Contemporary European History (2022), **31**, *271–285*
doi:10.1017/S0960777321000163

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

ARTICLE

Joint Efforts in the Fight against Franco: Protest and Repression during the Spanish Long '68

Pau Casanellas[1,2]

[1]Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa Instituto de História Contemporânea, Lisboa, Portugal and [2]Departament d'Història Moderna, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain
pau.casanellas@uab.cat

As in many other countries, Spanish society also underwent its own '68. In response, the Franco regime increased repression: it became much harsher, and much broader. After that, opposition to state brutality became the anti-Franco movement's main cause and a unifying element for its many different actors. This is the process addressed by this article. Specifically, it aims to explore how repression facilitated the encounters between activists coming from different social movements and political organisations. At the same time, it tries to show the importance of diversifying the analyses on the long '68 – focusing on different countries, regions and cities – in order to grasp its transnational nature.

Despite living under one of twentieth-century Europe's most savage dictatorships, Spanish society also underwent its own long '68,[1] a process influenced by the changes that had sent shockwaves through the left worldwide since the mid-1950s.[2] A broad range of new theoretical and practical points of reference led to the symbolic insertion of local activists into the global revolutionary collective imagery. As some authors have pointed out, the international circulation of ideas, practices and individuals was a key factor in the development of the events.[3] This phenomenon existed long before the French May–June, but it was also influenced by it.

At the same time, the dynamics of local mobilisation and the constraints imposed by the dictatorship played a decisive role too. Taking advantage of the relative softening of the repression from the early 1960s onwards, the main (worker- and student-based) social movements opposing Francoism had provided tangible evidence of their capacity for influence. This success was due primarily to two main factors. On the one hand, the social movements pursued a kind of activism that, without entirely abandoning the obligatory measures that came with being clandestine, had a clear desire to

[1] The expression tries to underline the dimension of '68 as a long-lasting process, rather than a series of events concentrated on 1968. In France, the term *années 1968* has become popular among historians in the last two decades. One of the first books to popularise it was Geneviève Dreyfus-Armand et al., eds., *Les années 1968. Le temps de la contestation* (Paris/Brussels: IHTP-CNRS/Complexe, 2000).

[2] See, among many others, Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert and Detlef Junker, eds., *1968: The World Transformed* (Washington, DC/Cambridge: German Historical Institute/Cambridge University Press, 1998); Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Gerd-Rainer Horn, *The Spirit of '68: Rebellion in Western Europe and North America, 1956–1976* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[3] Dreyfus-Armand et al., *Années*; Melinda Davis et al., eds., *Changing the World, Changing Oneself. Political Protest and Collective Identities in West Germany and the U.S. in the 1960s and 1970s* (New York: Berghahn, 2010); Ludivine Bantigny, Boris Gobille and Eugenia Palieraki, eds., 'Les "années 1968": circulations révolutionnaires', *Monde(s)*, 11 (2017).

be visible to the public. On the other, there was the strategy of penetrating the organisations set up by the dictatorship to gather and indoctrinate the masses, be they workers or students.[4] The obstacles to participation and the repressive measures imposed in response to this process largely resulted in the exhaustion of the *entryism* or infiltration in the regime's mass organisations used by the opposition. The need to run this blockade resulted in the radicalisation of some anti-Franco groups. In a context in which open political action had increasingly serious repression as a consequence, bolder actions and a certain return to clandestine activism kept the movement alive, challenging the regime without exposing itself excessively to police action.

The increase in the repression used by the dictatorship to respond to this radicalisation did nothing more than reassure the activists that they had taken the correct path. At the same time, opposition to state brutality and repressive legislation, as well as the fight for amnesty and solidarity with political prisoners, became the anti-Franco movement's main cause and a unifying element for its many different actors. In recent years, these kinds of encounters – or *de-compartmentalisation* – have drawn the attention of historians working on '68.[5] This is the process addressed by this article. Specifically, it aims to explore how repression helped the joint efforts between Spanish activists coming from different social movements and political organisations. For years now, some historians have noted the importance of the ties between workers' and students' movements under the Franco regime.[6] Here, we would like to go a step further and add other actors to the analysis. Above all, we will focus on the relationship between the regime and the opposition, and between repression and protest.[7]

The Protest Cycle

However many important cultural changes had taken place and were still doing so,[8] for some time now, multiple authors have been reviving the debate on '68 by emphasising the central role played by the workers' movement, or labour in general.[9] Likewise, the focus on the prominence of a 'new working class' – in contrast to traditional blue-collar workers – does not seem to have resisted its critics.[10] So the sequence of events that has traditionally been used to describe the French May–June, with a student conflict that attracted the solidarity of workers and led to a general strike, is

[4] Two of the best analyses of this process are Xavier Domènech, *Clase obrera, antifranquismo y cambio político. Pequeños grandes cambios, 1956–1969* (Madrid: Catarata, 2008); Sergio Rodríguez Tejada, *Zonas de libertad. Dictadura franquista y movimiento estudiantil en la Universidad de Valencia* (Valencia: PUV, 2009). As stated by Joe Foweraker, *Making Democracy in Spain. Grass-roots Struggle in the South, 1955–1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 211, the workers' strategy of infiltrating the vertical syndicate was intended 'to secure an institutional cover for their own extralegal activities'.

[5] A pioneering and stimulating work was Xavier Vigna and Michelle Zancarini-Fournel, 'Les rencontres improbables dans "les années 68"', *Vingtième Siècle*, 101 (2009), 163–77. See also some notes on these kinds of *métissages* in Bernard Pudal and Jean-Noël Retière, 'Les grèves ouvrières de 68, un mouvement social sans lendemain mémoriel', in Dominique Damamme et al., eds., *Mai–Juin 68* (Paris: Les Éditions de l'Atelier/Les Éditions ouvrières, 2008), 207–21.

[6] José Maravall, *Dictatorship and Political Dissent: Workers and Students in Franco's Spain* (London: Tavistock, 1978), 10–12.

[7] As stated by Ian Kershaw in his analysis on the Nazi dictatorship, 'resistance is a product and reflection of the system of rule itself; the nature of that rule determines the nature of resistance'. Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 224.

[8] See an overall view of the cultural dimension of '68 in Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, c.1958–c.1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[9] As for the French case, see for instance Xavier Vigna, *L'insubordination ouvrière dans les années 68. Essai d'histoire politique des usines* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2007); Damamme et al., eds., *Mai–Juin 68*; Philippe Artières and Michelle Zancarini-Fournel, eds., *68. Une histoire collective. 1962–1981* (Paris: La Découverte, 2008); Ludivine Bantigny, *1968: De grands soirs en petits matins* (Paris: Seuil, 2018).

[10] A very accurate critique of the 'new working class' thesis is to be found in Gerd-Rainer Horn, 'The Changing Nature of the European Working Class: The Rise and Fall of the "New Working Class" (France, Italy, Spain, Czechoslovakia)', in Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert and Detlef Junker, eds., *1968: The World Transformed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 351–71.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

now doubtful. The labour conflict had been building up steam for some time, and was certainly not a result of the students' actions.[11] The implications of this idea are quite significant: under this new lens, May '68 in Paris is no longer a 'carnival'[12] sprouting from youthful desire for self-realisation – the 'human passions which must be satisfied', in the words of situationist Raoul Vaneigem[13] – but rather the meeting of multiple struggles as a result of the bursting of pent-up discontent. As Colette Magny expressed with delicate irony in her song *The Octopus* (*La pieuvre*), dedicated to the Rhodiaceta strike (Besançon, February–March 1967): 'Thank you, Rhône-Poulenc / chemical trust / foremost French financial group / it's thanks to you / that we can play the bourgeois / one Sunday out of every four in the year / at Rhodiaceta.'[14] It was not simply a matter of values, of personal realisation, but also a question of material conditions. Nevertheless, this does not mean that conflicts were dominated by economic criteria either.[15] Otherwise, the dichotomous distinction between *political* and *economic* factors as a cause of labour unrest presents serious problems.[16]

