, occupation determined the social and political structures of the land. The scale and ubiquity of repression had a paralysing effect; republicanism was expunged from public life, and those who had lost the war were excluded from the national community. As Manuel Azaña had written, the Nationalists' principle of authority was 'based on blind obedience and on suppression of free opinion.' Such power 'arrogates to itself the power of disposing of the lives of its subjects, and they act as if they measure authority by the number of people they kill.'¹¹ Purging, denunciations, and the surveillance mechanisms of a police state enhanced the state's capacity to repress, a process increasingly understood in terms of social control.¹² The forced dislocations and trauma of the repression meant a retreat into silence, a term much used to describe the 1940s, despite its essential ambivalence. For historians use silence as both metaphor and description and, even as the latter, it has multiple facets. Repression brought one silence, privation another; exhaustion kept some mute while others were silenced through fear. And, as open conflict faded, resignation, acceptance, even passive acquiescence brought their own silence. Ascribing meaning to silence is thus fraught with difficulty. It is as well to remember that all the historian can actually hear is the absence of speech.

It would thus seem that, while silence *may* deny legitimacy to the victor, it may also represent an accommodation with the occupiers, or some other kind of acquiescence. The division between victors and vanquished in the Civil War was the political mainstay of the regime but it did not translate into a simple social reality. There were many who clearly belonged to neither side: for some, loyalties, like many families, were divided; others felt little affinity with politics and, had simply wanted an end to the war; many retreated into ordinary life, trying to reconstruct some kind of everyday normality in the harsh conditions of the postwar, creating non-political spaces of sociability in their local towns. In the years of hunger, given a choice between eating and freedom-fighting, most people would eat. The failure of the anti-Francoist guerrilla by the end of the decade demonstrated the completeness of Franco's military victory; the maquis never came close to their aim of fomenting a general, popular rebellion against the regime.

By 1949, mute acceptance of the status quo characterised much of the population, a passivity which was essential to establishing the New State as a regime rather than simply a military victory. Over the following decade, a working social consensus formed around the regime, keeping it in place (if not in full command) until the 1970s. There was now no prospect of the regime's removal by some *deus ex machina*, such as invasion or spontaneous rebellion. The pace of repression, particularly killing, slackened, and economic conditions eased; families were still poor but no longer starving. Ordinary people 'began to be able to breath' and, as one worker in Puerto de Sagunto (Valencia) put it, they started to "'tragar" a Franco'.¹³

¹¹ Manuel Azaña, *Vigil in Benicarló*, 76-7.

¹² E.g. Glicerio Sánchez Recio (ed), *El primer franquismo (1936-59)*: *Ayer* 33 (1999) and Conxita Mir, *Vivir es sobrevivir: Justicia, orden y marginación en la Cataluña rural de posguerra* (Lleida, 2000)

¹³ Saz, *Fascismo y Franquismo*, 195

Among the better-off, the postwar resurgence of Catholicism did much to cement a new social consensus, helped by the muting of bourgeois republicanism. By 1959, generational change, mute acceptance, the ability to live some kind of ordinary life, had all contributed to an essentially passive accommodation with the regime. This was never intended—nor was it likely—to include committed Republicans but it nevertheless re-established the regime with some kind of legitimacy.

Establishing legitimacy was a messy process. Understandings of legitimate authority were often poorly expressed, if expressed at all. In many ways legitimacy was felt rather than thought, in part because there was no single source, no coherent body of thoughts and values which would confer or deny legitimacy. Rather, various sources coexisted, among them: legality, contractual theories of government; the will of God, of the nation, of the people; a notion of natural or right order; historical destiny. Often overlapping, these were the 'murky textures of socially-rooted norms and assumptions in which the traditional and the modern, the democratic and the anti-democratic, and the secular and religious were intertwined' by which people understood good (or bearable) government.¹⁴ There is more to legitimacy, then, than strategies of legitimation, for all that engaging in such strategies is a clear function of government.¹⁵ For such strategies to be effective, they have to resonate. There is, in effect, a 'living debate' between rulers and ruled.

It is the contention of this paper that the ideological structures of the regime—which have been widely examined in terms of fascism, militarism, authoritarianism and social control—also conveyed wider meanings acting, in effect, as agglutinates of legitimacy. Paradoxically, this is not to deny that they were also used repressively; it is the plasticity of ideas which makes them resist single meanings. To take a prime example, the first appeal of the Franco regime was to order. The repressive connotations of this are easy to see. The ideological constructs of the regime, from the Causa General to Falangist novels to the character references provided by parish priests, all contrasted the 'order' of the New State to the chaos and anarchy of the Republic.¹⁶ This appeal to strong government was directed at Franco's natural constituents, the ideological right, precisely those 'personas de orden' listed in the files of the Causa General. But it is worth noting that, during the Civil War, the Republican government also drew on ideas of effective governance, maintaining social order against 'criminal' or 'uncontrollable' elements and radical social experimentation. Indeed, liberal republicans, who viewed with equal horror the revolutionary excesses of 1936 and the brutal repression after 1939, had little recourse other than silence; their children were assimilated into the regime, but they had no words with which to respond.¹⁷

The purpose of strong government was also to create internal harmony, another of Francoism's ideological props. The purpose of postwar consolidation was not to

¹⁴ Conway and Romijn, 'Introduction', 383.

