

ARTICLE

## **Governing Goods, Bodies and Minds: The Biopolitics of Spain during the Francoism (1939-1959)**

SALVADOR CAYUELA

University of Castilla La-Mancha, Spain

**ABSTRACT.** In this article I am going to analyse the creation of a series of disciplinary and regulatory mechanisms aimed at increasing the State's forces and decreasing the individual's capacity to protest during the initial years of Franco's regime. In order to do this, after an introductory section that presents certain concepts and methodologies, I am going to describe three areas of analysis in which the biopolitical mechanisms belonging to the Franco regime emerged: the economic sphere, the medical-social sphere and the ideological-educational sphere. I will use the analysis of these mechanisms to present the training and functioning of the totalitarian governmentality during the first years of the Franco regime, and the creation of a subjectivity, which was considered to be the cornerstone on which the regime was supported for almost forty years. Finally, I will conclude with some considerations about the biopolitical interpretation of fascism and Francoism.

**Keywords:** Biopolitics, Governmentality, Francoism, Fascism, *Homo Patiens*.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

#### **SOME CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPRECIATIONS**

The Franco regime arose from the ashes of a bloody civil war that devastated Spain between 1936 and 1939.<sup>1</sup> Within this context, violence and fear played an essential role in the institutionalisation of the *New State*.<sup>2</sup> The new regime orchestrated a complete set of repressive mechanisms and a far-reaching police system where denouncement and legal exceptionality were the *norm*. However, from a historical point of view, the 'violent taking over of power' does not seem to be considered in any way to be exceptional. As authors

---

<sup>1</sup> Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War. Reaction, Revolution and Revenge* (2012); Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War* (2012); Helen Graham, *The Spanish Civil War: A Very Short Introduction* (2005).

<sup>2</sup> Michael Richards, *A Time of Silence Civil War and the Culture of Repression in Franco's Spain, 1936–1945* (2006); Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-Century Spain* (2012).

such as Nicolas Machiavelli, Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche or Walter Benjamin have stated and analysed, political systems are usually instituted using violence and segregation.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, these regimes generally need to institute or re-update certain mechanisms, such as the Law itself, which can endow its institutions and the actual government system itself the legitimacy to make its continuity and stability over time possible while simultaneously masking its dark origins.<sup>4</sup> From this perspective, the fact that the founding moment of a political system can be marked by the illegitimate and disproportionate use of violence should not prevent it from being scrutinised critically, thus allowing its main legitimisation strategies to be discovered and analysed, as in the case of the Franco regime. And the fact is that in spite of its bloody and 'illegal' origin, General Franco's regime could not have been forged and sustained, exclusively, by the use of force.

In order to understand its main legitimisation strategies and how they worked, I am going to use the conceptual and methodological apparatus developed by the French thinker Michel Foucault regarding the concept of *biopolitics*.<sup>5</sup> Using this concept I am going to refer to the set of mechanisms of conduct of conducts and the natural phenomena related to the human being as a living organism and species, subject as such, to an entire series of biological processes within a scope that is group orientated by birth rates, morbidity rates, mortality rates, hygiene rates, life expectancy rates, etc., and life circumstances that affect the arrangement of these individuals in the city, in the workplace, at school, etc. Biopolitics is therefore made up of the so-called *disciplinary mechanism*, which emerged in the 17th century and was aimed at the individual,<sup>6</sup> and by what are known as *safety or regulatory mechanisms*, which appeared at the end of the 18th century and were in charge of regulating all the biological processes. These elements must be understood in connection with a third element, *sovereignty*. The combination of these three elements make up the different *forms of biopolitics*, associated with many other *forms of government* or *governmentalities*, and understood as the 'form of conduct of conducts within a specific historic period'.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Michel Foucault, "Il faut défendre la société". *Cours au Collège de France, 1976* (1997), 7-19; Edouard Delruelle, *Métamorphoses du sujet. L'éthique philosophique de Socrate à Foucault* (2004), 147-148.

<sup>4</sup> Alain Supiot, *Homo juridicus. Essai sur la fonction anthropologique du Droit* (2005).

<sup>5</sup> Michel Foucault, "Il faut défendre la société", 213-235; *Histoire de la Sexualité I. La volonté de savoir* (2003), 177-211; *Sécurité, territoire, population. Cours au Collège de France, 1977-1978* (2004); Judith Revel, "Identity, Nature, Life: Three Biopolitical Deconstructions," *Theory, Culture & Society* 26:6 (2009), 45-54; Martina Tazzioli, "Revisiting the Omnes et Singulatim Bond: The Production of Irregular Conducts and the Biopolitics of the Governed," *Foucault Studies* 21 (2016), 98-116; Johanna Oksala, "Violence and the Biopolitics of Modernity," *Foucault Studies* 10 (2010), 23-43.

<sup>6</sup> Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir. Naissance de la prison* (2004); Falguni A. Sheth, "The War on Terror and Ontopolitics: Concerns with Foucault's Account of Race, Power Sovereignty," *Foucault Studies* 12 (2011), 51-76.

<sup>7</sup> Michel Foucault, *Sécurité, territoire, population*, 10-12; Michel Foucault, *Naissance de la biopolitique. Cours au Collège de France, 1978-1979* (2004), 17; Michel Foucault, "La 'gouvernementalité'". *Dits et écrits II. 1976-1988* (2001), 655; Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality. Power and Rule in Modern Society* (2006), 98; David Macey, "Rethinking Biopolitics, Race and Power in the Wake of Foucault," *Theory, Culture & Society* 26:6 (2005), 186-205; Graham Burchell; Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, P. (Eds.) *The Foucault Effect. Studies in Governmentality*

This conception of biopolitics and governmentality, without forgetting the essential role of sovereignty, on the one hand, allows us to safeguard the theoretical ambiguity from which Foucault defined these aspects in different places in his work. In fact, the French thinker had two very different definitions for this concept of biopolitics.<sup>8</sup> The first one, exclusively referring to the 'regulating mechanisms' or 'dispositives of security' commissioned by the government of the populations, and a second definition which I will use here, which designates the exercising of a co-extensive power with life; that is to say, whatever enters human life, as a political concept, in the government's calculations. From this second point of view, biopolitics could be made up of both *anatomo-politics of the human body* aimed at the disciplinary governing of individuals, such as using the *biopolitics of the human race*, commissioned by the governing of the biological processes of the group referred to above. Finally, the term 'bio-power', or 'bio-powers,' would be used for the set of techniques aimed at multiplying, controlling and lengthening life.

On the other hand, the second definition of the concept of biopolitics would allow Foucault to establish a bridge between the so-called *war* or *strategic model of power*, where power was understood as a 'productive relation of forces' and the subsequent *governing* or *governmental model*, where power is considered as conduct of conducts. Without involving a radical split with all of the aforementioned, this new model would allow the French thinker to describe certain 'regulating technologies' that were incompatible to a certain extent with the previous war model. And the fact is that the governing, which is understood as technical, as an action conceived as conduct of conducts, no longer has the aim of a potential to use force to dominate (the body), as in the case of the disciplines, but rather to dominate the actions of others and of the self. The government, therefore, intends to use the same freedom of the individuals, understood to be the governed, motivating or directing their initiatives, instituting a permanent game of mutual incitement and challenge in a link of agonism.<sup>9</sup>

This new model also allowed Foucault to redefine the relations between power and freedom, completing the ancient opposition between power and *resistance* and at the same time maintaining the cases assumed by his analysis of the power. However, alongside this definition of the term 'government' as a 'conduct of conducts', we find another more limited meaning in the term *governmentality*, also called the art of governing, rationality of governing or form of governing, with which the French thinker referred to as the 'system of thought about the nature and practice of government,' that is to say, of the conduct of conducts within a specific historic period. From this point of view, both the disciplinary dispositives and the security mechanisms, both components of biopolitics, should emerge sheltered by a certain form of government: namely, the former by mercantilist

---

(1991); and Stephen J. Collier, "Topologies of Power: Foucault's Analysis of Political Government Beyond 'Governmentality,'" in *Theory, Culture & Society* 26:6 (2009), 79–109.

<sup>8</sup> Javier Ugarte, "Las dos caras de la biopolítica," in Javier Ugarte (coord.), *La administración de la vida. Estudios biopolíticos* (2005), 43–72; Francisco Vázquez, *La invención del racismo. Nacimiento de la biopolítica en España* (2009), 9 and ss.