If, in a French context, the Rhodiaceta conflict could be considered an emblem of the outbreak or the revival of the struggle (it was the first French labour conflict since 1936 in which workers occupied a factory),[17] in a Spanish context this same symbolism could be ascribed to the name *Bandas*. In November 1966, around 500 workers at the *Laminación de Bandas en Frío* factory (in the town of Etxebarri, within the Bilbao metropolitan area) declared a strike. The long conflict (five and a half months) and the many displays of solidarity it inspired from January 1967 onward generated a great deal of concern among the authorities.[18] Among other expressions of solidarity, the internal bulletins of the Social Investigation Brigade (*Brigada de Investigación Social*; BIS) remarked on the opposition's call 'to coerce the workers hired recently by the company' to substitute striking employees.[19] It took the declaration of a state of emergency in Biscay province on 21 April to bring an end to the strike. In their posterior analysis of the events, the striking workers noted that, despite the pain and the anger caused by the firing of some forty of their number, the events 'were glorious, because to bring down our resistance they needed an entire repressive structure that forced the Regime to reveal, like seldom before, its true nature as a marionette manipulated by capitalism'.[20]

The characterisation of Francoism as a class regime found in the text indicates that the anti-capitalist element was taking on an increasingly important role within the movement. The workers' movement – which in many aspects served as a sort of trail blazer, marking a path that would then be followed by other members of the opposition[21] – is a perfect example of that. The workers' main form of organisation consisted of the Workers' Commissions (*Comisiones Obreras*; CCOO), which had

[11] The rise of class conflict was a common characteristic in many industrial countries from the late 1960s onward. Michael Shalev, 'Lies, Damned Lies and Strike Statistics: The Measurement of Trends in Industrial Conflict', in Colin Crouch and Alessandro Pizzorno, eds., *The Resurgence of Class Conflict in Western Europe since 1968, Vol. I, National Studies* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1978), 1–19.

[12] Raymond Aron, *La révolution introuvable. Réflexions sur les événements de Mai* (Paris: Fayard, 1968), 15.

[13] Raoul Vaneigem, *The Revolution of Everyday Life* (London: Rebel Press, 2001), 246.

[14] The song was included in the LP *Magny 68/69* (Taï-Ki, 1969) and was used as the soundtrack of the short film *Rhodia 4x8* (SLON/Iskra, 1969), by the Medvedkin Group of Besançon. Of course, the fame of the Rhodiaceta is to a large extent due to the documentary *À bientôt, j'espère* (SLON/Iskra, 1967), by Chris Marker and Mario Marret, shot some months after the 1967 strike.

[15] The work of Vigna, *Insubordination*, largely proves the deep class antagonism that very often lay behind the 1968 strikes.

[16] Some very interesting notes on the matter are to be found in Xavier Domènech, *Cambio político y movimiento obrero bajo el franquismo. Lucha de clases, dictadura y democracia (1939–1977)* (Barcelona: Icaria, 2012), 101–38.

[17] See Nicolas Hatzfeld and Cédric Lomba, 'La grève de Rhodiaceta en 1967', in Damamme et al., eds., *Mai–Juin 68*, 102–13.

[18] See Pedro Ibarra, *El movimiento obrero en Vizcaya: 1967–1977. Ideología, organización y conflictividad*, (Bilbao: UPV, 1987), 64–7; José A. Pérez, *Los años del acero. La transformación del mundo laboral en el área industrial del Gran Bilbao (1958–1977). Trabajadores, convenios y conflictos* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2001), 293–304.

[19] *Boletín Informativo* (Madrid), 22, 19 Apr. 1967, FC, M.° Interior – Policía, H, 53112, Archivo Histórico Nacional (AHN), Madrid.

[20] *Nuestra huelga. 30 nov. 1966 – 15 mayo 1967. 163 días de lucha obrera contra el capitalismo fascista del Estado Español* (Etxebarri: Trabajadores de Laminación de Bandas, 1968), 8.

[21] Foweraker, *Making Democracy*, 8; Domènech, *Clase obrera*, 254.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

appeared in the early-to-mid 1960s as a unified, nonpartisan space for political action and collective pressure – but in which members of the Communist Party did play a predominant role.[22] In a context of growing repression,[23] and during the struggle to control the course taken by the CCOO, in 1968 a new sort of organisation appeared, born of the tendency towards radicalisation of some labour activists: the Zone Workers' Commissions (*Comisiones Obreras de Zona*). These sought to bring together all labour activists, whether or not they were involved in their factory's commission, together with the Youth Workers' Commissions (*Comisiones Obreras Juveniles*), which had appeared shortly before in some areas as a youth branch of the CCOO and even sought to include students. These new spaces organised workers by geographic area, not by industry. With the increasing repression, this would allow for much of their action to be taken to the streets. However, this would not be in the form of the large protests employed up to that point, as these easily became the target of repression. Rather, they would use bolder actions such as 'lightning protests', which were brief and attended by a small number of activists.[24]

Although they each had their own characteristics, the students' and the neighbours' movements both underwent a similar evolution during this period. After the creation, in multiple large Spanish cities, of democratic students' unions apart from the Spanish University Syndicate (*Sindicato Español Universitario*, which all students were obligated to join), in the 1967–8 academic year the student movement underwent a significant mutation. From activities rooted in 'academics', focused on the demand for greater democracy in how students were represented – and in the democratisation of university in general – they moved on to a more clearly political campaign, marked by the fight against repression and the desire to draw closer to the workers' movement, from a revolutionary perspective of bringing global change to society.[25] In general, the new, radical orientation of a significant part of the movement resulted in a greater emphasis on horizontal organisation – in spite of the 'authoritarianism' that dominated in some revolutionary groups[26] – and on direct, often violent action.[27] At the same time, the desire to draw closer to the workers' movement drove some students to abandon their studies and proletarianise themselves. One of the groups that best represents this trend is the Student Strike Committees – Workers' Strike Committees (*Comités de Huelga Estudiantiles – Comités de Huelga Obreros*), which proposed, among other things, the abolition of the 'capitalist division of labour' and of the university itself.[28]

Meanwhile, the third most important pillar of the anti-Franco movement, the neighbours' movement, was starting to blossom. The first shoots of this movement had appeared in the years prior in the suburbs of the largest cities, as a result of the dictatorship's chaotic and speculative model of urban development. They were largely the result of multiple waves of migrants and of their protagonists'

[22] See David Ruiz, coord., *Historia de Comisiones Obreras (1958–1988)* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1994); Emanuele Treglia, *Fuera de las catacumbas. La política del PCE y el movimiento obrero* (Madrid: Eneida, 2012).

[23] Maravall, *Dictatorship*, 76–7.

[24] Domènech, *Clase obrera*, 286. See also José Antonio Díaz, *Luchas internas en Comisiones Obreras (Barcelona, 1964–1970)* (Barcelona: Bruguera, 1977); José Babiano, *Emigrantes, cronómetros y huelgas. Un estudio sobre el trabajo y los trabajadores durante el franquismo (Madrid, 1951–1977)* (Madrid: Siglo XXI/Fundación Primero de Mayo, 1995), 284–313; Sebastian Balfour, *Dictatorship, Workers and the City: Labour in Greater Barcelona since 1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 92–109.

[25] Jaime Pastor, 'El SDEU y la generación del 68', in Juan A. Barragán et al., eds., *La crisis del movimiento juvenil en las sociedades capitalistas* (Madrid: Ediciones de la Torre, 1979), 81–98.

[26] Antonio Sala and Eduardo Durán [José A. Díaz and Santiago López Petit], *Crítica de la izquierda autoritaria en Cataluña: 1967–1974* (Paris: Ruedo Ibérico, 1975).

