

**ANTÓNIO COSTA PINTO**

**Edited by**



# **RULING ELITES AND DECISION-MAKING IN FASCIST-ERA DICTATORSHIPS**

**SOCIAL SCIENCE MONOGRAPHS**



**António Costa Pinto**

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AND DECISION-MAKING  
IN FASCIST-ERA  
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## Executive, single party and ministers in Franco's regime 1936–45

*Miguel Jerez Mir*

Serrano [Suñer] and Franco, together, taking in the spring air in a Salamanca that was peaceful despite the war being near at hand, spoke of the possible future for Spain. Perhaps it would be better to say that Serrano spoke while Franco listened. He listened closely to what Serrano was saying. Of new Spain, of the empire and the Catholic monarchs, of the yokes and the arrows of a powerful Spain, of the Caesar Carlos: glorious names. Of heroism, and everything was now possible...The empire was made by and ruled over by the predestined. (Ramirez 1964: 245).

I would have appointed a Falangist style homogeneous ministry. However, the entire monarchist branch immediately stood up to oppose it, and then everyone was against it: the Falange as much as any other. It was then that I decided to divide the portfolios between those who had ideas similar to the sectors that had contributed to the National Movement. (Salgado-Araujo 1977: 208)

### Introduction

Unlike Nazi Germany and Mussolini's Italy, which were undoubtedly of a fascist nature, in Franco's Spain, as in Salazar's Portugal, the issue is more controversial, even for the years prior to the defeat of the Axis.<sup>1</sup> Naturally, this affirmation is only true if that concept is intend-

<sup>1</sup> The question of the nature of the Franco regime has been the subject of several debates, largely as a reaction to Juan J. Linz's decision to categorise it as an authoritarian regime (1964; 1974). There is no shortage of historians who by the early 1990s had begun to argue that the subject was 'depleted' (Aróstegui 1992: 90), or that the

ed to refer to a specific type of regime that contains a series of well-defined characteristics; on the contrary, if used in a broader sense, it could include all those right-wing authoritarian movements headed by a single leader sympathetic towards some aspects of this ideology and adopted their paraphernalia (Malefakis 2000: 30–9).

Whatever the approach taken, there are two issues that allow little controversy. The first is that, regardless of its later authoritarianism, the Franco regime had strong totalitarian tendencies from its beginnings until at least the end of the Second World War, and certainly until 1942 (Ramírez 1978: 23–5; Linz 1964; 2000; Linz and Jerez Mir 2003). The second is that a large part of this totalitarianism was fascist inspired, largely consistent with the rise of this ideology in Europe at that time and with the decisive German and Italian contribution to the uprising of an important segment of the Spanish army against the government of the Second Republic and the instauration of the Franco regime and, on the other hand, with the addition of the Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional-Sindicalista (FET-JONS)—both before and after unification—to the war effort, particularly in the rear and with the construction of the regime both ideologically and in the provision of political personnel at the different levels of the new state.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the unique elements of the Spanish case need highlighting. Franco's regime and its official single party, FET-JONS, originated in a civil war (1936–9) that was to have important consequences for both (Linz 1970: 133–4), given the fact the evolution and the result of

dispute was almost entirely a debate on terms that had become 'sterile, at least as a tool for advancing real knowledge' (Tusell 1988; 1993). For a summary of the different positions, see Pérez Ledesma (1994); for more recent historiographic revisions, see Sánchez Recio (1999) and Saz Campos (2004: 245–54).

<sup>2</sup> According to Stanley Payne, between 1931 and 1945 Franco's regime was 'at least doctrinally, semi-fascist.' He argues that the fascist nature of the state's single-party state, FET was only mitigated by its confessional nature that 'explicitly embraced syncretism and Franco from the beginning.' Instead, he argues that the regime 'was never, and never had any intention of becoming structurally totalitarian,' although in the beginning it absorbed 'many elements of fascist doctrine through the incorporation of the Falange and its programme' (Payne 1987: 657).



this had much to do with the military aid the rebels received from the two Axis powers. It was also a military-led regime. General Francisco Franco, who was head of state from October 1936 until his death, was also, apart from the regime's final two years, head of government and the party's national leader from its creation and supreme commander of the armed forces. The regime was founded in October 1936, later than the others (although it was also the first to experiment with 'fascistisation'), and was the last such European regime to disappear, after almost 40 years: exceeded in duration only by Salazar's regime in Portugal. Along with Portugal, Franco's regime was named after the dictator himself and, like its Portuguese peer, it survived the defeat of the Axis powers, enabling the regime's ministers to continue their political careers. Franco's regime was also the only one that did not break down as a consequence of either military overthrow or popular revolution: Spain's transition to democracy was essentially peaceful, albeit one that took place in the context of intense terrorist activity of a very different ideological nature. It was also the only regime—with the partial exception of Mussolini's Republic of Salò—that for a while coexisted with another very different regime; however, for reasons of space we cannot make the comparison here between the elites of the two governments that claimed sovereignty over the Spanish state during the civil war.