¹⁵ Rodney Barker, *Legitimizing Identities: The Self-Representation of Rulers and Subjects* (Cambridge, 2001)

¹⁶ E.g. Carmen González Martínez, 'La Causa General de Murcia: técnicas de estudio' in Isidro Sánchez, Manuel Ortiz and David Ruíz (eds), *España Franquista: Causa General y actitudes sociales ante la dictadura* (Cuidad Real, 1993); Tomás Borrás, *Oscuro heroísmo* (Sevilla, 1939); Conxita Mir, *Vivir es sobrevivir*, 226-37.

¹⁷ Saz, *Fascismo y Franquismo*, 190.

mobilise the masses or to establish the regime on an active, popular dynamic but rather to control this dynamic and depoliticise it. The watchwords of the New State—unity, harmony, discipline, order, hierarchy—coincided with fascism but they were not defined by it. The praxis of the single party after 1939 showed this starkly. The construction of the regime, particularly at local level, demanded more neutral, everyday understandings of order and hierarchy than fascist ones. More significantly, all of these concepts also had a particular content defined by Catholic teaching. And it was, of course, religion which was used most overtly to justify the war against the Republic, the victory of the ‘Catholic arms of Franco’ and, then the Francoist regime.

To believers, there can be no more powerful source of authority than revealed truth. This was powerfully shown in the enthusiasm for the ‘Crusade’, an enterprise defined by the hierarchy but fuelled by the ordinary faithful.¹⁸ Many identify the collective pastoral letter of 1937 as *the* legitimising document of the Franco regime and, undoubtedly, the verdict of Christ’s vicars carried great weight, hence the very considerable support for Franco among Catholics outside Spain. Yet, the claims of divine authority or inspiration can *never* be sufficient for general legitimation. No matter how strong the convictions of the faithful, the claims of Divine Will have no authority among non-believers and may also (as in Spain) fail to convince certain groups of co-religionaries.

For religion to fulfil a wider legitimising function, it has to mobilise values and beliefs that are held by both those who go to church and those who do not (or who would not, if they had the choice). The ideology espoused must, in some respects, coincide with other, secular projects if it was to have the plasticity needed in the construction of legitimacy. Yet, such overlaps and coincidences were legion. Organicist political language, for example, was common to Catholicism and fascism. The purpose of government was, according to Catholic teaching—which owed much to St Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-1274)—the assurance of internal peace, an injunction that was easily related to ‘the peace of Franco’. In the New State, peace, order, authority and hierarchy were inextricable and only this notion of orderly peace would lead to the harmony which was the goal of all good government.. The unity of Spain was ever-present in the rhetoric of the regime; ‘the centralization of functions... was established though an organic system of successive relations of different levels of hierarchy, from the most local base up to the head of state.’¹⁹ Unity thus represented centralism which was, in turn, equated with hierarchy, both of which were understood as order. And this order was mandated by the past, whether history—as in Franco’s claim that ‘Spain was never greater than when she was one, And in this tradition lies our strength’²⁰—or custom.

Ideas of a neo-Thomist order were seen throughout Franco’s New State, giving it an ideological underpinning which, though less overt, was just as important and more pervasive than fascism. Such an order existed at a theoretical, an institutional, and, in its representation, at a popular level. Social standing and hierarchy were a given,

¹⁸ See, e.g. Mary Vincent, ‘The Martyrs and the Saints’, *History Workshop Journal* (1999); Javier Ugarte, *La nueva Covadonga insurgente*

¹⁹ Carmen Ortiz, ‘The Uses of Folklore by the Franco Regime’, *The Journal of American Folklore* 112 (1999), 487.

²⁰ ‘Declaraciones del Generalísimo al enviado especial del *Journal de Geneve*’, *Palabras del Caudillo* np but Madrid, 1939), 289.

already set out in the established social order. This can be seen if we look at the apex of the (earthly) pyramid, Franco himself. For hierarchy was, in turn, represented, not only in a particular vision of Spain, but in the person of the dictator, Francisco Franco, Caudillo of Spain 'by the grace of God'. This monarchical formulation was inscribed on the dictator's coins—his head on the verso from 1947-8—just as it had been on Alfonso XIII's and Isabel II's.²¹ The panoply of monarchism symbolised the social order, just as it had done under Alfonso himself. The iconography of Franco's victory was inscribed on the reverse of his coinage, with the eagle, coat of arms, and the legend 'one, great and free'. Trial by combat had confirmed his position and, as conquest was only possible if God willed it, his position was divinely-sanctioned. As Aquinas put it, 'cities or provinces which are not ruled by one person are torn by dissensions and strive without peace'.²² Established traditions of theological syllogism thus underpinned the caudillo's pre-eminence. Like Spain's kings, he would answer only 'to God and history'.²³