<sup>9</sup> Francisco Vázquez, *La invención del racismo*, 11 and ss.

governmentality (17th and 18th centuries), and the latter by liberal governmentality (end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup>).<sup>10</sup>

However, it is important to mention now that the security mechanisms do not imply an improvement of the disciplines but rather an accommodation or overlapping in the power devices activated in the Modern Age. And the disciplines also cannot be considered to be a more refined style in the exercise of power than sovereignty. The genealogical history laid out by Foucault cannot uphold the existence of an increasingly subtle, invisible, perfected and omnipresent power. The thesis of the 'progressive sophistication', defended in one way or another by authors such as Bauman,<sup>11</sup> Hardt and Negri<sup>12</sup> or Agamben,<sup>13</sup> forgets that sovereignty, the disciplines and the security mechanisms form from their birth a triangle in which articulation or feedback varies from one period to another, giving rise to different configurations.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, rather than talking about biopolitics in general, it would be necessary to distinguish between as many forms of biopolitics as ways of governing, always using a pluralist, strictly historical approach to human events that invalidates unitary or progressive approaches. For this reason any biopolitical study, such as the one I am intending to carry out here, must be inseparable from the morphology of governmentality that takes into consideration the variations in the governing practices of the different forms of state and, in the last instance, of each State.<sup>15</sup>

Finally, in order to apply this conceptual and methodological apparatus to the case of the Francoism, I am going to distinguish between three spheres where I analyse the creation and the functioning of the different 'biopolitical mechanisms' (*disciplinary* and *regulatory*) activated by the regime between 1939 and 1959. The first of these spheres is the *economic field*, where I will present the characteristic features of the regime's economic policies and their labour relation framework. The second sphere is the *medical-social area*, where I will analyse, firstly, the social security system orchestrated by the new regime and, secondly, its dominant medical and psychiatric discourses. And lastly, the lines of action and performance of the *Auxilio Social* (Social Assistance). The third area, known as the *ideological-educational sphere*, is where I will show the functioning and targets of three mechanisms that were directly in charge of the indoctrination and disciplining of the behaviour of young people, women and students: the *Frente de Juventudes*, the *Sección Femenina de Falange* and the *education system* itself.

The analysis of the performance of the biopolitical mechanisms ordered by the regime in each of these three spheres will allow me, on the one hand, to present the notes that characterise what I will call the *Francoist Governmentality*. In fact, this was a *form of*

---

<sup>10</sup> Michel Foucault, "Leçon du 17 janvier 1979," in Michel Foucault, *Naissance de la biopolitique. Cours au Collège de France. 1978-1979* (2004), 48; Michel Foucault, "Leçon de 5 avril 1978", in Michel Foucault, *Sécurité, territoire, population. Cours au Collège de France. 1977-1978* (2004), 360.

<sup>11</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989).

<sup>12</sup> Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri, *Empire* (2000).

<sup>13</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Homo sacer. Il potere sovrano e la nuda vita* (2003).

<sup>14</sup> See for that Michel Foucault, *Sécurité, territoire, population*, 10-12; Peter O'Malley, "Risk and Responsibility," in Andrew Barry; Thomas Osborne and Nikolas Rose, *Foucault and Political Reason. Liberalism, Neoliberalism and Rationalities of Power* (1996), 192; or Mitchel Dean, *Governmentality*, 98 and ss.

<sup>15</sup> Francisco Vázquez, *La invención del racismo*, 15.

government used by the regime itself that was shown to be capable of governing the conducts of its subjects, creating a characteristic of *subjectivity* amongst Spaniards during this time. This subjectivity, which I will call the '*homo patiens*',<sup>16</sup> was, in my opinion, the true cornerstone on which General Franco's dictatorship was based for almost forty years. And, on the other hand, this analysis will finally allow me to show a new interpretation of the fascist and totalitarian regimes of the 20th century, taking into consideration the Foucauldian approximation of biopolitics and governmentality.

### **The government of goods: the economic sphere**

As Foucault showed in his courses at the *Collège de France* in 1978 and 1979, abridged under the title *Naissance de la biopolitique*, any morphology of governmentality and of its associated biopolitics is inseparable from the analysis of its economic rationality, as good governing of its assets is the element that ensures the nation's prosperity and, in the last instance, its legitimacy.<sup>17</sup> In the case of Francoism, the so-called 'Nationalists' had already ordered a distinctively interventionist economy in the middle of the Civil War, which would lay down the foundations for the economic policy used in the first years of the Franco regime. It was an autarchic and interventionist policy, with direct fascist inspiration, which was going to allow a true *Predatory State* to be maintained.<sup>18</sup> As indicated by Jordi Catalán, this economic policy presented five characteristics: 1) the adoption of autarchic policies that subordinated the economic needs to the political aims of the regime; 2) an industrialisation guided by military and political imperatives; 3) the fixing of prices by the State, as well as its intervention in the assignment of resources; 4) a monetary policy contrary to devaluation and a rigid system for control of the exchange rates and 5) a labour relations system based on the obligatory categorising of workers in a vertical trade union system, a centralised fixing of salaries and, of course, the repression of free trade unionism.<sup>19</sup>

As indicated in the '*Fuero del Trabajo*' (*Work Charter*) of 1938, in its article XI.1: 'National production forms an economic unit that serves the Homeland. It is the duty of every Spaniard to defend it, improve it and increase it. All the factors intervening in the production are subordinate to the supreme interest of the Nation.' Nevertheless, there was nothing for Spaniards to fear, as Francisco Franco himself affirmed in 1938, 'because Spain is a

---

<sup>16</sup> Viktor Frankl introduced the concept of '*homo patiens*' for the first time in his book *Homo Patiens. Versucheiner Pathodizee* (1950). For Frankl, the 'grieving man' is the individual who is able to find the reason of his or her suffering, transforming it into action without despair. In this way, facing the suffering, the '*pati aude*' – in opposition to the Kantian '*sapere aude*' – is what makes us human. This conception of the '*homo patiens*', being a kind of 'psychological explanation' of the human condition, is totally different from mine. As it will be explained below, my definition of the '*homo patiens*' has a political meaning, being the result of a specific 'conduct of conducts' in a particular moment of history and in a concrete State.

<sup>17</sup> Michel Foucault, "Leçon du 10 janvier 1979," in Michel Foucault, *Naissance de la biopolitique* (2004), 3-28.

<sup>18</sup> Gonzalo Caballero, "La economía política desde el Estado depredador franquista al Estado contractual español," *RIPS. Revista de Investigaciones Políticas y Sociológicas* 3:1 (2004), 53-75.

<sup>19</sup> Jordi Catalán, "La reconstrucción franquista y la experiencia de la Europa Occidental," in Carlos Barciela (ed.), *Autarquía y mercado negro. El fracaso económico del primer franquismo, 1939-1959* (2003), 135.

privileged country that is self-sufficient. We have everything we need to live and our production is great enough to ensure our own subsistence'.<sup>20</sup>

This economic policy meant an unbearable shortage of both energy products and of machinery and spare parts, circumstances which delayed the post-war economic recovery. Nevertheless, if we pay attention to the mechanisms created by the New State to arrange the country's commodities during these years, I must first mention the *Instituto Nacional de Colonización* (INC) (National Colonisation Institute), which was modelled on its Italian counterpart.<sup>21</sup> The INC was in charge of applying the totalitarian intervention policies on Spanish agriculture, which we can summarise as the arrangement of crops, of productions, of prices and the consumption of agricultural produce. In spite of the fact that this mechanism facilitated the creation of agricultural trade union organisations, and that in principle it had to defend the smallholders of land against the large landowners, it soon was to show its true objectives: the arrangement of a policy of complete control over the economic activity and labour relations in Spanish agriculture, and an instrument that served the large-scale producers.

These interventionist policies also meant the extension of a black market that was going to allow a very important accumulation of capital, as it was basically taken advantage of by the war's victorious classes and the new members of the 'national cause.' The regime's agricultural policy itself encouraged the appearance and expansion of this black market, parallel to the official market, where the intervened products were sold at prices that were much higher than the official ones given by the government.<sup>22</sup> In this way, a system of quotas, concealments and seizures was promoted, which caused a general shortage of essential products, which were distributed using an incredibly inefficient rationing system. Along with the sudden drop in wages after the war, we can imagine how difficult the situation was for the Spanish population and the general suffering experienced by most of it.

For authors such as Richards<sup>23</sup> or Arco Blanco,<sup>24</sup> this situation was a desired consequence, or at least a fruitful one for the new authorities in their attempt to obtain the submission of its citizens. For others, such as Molinero and Ysàs,<sup>25</sup> this generalised hardship meant a constant concern for the regime, as it constituted a potential danger of social instability. There is no doubt that it was an *undesired result, but one which was assimilated by the system to its own benefit*. Therefore, it meant the initial accumulation of capital that would make the country's economic upturn possible. General Franco's words were ironic

---

<sup>20</sup> Francisco Franco, *Palabras del Caudillo, 19 de abril-31 de diciembre de 1938* (1939), 263.

<sup>21</sup> Carlos Barciela, and María I. López, "El fracaso de la política agraria del primer franquismo, 1939-1959. Veinte años perdidos para la agricultura española," in *Autarquía y mercado negro. El fracaso económico del primer franquismo, 1939-1959*, ed. Carlos Barciela (2003), 55-93.

<sup>22</sup> Albert Carreras & Xavier Tafunell, *Historia económica de la España contemporánea* (2003), 284-285.

<sup>23</sup> Michael Richards, *A Time of Silence*.

<sup>24</sup> Miguel Ángel Arco, "Hunger and the Consolidation of the Francoist Regime (1939-1951)," *European History Quarterly* 40:3 (2010), 458-483.