[27] Rodríguez Tejada, *Zonas*, II, 148–203; José Álvarez Cobelas, *Envenenados de cuerpo y alma. La oposición universitaria al franquismo en Madrid (1939–1970)* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 2004), 222–67; Josep M. Colomer, *Els estudiants de Barcelona sota el franquisme*, vol. II (Barcelona: Curial, 1978), 11–54; Eduardo González Calleja, *Rebelión en las aulas. Movilización y protesta estudiantil en la España contemporánea. 1865–2008* (Madrid: Alianza, 2009), 318–48; Elena Hernández Sandoica, Miguel Á. Ruiz Carnicer and Marc Baldó Lacomba, *Estudiantes contra Franco (1939–1975). Oposición política y movilización juvenil* (Madrid: La Esfera de los Libros, 2007), 217–76.

[28] Colomer, *Estudiants*, 15–7 and 39–40; Ivan Bordetas and Anna Sánchez, *L'antifranquisme oblidat. De la dissidència cristiana al comunisme revolucionari (1953–1972)* (Barcelona: Base, 2019), 258–83.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

previous political cultures and traditions of action.[29] At the end of the 1960s, neighbourhood associations, which had been the principle means of organisation for the movement, had started to coexist with a new kind of entity, the Neighbourhood Commissions (*Comisiones de Barrio*; CBs). These exemplified the process of diversification – and often radicalisation – of neighbourhood activism. As opposed to the neighbourhood associations, which were legal, the CBs were the result of the application of the model of the Workers' Commissions in a neighbourhood setting, with no sort of legal protection and with a clear class connotation.[30] One leaflet from a Barcelona neighbourhood used these words to attack the invasive police presence on May Day, 1970: 'Why do they control the working people of Torre Baró? Why don't these public forces control the bourgeois who exploit us? . . . Why do the public forces always defend the capitalists and attack and control the workers?'[31]

In keeping with this process of radicalisation, the map of clandestine political organisations underwent significant fragmentation. To the left of the Communist Party of Spain (*Partido Comunista de España*; PCE), a constellation of acronyms appeared. In spite of representing a significant range of ideological orientations (from Maoism and Trotskyism to 'anti-authoritarian' ideas), all shared the common denominator of a revolutionary perspective.[32] Furthermore, we must also consider the presence of an element that impacted practically the entire radical left: the theoretical justification – and, on occasions, the use – of violence.[33] Although this phenomenon was not absent in nearby countries, there were few places in Europe where the armed struggle took root as it did in Spain. And, with the exception of Northern Ireland, Spain is also the country where there was the greatest number of deaths resulting from different forms of political violence throughout the 1970s, far beyond Italy and Germany.[34] A significant part of this violence was due to Basque Fatherland and Freedom (*Euskadi ta Askatasuna*; ETA), which throughout the 1960s attempted to adapt the ideology of Basque nationalism to modern industrial society and guerrilla tactics. Its adoption of Third-Worldism was due, among other factors, to the organisation's presentation of the Basque Country as an occupied nation and to the Francoists' policy of oppression, which helped to consolidate this 'colonialist mirage'.[35] From the time of ETA's first fatal victims in 1968, its activities would decisively impact the state's repressive response: the following decade was characterised by a toughening of public order policy. However, as a result of the significant levels of anti-Franco commitment within society, this would only end up harming the dictatorship and promoting the convergence of the different sectors making up the opposition.[36]

[29] See Carme Molinero and Pere Ysàs, coords., *Construint la ciutat democrática. El moviment veïnal durant el tardofranquisme i la transició* (Barcelona: Icaria/UAB, 2010); Vicente Pérez Quintana and Pablo Sánchez León, eds., *Memoria ciudadana y movimiento vecinal. Madrid, 1968–2008* (Madrid: Catarata, 2008); Ivan Bordetas, *Nosotros somos los que hemos hecho esta ciudad. Autoorganización y movilización vecinal durante el tardofranquismo y el proceso de cambio político* (PhD diss., UAB, 2012).

[30] Bordetas, *Nosotros somos*, 285–418. As for the radicality and class content of the movement, see Ricard Martínez i Muntada, 'Movimiento vecinal, antifranquismo y anticapitalismo', *Historia, Trabajo y Sociedad*, 2 (2011), 63–90.

[31] Comisión del Barrio de Torre Baró, Trinidad y Verdun, 'Vecinos de Torre Baró' [May 1970], Correspondencia Gobernadores, 120, Archivo General de la Delegación del Gobierno en Cataluña (AGDGC), Barcelona.

[32] See Ricard Martínez i Muntada, 'La izquierda revolucionaria de ámbito estatal, de los sesenta a los ochenta: una brevísima historia', *Viento Sur*, 126 (Jan. 2013), 108–18; Felipe Pasajes [pseudonym], 'Arqueología de la autonomía obrera en Barcelona 1964–1973', in Fundación Espai en Blanc, ed., *Luchas autónomas en los años setenta. Del antagonismo obrero al malestar social* (Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños, 2008), 73–112.

[33] See Pau Casanellas, '"Hasta el fin". Cultura revolucionaria y práctica armada en la crisis del franquismo', *Ayer*, 92, 4 (2013), 21–46.

[34] It is important to note that most casualties in Spain took place from 1977 onwards, in the first years of the parliamentary democracy. Some comparative data are collected in Eduardo González Calleja, *El laboratorio del miedo. Una historia general del terrorismo* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2012), 410–12, 503–7 and 548–52; Donatella Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence and the State. A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 128.

[35] Gurutz Jáuregui, *Ideología y estrategia política de ETA. Análisis de su evolución entre 1959 y 1968* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1981), 411–59.

[36] Pau Casanellas, *Morir matando. El franquismo ante la práctica armada, 1968–1977* (Madrid: Catarata, 2014).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Finally, another face of the transformations from the second half of the 1960s were the cultural changes. Taking advantage of the cracks in censorship and the gradual policy towards openness promoted by some sectors of the dictatorship, there was a true explosion in publications and cultural initiatives.[37] Nevertheless, policies regarding things like drug consumption or morality were far from permissive. In part, this explains the perhaps less-naïve character of this phenomenon in Spain. As one witness remembers, 'almost no one from Barcelona reached the level of near-foolish beatitude of some of the foreign hippies we saw around here. We were bearing too much of a burden for that'.[38] Police attention could be focused on things as seemingly harmless as the 'lewdness' of those dancing at the Bocaccio nightclub in Barcelona,[39] one of the habitual gathering places for the so-called *gauche divine*. The infractions 'for poor illumination or immorality' could incur fines of up to 10,000 pesetas, and could even lead to the closing of the space.[40] This led to some nightclubs, like the aforementioned Bocaccio, taking on the appearance of 'halls for hosting first-communion luncheons'.[41]

The Repressive Cycle

If the Bandas conflict can be understood as the start of a new cycle of unrest, the state of emergency decreed in Biscay to bring an end to the strike – as well as to stop the other conflicts that were starting to proliferate – also marks the start of a backward slide in the public order policy. The many arrests made during the three months of the state of emergency declared in 1967 (around 300, with forty-seven imprisoned)[42] foreshadowed one of the main characteristics of the repression from then on: its breadth. Most of those arrested had played a significant role in the labour movement, showing the concern that workers' unrest provoked among authorities. Significantly, at the start of 1967, the Supreme Court had declared the CCOO illegal,[43] and the following November, the government decreed the freezing of wages and banned collective bargaining.[44]

The state of emergency had first been declared in 1956, as a result of student protests in Madrid, and the regime had made use of it on two other occasions: in 1958 and 1962. Although the 1959 Law on Public Order (*Ley de Orden Público*) had increased the penalties that could be applied by the administration under normal circumstances, this did not prevent the state of emergency from becoming one of the most oft-used legislative resources for the purpose of repression. After Biscay, it was the turn of Gipuzkoa. As a result of the first two fatal victims of ETA (in June and August of 1968), the government decreed a new state of emergency in the province.[45] The repression would increase even

[37] See Germán Labrador, *Culpables por la literatura. Imaginación política y contracultura en la transición española (1968–1986)* (Madrid: Akal, 2017), 187–381.