To these factors can be added the particularly important role the Spanish church's hierarchy played during the regime's early years, particularly in securing legitimacy within Catholic public opinion for the uprising, which, in a pastoral letter published in July 1937, the Spanish bishops called a 'crusade'. No less unique was the fact that in June 1941 an agreement with the Vatican—which had officially legitimised the regime three years earlier through the appointment of a Nuncio—conferred upon the dictator the rights of a monarch 'by the grace of God', including the right to appoint his own bishops from a list prepared by the Pope—a privilege Franco exploited both for its immediate value in providing him with a tool with which he could control the composition of the episcopacy and for providing legitimacy for his regime. Henceforth, new bishops had to swear loyalty to

the Caudillo (leader) and to the principles of his new state. Certainly, no other dictator enjoyed the right, inherited from the Bourbons, to enter a church under a canopy or have their image surrounded with the words 'Caudillo of Spain by the grace of God' stamped on the country's coins (Hermet 1986: 29–110; Ruíz Rico 1977).

### **The beginnings of Francoism and the institutional configuration of his regime**

The Franco regime was inaugurated on 1 October 1936, little more than two months after the uprising by a substantial part of the officer corps—including generals and admirals (Alonso Baquer 2005)—that triggered a bloody war against the Second Republic (Payne 1995). At that time Franco took office as 'head of government of the Spanish state and Generalísimo of the nation's forces on land, sea and air.' He went on the balcony of Burgos's *Capitanía General*, where he greeted the crowd with a populist synthesis of his plans:

We have come for the people; we have come for the humble and for the middle class. We have not come to save the capitalists. Our work requires the sacrifice of all, particularly of those who have more to benefit than those who have nothing. We will endeavour to aid those who have a home with no heat or bread. We will bring about the holy task of social reform with affection, while demanding that everyone does their duty. (Cabanellas 1973: 658)

The proclamation by someone who had until recently been reluctant to join the uprising, was a product of the resolution eventually adopted by the small number of active-service generals at a meeting near Salamanca three days earlier. The original decree, issued on 29 September, said 'the Generalísimo assumed the role as head of state *during the war*,' [emphasis added] a condition that was particularly important for the monarchists (Preston 1995: 120–40, 176–85). Ironically, Franco's appointment was signed by the only one of his peers who had abstained one week earlier at the meeting in which the decision to choose a generalísimo (a supreme military, not political, commander) was taken: general Miguel Cabanellas, who, as the most sen-

ior divisional commander was also president of the National Defence Committee (JDN—Junta de Defensa Nacional), also believed the position was unnecessary (Payne 1995: 176–84, Tusell 1992: 53–4).<sup>3</sup>

The creation of the JDN, which was composed entirely of military figures, was not planned by the conspirators; rather, it was established by General Mola without official consultation during the early days of the uprising, as soon as it became apparent that the coup d'état had become a civil war (Tusell 1992: 35). Had the coup succeeded immediately the rebels would have established a civil directorate or a military junta led by general Sanjurjo. It is impossible to know what the characteristics would have been in such a regime, nevertheless, it makes it difficult to believe that the degree of rupture with the previous governments—whether republican or monarchist—were similar to the Franco regime, a regime that was understood precisely by its birth in the context of civil war. Indeed, the war was the process by which Franco obtained his personal power, both militarily and politically. The original core of which was truly a new state of military administration (Thòmas i Andreu 1999: 42).

The JDN, which was based in Burgos, originally consisted of five generals and two colonels; however, Salamanca was the rebel capital (Serrano Suñer 1947).<sup>4</sup> The decree establishing the JDN on 24 July 1936 stated it 'assumes all state authority and is the legitimate representative of the country in dealings with foreign powers'. According to Serrano Suñer, Franco's brother-in-law and all-powerful member of his government during the early years of the regime, this organi-

<sup>3</sup> Apparently only general Queipo de Llano, commander of the army of the south, expressed limited disagreement. As for general Mola, commander of the army of the north and the mastermind of the conspiracy, while he agreed with the appointment of Franco as Generalísimo, he was unhappy with the final draft of the decree (Tusell 1992: 54).