<sup>25</sup> Molinero, Carme and Ysàs, Pèrre. "Pobreza y supervivencia en un país en reconstrucción," *Ayer* 52 (2003), 255.

when he affirmed, back in 1949, that ‘the limitless selfishness of money has opposed the general interest of the nation, but not due to inoperative political definitions, but by creating the instruments necessary to perform it’.<sup>26</sup>

Another of the regime’s privileged mechanisms where its economic strategies flowed was the *Instituto Nacional de Industria* (INI) (National Industrial Institute), founded in 1941, directly inspired by the Italian Fascist *Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale*.<sup>27</sup> It was a holding company using public capital, and its priorities were, therefore, military and self-sufficient projects, inspired by the direct interventions on the production performed by European fascist powers during the period in between the wars. Moreover, the industrialising policy orchestrated by the INI was not very realistic and was very inefficient as it was much more concerned about military and political questions than about the country’s economic development. In fact, its projects hindered the forming of private companies in certain areas of national interest such as the production of synthetic fuels, the manufacturing of motor vehicles, shipbuilding, the electricity industry, etc., as the companies from the holding company benefitted from both public funds and from favourable treatment in order to win contracts over private competition.

Before ending this section, I must present the characteristics of the *trade union policy* of the New State. Also, in the framework of the basic relations in the world of work, the Civil War meant an authentic break up, with free trade unionism becoming banned and striking workers being punished as ‘convicts for sedition.’ Trade unionism was considered to be a ‘Marxist deception,’ without any justification in the New Order, and this was because:

Social classes are a myth; the employers, the technicians and the workers do not form enemy groups because they are inseparable in the production; because an industry cannot operate, however large or small it is, without the company, the technique and the manpower [...] *National-Trade Unionism* [...] conceives the company as a society of producers in which everyone puts something in, some as capital and management, others as technique and others as manpower, and therefore, all of them participate in the profits.<sup>28</sup>

The Franco regime articulated a Christian class conception of work that was going to be used by the dictatorship to institutionalise the rapport between the homeland and work, always dependent on the State’s interests.<sup>29</sup> The producers had to be framed by production branches in the so-called *Vertical Trade Union*, dependent on the single party, and in charge of arranging the economy, social policy and labour relations using political criteria. The ‘*Organización Sindical*’ (OSE) (Trade Union Organisation) was, therefore, theoretically in charge of making ‘the appearance and needs that in the economic order are felt by the producing elements of the Nation’ reach the State, working at the same time as a bridge between the State’s economic aspirations and these producing elements. Soon the

---

<sup>26</sup> Francisco Franco, *Textos de doctrina política. Palabras y escritos de 1945 a 1950* (1951), 154.

<sup>27</sup> Antonio Gómez, *De mitos y milagros. El Instituto Nacional de Autarquía, 1941-1963* (2000).

<sup>28</sup> José Luis Arrese, *La revolución social del nacionalsindicalismo* (1940), 173.

<sup>29</sup> Josefa Dolores Ruiz, *Trabajo y franquismo* (1999), 49-54; Salvador Cayuela, *Por la grandeza de la patria. La biopolítica en la España de Franco (1939-1975)* (2014), 51.

compulsory categorising of all the workers in the trade union would be decreed; a step intended to ensure their attachment to the New Order and to prevent the resurgence of class awareness and worker solidarity.

The world of work during the first years of the Franco dictatorship would be completed with other disciplinary mechanisms directly in charge of the purging, standardisation and ideologisation of the workers, particularly those committed to Republicanism and left wing politics.<sup>30</sup> These were the *Disciplinary Battalions of Soldier Workers*, the *Sentence Reduction System for Work*, and the *Militarised Penitentiary Colonies Service*. These were mechanisms aimed at granting prisoners of war and political prisoners the 'right to work,' the main aims of which were to take advantage of these convicts as a method of punishment; as atonement for the punishment; and above all, as a mechanism aimed at generating an extra benefit for the State while bolstering the workforce. In principle, the prisoners obtained a small salary and a reduction in their sentences in exchange for their work, which showed the underlying intentions of the programme: the *moral and political re-education* of the prisoners and of their families.

### **The government of bodies: the medical-social sphere**

The governing of bodies, of their health and the disease processes, as well as the conditions in which the group biological processes are developed, have been interpreted by Foucault as the central place in the biopolitical governing of populations. The aim of biopolitics of populations, in the limited definition of the term, was, in fact, to increase the nation's productive force. Accordingly, and at the conclusion of the Civil War, the new authorities seemed determined to implant a social security system in Spain based on the creation of national insurances. In the *Work Charter* of 1938, in its 10th Decree, the following had already been affirmed: 'The social security will provide workers the safety of coverage during their times of misfortune,' and it added, 'The social insurance for old age, invalidity, maternity, work accidents, professional illnesses, tuberculosis and unemployment will be increased, as the new government trended towards the implementation of total insurance coverage.'

Nevertheless, the socio-healthcare situation in the nineteen forties was truly catastrophic, marked by the outbreak and spreading of three epidemics, smallpox, typhus and diphtheria, as well as the existing permanent threat of tuberculosis, the very high infant mortality rate and malaria.<sup>31</sup> Taking all of these elements into account, the new government was more concerned about making the population responsible for its health-related behaviour than putting positive steps into practice. On this point, the statements made by

---

<sup>30</sup> Gutmaro Gómez, "The origins of the Francoist penitentiary system, 1936-48," in *International Journal of Iberian Studies* 23:1 (2010), 5-21; Carme Molinero; Margarida Sala, and Jaume Sobrequés, (eds.) *Una inmensa prisión. Los campos de concentración y las prisiones durante la Guerra Civil y el Franquismo* (2003).

<sup>31</sup> Isabel Jiménez, "El tifus exantemático en la posguerra española (1939-1943). El uso de una enfermedad colectiva en la legitimación del 'Nuevo Estado'," *Dynamis. Acta Hispanica ad Medecinae Scientiarumque. Historiam Illustradam* 14 (1994), 188.

the Director General for Health José A. Palanca should be understood when referring to the typhus epidemic suffered by the city of Malaga at that time:

During our war the entire coastal region of North Africa was an incubator for endemic typhus and it cannot be forgotten that volunteers constantly came from this region to swell our ranks, although, to tell the truth, they never brought a single case of the disease [since] there was a lack of population with the sufficient degree of receptivity for the contagion to propagate with ease [...] But, additionally, it is very likely that the moral and material suffering experienced during the war years in the red zone [...] determined the appearance of the epidemic.<sup>32</sup>

The *reds* continued to be blamed for any evil that occurred in Spain, guilty both of the material and of the moral misery that the population suffered from, while the *winners* were the only ones who could bring an end to the hunger, the pain and the distress. These arguments decorated all the New State's healthcare publications during this first era of the Franco regime, not only aimed at 'improving the health of the national body',<sup>33</sup> but also at instilling the ideological project sponsored by the regime, which was revealed as a *paradigmatic biopolitical figure*.

With this aim, the laws were updated and extended. For example, the *Vagrancy Act*, which was passed during the 2nd Republic, was now going to work by activating criminal intervention on the assumed 'danger of the subject': that is to say, it was aimed at 'preventing possible future crimes.' As its second article stated:

The following could be declared to be in a dangerous state and subjected to the safety measures of this Law: regular layabouts; ruffians and pimps; those who do not identify themselves when they are required to by the authorities and their agents, the possession or origin of money or goods found in their hands or that had been delivered to others for investment or custody; professional beggars and those who live from another person's begging occupation or who exploit underage children, the mentally ill or cripples; etc.

Since the so-called 'dangerous states' were very lax and malleable, and taking into account the generalised miserable conditions in which a large part of the Spanish population was living, virtually all citizens were susceptible to being subjected to the disciplinary steps instituted by the Act. In short, all those who 'had lost the war' could be punished with the loss of their liberty.

Another of the prime biopolitical mechanisms from this period was the *Compulsory Health Insurance* (SOE), approved in December 1942. This insurance, also having a Fascist inspiration, was upheld under typically *prudentialist* principles, where social security is understood to be both a right and an obligation of the individual with the homeland.<sup>34</sup> The State placed the necessary means to protect and conserve the health of the individuals,

<sup>32</sup> José Antonio Palanca, *Las epidemias de la posguerra. Discurso leído en la solemne sesión celebrada el día 28 de marzo de 1943 en la Real Academia de Medicina* (1943), 11-12.

<sup>33</sup> Salvador Cayuela, *Por la grandeza de la patria*, 100-101.

<sup>34</sup> Alfons Labisch, "Doctors, Workers and the Scientific Cosmology of the Industrial World: the social construction of health and the «homo hygienicus»," *Journal of the Contemporary History* 20 (1985), 599-615.

but only insofar as this meant protecting and increasing the strength of the nation, its economic power and its capacity to expand, with the national body being understood to be a living organism with specific biological requirements.<sup>35</sup>

Another of the essential biopolitical devices of the time was the *Auxilio Social* (AS) (*Social Assistance*).<sup>36</sup> Established during the Civil War as *Winter Assistance*, clearly referring to the Nazi *Winterhilfe*, was an organisation originally created with the idea of helping women, children and other people in need by giving out food in soup kitchens and shelters that were located in hostels. The AS soon became the New State's favourite charity-welfare organisation, subjected to the control of the *Female Section of Falange*.