[38] Pau Malvido [Pau Maragall], *Nosotros los malditos* (Barcelona: Anagrama, 2004), 28.

[39] Jefatura Superior de Policía (JSP) de Barcelona, 'Resultando observación Sala de Fiestas "Bocaccio"', 17 Oct. 1968, Gobernadores Civiles, 273, AGDGC.

[40] Junta Provincial de Orden Público, 'Acta n. 15', 23 Feb. 1973, Vicesecretaría, 2, AGDGC.

[41] Oriol Regàs, *Los años divinos. Memorias del señor Bocaccio, el hombre que sintonizó con las ansias de transgression y libertad de toda una generación* (Barcelona: Destino, 2010), 293.

[42] Ibarra, *Movimiento*, 63; Gobernador Civil Vizcaya, 'Parte de información trimestral', 6 July 1967, Archivo del Gobierno Civil de Vizcaya (AGCV), Leioa.

[43] Francisco J. Bastida, *Jueces y franquismo. El pensamiento político del Tribunal Supremo en la Dictadura* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1986), 178.

[44] Faced with the impossibility of negotiating working conditions and wages within a company framework, the government had to diffuse the first significant waves of strikes in the 1950s by decreeing rises in wages. To bring an end to this trend, in April 1958 the Law on Collective Union Agreements (*Ley sobre Convenios Colectivos Sindicales*) was passed, giving a certain degree of negotiating capacity to businesses and workers. Far from bringing an end to the conflicts, it simply changed their characteristics: in general, they were limited to big businesses (and their areas of influence), where workers had more capacity to apply pressure. On this topic, see: Carme Molinero and Pere Ysàs, *Productores disciplinados y minorías subversivas. Clase obrera y conflictividad laboral en la España franquista* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1998); Domènech, *Clase obrera*.

[45] According to some sources, more than 400 people were arrested in the Basque Country in 1968, whereas in 1969 there were almost 2,000 arrests. *La otra Euskadi. El infierno de los vascos* (Saint-Jean-de-Luz: Euskal-Elkargoa, 1975), 182–3.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

further in January of the following year when, under the pretext of student protests – and after the death in Madrid of student Enrique Ruano in police custody – [46] the state of emergency was declared once again, this time throughout Spain. In the press conference called to announce the measure, Minister of Information and Tourism Manuel Fraga stated, in reference to the events in France: 'we won't wait for [a French] May to roll around, so that it becomes more difficult and more expensive to fix'.[47] However, it must be said that the repression reached many other sectors besides students. According to the General Director of Security, Eduardo Blanco, the suspension of rights served to 'decapitate the whole lot of political movements that were promoting unrest', both at the universities and in the streets.[48] Internal figures from the BIS counted 1278 arrests throughout the two months of the state of emergency, 501 of which were students.[49]

The cycle of repression culminated between the end of 1970 and mid-1971. The regime would once again impose a state of emergency, first in Gipuzkoa and, a few days later, throughout Spain. This was a result of the protests against the so-called Burgos Trial, designed to be a mass proceeding against ETA's actions in 1968 and 1969, when the Basque organisation had clearly adopted an armed struggle strategy. Over the course of six months, 2066 people were arrested, and 228 were still in prison in June 1971, according to the figures made public by the General Director of Security.[50]

Besides the state of emergency, the other resource that characterised this increase in repression was the abusive use of military jurisdiction. With the creation of the Court of Public Order (*Tribunal de Orden Público*) in December 1963,[51] the jurisdiction of military courts had been significantly reduced. However, in August 1968, the Executive Order on Repressing Banditry and Terrorism (*Decreto ley sobre represión del bandidaje y terrorismo*) made any display of political dissent equivalent to military rebellion.[52] From then on, not only was there a substantial increase in the number of civilians subjected to court-martial,[53] there was also a generalised increase in the sentences applied.

Beyond the legal aspect, the second area in which the new public order policy was most clearly reflected was in police action. Here, 1967 was also a turning point. On 9 September, a 17-year-old inhabitant of Zugarramurdi (Navarre), Mikel Iturbe Elizalde, was shot to death by the Guardia Civil, who seem to have mistakenly identified him as an ETA member. The appearance of this armed organisation, whose members began carrying weapons around this time, significantly influenced the behaviour of the police. However, only a small proportion of the deaths that could be attributed to the police from then on – starting with the death of Iturbe, and including the one of Txabi Etxebarrieta in June 1968 – can be considered a result of the fight against ETA. Since the late 1960s it had not been uncommon for the police to break up protests with live ammunition,[54] which resulted in a significant number of deaths.[55] The words of Minister of the Interior Tomás Garicano Goñi in 1972 are quite illustrative of the government's responsibility in these sorts of actions:

[46] See Ana Domínguez, ed., *Enrique Ruano. Memoria viva de la impunidad del franquismo* (Madrid: Complutense, 2011).
[47] *La Vanguardia Española*, 25 Jan. 1969, 4.
[48] 'Indications du directeur général de la Sécurité sur l'état d'exception', telegram from the French Embassy in Spain to the French Foreign Affairs Department, 5 Feb. 1969, Europe 1945–…, Espagne 1961–70, 263, Centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, Paris.
[49] *Boletín Extraordinario* (Madrid), 20 May 1969, XI, Archivo Personal Juan José del Águila.
[50] *ABC*, 20 June 1971, 29–31.
[51] See Juan José del Águila, *El TOP. La represión de la libertad* (Barcelona: Planeta, 2001).
[52] As for the changing role of military law, see Manuel Ballbé, *Orden público y militarismo en la España constitucional (1812–1983)* (Madrid: Alianza, 1985); Carmen Lamarca, *Tratamiento jurídico del terrorismo* (Madrid: Ministerio de Justicia, 1985); Casanellas, *Morir matando*.
[53] The number of civilians found guilty in military trials was: 232 in 1967, 254 in 1968, 400 in 1969 and 403 in 1970. *Anuario Estadístico Militar*, 19 (1976), 485.
[54] See for instance Babiano, *Emigrantes*, 301–2.
[55] Some data about the victims of repression during the last years of the Franco regime have been collected in David Ballester, *Vides truncades. Repressió, víctimes i impunitat a Catalunya (1964–1980)* (Valencia: PUV, 2018); Casanellas, *Morir matando*. From 1975 on, the most reliable figures of victims are the ones included in Sophie Baby, *Le mythe de la transition pacifique. Violence et politique en Espagne (1975–1982)* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2012).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

'Clashing with the public forces is dangerous. Until people realise this, there will not be true order, and order will be maintained at all costs . . . The idea that firearms should not be used is mistaken. They will be used as often as is necessary.'[56] In addition, there were also some deaths in police custody, and the application of the death penalty should be considered as well. The regime had not used the death penalty against political opponents since 1963, but in 1974 and 1975 six political prisoners were executed. In all, around a hundred died as a result of the different forms of repression used between 1967 and June 1977, the date of the first multiparty elections celebrated in Spain since February 1936.

These casualties were the most visible and tragic consequence of harsher action by police and of the repression applied in general. However, they were just the tip of the iceberg. The testimonies of many citizens detained by police forces during these years provide an idea of the harsh conditions of arrest. A report from early in 1969, for instance, includes the testimony of individuals who had spent up to twenty days at a time in police holding cells. The same document notes that 'once again, torture is used regularly by the political police'.[57] The variety of torture methods used, as well as their sophistication,[58] seems to indicate that it was a conscious, carefully studied practice. According to some reports, in several cases even electric shocks were used.[59] This method was common in the post-war years but had gradually ceased to be employed since then.