In July 1947, Spain was formally declared to be a monarchy, albeit one without a king. The law of succession defined 'a Catholic, social and representative state which, in keeping with her tradition, declares herself constituted into a kingdom'. Fittingly, the dictator's self-presentation was increasingly regal, drawing on an established visual tradition of the 'soldier-king'—Alfonso XII and XIII were customarily depicted in uniform, both in portraiture and on coins—and reasserting the formality and deference of a royal court. This social role allowed Franco to claim the 'natural' authority of the monarch; he represented the abstract principle of monarchism rather than a personal ambition, carrying out the office of ruler, not an individual caprice. The proper conduct of business, for Franco as for his functionaries, conveyed their fitness to govern and the abstract qualities of efficient government. This was a performance, carried out in representation of both the principle of monarchism and the hierarchal social ordering that represented.²⁴ Hence the panoply of monarchy which surrounded the dictator at his court of El Pardo: as early as 1936, those granted an audience with the *generalísimo* had to wear full morning dress.²⁵

This regalism was mechanically reproduced for a mass audience. As one traveller noticed, every 'shop, garage, public building, restaurant, café, or pension conspicuously displayed photographic likenesses of General Franco occupying prominent spots on walls or above cash registers where the eye most definitely could not fail to pick them out.'²⁶ Through these cheaply reproduced portraits, the Caudillo became omnipresent, Spain's representative as well as its ruler. As with official photographs of European monarchs, which had become hugely popular from the

²¹ <http://www.fuenterrebollo.com/index.html>

²² *De regimine principum*, book 1, ch. 2.

²³ Alfonso XIII famously refused to abdicate his throne in 1931, claiming that his rights as king were 'deposited in me by History, which must one day demand a rigorous account of my custodianship'.

²⁴ Michael Braddick, 'Administrative performance: the representation of authority in early modern England' in Michael Braddick and John Walter, *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society* (Cambridge, 2001), 185.

²⁵ Paul Preston, *Franco: A Biography* (London, 1993), 189, 346, 642. One British visitor who managed, at short notice, to find only a sports jacket to wear with his sponge-bag trousers was told by 'high-born' Spanish friends that such an outfit in audience with the Caudillo 'would not be a compliment to Spain', S. F. A. Coles, *Franco of Spain* (London, 1955), 66.

²⁶ Richard Wright, *Pagan Spain* (London, 1957), 86-7.

1930s, these portraits showed little in the way of specific context. Even the *generalísimo*'s uniforms were increasingly ceremonial, less connected to the military history of the civil war. Nor, unlike news images, was he shown doing any specific; rather, the Caudillo gazed out of the picture, beyond the viewer, in a neutral stance which gave the image a certain timelessness and, more prosaically, a long shelf-life.²⁷

Portraits of royal personages such as Britain's Queen Elizabeth or Princess Margaret fostered an emotional bond between the monarch and individual citizens, not least through the romance of royal weddings, fairy-tale evening gowns and gala occasions. Franco tried to capture this romance in set-piece events such as the ball held for his only daughter's coming out in 1944 or her marriage in 1950—a year when per capita meat consumption was still half that of 1926. The Franco family never achieved the emotional resonance that European royal families did in their homelands: the brutality of the regime was too great; the subversive undercurrents of popular opposition too sharp. But even as Doña Carmen's pretensions and acquisitiveness were lampooned in the nickname *Doña Collares*, the family life of '*los Franco*' was photographed and touched-up for a press hungry for celebrity.

Launched in 1944, the new magazine *¡Hola!* was dedicated to 'the goings-on of European royalties, Madrid society and the minutiae of the family life of the *generalísimo*'.²⁸ Traditional social hierarchies were given a new spin as, aided incalculably by Rainier of Monaco's marriage to Grace Kelly, the magazine presented the life and leisure of monarchy and aristocracy as a product for mass consumption. Glossy photography commodified the lifestyle of this anachronistic—and, in the case of the Francos, parvenu—class even as unctuous commentaries preserved a proper respect for birth, wealth, and status. Deference was the prevailing idiom of *¡Hola!*; it offered its readers a window onto the 'real' world of the aristocracy, but not so that they could criticise it. Trivial though they may appear, the society news, family snapshots, and pictures of Franco out hunting which graced the pages of *¡Hola!* were thus part of a conscious strategy of legitimisation. This was not simply for public consumption—Carmencita Franco's lavish wedding took place in the relatively private chapel at El Pardo—but also for private conviction. The rituals of legitimisation were, in part, to convince the ruler of his own fitness to govern or, in Franco's case, to reign. He was no exception to the rule that those who govern 'appear to need to legitimate their power, to demonstrate ... their unique prestige ... as persons set apart to exercise the powers and privileges of government.'²⁹

Catholicism was key to this process of self-legitimation, not least in the elaborate public liturgies designed to demonstrate the unity of the Caudillo with the Spanish nation under God. Great liturgical set-pieces such as the commemoration of the apparition of the Virgen del Pilar in 1940 acted as a celebration of harmonious social order with the faithful, under clerical direction, travelling from all over Spain on pilgrimage to the country's patron, herself both a local and a national symbol. In a tradition often associated with monarchism, military honours were conferred on the Pilar, so making the association between religious and civil hierarchical communities

²⁷ Alexis Schwarzenbach, 'Royal Photographs: Emotions for the People', *Contemporary European History* 13:3 (2004), 255-80.

²⁸ Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi, *Spain: Dictatorship to Democracy* (London: 2nd ed., 1981), 113.