The AS created other services as well, such as the Assistance for Liberated People or the National Trade Union Work for the Protection of Mother and Child, clearly inspired by Fascist Italy's Opera Nazionale per la Maternità ed Infanzia. The former was used even during the Civil War, with the Assistance accompanying Franco's troops in their conquest of the Republican towns and cities giving out bread and soap to the malnourished and neglected population. Along with this distribution of basic necessities, AS took care of registering and controlling the subjects being looked after, particularly mothers and children. In fact:

The idea was not so much to follow the individual life cycle, as had occurred with nineteenth century charity, but rather to attempt to invade the family environment as a whole and to collect not the personal biological incidents, but rather all the possible members of the family in order to heal the effects caused not only by the war, but also individualistic practices that were destroying the family, attributed to liberalism and Marxism had caused.<sup>37</sup>

The *National Trade Union Work for the Protection of Mother and Child* had the same mission, as was indicated in its founding text: 'The moral and material sheltering of maternity, the protection of the child from the mother's womb, the fight with weapons of hygiene and culture against infant mortality, the initial instruction (both spiritual and physical) of the new generations and the consolidation of family life'.<sup>38</sup> The 'Work' was also completely involved in the regime's pronatalist aspirations, obsessed with reaching the mythical figure of 40 million Spaniards.

A third and final mechanism used by the Franco regime that was particularly relevant in the governing of this medical-social area was the actual group of *doctors and psychiatrists* who were followers of the regime, and the influence of their racial discourses on the rest of the Francoist *biopolitical mechanisms*. Authors such as Vallejo Nájera, López Ibor, Rojo Sierra or Linares Maza prepared a real *para-psychiatric* project aimed at scientifically

---

<sup>35</sup> Francisco Vázquez, *La invención del racismo*, 202.

<sup>36</sup> Ángela Cenarro, *La sonrisa de Falange. Auxilio Social en la Guerra Civil y la posguerra* (2006); Mónica Orduña, *El Auxilio Social (1936-1940): la etapa fundacional y los primeros años* (1996).

<sup>37</sup> Pedro Carasa, "La Revolución Nacional-Asistencial durante el primer franquismo (1936-1940)," *Historia Contemporánea. Marginación, Desigualdad y Poder* 16 (1997), 89-140.

<sup>38</sup> Auxilio Social, *Obra Nacional Sindicalista de Protección a la Madre y al Niño* (1939), 9.

legitimising the Civil War itself and the atrocities committed by the rebels.<sup>39</sup> These authors contributed to the creation and extension of a certain *State racism*<sup>40</sup>, which was going to work as a key discourse for the legitimisation of the New State. In this way, the regime understood homosexuals, Jews, anarchists, communists, and 'Reds' in general as carcinogenic agents who threatened the body of the nation from within.

Demonstrating these hypotheses was the main aim of the *Cabinet for Psychological Research*. This was one of the first great attempts at 'psychiatrising' political dissidents. Created and directed by Antonio Vallejo-Nájera in 1938, its function was to initiate a clinical research programme on men and women caught by the national army, with the aim of discovering the 'Psychism of Marxist fanatics' using the following work tenets: '1. Relations between a specific bio-psychic personality and constitutional predisposition towards Marxism; 2. Proportion of the Marxist fanaticism in the lower intellectual ranges; And 3. Proportion of antisocial psychopaths in the Marxist masses.' The conclusions of these tenets seem obvious:

1. The idea of relating the bio-psychic personality and the constitutional predisposition towards Marxist political fanaticism [...]
2. The simplistic ideology of Marxist thinking and the social equality that it promotes encourages their assimilation by lower intellectual ranges and culturally deficient people [...]
3. Joining Marxism to anti-sociality and to social immorality, particularly against Catholic morals, it seems likely that psychopaths of all types, preferably antisocial psychopaths would join the Marxist ranks.<sup>41</sup>

As with what was occurring in Nazi Germany, democrats, Marxists, republicans, homosexuals and Jews were deprived of their rights as human beings and stripped of some rights that did not belong to them as they did not form a part of the true Spain, in the eyes of the new government. For this reason, the Civil War, which from the beginning had been understood as a *Salvation Crusade of Christian Civilisation*, was understood to be the best and most effective *immune mechanism*. In short, the war meant an excellent elimination-selection mechanism for the rebels, capable of regenerating a Spain that had been debased by pathogenic elements that threatened to corrupt the body of the nation. This is how López Ibor referred to it:

Spain [...] has been felt to be broken to the bone by its history and now, when it has reached a situation of to be or not to be, is the point when positive and negative forces have collided on its surface, in a purer way, which, in an unchanging antimony form its entire historical path. Therefore, Spaniards, in this terrible purging of war, have been cleansed as a people and as a destination, and after the dark night of a shallow life,

---

<sup>39</sup> Michael Richards, "Spanish Psychiatry c. 1900-1945: constitutional theory, eugenics and the nation," *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* 81:6 (2004), 823-48; Enrique González, *Psiquiatría y sociedad autoritaria, España 1939-1975* (1978).

<sup>40</sup> Kim S. Rasmussen, "Foucault's genealogy of racism," in *Theory, Culture and Society* 28 (2011), 34-51; Michael Burleigh, and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State. Germany 1933-1945* (1991).

<sup>41</sup> Antonio Vallejo-Nájera, "Psiquismo del fanatismo marxista," *Semana Médica Española* 6 (1938), 172-180.

surrendering to the idea of remedying their daily requirements, have felt the sudden illumination of their own essence.<sup>42</sup>

The enemies on the battlefield were not only political adversaries, but also harmful elements for the race; cancerous cells that from within the national body itself that threatened to corrupt it. The racial superiority of the rebels had also been corroborated on the battlefield. According to Vallejo Nájera, for example, in the national ranks there were no records of cases of war psychosis since its soldiers, true representatives of the race, 'defended a noble, enthusiastic cause.' On the other hand, the republican army, as it was formed by men suffering from the Marxist virus, were full of psychotic and historicised neurotics.<sup>43</sup>

But what were the characteristics of this supposed *Hispanic Race*? Obviously the doctors and psychiatrists from the Franco Regime could not defend the genotype unity of those supposed characteristics of the race. Therefore, this Hispanic race was going to be founded on its discourses regarding the existence of a national genius, settled on a supposedly biological base, inherited by the Spanish people as a predisposition to certain psychological qualities: a passionate rather than a prudent character, stoicism, idealism, sobriety, love for warrior values, indifference when faced with death, etc. The Hispanic race was a 'spiritual community,' almost identifiable with *Hispanicity* itself:

There is no biotype unity in the Iberian race, and therefore a Basque offers us a body shape, a temperament and a character that differ greatly from an Andalusian, from a Catalanian, from a Galician or from a Castilian. But the race has surpassed the territorial boundaries and has peopled or repopulated many American nations, instilling in them not only biological characters, but also ideas, habits, language, religion and culture, in such a way that Argentineans, Peruvians, Chileans, Mexicans all offer these similarities to Castilians, meaning for example that we can talk about racial unity [...] What we call race is not exclusively formed by the biological characteristics that can be passed on through the germ plasm, but rather those that are the light of the spirit, such as the thinking and the language.<sup>44</sup>

For López Ibor, this *Iberian Race* was a kind of ideal mixture between the *Mediterranean* type – e.g. extroverted, excitable, passionate, tending to extremes, etc. – and the *Nordic* type – e.g. sober, strong, mystic, organised, etc. Throughout history, these characteristics emerged at times of national greatness where this genuine Spanish lifestyle had taken shape. Characterised by the scorn for riches and little interest in technique, Iberian men were indifferent to death and their final aspiration was heroism, being lovers of military and literary glory, sober and stoic and always blasé about the circumstances of everyday life.<sup>45</sup>

This racial conception was going to be accompanied by a racial policy aimed at regenerating the Hispanic race. Obviously, in the ultra Catholic Spain of the nineteen thirties and forties, the *racial hygiene and eugenic State restriction* steps were not going to be

---

<sup>42</sup> Juan José López-Ibor, *El español y su complejo de inferioridad* [1951] (1971), 150.

<sup>43</sup> Antonio Vallejo-Nájera, *Psicosis de guerra. Estudio clínico y estadístico* (1942), 12.

<sup>44</sup> Antonio Vallejo-Nájera, *Eugenesia de la Hispanidad y Regeneración de la Raza* (1937), 108.