Finally, the Francoist secret service agencies also experienced notable changes around 1968. At the end of that year a new office was created specifically for facing student 'subversion', and it was soon expanded to address all actions by the opposition. This new entity, the National Counter-subversive Organisation (*Organización Contrasubversiva Nacional*; OCN), was made up of members of the military, but it answered directly to the government and was not connected to the other existing military and police information departments. In 1972, it was renamed the Central Documentation Service (*Servicio Central de Documentación*; SECED).[60] In the words of its first chief officer, José Ignacio San Martín, the idea behind the creation of the OCN was that 'war, or conflict, is nothing more than a battle of wills'.[61] This approach involved 'political warfare', very similar to what Raymond Marcellin, the French Minister of the Interior appointed in late May 1968, would define years later as 'a war that states wage without making use of armed combat'.[62]

As a result, many of the actions of this espionage bureau were designed for so-called 'positive psychological action': trying to win people over using counter-propaganda and promoting active movements that would serve as a counterbalance to the unrest created by the anti-Francoists. However, this certainly did not mean that direct action was not used. A document on ETA and the situation in the Basque Country even expressed the 'indispensable' need to carry out 'physical action to eliminate activists'. Indeed, from the early- to mid-1970s, violent action began to proliferate not only against ETA and its support network, but also against other anti-Francoist interests, even within French territory.[63] This was to be the most venomous result of the increase in repression around 1967–8.

[56] *Informaciones*, 2 Dec. 1972, 2.

[57] 'Documentos e información sobre la represión en Cataluña', Mar. 1969, Represión franquista, 48/3.1, Archivo de Historia del Partido Comunista de España (AHPCE), Madrid.

[58] See for instance *Batasuna. La répression au Pays Basque* (Paris: Maspero, 1970), 46–53.

[59] Gregorio López Raimundo, 'Detener la represión. Acabar con el inmovilismo. Imponer un cambio democrático', Jan. 1969, Cultura, MIT, Gabinete de Enlace, 642, Archivo General de la Administración (AGA), Madrid.

[60] Javier Tusell, *Carrero. La eminencia gris del régimen de Franco* (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 1993), 378–80; Pere Ysàs, *Disidencia y subversión. La lucha del régimen franquista por su supervivencia, 1960–1975* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2004), 25–8; Antonio M. Díaz Fernández, *Los servicios de inteligencia españoles. Desde la guerra civil hasta el 11-M. Historia de una transición* (Madrid: Alianza, 2005), 137–41 and 146–50.

[61] José Ignacio San Martín, *Servicio Especial. A las órdenes de Carrero Blanco (de Castellana a El Aaiún)* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1983), 30.

[62] Raymond Marcellin, *La guerre politique* (Paris: Plon, 1985), 10.

[63] Casanellas, *Morir matando*, 57 and following.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

From the University to the Convent: Organising Solidarity

On the morning of 9 March 1966, over 500 students gathered in the Capuchin convent in Barcelona to form the Democratic Students' Syndicate of the University of Barcelona (*Sindicat Democràtic d'Estudiants de la Universitat de Barcelona*; SDEUB), a model that would soon be copied in most of Spain's principal cities. Together with the students, three dozen professors and intellectual and cultural figures had attended to support the creation of the SDEUB. After two days occupying the monastery – an episode that would come to be known as the *Caputxinada* – police forces stormed the building. According to an extensive police report on the events of the days prior, BIS agents had 'intensified their vigilance of known student elements . . . as well as suspicious professors'. Nevertheless, they were only able to confirm the location of the meeting once it was already underway.[64]

If it can be said that the police operation was not a success, this is even more true of its consequences. For the student movement, the *Caputxinada* was a notable step forward. It drove the movement to work more closely with CCOO, and in the following months they collaborated on a series of anti-repressive actions.[65] In fact, the repression suffered by the students sparked widespread shows of solidarity in several cities. In Barcelona (the epicentre of the protests), during the following days and weeks, multiple gatherings brought together thousands of protesters, who marched in defence of the SDEUB and against repression. In some churches in Catalonia, 'instead of commenting on the day's passage from scripture, [priests' sermons] presented recent events to the parishioners . . . suggesting that religious freedom had been trampled upon, breaking the Concordat with the Holy See'.[66] One of the most peculiar, groundbreaking events was a protest made up of priests that took place on 11 May 1966, with the goal of delivering a protest letter to the local police chief denouncing the tortures one of the detainees was subjected to. However, perhaps the most significant reaction was the creation of the Round Table (*Taula Rodona*), a group launched by intellectuals that had participated in the *Caputxinada*. It served as a unified platform for opposition forces in Catalonia that, for the first time since the end of the Civil War, brought together a range of ideologies ranging from Christian democrats to communists.[67] It would be the first of a number of unified, anti-Francoist spaces that would appear before the end of the dictatorship, and that would be propelled largely by the struggle against repression.

It was not by accident that a convent was the chosen venue for the creation of the SDEUB. The Concordat signed between the Spanish government and the Holy See in 1953 established, in its article XXII.3, the inviolability of Church buildings, except in cases of 'urgent need'.[68] This turned churches and convents into regular venues for gatherings of those opposing the regime. To bring an end to this custom, in the summer of 1968 the government allowed the administration and police chiefs in each province to determine the existence of an 'urgent need' when convenient. In fact, since 1967 police searches had begun in religious buildings without the authorisation of the Church.[69] Beyond providing spaces, part of the clergy and some religious communities began to show outright hostility to the dictatorship. One clear example of this were the protests that took place in the Basque Country in 1968, where a group of priests first occupied a number of buildings belonging to the Bishopric of Bilbao, and then the seminary of the diocese, as a protest against repression.[70] In response, the dictatorship ordered the 'special and discreet monitoring' of a number of priests.[71]

[64] *Boletín Informativo* (Madrid), 12, 17 Mar. 1966, FC, M.° Interior – Policía, H, 53110, AHN.

[65] Jordi Sancho, '"Nuestro 68 fue el 66". El movimiento estudiantil de Barcelona en el marco global de los *sesentayochos* (1965–1969)', *Historia del Presente*, 34 (2019), 161–82.

[66] *Boletín Informativo* (Madrid), 12, 17 Mar. 1966, FC, M.° Interior – Policía, H, 53110, AHN.

[67] Joan Crexell, *La Caputxinada* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1987); Colomer, *Estudiants*, vol. I, 215–246 and 252–4.

[68] 'Concordato entre la Santa Sede y España', Vatican City, 27 Aug. 1953, in *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, 292 (19 Oct. 1953), 6230–4.

[69] Anabella Barroso, *Sacerdotes bajo la atenta mirada del régimen franquista* (Bilbao: Instituto Diocesano de Teología Pastoral/Desclée De Brouwer, 1995), 265–6.

[70] Paulo Iztueta, *Sociología del fenómeno contestatario del clero vasco: 1940–1975* (San Sebastián: Elkar, 1981), 152–9; *Batasuna*, 33–5.