²⁹ Rodney Barker, *Legitimizing Identities: The Self-Presentation of Rulers and Subjects* (Cambridge, 2001), quote at 41.

complete.³⁰ But there was also a private side to the devotions which characterised Franco's government, the late-night rosaries, daily mass, and personal confessions which went together with the dictator's arrogation of the princely privileges of entering church under a canopy and presenting his own episcopal candidates to the papacy in establishing his own fitness for office in his own eyes.

There was, then, a real sense in which Franco saw the Church 'in the manner of a medieval king, regarding it as the legitimising agent of his own divine purpose' but this was not simply a question of public image or borrowing the king's clothes. Although those who emphasise the regime's fascism dismiss its 'monarchical façade' as 'an elaborate show' and 'laughable' deceit,³¹ Franco's was a personal rule, and its style and articulation was not simply window-dressing for a changing international climate. The caudillo lacked both the birthright and sacramental anointing of the kings of Spain, yet he was still a monarch, whose understanding of personal rule did indeed bear close affinity to notions of medieval kingship. He enjoyed the services of both courtiers and counsellors, including the Cortes, established as an appointed, advisory body in 1942. Yet, as John Watts says of England's Henry VI, 'the "king counselled" was still the king... there was one jurisdiction, it was his, and it ranged with equal fullness over all the causes in his realm.'³² Legislation was enacted only by the will of Franco, as represented in his signature; his was the right of turning legislative 'norms' into statute. His also was the command of life and death: both death sentences and petitions for clemency were personally granted by the dictator, who referred to political power as 'command' [*el mando*].³³

Prudence, convention, counsel, together with law and statute, all acted to condition and limit Franco's exercise of power. But it was still, in a profound sense, unrestrained, in his own words, 'a personal fiat'.³⁴ The US chargé d'affaires had complained that Franco 'thinks he knows better than anyone else what is best for Spain and the Spaniards today'.³⁵ Such a conviction—the logical extension of a right to rule based on personal fitness and a providential military victory—represented the monarchical ideal of 'sovereign representiveness', or the king as 'the representative and embodiment of the realm'.³⁶ This was given regular expression in ecclesiastical pronouncements, appropriately enough as such understandings dated from the teachings of Thomas Aquinas, reaffirmed by the Vatican in 1879 as the basis of Christian scholarship and social teaching.³⁷ When, as bishop of Málaga in 1965, Angel Herrera Oria said that Franco 'represents the common good of my people [*pueblo*] ... he has given my *patria* twenty-five years of peace', he was drawing on a

³⁰ Giuliana di Febo, *Ritos de Guerra y de la Victoria en la España Franquista* (Bilbao, 2000), 39-47; Brian Porter, 'Hetmanka and Mother', *Contemporary European History* 14:2 (2005).

³¹ Preston, *Franco*, quotes at 619 and 566-7. Cf Julián Casanova's interpretation of Franco's religious persona as an essentially cynical exercise in public relations, *La iglesia de Franco* (Madrid, 2001), 75-6.

³² John Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge, 1996), 16.

³³ Preston, *Franco*, 227, 337; Juan Pablo Fusi, *Franco: A Biography* (London, 1987), 43.

³⁴ Quoted Fusi, *Franco*, 49.

³⁵ Quoted Preston, *Franco*, 598.

³⁶ Watts, *Henry VI*, 17.

³⁷ *Aeterni Patris* which maintained that 'single-handed, he victoriously combated the errors of former times and supplied invincible arms to put those to rout which might in aftertimes spring up.' (§ 18). Encyclicals are available online at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/index.htm and <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/>.

familiar body of Thomist thought. For the bishop, as for the saint and the pope, the purpose of government was to create harmony, order, and social peace.³⁸ As Pius XI affirmed in 1923, for the Church, Aquinas was 'the perfect theologian' who gave 'infallible rules ... for civil and domestic society', the observation of which would unfailingly lead to the 'peace of Christ in the kingdom of Christ'.³⁹

These rules were bound up in the idea of order. 'It is the function of the wise man ... to put things in order, because wisdom is primarily the perfection of reason and it is the characteristic of reason to know order.'⁴⁰ In the papal encyclicals, Aquinas himself became symbolic of this order, which was both natural and divinely ordained, and so in itself representative of St Thomas's reconciliation of reason and faith. Such order was, of course hierarchical. The 'essence of peace' was a 'tranquil living together in order', where 'the similarities no less than the differences of men find their allotted place in the fixed order of being.'⁴¹ Peace, harmony, order—in a word, good government—all required guidance. '[I]n the same way as in the natural order created by God, the lower must remain beneath the direction of the higher, in human affairs inferiors are bound to obey their superiors according to the order established by natural and divine law.'⁴² Both in the thirteenth century and in the twentieth, the Church itself was both a patriarchy and an absolute monarchy. The theological modelling of secular government reflected this. Monarchy was the most natural form of government, and the most conducive to unity: 'government by one person is more likely to be successful than government by many'.⁴³ And the establishment of peaceful unity was the ruler's most important task: 'the unity of a community, which is peace, must be brought into being by the skill of the ruler'.⁴⁴ Herein lay the common good, and guidance—the sagacity of a prudent and counselled monarch—would bring it about. King, realm, and common interest thus came together in the *topos* of the 'body politic'.⁴⁵

In this organic conception of the state, and according to Thomist thought, 'justice' was 'the proper working' of a monarchical social order. The emphasis on personal virtue in Christian teaching—which was particularly important for those in authority—meant that, in a personal local context, justice could be modified by magnanimity or pity. The theological virtue of love thus mitigated law in the interests of the community; the justice of 'love' reflected the natural order of that local community; it was 'right adjudicated with reference to social force, rather than abstract principle'.⁴⁶ Such an understanding may have been anachronistic, but it explained the otherwise baffling reference in the Spanish bishops' 1937 collective

³⁸ José María García Escudero, *El pensamiento de Angel Herrera: antología política y social* (Madrid, 1967), 234; José Sánchez Jiménez, *El cardinal Herrera Oria: pensamiento y acción social* (Madrid, 1986), 19-48.