<sup>45</sup> Juan José López-Ibor, *El español*, 160.

acceptable. For this reason, the regeneration of the race had to be achieved by the those incarcerated in prisons, asylums and 'moron colonies' of those who were considered to be degenerating the elements of the race. At the same time, the procreation of those who were best endowed mentally and physically had to be encouraged, contributing to the intellectual and physical development of children and young people and, above all, encouraging the social environment that was best for 'the biopsychic expansion of the pure race.'<sup>46</sup>

### **The government of minds: the ideological and educational sphere**

These discourses on the mental inferiority of the republicans, the necessary racial regeneration of Spain and the chivalrous ideal of the Iberian race, filtered down through the New State's educational mechanisms. In fact, for the rebels the republican educational system was precisely the first and most damaging *solvent* institution of the homeland. Therefore, it is not surprising that just a few months after the beginning of the Civil War, in November of 1936, a decree for the cleansing of school teachers was passed in the foreword of which the following could be seen:

The attention that the problems of education deserves, so essential for the population's progress, would be sterilised if a cleansing task of the personnel who have such an important task was not performed beforehand. The fact that for several decades teaching at all levels and with increasingly rare exceptions has been influenced and virtually monopolised by dissolvent ideologies and institutions, openly challenging the national genius and tradition, means that it is necessary, during these dark times we are living through, for an in depth review of the personnel involved in Public Instruction to be carried out; a process that is prior to a radical and final reorganisation of education, to eradicate these false doctrines which, along with their disciples, have been the main factors behind the tragic situation that our homeland has been brought to.<sup>47</sup>

This decree allowed the expulsion of approximately 14,600 teachers, around 29.2% of all the teachers in Spain. And along with the teachers, the textbooks and the school libraries were subjected to a thorough cleansing and elimination. Education now had to serve the supreme interests of the New State. The republican co-education was eliminated as it was considered to be an idea that opposed traditional values and was promoted by materialistic ideologists and atheists who sought to break up the patriarchy and the natural differences instituted by God on Earth. Also on this point, the Law on Primary Education of 1945 clearly subordinated the individual's interests to those of the homeland, and the social function of women was reduced to their work as *wives, mothers and nurses*:

The school children will be guided according to their skills, for higher intellectual training or for a professional work life in industry or commerce or in farming activities [...]

---

<sup>46</sup> Juan José López-Ibor, *Discurso a los universitarios españoles* (1938); Antonio Vallejo-Nájera, *Política Racial del Nuevo Estado* (1938).

<sup>47</sup> BOE of the 11th of November, 1936.

Women's primary education will particularly prepare them for life in the home, crafts and the household industry.<sup>48</sup>

In the Franco State, education therefore had to be religious, patriotic and orientated towards each sex, while aimed at forging a firm unitary national spirit founded on the creation of good citizens who knew their place in the world and in society. The *training* itself at that time was much less important than the *indoctrination*, and virtually all the lessons in academic subjects, e.g., the forming of the National Spirit, Spanish Language, Mathematics, Geography, History and Physical Education, were used to instruct pupils in the regime's deeply beloved patriotism.<sup>49</sup>

Through the patriotic readings of the History of Spain, a kind of 'catechism of political instruction' was prepared, aimed at instilling enthusiasm for anything Spanish and the values and attitudes belonging to the *Hispanic* race in the children, such as militant life, sacrifice, discipline, fellowship, stoicism, etc. As the Minister for Education, José Ibáñez Martín stated in 1943 that children should be 'the anonymous, suffering and generous instrument of Spanish life itself.' Education therefore had a threefold purpose: in the first place, to offer individuals the skills that would allow them to guarantee their subsistence and that of their families; in the second place, to offer them the possibility to contribute with their effort to the greatness of the Homeland and social harmony; and finally, it instructed them in the Christian faith to ensure they were deserving of eternal salvation.<sup>50</sup>

There were economic, religious and totalitarian principles that belonged to the regime's ideology known as *National-Catholicism*, which redrafted and brought together the principles of the old ministerial Christianity and the new productive models of controlled capitalism. Education played an essential role in this government model, capable of managing both the beliefs of the children and the young people, along with their skills and everyday attitudes about themselves, toward others and toward the world. This ensured that the young people accepted their place in the world and the miserable conditions which most of them had to face.

But the educational system was not going to be the only disciplinary mechanism in charge of *governing* the attitudes of Spanish children and young people. In the middle of the Civil War, in the heart of what would become the single Francoist party – *Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista* (FET de las JONS) –, the so-called *Organizaciones Juveniles de las FET y de las JONS* were formed. These Youth Organisations (Y.O.) were the first Falange youth organisations, using a development of trends that were going to outline the youth policy of the Franco regime. Directly inspired by the Italian youth fascist groups, the Y.O., it played a very important role in the categorisation and indoctrination of young Spaniards during wartime Spain. When the conflict

---

<sup>48</sup> BOE of the 18th of July, 1945.

<sup>49</sup> Gonzalo Capellán, "La miseria de la pedagogía. Los manuales escolares como propaganda durante el franquismo," in *Propaganda y medios de comunicación en el primer franquismo (1936-1959)*, ed. J. M. Delgado, J. M. Logroño (2006), 51-77.

<sup>50</sup> Alejandro Mayordomo, "Aproximación a enfoques y tiempos de la política educativa", in *Estudios sobre la política educativa durante el franquismo* (1999), 19.

ended in 1940, the Foundational Law of the *Frente de Juventudes* (FJ) was enacted, a clear legacy from the Y.O. and a mechanism aimed at directing the Franco regime's youth politics.<sup>51</sup>

The most important aim of this new organisation was: 'the training and discipline of the generations of the Homeland in a Catholic, Spanish, military spirit, in line with the Spanish Traditionalist Falange and with the JONS.' It was the privileged mechanism of the new Franco regime for the categorising and disciplining of Spanish youth, with very clear guidelines, which focused on spreading their actions to all Spanish youth, both young men and young women from 7 to 21 years of age. The actions had to be exercised in both the education centres and in the work centres in areas such as political initiation, physical education and monitoring and fulfilling the Movement's instructions.

The FJ attempted effectively to instil in young Spaniards a kind of *Spartan education* so beloved by the new regime, with particular instruction given to the subject of the *Forming of the National Spirit*. It was a subject given by the FJ instructors at all levels of the educational system, the contents of which were: the historical national subjects; the songs, slogans and symbology of the FJ; the doctrinal concepts of the *Movement*; the political structure of the Franco State; the love for the '*Caudillo*' and the regime; etc.<sup>52</sup>

The young workers, known as *apprentices*, were also a target for the FJ. For them, the Falangist youth organisation offered classes where they gave them 'religious, political, physical, sport and pre-military education.' With this action, the Apprentices Section sought to incorporate the young workers into the movement, making them feel the *National-Trade Union* doctrine and perfecting their attitudes and professional skills, always to the benefit of the homeland. Obviously, an undeclared aim was the control over young workers who were susceptible to the dissolving Marxist discourses and a latent anti-establishment danger.

The final disciplinarian mechanism, which I will now refer to and which was aimed directly at the indoctrination and control of women, was the *Sección Femenina de Falange* (SF).<sup>53</sup> Created and directed in 1934 by Pilar Primo de Rivera, the sister to José Antonio Primo de Rivera, the founder of the *Falange Española*, it was established with the clear idea of women giving care, and was always under men's supervision. However, it was during the war that it was assigned what would be its most essential work: *the training of Spanish women*. From that point onwards, the organised and hierarchical nature of the organisation and its political and religious principles would define the models of women promoted by the regime throughout its history. By granting 'too many rights' to women, the republican legislation had questioned family life and politics along with male authority. Therefore, it was necessary to re-establish the divisions in terms of gender, a basic point needed to primarily resolve the so-called 'demographic problem.'

---

<sup>51</sup> Manuel Parra, *Juventudes de vida española. El Frente de Juventudes, un proyecto pedagógico* (2001).

<sup>52</sup> José Ignacio Cruz, *El yunque azul. Frente de Juventudes y sistema educativo. Razones de un fracaso* (2001).

<sup>53</sup> Kathleen Richmond, *Women and Spanish Fascism: The Women's Section of the Falange, 1934–1959* (2003); Rosario Sánchez, *Mujer española, una sombra de destino en lo universal. Trayectoria histórica de Sección Femenina de Falange (1934-1977)* (1990), 40.

The SF was going to be the mechanism in charge of politically indoctrinating Spanish women in the regime's *National-Trade Union* and religious ideology. It was its essential objective, since the 'recapturing of the home and family' was dependent on the 'ideological recovery' of the women. With this aim, the SF created or absorbed actions directly aimed at disciplining women and their families; for example, the '*Servicio Social*'<sup>54</sup> (Social Service), which was created in the image of the Nazi *Arbeitsdienst*, or the '*Cátedras Ambulantes*'.<sup>55</sup> Regarding the '*Servicio Social*', it was a kind of 'female military service,' and first aimed at giving care during wartime and later on at organising the free work performed by single women between the ages of seventeen and thirty-five for a six-month period. The first three months were devoted to theoretical training and the remainder to the compulsory provision of some kind of unpaid work. Regarding the '*Cátedras Ambulantes*,' they were caravans made up of several sections, including training, healthcare knowledge, rural industries, household work, etc., which were then entrusted with visiting the most distant rural areas of Spain. Their essential aim was the political indoctrination of country people, particularly women, and the spreading of the principles and basic recommendations for 'childcare,' that is to say, basic knowledge about the care and rearing of children during their first years of life.