[71] JSP de Bilbao, 'Previsión trimestral', 9 Jan. 1969, AGCV.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Still another example of this commitment was the statement given by the abbot of the Benedictine community on Montserrat, Aureli Maria Escarré, to *Le Monde* newspaper in November 1963. Among other things, he stated that the regime 'calls itself Christian, but it doesn't obey the basic principles of Christianity', or that 'the first subversion that exists in Spain is that of the government'.[72] In fact, a space belonging to the Benedictine community in Barcelona, the Casal de Montserrat, was used by some opposition groups to produce propaganda. In January 1967, in a police operation resulting from a 'confidential tip' received by the police, two individuals leaving the building with CCOO propaganda were arrested. One of them was Oriol Solé Sugranyes, a 19-year-old man who had already been taken in at least twice before: as a result of his participation in the *Caputxinada* as a representative for baccalaureate students, and for having taken part in a protest convened by the CCOO in December 1966.[73] The life story of Solé Sugranyes is a good representation of the changes that were taking place in a significant part of the anti-Franco movement. First a member of the communist youth, he left to join the PCE (*internacional*), a Maoist splinter of the PCE created in 1967. Soon afterwards, he was drawn to the ideas of workers' autonomy represented by the Platforms of Workers' Commissions (*Plataformas de Comisiones Obreras*), which appeared in 1969. Finally, from his exile in Toulouse, he ended up becoming one of the founders of the Workers' Liberation Movement – Autonomous Combat Groups (*Movimiento Ibérico de Liberación – Grupos Autónomos de Combate*; MIL-GAC), an armed organisation that was also inspired by the ideas of workers' autonomy.[74]

In the wake of the unifying experience of the Taula Rodona and inspired by the same anti-repressive objectives, the Solidarity Commissions (*Comissions de Solidaritat*) appeared in 1969 with the goal of providing support to political prisoners. These were created through the initiative of certain sectors of the Archbishopric of Barcelona as a result of the large number of arrests made during the state of emergency declared that same year, and they involved a wide participation of the members of the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia (*Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya*; PSUC, the Catalan communist party). These commissions had a simple objective: first, to obtain precise information about all victims of social and political repression; second, to provide them with material, legal and human support; and finally, they sought to make the public aware of the prisoners' situation. Using the Barcelona model, the Solidarity Commissions spread throughout Catalonia, and similar entities – with which they enjoyed a certain level of coordination – took root across Spain. As a result of the unifying trend created, in November 1969 a Catalan Amnesty Commission (*Comissió Catalana d'Amnistia*) was also created in parallel with the creation and consolidation of the Solidarity Commissions. The Catalan Amnesty Commission was created to promote the struggle in favour of 'general political amnesty'.[75]

From then onwards, the call for the liberation of political prisoners would become the strongest unifying element in the protests against the dictatorship – a *minimum common denominator* between the different sectors of anti-Francoists that allowed them to organise actions without getting lost in ideological details. It is worth noting that the Solidarity Commissions incorporated everything from Christian democrats to members of the revolutionary left. As proclaimed in a communiqué from the PCE's Biscay Commission in 1969, 'we should expand our solidarity actions to include all victims of the repression without distinction: socialists, ETA youth, progressive Catholics, workers, students, intellectuals, priests, democrats and communists; we are all united by the common bond of anti-Francoism and the hate the dictatorship shows for us'.[76]

[72] *Le Monde*, 14 Nov. 1963, 1 and 4.

[73] *Boletín Informativo* (Madrid), 8, 7 Feb. 1967, FC, M.° Interior – Policía, H, 53112, AHN.

[74] See *Oriol Solé Sugranyes. 40 anys després. Escrits de l'Oriol i per a l'Oriol* (Barcelona: Descontrol, 2016).

[75] See César Lorenzo, *Solidaritat, justícia, memòria. L'Associació Catalana d'Expresos Polítics del Franquisme* (Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, 2019); Francisco Martínez Hoyos, 'Solidaridad de presos políticos', in Narcís Figueras and Pep Vila, eds., *Miscel·lània en honor de Josep Maria Marquès* (Barcelona: PAM/Diputació de Girona, 2010), 583–8; Pau Casanellas and César Lorenzo, 'Lucha antirrepresiva e influjo unitario en la movilización antifranquista: las Comisiones de Solidaridad (1969–1977)', *Historia y Política*, 43 (2020), 291–326.

[76] Comité de Vizcaya del PCE, 'Frente a la represión en Euzkadi', [1969], AGCV.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Although the harsh repression that took place during the two months of the state of emergency in 1969 left the anti-Franco movement feeling defeated, the anti-repressive response generated foreshadowed the difficulties the dictatorship would have to face from then on. A document by the Executive Committee of the PSUC prepared in the midst of the state of emergency was quite accurate in stating that the attempt to 'slide backwards' into greater repression 'is condemned from the beginning to suffer the most resounding failure', since 'the reaction against repression is becoming the broadest form of mass action against the dictatorship, and a space for the convergence of everyone who wants to establish a climate of coexistence and respect within the framework of the rule of law in Spain'. In order to argue this point, the text mentioned a number of recent initiatives: a letter denouncing torture sent to the minister of the interior by well-known representatives of different political tendencies within anti-Francoism and by well-known figures from multiple fields; the criticism of the same by the bishop of Santander and the priors of the religious organisations located in Catalonia; or, even more significant, the decision by the bishop of San Sebastián to take up collection in the churches in favour of the families of the detained and those deported to other provinces. According to the author of the document, what was most important was for the fight against repression 'to take place through open means', which reflected a significant level of politicisation. This could be seen, it was said, in the creation of civic commissions in charge of coordinating solidarity with the victims of repression and the defence of human rights,[77] such as the aforementioned Solidarity Commissions.

From the Law Office to the Factory: Lawyers and 'Rupture Defence'

Lawyers were another group that played a significant role in denouncing repression.[78] Although the involvement of certain of their numbers in the defence of rights and liberties was nothing new, the increased repression at the end of the 1960s served as a spark for much more active participation, often as a group, which would soon cause noticeable concern among the authorities.[79] As noted in one government document, protests by bar associations and other professional associations arouse to denounce the aforementioned Executive Order on Repressing Banditry and Terrorism, from August 1968. Lawyers became significant participants in the public outcry against the application of military justice to members of the opposition, an irregularity that violated any principle of legality. One early example of this was the agreement reached at an extraordinary general meeting of the Madrid Bar Association, asking that the government abolish special jurisdictions and that they establish a special penitentiary status for political prisoners.[80] A few months later, on 10 December of that same year (the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights), the dean of the Bar Association of Barcelona signed, in the name of his organisation, a letter to Franco asking that he grant broad political amnesty. Some organisations and famous figures from other countries, such as the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir and Claude Roy, expressed their support for the text.[81] This criticism would end up reaching the Fourth National Congress of Spanish Lawyers (*IV Congreso Nacional de la Abogacía Española*), held in León in June 1970. The conclusions of the meeting asked for the elimination of special jurisdictions, the abolition of the death penalty and the granting of general amnesty for political prisoners.[82]

[77] López Raimundo, 'Detener'.

[78] See Claudia Cabrero et al., *Abogados contra el franquismo. Memoria de un compromiso político, 1939–1977* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2013).

[79] For instance: 'Plan de desarrollo político que el Consejo Provincial del Movimiento de Guipúzcoa entrega al ministro secretario General', 11 Sept. 1968, Presidencia, MN, SGM, ST, 51/18770, AGA.

[80] Ysàs, *Disidencia*, 70–1.

[81] Lorenzo, *Solidaritat*, 17–18.

[82] *Conclusiones del IV Congreso Nacional de la Abogacía Española. León, junio 1970* (Barcelona: Ilustre Colegio de Abogados de Barcelona, 1971).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Some attorneys went even farther than simply denouncing the dictatorship's repressive system. Thus, several of them even took part in the 'rupture' strategy used in trials by certain political organisations. Such actions were clearly in sync with practices that the lawyers of members of the Algerian National Liberation Front had helped to promote, and that would later be imitated by scores of anti-colonial and revolutionary organisations.[83] According to one of these lawyers, Jacques Vergès, the 'rupture' strategy was characterised by contesting the entire established order (including existing laws and the court system), the perception of justice as a 'battlefield' for the defendants and the need for collective defence for all accused.[84]

In the case of Spain, the most well-known example was the above-mentioned Burgos Trial, which took place in December 1970. This court-martial was used by the sixteen individuals on trial as a privileged platform for expression in order to broadcast their ideas to international public opinion. Within the framework of this common strategy, their defence attorneys used the opportunity to denounce the use of military jurisdiction. As two of these lawyers wrote, the limited role given to them in this legal proceeding did not eliminate their capacity to advocate: 'Lawyers are simply granted the role of providing the appearance of legal guarantees in a political trial. But therein lies their strength . . . The lawyers will not be able to defend, but they can show that they are unable to defend'.[85] However, the goal was not simply for the protests to influence the result of the trial, the intention was also that the 'rupture' strategy help to erode the dictatorship: 'It is no longer simply about people in the street being able to impact the result of the political trial. It is about the result of the trial being able to transcend, to go beyond the judicial farce and have repercussions on political confrontation in general'.[86]