<sup>4</sup> One of the Junta's first decisions had been to appoint Franco as head of the Moroccan army and of the expeditionary force. Besides Franco and Queipo de Llano, the other members of the Junta were two generals and a naval captain. Tusell said, 'the JDN did nothing other than recognise existing authority, which was an indirect admission of its provisional status and limited effective weight' (1992: 38).

sation was an example of the 'encamped state' since it assumed that more than merely a new political regime it was a quartermaster and the elementary administrator of a phase during which the decisive element was the military.

The feeling of temporariness was in this case multiplied by the fact the Junta produced legislation that was not only of an elemental nature, but which was completed and rectified during its 69-day existence. At midday on 24 July, the Junta published its programme, which was reprinted on several days by the press sympathetic to the insurgents. While it was a minor document of limited transcendence, it admitted that the insurgents were facing a republican opponent. For instance, it did not say parliament was illegitimate—an argument used later as a propaganda tool to confirm that republicans had been 'inspired by Bolshevik goals'. Using the rhetoric of the 19th century, the programme's author claimed parliament had 'torn the Spanish state asunder and foolishly offended it, much to the jubilation of the Soviet republics'. What the military offered was 'Spain before Marxism' and 'law before anarchy', under an authority that would impose public order in a flexible manner while implicitly promising to retain the social and political advances. All that was said of the future was that a military directorate would be formed to replace the current provisional one (Tusell 1992: 38).

Soon they would be taking the first steps towards the construction of the new system—'the legality of 18 July', according to the formula coined by the new regime—by this 'collegiate head of state'. Moreover, during the war the insurgents claimed authority, through the leaders of rebel barracks and army chiefs, in parts of Spain still under government control (Viver Pi Sunyer 1978: 75).

Nevertheless, such important military leadership during the first months of the civil war needed to be nuanced in two important senses: on one hand, the JDN and all of the organisations dependent upon it, was only a 'provisional organisation of war', headed by a group of officials and military officers whose main goal was to secure their position rather than to take control of a 'state' that did not control the entire territory and for which they had no plans. On the

other hand, several of the decisions taken by the military command were mediated by the 'old politicians' in Salamanca and Burgos, and in particular by the monarchist group and members of the oligarchy. As Viver Pi Sunyer notes, 'when the JDN performed its more important sovereign and constituent act, that is, when it dissolved itself and transferred all of its powers to Franco, following the advice of the traditional families, and of the monarchy, acting through these generals' (1978: 77). In this sense, the symptomatic result of one of the first politically significant measures taken by the Junta, on 29 July, was the re-establishment of the monarchist flag throughout the Nationalist zone, despite the initial proclamations made by the insurgent generals, which ended with 'Viva la Republica!' (Cabanellas 1973: 658). No less revelatory was the beginning, on the same dates, of the reversal of the agrarian reform and the return of the land that the republican government had expropriated from Spain's *grandees* (*Grandes de España*),<sup>5</sup> and which had been the cause of the failed military uprising of 1932 that many of them had supported. In September 1936 regulations were introduced governing political parties, declaring illegal those parties that had formed part of the Popular Front in the February elections. A little later, in what was to be one of its final measures, the JDN banned all political and trade union activities within the nationalist zone, although it left the door open to the use of 'valuable personal contributions' under the condition that such activities had no party intentions. Although the relevant decree stated that the government would in future develop 'the only possible politics and unionism', while not demonstrating any clear unifying will. 'Only with the passage of time—by then well into the war—did they push ahead with the fascistisation of the emerging regime' (Tusell 1992: 39).—

On the day following the proclamation of Franco as head of state, in an operation that some have viewed to be an authentic coup d'état, the *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, which until then had been called the *Boletín de la Junta de Defensa Nacional de España*, published a decree writ-

<sup>5</sup> Grandee was a special title awarded by the monarchs of Spain to some members of the upper aristocracy, the majority of whom were owners of very large estates.

ten by Franco dismantling the JDN and replacing it with the State Technical Junta (JTE—Junta Técnica del Estado), which was to advise Franco and the head of the armed forces, whose decisions needed to be endorsed by the head of state.<sup>6</sup>

Without doubt this meant a substantial change in the political organisation of the Nationalist zone. However, the ‘camp’ feature did not disappear until the end of the conflict. The preamble to the regulations establishing the JTE made clear that it was a provisional body: thus, it affirmed that ‘the [structure] that is presently formed, at least until the announcement of a permanent body to be established over all national territory’ could not be taken as definitive.