### **The Totalitarian Governmentality of the first era of Francoism and the creation of the '*homo patiens*'**

As we have seen throughout these pages, from the beginning of the Civil War the Franco regime created an ensemble of *disciplining and regulating mechanisms* aimed at increasing the State's forces on one hand, and on the other hand, at reducing the anti-establishment capacity of individuals. The operation of all these *biopolitical mechanisms* shows, along with a *totalitarian sovereignty*, the characteristics of the *Franco regime's governmentality*. Without any doubt, it was a *totalitarian governmentality* related to the ones developed by other political systems of the time, such as Italian Fascism, German Nazism or the Soviet Union.<sup>56</sup>

In fact, if we pay attention to the biopolitical mechanisms orchestrated in the economic sphere, it is easy to verify how all the aspects of the country's economic life were subordinated to the supreme interest of the State. The economy during the first years of the Franco regime was completely guided by political and military criteria, ordered from top to bottom, with absolute conviction in the autarchy and economic independence of Spain. This ideological framework guided the creation of the National Institutes of Industry and Colonisation. Also, those of the Vertical Trade Unions, mechanisms which, along with others such as the Battalions of Worker Soldiers or the Job Centres themselves, were also

---

<sup>54</sup> Mónica Orduña, *El Auxilio Social (1936-1940): la etapa fundacional y los primeros años* (1996), 177-208.

<sup>55</sup> Rosario Sánchez, *Mujer española*, 40.

<sup>56</sup> Enzo Traverso (ed.), *Le totalitarisme. Le XXe siècle en débat, textes choisis et présentés* (2001); Simona Forti, "The biopolitics of Souls. Racism, Nazism, and Plato," in *Political Theory* 34:1 (2006), 9-32; Sergei Prozorov, "Foucault and Soviet biopolitics," in *History of the Human Sciences* 27:5 (2014), 6-25; and "Living Ideas and Dead Bodies: The Biopolitics of Stalinism," in *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 38:3 (2013), 208-227.

in charge of subduing any anti-establishment attitudes shown by individuals, instilling in them the supreme duty of the nation's aggrandizement.

We find the same form of totalitarian government in the arrangement of the forces activated by the Franco regime during those years, which were also upheld by a certain State racism that always conditioned the health of individuals to that of the nation as a whole.<sup>57</sup> The *Spanish race* had to be purged of the pathogenic agents that were degenerating it, with the Civil War being understood as the New State's first and most expensive immune and purifying mechanism. The sacred body of the Eternal Spain had to also be preserved thanks to a complete network of health care interventions, at the same time understood as *regulating mechanisms*, aimed at adjusting certain biological processes that affected the population as a whole, and *disciplinary mechanisms* also being understood to be steps to 'standardise' the population.

And finally, children, young people and women had to be subjected to the designs of the *New Order*. This was the undertaking of the 'Sección Femenina,' of the 'Frente de Juventudes' and of the educational system itself: to eradicate the promises of freedom, democracy and equality, encouraged in times of the 2nd Republic, from their minds; individuals who now were indoctrinated in the values of the *Uprising* and the love for Spain and the 'Caudillo.' Women had to learn to be wives, mothers and nurses while young men were guided in their ways of how to be and how to think regarding values that were innate for Spanish men, e.g., nobility, heroism, discipline in service, etc.

All these disciplinary and regulating mechanisms were used to carve out a series of attitudes, behaviours and images about one's self and of others and of the world, which created the subjectivity of Spaniards in the post-war years.<sup>58</sup> It was a particular individual, a subject who arose from the crossing of many productive relations of power and knowledge, that spontaneously shaped this individual's personality and his attitudes, giving him certain abilities and allowed certain lifestyles while prohibiting others. I am referring to the '*homo patiens*,' the idiosyncratic subjectivity of the first years of Franco's Spain, a subject who emerged as a plateau in the centre of a set of 'government practices' articulated as the characteristic elements of the governmentality of the Franco regime.

In fact, the subjectivity ingrained in Spaniards of that time arose from the intersections of this complex network, or the biopolitical mechanisms that we have seen here: the SOE, the 'Frente de Juventudes,' the 'Sección Femenina,' the medical and psychiatric discourses and actions, the Social Assistance, in the classrooms, in the factories, etc. What emerged was a resigned, politically demobilised, apathetic individual able to bear the hardships for the greatness of the homeland and destined to live stoically in injustice and misery. This *homo patiens* was, in my opinion, the true cornerstone that allowed the Franco regime to be upheld for almost forty years; a subject created as a *governing bonus* shaped within

---

<sup>57</sup> David Macey, "Rethinking Biopolitics".

<sup>58</sup> Salvador Cayuela, *Por la grandeza de la patria*, 205; Salvador Cayuela, "El nacimiento de la biopolítica franquista. La invención del 'homo patiens'," *Isegoría. Revista de Filosofía Moral y Política* 40 (2009), 273-288; Claudio Hernández, "The Triumph of 'Normality', Social Attitudes, Popular Opinion and the Construction of the Franco Regime in Post-War Rural Spain (1936-1952)," in *European History Quarterly* 46:2 (2016), 291-310.

the bio-powers articulated by the different instances of the New State. With the creation of a population that was resigned to its reality and to the silence of everyday life, Franco's regime was ensured a long period of stability that only after several decades would come to an end. And this was due to the fact that in the actual creation of attitudes and lifestyles, this form of Francoist government could not prevent the appearance of wrinkles, of *fractures in this subjectivity*, which during the decade of the nineteen seventies would open up new spaces of existence and new ways of thinking. The appearance of these *points of possible overthrowing* and *new spaces of subjectivation* would bring an end to the dictatorship.<sup>59</sup> And this would occur in spite of the fact that many of the characteristics of the *homo patiens* may still be found active today in a large part of the Spanish population.

### TO CONCLUDE: THE BIOPOLITICAL APPROACH AS A NEW INTERPRETATION OF FRANCOISM, FASCISM AND TOTALITARIANISM

The Franco regime has been interpreted in many ways, some of them even being partially contradictory. Spanish authors such as Julio Aróstegui defined it as *a conservative dictatorship*,<sup>60</sup> while others, such as Javier Tussell, referred to it as a *personal dictatorship*,<sup>61</sup> or *authoritarianism* as in the case of Juan José Linz.<sup>62</sup> On the other hand, foreign scholars such as Stanley Payne called it a *post-fascist authoritarian system*,<sup>63</sup> or a form of *reactionary nepotism* in the case of Guy Helmet.<sup>64</sup> These interpretations could be even more enhanced if we include certain elements regarding the question of totalitarianism that are very present in studies of the fascist and communist regimes that were in force during the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>65</sup> However, it is symptomatic that in the magnificent compendium of texts on totalitarianism recently ordered by Enzo Traverso, no reference to the Franco State appears as an orthodox form of a fascist or totalitarian regime, or any document by its ideologists.<sup>66</sup> Neither does it appear as a model to be studied in the classic theoretical works by totalitarian fascists and communists, for example Ernst Nolte<sup>67</sup> or François Furet.<sup>68</sup> Obviously, it also did not appear in the great work by Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, where she reserved this adjective exclusively for German National Socialism and Stalinist Soviet Communism.<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> Lois McNay, "Self as Enterprise: Dilemmas of Control and Resistance in Foucault's The Birth of Biopolitics," in *Theory, Culture & Society* 26:6 (2009), 55–77.

<sup>60</sup> Julio Aróstegui, "La historiografía sobre la España de Franco," *Historia contemporánea* 7 (1992), 77-100.

<sup>61</sup> Javier Tussell, *La dictadura de Franco* (1998).

<sup>62</sup> Juan José Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* (2000).

<sup>63</sup> Stanley G. Payne, *The Franco Regime, 1936-1975* (2011).

<sup>64</sup> Guy Helmet, *La politique dans l'Espagne franquiste* (1971).

<sup>65</sup> Simona Forti, *Il totalitarismo* (2001).

<sup>66</sup> Enzo Traverso, *Le totalitarisme*.

<sup>67</sup> Ernst Nolte, *The Three Faces of Fascism* (1965).

<sup>68</sup> François Furet, *Le passé d'une illusion, essai sur l'idée communiste au xx<sup>e</sup> siècle* (1995). See also: François Furet & Ernst Nolte, *Fascisme et communisme* (2007).

<sup>69</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951).

This lack of definition of the Franco regime or its complete absence in the writings by important theorists of fascism and totalitarianism in the 20th century is incredibly significant. In fact, in my opinion this is due to the extended 'negative' interpretation of Francoism; that is to say, in its understanding based on the premise of what *it did not become*, rather than about what it *in fact was*.<sup>70</sup> This comes from an interpretative strategy based on a kind of hierarchy amongst some regimes considered to be pure fascism and others where fascism occurred in a more or less *incomplete* way. In this pyramid, Nazism would clearly hold the higher order, followed by Italian fascism, the *Action Française*, Francoism, South American dictatorships, etc. This is precisely one of the excessively *formalist* explanations of the political processes, a hazard that is only saveable if we take a careful look at the particularities and historical variations in each of the countries which, in this case, suffered from the scourge of fascism. For this reason, a radically historical analysis must be prepared for each case, taking into account what Foucault called the 'historical conditions of possibility' of the different historical phenomena.<sup>71</sup>

In fact, the political concepts must be used in their purely historical and as such changeable nature, and not as fixed ideas that would remain on the edge of the particular circumstances.<sup>72</sup> With the terms fascism and totalitarianism, we are designating state systems amongst which, without any doubt, Francoism may be found, at least in the period studied here. On the other hand, the fact that certain defining elements differed from one fascist regime to another does not invalidate the argument, for one reason alone: in reality, we will never be able to find a *pure fascist regime*. As I have attempted to show through this text, Francoism shared many of its defining elements with German Nazism and, without any doubt, Italian fascism, from which it took a large part of its elements.