The fact that two of the defence counsels in the court-martial (Gregorio Peces-Barba and Josep Solé Barberà) were from outside the Basque Country and were politically distant from ETA and Basque nationalism shows the breadth of the social reaction that arose. During the trial, around a hundred lawyers occupied the Palace of Justice in Madrid. In Catalonia, around 300 well-known cultural figures locked themselves in the monastery of Montserrat. The latter resulted in the Permanent Assembly of Catalan Intellectuals (*Assemblea Permanent d'Intel·lectuals Catalans*), which would, in turn, be one of the seeds of the Assembly of Catalonia (*Assemblea de Catalunya*), a unifying platform for Catalan anti-Francoists that was the continuation of the aforementioned Taula Rodona and the Coordinating Commission of Political Forces of Catalonia (*Comissió Coordinadora de Forces Polítiques de Catalunya*) created in 1968–9.[87] On a certain level, it can be said that as a result of the Burgos Trial, the creation of an *anti-Francoist civil society* began to become visible. Within it, more and more connections and common spaces were appearing between different characters in the opposition to the regime. The continuity of the aforementioned Assembly of Catalonia until the end of the dictatorship shows that the joint efforts in the fight against Franco were not ephemeral.

Furthermore, the trial helped to focus international attention on Francoism and sparked a wave of solidarity across many countries.[88] One example is the involvement, once again, of Jean-Paul Sartre. In his prologue to Gisèle Halimi's book *The Burgos Trial* (*Le procès de Burgos*), the French philosopher agreed with ETA's Third-Worldist views, and described the armed struggle as an inevitable road to the independence of the Basque Country: 'the colonised have no other way out than to respond to violence with violence . . . the Basque people cannot avoid radicalisation: they now know that they can only obtain independence through armed struggle'.[89] From the start of the 1960s, lawyers and defenders of

[83] See Georges Arnaud and Jacques Vergès, *Pour Djamila Bouhired* (Paris: Minuit, 1958); Abdessamad Benabdallah et al., *Défense politique* (Paris: Maspero, 1961); Jacques Vergès, *De la stratégie judiciaire* (Paris: Minuit, 1968).

[84] Vergès, *Stratégie*.

[85] Kepa Salaberri [Miguel Castells and Francisco Letamendia], *El Proceso de Euskadi en Burgos. El sumarísimo 31/69* (Paris: Ruedo Ibérico, 1971), 85.

[86] Miguel Castells, *Los procesos políticos. (De la cárcel a la amnistía)* (Madrid: Fundamentos, 1977), 122.

[87] Josep M. Colomer, *Assemblea de Catalunya* (Barcelona: L'Avenç, 1976), 35–45.

[88] See Gisèle Halimi, *Le procès de Burgos* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), 163–231.

[89] Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Préface', in Halimi, *Procès*, XXIV.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

human rights from several European countries had committed themselves to denouncing Francoist repression.[90] In addition to the ties between individuals and organisations from Spain and abroad, another group was fundamental to channelling international solidarity, especially from the second half of the decade onwards: Spanish migrants in Europe. They helped create one of the most active organisations in this area, the Exterior Delegation of Workers' Commissions (*Delegación Exterior de Comisiones Obreras*). From abroad, this group worked to denounce the circumstances in Spain, raise funds and connect with the different solidarity groups in European cities.[91]

Nevertheless, the main vector of mobilisation and the main source of concern for the regime was within the country: it was still the workers' movement. As stated by a police document in reference to the events that occurred at the end of 1970: 'As a result of the court-martial in Burgos against ETA elements, it was found . . . that strikes, which are forbidden in Spain, can be driven by matters that have nothing to do with labour'.[92] Indeed, the strikes that took place in opposition to the trial marked a turning point. In the Basque Country – especially in Gipuzkoa and Biscay – the strike was quite broad for several days.[93] Police forces were entirely overwhelmed, as can be seen in the report by the general command of the Guardia Civil in San Sebastián, which noted that 'protests made up of over 1,000 individuals had to be dissolved in some towns by groups of available agents which numbered no more than eight individuals'.[94] At one of these protests, held in Eibar on 4 December, PCE(i) member Roberto Pérez Jauregui was wounded by a bullet, dying four days later. According to a communist activist from San Sebastián, 'the beginning of the end [of the dictatorship] had begun', as 'we Gipuzkoans had shown that the General Strike is extremely difficult but perfectly *possible*'.[95] Finally, the protests drove the regime to commute the nine death sentences applied to six of the accused, as had already happened on two previous occasions: with Iñaki Sarasketa, in 1968, and with Andoni Arrizabalaga, in 1969 – both ETA members.[96] The efforts and the mobilisation of tens of thousands of individuals that had nothing to do with the armed struggle – and who may have even condemned it in some cases – had saved their lives. Also, although ETA was operating under extremely difficult circumstances before the court-martial (worsened by the division that took place between the fifth and sixth assemblies), the trial served to strengthen the organisation. Somehow, the prediction of a police report from late October was fulfilled: 'it would be unfortunate if this terrible division [within ETA] was lessened . . . by the campaign of unity and solidarity all opposition groups are preparing for the upcoming court-martial in Burgos'.[97]

Outside the Basque Country, strikes opposing the Burgos Trial were much more limited. However, it is worth noting several actions led by students, who adopted a cause that had nothing to do either with making universities more democratic or with their immediate reality.[98] In addition, the struggle against death sentences for ETA members fuelled the radicalisation of mobilisations. Almost immediately after the trial ended, a strike broke out in Barcelona that would serve as a benchmark in this

[90] One of the most important efforts was the report *Spain and the Rule of Law* (Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1962).

[91] Carlos Sanz, 'Las movilizaciones de los emigrantes españoles en Alemania bajo el franquismo. Protesta política y reivindicación sociolaboral', *Migraciones y Exilios*, 7 (2006), 51–80; José Babiano and Ana Fernández, *La patria en la maleta. Historia social de la emigración española a Europa* (Madrid: Fundación 1° de Mayo/GPS, 2009), 149–150 and 188–190.

[92] JSP de Bilbao, 'Programa de actuación temporal de los servicios de la demarcación correspondiente al primer trimestre del año 1971', [1971], AGCV.

[93] JSP de Bilbao, 'Ambiente público', 3 Dec. 1970, AGCV; Gobierno Civil Guipúzcoa, 'Memoria de la provincia correspondiente al año 1970', 30 Mar. 1971, Gobierno Civil, 3676, Archivo Histórico Provincial de Gipuzkoa (AHPG), Oñati.

[94] Jefatura de la 551ª Comandancia Guardia Civil, 'Informe sobre hechos subversivos ocurridos en la provincia durante el pasado mes de diciembre y actuación de la fuerza del Cuerpo', 1 Feb. 1971, Gobierno Civil, 3676, AHPG.

[95] Letter from Roberto, 4 Dec. 1970, Euskadi/Navarra, jack. 690, AHPCE.

[96] Casanellas, *Morir matando*, 35 and 79–80.

[97] JSP de Bilbao, 'Comunicado de aclaración de ETA contra el conocido Manifiesto lanzado por otra fracción de dicha organización', 23 Oct. 1970, AGCV.

[98] Álvarez Cobelas, *Envenenados*, 288–91; Colomer, *Estudiants*, II, 58–62; Rodríguez Tejada, *Zonas*, II, 275–80.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

sense: the Harry Walker strike.[99] Among the different groups giving support to the striking workers, especially notable was a group of anti-capitalist activists based in Toulouse who would soon form the MIL-GAC. In this case, the connection with activists from other countries went beyond the exchanges that had become habitual from the end of the 1960s: one of the tasks assigned to the Toulouse support group was to convince the workers in factories in Paris and Milan to support the strike, as the management of Harry Walker had begun to purchase components from these factories.[100] If the protest cycle at the end of the 1960s largely sprang from the experience of the Bandas strike, at the climax of the process the labour conflict once again occupied a central role. And now it did so having taken on a much more political bent, on occasions with more radicalised content and form, and with more and more international support.