This new body, which was inspired in part by the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (1923–30), was first headed by General Dávila Arrondo—a member of the dismantled JDN—and then by General Gómez-Jordana, who had been a senior official in Primo de Rivera’s regime. Both were monarchists and both were senior to Franco. It was true Dávila played an important role in Franco’s promotion to head of state and was a person Franco could trust absolutely to take charge of his office (Tusell 1992: 60). The JTE comprised a dozen members, including state general-secretaries: the war secretary and the secretary for foreign affairs, which was responsible for propaganda, and the president of the new body and the seven presidents of the other commissions: home, justice, industry, commerce and supplies, agriculture and agricultural labour, labour, culture and education, and

<sup>6</sup> The original title, ‘Head of Government of the Spanish State’ was obviated by the media and by the new *Boletín*. Franco also kept up the confusion over his position: was he the head of government or the head of state, given that he had been proclaimed absolute leader of the state and declared Spain to be a monarchy without a monarch (Cabanellas 1973: 661). Guillermo Cabanellas, son of the defence junta’s president, has no doubts about using the expression ‘coup d’état’ in reference to the Caudillo’s conspiracy that had been undertaken the previous month by generals Ormaz, Kindelán and Millán Astray (the first two monarchists, and the third the founder of the Spanish Legion) and lieutenant-colonels Yague, a noted Africanist, and Nicolás Franco, a naval engineer and Franco’s brother (Cabanellas 1973: 646ff). See Preston (1995: 176–86) for an English-language account of the facts leading to the proclamation of Franco as head of state.

public works and communications. The organisation was completed with the governor general. The former chief of the JDN, Cabanellas, was relegated to the purely ceremonial position of army inspector general (Thomàs i Andreu 1999: 43-4). With the exception of the secretary for foreign affairs and the head of the diplomatic office—both filled by career diplomats (one of whom, Sangroniz, was an authoritarian monarchist who convinced Franco to join the uprising)—the most important positions were occupied by high-ranking officers. It is worth noting that the position of secretary-general was given to Franco's brother Nicolás, who was an 'authentic jack-of-all-trades' during the regime's early days.

By appointing his brother to such an important post, Franco—far from expressing a determined ideological choice (Nicolás had served as secretary-general of the Agrarian Party during the Second Republic)—wished to see 'a quirk of character. Shy and suspicious, at the moment he entered the world of politics, which was new to him, he needed the support of someone he could trust absolutely—at first it was his brother; then it was his brother-in-law. The dictatorship, which since 1936 had been both military and personal, had developed a familial element' (Tusell 1992: 51, 66).

While the JTE established its headquarters in Burgos, Franco maintained his in Salamanca (Preston 1996: 186). The commissions played a role that was very similar to that of the ministries. A large number of their members were probably elected by virtue of purely technical criteria, although some did come from political parties of the right (particularly Alfonsist and traditionalist monarchists). Leading them was the JTE's president, who served as conduit to the dictator, in whose hands lay the final decision. Franco's authority was absolute, given that every legal and administrative disposition that emerged from it required the head of state's approval before it became effective (Thomàs i Andreu 1999: 44).

Alongside its consolidation through advances on the battlefield, the systematic recourse to terror behind the lines and the effective use of propaganda, important legal documents strengthened Franco's authority, particularly decree 255 of 19 April 1937—the unification

decree—and the Law of 30 January 1938 that created the General State Administration.

The decree brought together two quite disparate political forces under a single command within a single organisation, FET y de las JONS: Falange Española y de las JONS (the fascist party that was the result of the fusion of the Falange—which had been created in 1933 by José Antonio Primo de Rivera—and JONS—a small national-syndicalist party formed in 1931) and of *Comunión Tradicionalista* (Traditionalist Communion—the Carlists' political organisation and the only right-wing party that had not been swept away with the fall of the monarchy, even having a presence in the republican parliament) (Blinkhorn 1979; Linz, Jerez Mir and Ortega 2006: 322–7).