Therefore, in terms of the theoretical and methodological Foucauldian principles used here, I have tried to show the operation of the different biopolitical dispositives orchestrated by the Franco regime at its beginning. Its analysis, in fact, offers us a new interpretation of Francoism, as the operation of these mechanisms reveals its intrinsic principles from the baseline. Accordingly, Francoism could easily be defined as a totalitarian fascism, comparable with Italian fascism, or in many aspects, with German Nazism. And not only regarding its economic and labour policies, which could be easier to assimilate, but rather also in its own racial conception. In fact, as we have seen, an entire series of psychiatric and medical discourses was designed in the Spain of the nineteen forties to dissect the biological *continuum* of the nation, just as in the case of Nazism, differentiating the true representatives of the race from the others who had been infected by the Marxist virus, sentenced therefore to ostracism or annihilation. War was also commended as a mechanism for racial cleansing where those who did not deserve to form a part of the New State would be eliminated in a movement similar to the one designed by Hitler in

---

<sup>70</sup> Manuel Pérez Ledesma, "Una dictadura 'Por la gracia de Dios'," in *Historia Social* 20 (1994), 173-193.

<sup>71</sup> Michel Foucault, "Qu'est-ce que les Lumières," in *Dits et écrits II. 1976-1988, 1381-1397*; Salvador Cayuela, *Por la grandeza de la patria*, 311-316.

<sup>72</sup> Antonio Campillo, "Biopolítica, totalitarismo, globalización," in *Sociología Histórica. Monográfico sobre Biopolítica y Ciencias Sociales* 5 (2015), 7-41.

Germany: war as a condition in itself of political possibility, in warrior terms of confrontation, but also in biological terms of the annihilation of political adversaries.

The biopolitical interpretation of the political regimes brings a refreshing view, looking on the one hand at the state particularities but also at the dynamics of the group. A contrasting biopolitical study can certainly be highly interesting and revealing in this sense.<sup>73</sup> In the last instance, this Foucauldian approach makes us, without any doubt, put aside the idea that there is a single model of fascism; rather, there are different crystallisations founded on a myriad of governmental strategies that we can refer to as fascist that undoubtedly will always retain their own singularity. Yet, the look of the Spaniards described by Foucault during his visit to Madrid in 1975 should not differ greatly from that of Italians or Germans during the darkest years of the past century:

What we have seen here goes beyond what we often call, abusing the language, “this is fascism.” It is a higher form of fascism, simultaneously refined and brutal, which we have seen in action. This fascism with its pyramid of order and counter-order, this mechanism... this fear in order to maintain the fear. And in addition, the population’s look, full of this mute sympathy of people who have seen the setting. All of these are obvious stigmas of higher fascism.<sup>74</sup>

## References

- AA. VV, *Auxilio Social, Obra Nacional Sindicalista de Protección a la Madre y al Niño*. Madrid: Ediciones de Auxilio Social, 1939.
- Agamben, Giorgio, *Homo sacer. Il potere sovrano e la nuda vita*. Torino: Giulio Einaudi, 2003.
- Arco Blanco, Miguel Ángel, “Hunger and the Consolidation of the Francoist Regime (1939–1951),” *European History Quarterly* 40:3 (2010), 458–483. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0265691410369744>.
- Arendt, Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Schocken Books, 1952.
- Aróstegui, Julio, “La historiografía sobre la España de Franco,” *Historia contemporánea*, 7 (1992) 77-100.
- Arrese, José Luís, *La revolución social del nacionalsindicalismo*. Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1940.
- Bauman, Zygmunt, *Modernity and the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989.
- Barciela, Carlos, and López, María Inmaculada, “El fracaso de la política agraria del primer franquismo, 1939-1959. Veinte años perdidos para la agricultura Española,” in *Autarquía y mercado negro. El fracaso económico del primer franquismo, 1939-1959*, ed. Barciela, Carlos, 55-93. Barcelona: Crítica, 2003.
- Burchell, Graham, Gordon, Colin, and Miller, Peter (eds.), *The Foucault Effect. Studies in Governmentality*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991.
- Burleigh, Michael and Wippermann, Wolfgang, *The Racial State. Germany 1933-1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991.

<sup>73</sup> Salvador Cayuela, “Biopolítica, nazismo, franquismo. Una aproximación comparativa,” *Endoxa. Series Filosóficas* 28 (2011): 257-286.

<sup>74</sup> Michel Foucault, “Aller à Madrid,” in Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits I, 1964-1975* (2001), 1630.

- Caballero, Gonzalo, "La economía política desde el Estado depredador franquista al Estado contractual español," *RIPS. Revista de Investigaciones Políticas y Sociológicas* 3:1 (2004), 53-75. <http://hdl.handle.net/10347/8217>.
- Campillo, Antonio, "Biopolítica, totalitarismo, globalización," *Sociología Histórica. Monográfico sobre Biopolítica y Ciencias Sociales* 5 (2015), 7-41.
- Capellán, Gonzalo, "La miseria de la pedagogía. Los manuales escolares como propaganda durante el franquismo," in *Propaganda y medios de comunicación en el primer franquismo (1936-1959)*, ed. Delgado, José Miguel, 51-77. Logroño: U de la Rioja, 2006.
- Carasa, Pedro, "La Revolución Nacional-Asistencial durante el primer franquismo (1936-1940)," *Historia Contemporánea. Marginación, Desigualdad y Poder* 16 (1997), 89-140.
- Carreras, Albert, and Tafunell, Xavier, *Historia económica de la España contemporánea*. Barcelona: Crítica, 2003.
- Catalán, Jordi, "La reconstrucción franquista y la experiencia de la Europa Occidental" in *Autarquía y mercado negro. El fracaso económico del primer franquismo, 1939-1959*, ed. Barciela, Carlos, 123-168. Barcelona: Crítica, 2003.
- Cayuela, Salvador, *Por la grandeza de la patria. La biopolítica en la España de Franco (1939-1975)*. Madrid: FCE, 2014.
- Cayuela, Salvador, "Biopolítica, nazismo, franquismo. Una aproximación comparativa," *Endoxa. Series Filosóficas* 28 (2011), 257-286. <https://doi.org/10.5944/endoxa.28.2011.5299>
- Cayuela, Salvador, "El nacimiento de la biopolítica franquista. La invención del 'homo patiens'," *Isegoría. Revista de Filosofía Moral y Política*, 40 (2009), 273-288. <https://doi.org/10.3989/isegoria.2009.i40.660>
- Cenarro, Ángela, *La sonrisa de Falange. Auxilio Social en la Guerra Civil y la posguerra*. Barcelona: Crítica, 2006.
- Collier, Stephen J., "Topologies of Power: Foucault's Analysis of Political Government Beyond 'Governmentality'," *Theory, Culture & Society* 26:6 (2009), 79-109. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0263276409347694>.
- Cruz, José Ignacio, *El yunque azul. Frente de Juventudes y sistema educativo. Razones de un fracaso*. Madrid: Alianza, 2001.
- Dean, Mitchell, *Governmentality. Power and Rule in Modern Society*. London: Sage Pub, 2006.
- Delruelle, Edouard, *Métamorphoses du sujet. L'éthique philosophique de Socrate à Foucault*. Brussels: De Boeck, 2004.
- Forti, Simona, "The biopolitics of Souls. Racism, Nazism, and Plato," *Political Theory* 34:1 (2006), 9-32. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0090591705280526>.
- Forti, Simona, *Il totalitarismo*. Milano: Laterza, 2001.
- Foucault, Michel, "Il faut défendre la société" in *Cours au Collège de France, 1976*. Paris: Gallimard/Seuil, 1997.
- Foucault, Michel, "Aller à Madrid," in Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits I. 1964-1975*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald, 1628-1630. Paris: Gallimard, 2001.
- Foucault, Michel, "La 'gouvernementalité'" in Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits II. 1976-1988*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald, 635-657. Paris: Gallimard, 2001.
- Foucault, Michel, "Sécurité, territoire et population" in Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits II. 1976-1988*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald, 719-723. Paris: Gallimard, 2001.