³⁹ *Studiorum Ducem* § 20.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* § 14.

⁴¹ Pius XII, 'The Internal Order of States and People' (1942) quoting Aquinas.

⁴² Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 2nd part, Qu. 104, Art. 1 in A. P. d'Entrèves (ed), *Aquinas: Selected Political Writings* (Oxford, 1974, 175-7.

⁴³ *De regimine principum*, Book 1, Ch. 2.

⁴⁴ *De regimine principum*, Book 1, ch. 15.

⁴⁵ Essentially, this is Aquinas's reconciliation of an Aristotelian organic state with a theocratic world-view, Watts, *Henry VI*, 13-80.

⁴⁶ From Watts, *Henry VI*, p? after Clanchy, 'Law and love in the middle ages' in Bossy (ed), *Disputes and Settlement* (1983).

pastoral to the 'National Movement' releasing a 'current of love ... concentrated around the name and historical substance of Spin'.⁴⁷ The same document explicitly defined peace as 'the "tranquillity of order, divine, national, social and individual, which ensures to everyone his place and gives him what is due to him ..." [for] such is the human condition and the order of Divine Providence'.⁴⁸ This highly conservative, essentially static, understanding of social order—even without its elision into 'peace'—reflected Thomist theology but bore a more direct relationship to a voluminous body of neo-Thomist writing, which was cruder, more pervasive and much more widely read than the Summa Theologica or papal encyclicals.

An explicit, carefully argued body of Thomist thought—debated in seminaries and pontifical universities and safeguarded in papal teaching—thus coincided with much less arcane understandings of order and hierarchy. These had been demonstrated for generations in the organisation of Catholic life, the Spiritual Exercises, pious sodality, branches and projects of Catholic action, all of which were divided along hierarchical lines, distinguishing between clergy and laity, social classes, age groups, and sexes.⁴⁹ The emphasis on proselytising through the printed word since the Catholic revival of the late nineteenth century, also meant that there was an extraordinary volume of both intellectual and popular works dedicated to explaining Catholic teaching in the public domain. Articles expounding aspects of neo-Thomist thought were found, written in different registers for different audiences, in every Catholic periodical, from Razón y Fe and La Ciencia Tomista to Mensajero del Corazón de Jesús, Ecclesia and bulletins for parishes and pious groups. Some of those familiar with neo-Thomist doctrine were learned men. But many were, like Franco himself, neither theologians nor intellectuals and their reception of such ideas was often vague or nostalgic. The dictator's own political beliefs have been characterised as 'a tissue of vague and unsophisticated notions about authority, spirituality and paternalistic social responsibility'⁵⁰—a far more common stance than rigorous scholasticism.

In 1945, Franco provided a prologue to the Carlist thinker Victor Pradera's collected works. The men were friends, but their political beliefs coincided in an essentially emotional way which was not belied by dynastic differences. Pradera's El Estado Nuevo (1935), for example, put forward a typically corporatist vision of Spain as an 'indivisible' society of smaller communities (family, guild, region), 'an entity evolved organically, ratified by tradition and hence divinely ordained'.⁵¹ It was, he claimed, 'none other than the Spanish state of the Catholic monarchs'.⁵² Despite its Carlist provenance, Pradera's vision summarised conservative, Catholic understandings of state organisation and social harmony. Sentiment and nostalgia characterised his work just as much as reactionary conservatism and, while Carlist pretenders attracted the loyalty of relatively few, notions of natural order and appeals to social peace and correct behaviour, appealed to many. Order, hierarchy, social peace were key

⁴⁷ 'Sobre la guerra de España' in Jesús Iribarren (ed), Documentos colectivos del episcopado español, 1870-1974 (Madrid, 1974), 235-6.

⁴⁸ Iribarren, Documentos colectivos, 223-4.

⁴⁹ Mary Vincent, 'Gender and Morals in Spanish Catholic Youth Culture: A Case Study of the Marian Congregations', Gender and History (2001).

⁵⁰ Fusi, Franco, 45.

⁵¹ Martin Blinkhorn, Carlism and Crisis in Spain, 1931-1939 (Cambridge, 1975), 146-52 at 147. Corporatist ideas achieved great prominence in conservative circles throughout Europe during the 1930s, stimulated both by the examples of Italy and Portugal and Pius XI's Quadragesimo Anno.