Thus the official—and only legal—party was born. The idea to integrate under a single command—Franco—the more important parties within the Nationalist zone had been planned since the failure to take Madrid in November 1936 made it clear the war was going to take longer than expected. If until that moment the problems had almost always been of a military nature, from then on the insurgents had to attend to some political problems of the first order. The disparity of forces within the insurgency had been of concern to a military trying to prosecute a war and maintain public order; especially as the political groups had their own militias. The insurgents' German and Italian allies did not view the proliferation of political groups favourably, and despite their unification taking place in the spring of 1937, the militias were placed already under military command in December.

The other operation was longer in preparation. The senior levels of the Falange and some older Falangists, including Sánchez Dávila, were party to the unification. Some of the Carlist leaders also understood the need to form a united front. The first discussions took place in Seville during January, then in Lisbon in February (Payne 1965: 125ff). However, nothing happened until Serrano Suñer arrived in Salamanca on 20 February 1937 (Preston 1996: 253ff), when he effectively took over from Franco's brother, who had failed to shine as secretary-general of state, but who nevertheless remained in office



for almost one more year.<sup>7</sup> The task of creating a legal framework to provide the state with a legal basis now fell to Serrano Suñer. The creation of the single party—a decision he recognised had tactical advantages—was moved forward by him. Both the Falange and the Requeté (the Carlists) came under Franco's direct control, while the sections that remained more protective of their own orthodoxy (particularly within the Falange) were removed from the leadership of the new party. Their militia, like 'all other militia combatants', were merged into a single national militia, although they were allowed to retain 'their emblems and badges'. The head of state was also the supreme commander of the militia, while the army general, José Monasterio—who had Carlist sympathies—was put in operational command, assisted by two deputies who were also serving army officers: one a Falangist, the other a Requeté.

The unification was not agreed between the two groups; it was imposed upon them by government decree in order to ensure 'efficient government action'. If Serrano Suñer's claim is to be believed, while there had been some prior negotiations between some 'individuals of the interested parties', the more important representatives of the groups were simply 'notified' of Franco's intentions: the authorities sought the opinions of the two most powerful military officers of the time: generals Mola and Quiapo de Llano (Serrano Suñer 1947: 57; Payne 1965; Preston 1996: 255-74).

In their statement explaining the need for the decree they praised the fact both Falange and the Requeté were equals; however, from the beginning FE-JONS made sure the first 26 points of its programme were incorporated, ensuring the union was unequal and less favourable to the traditionalists (Blinkhorn 1979: 401-14; Payne 1965: 157-8).<sup>8</sup> The death of General Mola in an air crash put

<sup>7</sup> Nicolás had failed in his attempt to create a Francoist party that would integrate all of the groups supporting Franco, an idea that had largely been inspired by the Unión Patriótica (UP—Patriotic Union), which had been established by Miguel Primo de Rivera in 1924 (Payne 1965: 123).

<sup>8</sup> Paradoxically, in Serrano Suñer's opinion, the Falange offered greater resistance to the decree than the traditionalists (1947: 185).

an end to this group's expectations. As for the structure of FET, the second article, alluding to the 'definitive organisation of the totalitarian new state', was limited to establishing the bodies that were, with the head of state, to govern 'the new national political entities'—the secretariat, the political junta and the national council—that had already been provided for in the FE-JONS statutes of 24 October 1934.

The composition of the secretariat, to which the decree assigned the task of 'establishing the body's internal constitution, assisting its leader in preparing the state's organic and functional structure and assisting the government at all times', was made public two days later (*Boletín Oficial del Estado*, 22 April 1937).<sup>9</sup> The secretariat played an essential role during the following months, particularly in the elaboration of the new party's statutes, which were published barely 100 days after unification (Decree, 4 August 1937). Now the time was spent defining the organisational structure and functions of the national council, the members of which were still to be appointed, and of the political junta, which was described as the national council's 'permanent delegation'. It also emphasised the idea of the Movement, a term that had been widely used by the Falangists and which also appeared, in lower case, in the 19 April decree. The Movement, which in the definition of the new party was the inspiration and the foundation of the Spanish state, was to constitute 'a single legal entity with a single patrimony' (Articles 1 and 3 of the party's statutes). The property belonging to left-wing parties and trade unions was to form a fundamental part of this patrimony. More importantly, the Movement's secretary—as with the national council, political junta and Institute of Political Studies (IEP—*Instituto de Estudios Políticos*)—was, according to the 21 October 1939 law, responsible for the funds appropriated in the budget 'on behalf of the abolished chamber of deputies' (Jerez Mir 1982: 54–5).

<sup>9</sup> The decree stated that half of the secretariat's members were to be 'appointed by the head of state', with the remainder being elected by the national council, once it had been established.