- Foucault, Michel, "Qu'est-ce que les Lumières" in Michel Foucault *Dits et écrits II. 1976-1988*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald, 1381-1397. Paris: Gallimard, 2001.
- Foucault, Michel, *Histoire de la Sexualité I. La volonté de savoir*. Paris: Gallimard, 2003.
- Foucault, Michel, *Surveiller et punir. Naissance de la prison*. Paris: Gallimard, 2004.
- Foucault, Michel, *Sécurité, territoire, population. Cours au Collège de France, 1977-1978*. Paris: Gallimard/Seuil, 2004.
- Foucault, Michel, *Naissance de la biopolitique. Cours au Collège de France, 1978-1979*. Paris: Gallimard/Seuil, 2004.
- Franco, Francisco, *Palabras del Caudillo, 19 de abril-31 de diciembre de 1938*. Barcelona: Publicaciones Españolas, 1939.
- Franco, Francisco, *Textos de doctrina política. Palabras y escritos de 1945 a 1950*. Madrid: Publicaciones Españolas, 1951.
- Frankl, Viktor, *Homo Patiens. Versuch einer Pathodizee*. Verlag Deuticke: Vienna, 1950.
- Furet, François, *Le passé d'une illusion, essai sur l'idée communiste au xxè siècle*. Paris: Laffont/Calmann-Lévy, 1995.
- Furet, François & Nolte, Ernst, *Fascisme et communisme*. Paris: Hachette, 2007.
- González, Enrique, *Psiquiatría y sociedad autoritaria, España 1939-1975*. Madrid: Akal, 1978.
- Gutmaro Gómez, "The origins of the Francoist penitentiary system, 1936-48," *International Journal of Iberian Studies* 23:1 (2010), 5-21.  
[https://doi.org/10.1386/ijis.23.1.5\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/ijis.23.1.5_1).
- Jiménez, Isabel, "El tifus exantemático en la posguerra española (1939-1943). El uso de una enfermedad colectiva en la legitimación del 'Nuevo Estado'," *Dynamis. Acta Hispanica ad Medecinae Scientiarumque. Historiam Illustradam* 14 (1994), 185-198.  
<https://ddd.uab.cat/pub/dynamis/02119536v14/02119536v14p185.pdf>.
- Labisch, Alfons, "Doctors, Workers and the Scientific Cosmology of the Industrial World: the social construction of health and the «homo hygienicus»," *Journal of the Contemporary History* 20 (1985), 599-615. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/260399>.
- Lemke, Thomas, "New Materialisms: Foucault and the 'Government of Things'," *Theory, Culture & Society* 32:4 (2015), 3-25.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276413519340>.
- López, Juan José, *Discurso a los universitarios españoles*. Madrid: Rialp, 1938.
- López, Juan José, *El español y su complejo de inferioridad* [1952]. Madrid: Rialp, 1971.
- López, Ramón (coord.), *Estudios sobre la política educativa durante el franquismo*. Valencia: Universidad de Valencia, 1999.
- Loureiro, Ángel G., "Pathetic arguments," *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 9:2 (2008), 225-237. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14636200802283746>.
- Linz, Juan José, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*. Boulder: Rienner, 2000.
- Macey, David, "Rethinking Biopolitics, Race and Power in the Wake of Foucault," *Theory, Culture & Society* 26:6 (2009), 186-205. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276409349278>.
- McNay, Lois, "Self as Enterprise: Dilemmas of Control and Resistance in Foucault's The Birth of Biopolitics," *Theory, Culture & Society* 26:6 (2009), 55-77.  
<http://doi.org/10.1177/0263276409347697>.

- Mayordomo, Alejandro, "Aproximación a enfoques y tiempos de la política educativa," in *Estudios sobre la política educativa durante el franquismo*, 7-40. Valencia: Universidad de Valencia, 1999.
- Molinero, Carme and Ysàs, Pèrre, "Pobreza y supervivencia en un país en reconstrucción," *Ayer* 52 (2003), 255-280.
- Molinero, Carme, Sala, Margarida and Sobrequés, Jaume (eds.), *Una inmensa prisión. Los campos de concentración y las prisiones durante la Guerra Civil y el Franquismo*. Barcelona: Crítica, 2003.
- Nolte, Ernst, *The Three Faces of Fascism*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1965.
- Gómez, Antonio (ed.), *De mitos y milagros. El Instituto Nacional de Autarquía, 1941-1963*. Barcelona: Fundación Duques de Soria/U de Barcelona, 2000.
- Graham, Helem, *The Spanish Civil War: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Hardt, Michael & Negri, Antonio, *Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Helmet, Guy, *La politique dans l'Espagne franquiste*. Paris: Armand Collin, 1971.
- Hernández, Claudio, "The Triumph of 'Normality', Social Attitudes, Popular Opinion and the Construction of the Franco Regime in Post-War Rural Spain (1936–1952)," *European History Quarterly* 46:2 (2016), 291–310. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0265691416631900>.
- O'Malley, Peter, "Risk and Responsibility," in *Foucault and Political Reason. Liberalism, Neoliberalism and Rationalities of Power*, ed. Barry, Andrew; Osborne, Thomas & Rose, Nikolas, 189-208. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Oksala, Johanna, "Violence and the Biopolitics of Modernity," *Foucault Studies* 10 (2010), 23-43. <http://doi.org/10.5840/philtoday201422120>.
- Orduña, Mónica, *El Auxilio Social (1936-1940): la etapa fundacional y los primeros años*. Madrid: Escuela Libre, 1996.
- Palanca, José Antonio, *Las epidemias de la posguerra. Discurso leído en la solemne sesión celebrada el día 28 de marzo de 1943 en la Real Academia de Medicina*. Madrid: Instituto de España, 1943.
- Parra, Miguel, *Juventudes de vida española. El Frente de Juventudes, un proyecto pedagógico*. Madrid: Fundación Editorial San Fernando, 2001.
- Payne, Stanley G., *The Spanish Civil War*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Payne, Stanley G., *The Franco Regime, 1936-1975*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011.
- Pérez Ledesma, Manuel, "Una dictadura 'Por la gracia de Dios'," *Historia Social* 20 (1994), 173-193.
- Preston, Paul, *The Spanish Civil War. Reaction, Revolution and Revenge*. London: Harper Perennial, 2012.
- Preston, Paul, *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-Century Spain*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012.
- Prozorov, Sergei, "Foucault and Soviet biopolitics," *History of the Human Sciences* 27:5 (2014), 6-25. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0952695114537636>.
- Prozorov, Sergei, "Living Ideas and Dead Bodies: The Biopolitics of Stalinism," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 38:3 (2013), 208-227. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0304375413497844>.
- Rasmussen, Kim Su, "Foucault's genealogy of racism," *Theory, Culture and Society* 28 (2011), 34-51. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0263276411410448>.

- Revel, Judith, "Identity, Nature, Life: Three Biopolitical Deconstructions," *Theory Culture & Society* 26:6 (2009), 45–54. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0263276409348854>.
- Richards, Michael, *A Time of Silence Civil War and the Culture of Repression in Franco's Spain, 1936–1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006.
- Richards, Michael, "Spanish Psychiatry c. 1900-1945: constitutional theory, eugenics and the nation," *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* 81:6 (2004) 823–848. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1475382042000272319>.
- Richmond, Kathleen, *Women and Spanish Fascism: The Women's Section of the Falange, 1934–1959*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Ruiz, Josefa Dolores, *Trabajo y franquismo*. Granada: Comares, 1999.
- Sánchez, Rosario, *Mujer española, una sombra de destino en lo universal. Trayectoria histórica de Sección Femenina de Falange (1934-1977)*. Murcia: U de Murcia, 1990.
- Sheth, Falguni A., "The War on Terror and Ontopolitics: Concerns with Foucault's Account of Race, Power Sovereignty," *Foucault Studies* 12 (2011), 51-76. <http://dx.doi.org/10.22439/fs.v0i12.3337>.
- Supiot, Alain, *Homo juridicus. Essai sur la fonction anthropologique du Droit*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2005.
- Tazzioli, Martina, "Revisiting the Omnes et Singulatim Bond: The Production of Irregular Conducts and the Biopolitics of the Governed," *Foucault Studies* 21 (2016), 98-116. <http://dx.doi.org/10.22439/fs.v0i0.5015>.
- Traverso, Enzo (ed.), *Le totalitarisme. Le XXe siècle en débat, textes choisis et présentés*. Paris: Seuil, 2001.
- Tussell, Javier, *La dictadura de Franco*. Madrid: Alianza, 1998.
- Ugarte, Javier, "Las dos caras de la biopolítica," *La administración de la vida. Estudios biopolíticos*, (coord.) Ugarte, Javier, 43-72. Barcelona: Anthropos, 2005.
- Vallejo-Nájera, Antonio, *Eugenesia de la Hispanidad y Regeneración de la Raza*. Burgos: Editora Nacional, 1937.
- Vallejo-Nájera, Antonio, "Psiquismo del fanatismo marxista," *Semana Médica Española* 6 (1938), 172-180.
- Vallejo-Nájera, Antonio, *Política Racial del Nuevo Estado*. San Sebastián: Editorial Española, 1938.
- Vallejo-Nájera, Antonio, *Psicosis de guerra. Estudio clínico y estadístico*. Madrid: Morata, 1942.
- Vázquez, Francisco, *La invención del racismo. Nacimiento de la biopolítica en España, 1600-1940*. Madrid: Akal, 2009.

### Acknowledgment

This work was supported by the Spanish Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness/FEDER Funds (Grant number: HAR2015-64150-C2-2-P).

### Author info

Salvador Cayuela  
Department of Medical Sciences  
Faculty of Medicine of Albacete (UCLM)

SALVADOR CAYUELA

C/Almansa, 14  
Albacete, Castilla La-Mancha, 02006  
Spain  
[salvador.cayuela@uclm.es](mailto:salvador.cayuela@uclm.es)