Still, it was not all a bed of roses. Starting in 1972, ETA fell into a spiral of violence and repression,[101] and some of its attacks raised suspicions and helped to distance it from part of the opposition. After the deadly attack on the president of the government, Luis Carrero Blanco, in December 1973, PCE leaders internally debated the authorship of the attack, which they attributed to 'ultras'. They believed these 'ultras' sought to 'use all means to prevent the movement of the masses from continuing to expand and becoming more and more unified'.[102] This attack coincided with the planned starting date for the trial of CCOO's main leaders (the so-called *Proceso 1,001*), with which the communists planned to 'pull out all the stops and launch a broad, generalised campaign'.[103] However, the postponement of the trial put these protests on the back burner. Even more unease was caused by the attack on Calle del Correo in Madrid in September 1974, with thirteen deaths – an incident that provoked important confrontations within ETA. This time, the PCE mouthpiece openly spoke of a 'blind, inhumane, provocative' attack 'which smelled of the "black international"'.[104] Internally, the party's general secretary, Santiago Carrillo, emphasised the importance of 'opposing any of the regime's repressive schemes' while also 'avoiding converting these individuals [those arrested for the attack] into what they are not: heroes'.[105]

Conclusions – and Epilogue

As was the case in many different countries in the late 1960s, the period spanning 1967 to 1970 represented in Spain a huge leap forward in terms of social mobilisation, both from a quantitative and a qualitative point of view. Qualitatively, the political character of the conflict was significantly expanded, and its form and content were also radicalised. The Francoist repressive response also represented an escalation when compared with the relative relaxation of public order policy from the previous years. Not only did the repression become much harsher, it also became much broader: a clear proof of the breadth of the mobilisations it was trying to combat.

As a result of this toughening of repression, two contrasting reactions appeared within social movements. On the one hand, many activists underwent a significant radicalisation. On the other, there appeared a tendency towards the unification of those struggling against repression. Although the open action used by this sort of initiative conflicted with the apparent trend towards clandestine action

[99] See *Harry-Walker: 62 días de huelga* (Barcelona: Trabajadores de Harry-Walker, 1971); Joan Font [Joaquim Ferrer Roca], *La vaga de l'Harry Walker de Barcelona. Del 17-12-70 al 15-11-71* (Paris: Edicions Catalanes de París, 1972).

[100] See especially Sergi Rosés, *Le MIL. Une histoire politique* (La Bussière: Acratie, 2007); Jann-Marc Rouillan, *De mémoire (1). Les jours du début: un automne 1970 à Toulouse* (Marseille: Agone, 2007).

[101] Francisco Letamendia, *Historia del nacionalismo vasco y de ETA* (San Sebastián: Txertoa, 1979), I, ch. 5; Jose Mari Garmendia, *Historia de ETA*, (San Sebastián: Haranburu, 1980), I, 141–178; Casanellas, *Morir matando*, 121–69.

[102] Letter from Aurelio (F. Romero Martín) to Santiago Álvarez, 15 Jan. 1974, Activistas, 93/49.9, AHPCE.

[103] Meeting between the executive committee of the PCE and communist activists in the workers' movement, Jan. 1973, Movimiento Obrero, 91/2.4, AHPCE. See also José Babiano, ed., *Proceso 1.001 contra Comisiones Obreras. ¿Quién juzgó a quién?* (Madrid: Fundación 1° de Mayo, 2013).

[104] 'Los ultras y la explosión de la Puerta del Sol', *Mundo Obrero*, 16, 18 Sept. 1974, 3.

[105] Letter from Santiago Carrillo, 9 Dec. 1974, Activistas, 93/49.27, AHPCE.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163 Published online by Cambridge University Press

in most revolutionary groups and organisations (in this sense, Spain's '68 was much more Leninist than 'anti-authoritarian'), radical militants often participated in these broader spaces. In addition, they benefited from the increase in mobilisation in general driven by the unification of the fight against repression. The fact that calls to solidarity with ETA members on trial in Burgos in December 1970 were able to drum up a level of support that had not been seen previously is definite evidence of this: for the first time under Francoism, it was seen that a political general strike was possible, even if in a reduced geographical area.

The context of dictatorship contributed to this sort of convergence, driving collaboration that would be inconceivable in a parliamentary democracy. However, this does not lessen the importance of the capacity for creating dynamic, unified spaces that arose from the efforts of activists. In this process not only was there increased convergence between workers and students, there was also a gradual unification of sectors that were very distant ideologically. As a result, members of the radical left ended up sharing spaces and campaigns with many other dissident and opposition groups and individuals. We can therefore state that, in Spain, the encounters or *de-compartmentalisation* observed by some authors in other countries were especially deep. This shows the importance of diversifying the analyses on the long '68, as many different cities, regions and countries underwent similar experiences to the ones that took place in the most popular cases – such as Paris, Berlin, Berkeley, Columbia, or Tokyo.[106]

Going back to Spain, in the following years, the contradiction between the radicalism of some struggles and the trend towards unity became more acute, but neither phenomenon was negatively affected. On the contrary, throughout the early 1970s, the leap forward that took place within mobilisations was consolidated, and the proliferation of conflict could only be stopped partially with the declaration of a new state of emergency declared in 1975, first in Gipuzkoa and Biscay, finally throughout Spain using the Executive Order on Preventing Terrorism (*Decreto ley sobre prevención del terrorismo*), which was, in reality, aimed at the opposition as a whole. However, the death of Franco in November of that year reactivated the protests. In the first months of 1976 there was an explosion in mobilisations, in which the radical left played a key role together with the Communist Party. It was only when the government saw that it would be unable to keep control of the situation if the protests continued that it abandoned projects aimed at continuing the dictatorship. As a result, it can be said that the struggle of social movements was key to explaining the withering of the Franco regime,[107] even if the ideal some of them were fighting for was significantly different from the parliamentary democracy that began to take shape after 1977. All of this shows that the Spanish transition to democracy was neither easy nor calm, as has traditionally been stated. In fact, it was rife with protests, violence and state repression from the very beginning.[108]

Acknowledgements. This work was funded by Portuguese national funds through the FCT – Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P., under the Norma Transitória – DL 57/2016/CP1453/CT0013, as well as under the project UIDB/04209/2020.

[106] Some recent works have tried to do so. See for instance Eugenia Palieraki, Stéphane Boisard and Cecilia González, *Mobilisations sociales et effervescences révolutionnaires dans le Cône sud (1964–1976)* (Paris: PUF/CNED, 2015); Françoise Blum, Pierre Guidi and Ophélie Rillon, eds., *Étudiants africains en mouvement. Contribution à une histoire des années 1968* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2017); Abdón Mateos and Emanuele Treglia, eds., *Las convulsions del 68. España y el Sur de Europa* (Madrid: UNED, 2019). Likewise, in France some researches have given particular importance to regional studies, as we can see in David Hamelin and Jean-Paul Salles, eds., 'Mai 68. Aspects régionaux et internationaux', *Dissidences*, 5 (2008).

[107] Among the authors sustaining this thesis we should mention, at least: Balfour, *Dictatorship*; Molinero and Ysàs, *Productores*; Foweraker, *Making Democracy*; Ysàs, *Disidencia*; Nicolás Sartorius and Alberto Sabio, *El final de la Dictadura. La conquista de la democracia en España (noviembre de 1975 – junio de 1977)* (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 2007); Domènech, *Clase obrera*.

[108] As for the violence, see Baby, *Mythe*.

Cite this article: Casanellas P (2022). Joint Efforts in the Fight against Franco: Protest and Repression during the Spanish Long '68. *Contemporary European History* **31**, 271–285. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777321000163