⁵² Blinkhorn, Carlism and Crisis 151.

constituents of conservatism that—unlike mobilisation, brotherhood and direct action—were left intact by the fall of fascism. This can be seen in the admiration that there was abroad for General Franco, a admiration which survived even the utter discrediting of fascism and Nazism after 1945. Catholic apologists were predominant but, as the logic of the Cold War became more fixed, they were joined by others, who saw Franco as a stalwart of the West, if not its sentinel.⁵³

The appeal, though, was not simply to a bi-polar international order or a 'lesser evil'. Anti-communism was neither simply convenient nor defined only as an antonym; rather, it represented values and beliefs which were desirable in themselves. Against proletarian dictatorship stood meritocratic privilege and elite leadership, against public equality and 'sameness', came deference and social distinction. Throughout Europe, there was a desire for social 'normality', the absence of conflict and the reassurance of a familiar, accepted social order. This could be seen both in and outside Spain, but the reassertion of social order in Spain was both more overt and more reactionary than in, for example, Britain or France. For it was posited against not only the dislocations of wartime but also against the threat of a revolutionary political settlement. The social order of the New State was theorised in Thomist terms, but it was also both a reactionary order of landed elites and social privilege and a bourgeois order, understood in terms of authority, respectability, and paternalism. Notions of hierarchy underlying every aspect of this social order thus conveyed multiple meanings. An appeal to social order was exclusionary to some but reassuring to others.

For class is not the only source of social hierarchy. Admittedly, the ideological agenda of Francoism and the cushioning effect of Iberian neutrality meant that the peninsula escaped the profound egalitarianism of postwar Europe, where the eclipse of the old order was symbolised by the disappearance of domestic servants from middle-class homes. But every country which had experienced conflict—whether that was internal, external, or both—experienced a hierarchical impulse in its wake.⁵⁴ The reassertion of gender hierarchies, for example, was ubiquitous, not least as they acted as a powerful agent of demobilisation. The household was a powerful locus for reconstruction; a return to proper family life would end the troubling spectacle of women, mobilised for war work, acting as wage-earners and heads of household and provide a suitable role for soldiers, no longer required to kill but needing a role commensurate with their authority and independence. The return to the home thus became a powerful symbol of peace and reconstruction in the postwar.⁵⁵

The prospect of family life resonated beyond the boundaries of conservatism. Privation, material destruction, and the lived experience of war, combined to make domesticity a genuine goal, particularly as everyday life continued to be hard. Home offered the prospect of refuge and so had a real appeal, to women as well as men. It was also, of course, the case that gender hierarchies were often less resented and less opposed than were those of class. As the testimony of numerous anarchist women

⁵³ See, for example, the sympathetic biographies of Franco by George Hills, S. F. A. Coles and, particularly, Brian Crozier.

⁵⁴ This was a feature of post-1945 Catholic politics throughout Europe, despite the powerful democratic impulse of Resistance, Martin Conway, *Catholic Politics in Europe 1918-45* (London, 1997), 90-95.

⁵⁵ Kingsley Kent; Mary-Louise Roberts; Jon Lawrence

shows, even the most radical of men often left their egalitarianism with their boots at the front door.

Those on the left would not have agreed that—as the 1937 collective pastoral put it ‘Fatherland implies paternity’⁵⁶—but the rejection was often of patriotism rather than of patriarchy. Even for anarchists, the family was the primary unit of society: proponents of free love rejected church and state rather than monogamy. And, after 1939, with alternative conceptions of authority and the family prohibited and their prophets persecuted, traditional understandings were given free rein in Spain. To Carlists, for example, the family was not only the bedrock of both political and religious faith but also the support without which social structure would collapse. Monarchical authority was essentially paternal, as was ecclesiastical and, ultimately, divine authority.⁵⁷ Patriarchy, tempered by respect, affection, and prudence, ran through all institutions, the cornerstone of harmonious social order. To the enthusiasm of Catholic conservatives, the Civil Code of 1889, with its understanding of *patria potestas* and denial of full civic personality to women, was reinstated in 1938. Republican legislation on divorce, the rights of illegitimate children, and female suffrage was overturned, and the vision of the family found in Catholic teaching was asserted, promulgated, and protected in law.⁵⁸ Marriage was indissoluble, with domestic society based on ‘the primacy of the husband ... the ready subjection of the wife and her willing obedience [...] For if the man is the head, the woman is the heart’.⁵⁹ Both partners were equal in dignity but not in rights: the patriarchal authority which emanated through a patriarchal, monarchical church was also represented within the household, as part of the ‘natural’ order. Until 1958, the Civil Code took this to the extent of permitting honour killing in the case of an adulterous wife, distinguishing between male and female adultery in a way specifically condemned by the Church. But the bishops could live with this discrepancy; the wider recognition of the family was all that could be desired.⁶⁰

According to Catholic teaching, the family was both a divine and a natural institution. In terms of order, it preceded the state; in Leo XII’s words ‘The family may be regarded as the cradle of civil society, and it is in great measure within the circle of family life that the destiny of states is fostered.’⁶¹ When it was threatened, so was society; its natural order was inevitably and automatically pitted against the dissolvent chaos of individualism and modern life. A natural order, in harmony with the divine will, in which the church, as interpreter of that will, had primacy, which stemmed from the family (‘more sacred than the State’⁶²), with a distinct sphere for the civil state was, in effect, that systematised by Aquinas and reiterated by the modern

⁵⁶ Iribarren, 235.

⁵⁷ Jeremy MacClancy, *The Decline of Carlism*, Reno and Las Vegas, 2000), 28-31.

⁵⁸ Though Pius XI explicitly stated that married women should not be ‘put on a level with those persons who in law are called minors’, *Casti Conubii*, § 27.

⁵⁹ *Casti Conubii* §26-27. Similarly, Leo XIII, *Arcanum* (1880) § 11: ‘The husband is chief of the family and the head of the wife. The woman .. must be subject to her husband and obey him; not indeed, as a servant, but as a companion, so that her obedience shall be wanted in neither honour nor dignity’; and § 12: ‘children ... ought to submit to the parents and obey them, and give them honour’.

⁶⁰ The *Fuero de Trabajo* (1938 and 1967) recognised the family as ‘the natural nucleus and foundation of society, and at the same time, the moral institution endowed with inalienable rights and superior to all positive law.’ Ch. 12, art. 3.

⁶¹ *Sapientiae Christianae*, 1890

⁶² *Casti Conubii* § 69.

pontiffs, from Leo XIII onwards.⁶³ The family served as both the foundation of wider society and its microcosm. Observance of a natural order, with masculine authority tempered by virtue, mutual respect, and ecclesiastical teaching made 'the lives of husbands and wives ... better and happier'. Hierarchy, properly understood, thus led to peace and harmony; marriage had the power 'to render children obedient to their parents and servants to their masters.'⁶⁴ 'Honourable, noble obedience' was integral to 'the peace, the dignity, and the happiness of matrimony'.⁶⁵ For, while there was no inequality in human dignity, 'in other things there must be a certain inequality and due accommodation, which is demanded by the good of the family and the right ordering and unity and stability of home life.' Such was the 'essential order of the domestic society'; on it, the pattern of wider society would depend.⁶⁶

People did not have to be Thomist philosophers, or even practising Catholics, to recognise and value much of this. As Pius XII recognised in 1945, 'the feverish unrest of a troubled present and still more the anxieties about an uncertain future have given woman's position an central interest'.⁶⁷ In uncertain times, the appeal to natural order had great resonance, not least because it acted as a metaphor for an end to conflict and the return of peace and prosperity. Many men also gained by the stark reassertion of patriarchal authority, defined by the Spanish bishops in 1957 as a 'divine gift and [the] basis of the family'. The husband was both 'God's representative' and 'head of the woman'.⁶⁸ As heads of household, even former Republicans, unmanned by imprisonment and social humiliation, could reassert their identity as men. Harmony, social peace, hierarchical order, these watchwords of the new state, were given some substance by Francoist social legislation. Spain was 'a good mother of a large family' and, in the interests of that 'the essential order of domestic society', married women were 'liberated' from the workplace, prizes offered for fecundity, and *familias numerosas* rewarded. More significantly, family allowances (paid directly to the male head of household) were introduced as 'a clear support of paternity through income supplement'.⁶⁹

Welfare schemes were thus used to protect marriage and encourage a pronatalist demographic policy. Significantly, however, family allowances also reinforced masculine authority. They were only available to married men for the upkeep of legitimate children; state sponsorship was only for the 'natural', properly ordered family, which was, by definition, under patriarchal authority. Reinforcing the position of head of household, *jefe de familia*, thus reinforced the whole principle of paternalism, from the *jefe de estado* and the cardinal primate down through various political, intellectual, and clerical hierarchies to the ordinary married man.⁷⁰ As the Spanish bishops put it in 1956: 'Hierarchy basically means fatherhood ... Without

⁶³ In the encyclicals *Arcanum* (1880) and *Casti Connubii* (1930), the latter reaffirmed by Pius XII.

⁶⁴ *Arcanum*, § 26.

⁶⁵ *Casti Connubii* § 30.

⁶⁶ *Casti Connubii* § 76-7. This was reiterated in Pius XII, 'Women's Duties in Social and Political Life', 21 October 1945.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ 'Instrucción sobre la moralidad pública' 31 May 1957 in Iribarrén, *Documentos colectivos*, 312.

'Head of the woman' is from the teaching of St Paul, Ephesians 5:23.

⁶⁹ Mary Nash, 'Pronatalism and Motherhood in Franco's Spain' in Gisela Bock and Pat Thane (eds), *Maternity and Gender Politics* (London, 1991), 172.

⁷⁰ Nash, 'Pronatalism and Motherhood', esp. 170-3.

paternity, there is no hierarchy'.⁷¹ Unsurprisingly, the obligation to provide a 'family wage' was a long-standing component of Catholic teaching,⁷² not least because it offered a way of realising a particular vision of the family, which 'must be hierarchically constructed in a hierarchical society'.⁷³

Campaigns for a family or 'breadwinner's' wage were, though, not restricted to Catholics, or even Spaniards. Rather, they had been a major component of welfare campaigns throughout Europe, found, from the late nineteenth century, in both Catholic and Protestant countries, proposed by evangelicals, secularists, conservatives, and liberals. Like the general reassertion of family life, or the return of women to the home, such strategies could thus appeal outside the relatively narrow circles of the devout. They were part of a much wider and long-lasting discourse of paternalism, which intersected with—and often underpinned—all forms of bourgeois politics, on both the right and the left. The notion of the family wage, of example, built on deep-seated ideas of domesticity, social order, and the dignity of work as well as of masculine authority and natural gender roles. Yet, admitting the salience of one form of hierarchy admitted others, at least by implication. Paternalism may have been a more acceptable—certainly a more widespread and diffuse—face of patriarchy but it was an integral component of it. The belated building programmes for social housing, particularly after the creation of the Housing Ministry in 1957, reflected this intersection of family and class hierarchies. The attempt to finally build affordable accommodation was offset by differential scales, calculated according to floor-space, with larger flats—150 to 200 square metres as against to between 59 and 72—reserved for those 'of a superior social condition' who would 'by example' improve 'the needy' in their way of life and 'will try to attain true Christian brotherhood between the different social classes, which must necessarily always exist'.⁷⁴

Leadership and elite formation were thus also part of New State's hierarchical reading of society. Indeed, the thinking behind the 1950s housing strategy was identical to that expounded by the governor general of Huesca in 1938, when he had identified the key to social harmony as being 'the exemplarity of conduct among all who have positions of responsibility, command, or direction, whatever their standing or jurisdiction ... the local priest, Teacher, Doctor, and Pharmacist must, without fail, do so, as must, as is natural, the Local *Jefe* of the Falange.'⁷⁵ Certainly, the Falange were among the most enthusiastic adherents to the idea of hierarchies, understood in their case as a dynamic verticalisation of an all-encompassing state. But, as the governor general of Huesca, made plain, the totalitarian vision of the 'old shirts' co-existed with older, more pervasive and ultimately far more powerful understandings of hierarchy. The exhortation to exemplary behaviour owes far more to paternalistic understandings of social and class responsibility than to any fascist dynamic.

⁷¹ 'Declaración sobre la misión de los intelectuales católicos' 1 April 1936 in Iribarren, *Documentos colectivos*, 289.

⁷² For the family wage see, most famously, *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*. The obligation was reiterated periodically by the Spanish Church eg 'Instrucción colectiva sobre deberes de justicia y caridad', 3 June 1951; 'Sobre la situación social en España' 15 August 1956. Iribarren, *Documentos colectivos*, 261-2; 294, 297.

⁷³ Spanish bishops, quoted Pilar Folguera, 'El franquismo. El retorno a la esfera privada (1939-75)' in Elisa Gerrido (ed), *Historia de las mujeres en España* (Madrid, 1997), 530.

⁷⁴ Folguera, 'El retorno a la esfera privada', 532.

⁷⁵ Sánchez-Cazorla, *Las políticas de la victoria*, 49.

And this was only appropriate in a political system which was intended, above all, to depoliticise. Such a conception of political life—where government was both confined to elites yet extended through society via paternal authority—was an eminently suitable vehicle for neo-Thomist reasoning. Yet the coercive nature of patriarchal power—honour killing, wife-beating, ‘disciplining’ children as well as their state-level counterparts of prison, hard labour, and the scaffold—was not the only component of social order. For fathers also had a duty of care, albeit one which was posited upon submission and the dutiful obedience of those in his charge. And while this was put to brutal effect in the prisons, with their elaborate, parochially-inspired methods of earning parole through work, contrition, and submission to authority⁷⁶, it also had a more benign, beneficent face. For, although the exclusion and punishment of those outside the regime was vital to its strategy of pacification, life had to become bearable for those who stayed within it, so that the regime could become at least a ‘lesser evil, for all its shortcomings, at least better than uncertainty or conflict. For the welfarist measures put in place by the New State were effective, if far from comprehensive, and were seen as such even by industrial workers who had little ideological affiliation with the regime but who recognised the benefits of social housing, better retirement conditions, and social security.⁷⁷

For this to happen, the reassertion of the family had also to mean a recovery of domesticity. A sense of inviolable, private space—as at least attainable, if not actually realised—allowed the prospect of escape, endurance, survival. The autonomy of the family, like that of the Church, was an axiom of Catholic teaching; both institutions preceded the state and so could not legitimately be encroached upon. Ecclesiastical autonomy was recognised constitutionally by the Franco regime, though the position of the family was more ambiguous, not least because of its importance as a site for paternalistic social policy. But, even so, and despite the undoubted capacity of the state, there were spaces, both psychic and physical, which the regime never penetrated. For example, neither neo-Thomist thinking on the family nor a concerted pronatalist policy on the part of the regime succeeded in actually increasing the birth rate in the postwar; life was simply too hard.⁷⁸ Music groups, folklore societies, rambling groups and sporting clubs could, like the family itself, create non-politicised spaces for sociability and cultural exploration (which was particularly important in Basque and Catalan areas). The same was also theoretically true of religious associations, particularly youth groups, though here the ideological identification with the regime probably weighed too heavy. Such private spaces, fostered in part by the regime’s own paternalism, helped to ensure the regime’s survival by allowing the establishment of some kind of functioning legitimacy behind it. They would also, though, eventually allow the emergence of the kind of anti-hierarchical opposition which the regime strived so hard to eradicate, an evolution which demonstrates the contingent nature of legitimacy.

⁷⁶ See Angela Cenarro, ‘La institucionalización del universo penitenciario franquista’ in Molinero et al (eds), *Una inmensa prisión*, 133-53.

⁷⁷ Saz, *Fascismo y franquismo*, 190, 194.

⁷⁸ Nash.