The party's statutes also anticipated the establishment of a secretary-general and a minimum of 12 national services, each with their own department head (Articles 22 and 23). All of this was on a hierarchical scale, leading down from the Caudillo—the Movement's national leader—to members (Article 37). The top position within this organisation was taken by the Movement's national leader. All of its values and honours were personified in the leader who answered only 'before God and history' (Article 47). His authority within the party was absolute (Beneyto and Costa 1939: 187-8).

The statutes name Franco as 'Caudillo and national leader of the Movement' (Article 4), and granted him the right to name his own successor (Article 48) and to freely appoint and dismiss its secretary-general (Articles 45 and 46). He nominated all of the members of the first national council, and could 'at any moment replace or depose them' (Article 36). Franco also had the authority to call meetings of the council, and could limit them to the one obligatory meeting each year, that had to take place on 17 July, and 'fix the agenda their deliberations strictly observed' (Article 40). In July 1939, a few months after the end of the civil war, new statutes were approved (Chueca 1983: 409ff). This strengthening of the Caudillo's position was to the detriment of that of the council: the new wording of the statutes affected it negatively. Where it once stated the council 'has the authority to decide', it now said the council 'has the right to be informed'.

Previously the political junta had consisted of 12 members of the national council, half of whom were appointed by the council and the other half by Franco. The new statutes gave Franco authority to appoint a president, a vice-president and ten national councillors: five appointed by the council from a list of names chosen by Franco, the other five directly appointed by the Caudillo (Article 3). The council no longer had the right to nominate members of the 'party's permanent governing body', half of the members of which no longer needed to be members of the national council (Chueca 1983: 212).

It is worth mentioning changes made in relation to the organic relationship between the cabinet and the party. Both the secretary-

general of the party and the president of the political junta became government ministers, while ministers became ex-officio members of the national council, where they only participated in discussions on matters affecting their own ministries.

The political-administrative institutionalisation of Franco's dictatorship began with the general administration of the state law, which was introduced in January 1938. According to this, executive authority was concentrated in the person of the dictator and established the government as a body with powers of deliberation and proposal, all of which were subject to approval by the head of state. The executive was organised in ministries headed by a prime minister, who was also head of state: a dual position Franco occupied until 1973 (Alba 1980: 261).

With the end of the civil war, the law of 8 August 1939 granted Franco legislative authority to the extent it 'authorised the head of state to dictate dispositions, for reasons of urgency and with retroactive effect, without prior deliberation in the council of ministers, and to establish a national defence junta responsible to General Franco, composed of three military ministers, the respective heads of staff and the chief of staff—a position created by this law' (Olmeda y Parrado 2000: 156). This created a pattern of institutional functionality that remained practically unaltered until the end of the regime: a system that pivots around Franco, who had uncontested supreme authority, and, beneath him, a very clear separation from the mainly civil council of ministers that 'occupied itself with the daily government and actual administration, and an army, with a direct line to the head of state, with its own autonomy and which operated in isolation from the rest of the administration' (López Garrido 1992: 158). Although the regime was not completely institutionalised until the referendum of December 1966 that approved the organic state law, these initial decrees introduced by Franco remained in force until his death. It is fair to say that with the unification decree—which was never made a fundamental law—they were the regime's constitution (Torres del Moral 1990: 214).

### **Government, party and decision-making**

There is no agreement over the number of governments formed during the Franco regime. Some authors say there was only one government with an occasional change in personnel, at least until 1973, when Admiral Carrero Blanco was appointed prime minister in place of Franco, who remained head of state, supreme army commander and head of the Movement until his death.<sup>10</sup> By adopting criteria according to which there is a new government whenever there is a numerically significant change in the number of portfolios or when there is a change of prime minister, then there were a dozen governments (Urquijo 2001: 18), all but the final two of which were led by Franco.

Here we distinguish between the clearly differentiated governments of the wartime period (1938-45): the Burgos government inaugurated on 31 January 1938 and which was almost completely changed in August 1939; and the 'Victory' government, or 'Peacetime' government that continued until the end of the Second World War. Neither of the more important changes made to this second government (in May 1941 and September 1942) may be interpreted as the birth of a 'new government', given the political significance of the changes to the composition of the cabinets (Tusell 1989; Linz and Jerez Mir 2003: 76).<sup>11</sup>

Franco's regime was an almost complete break with its predecessor: only Miguel Primo de Rivera's Civil Directorate (1925-30) was more complete (100 per cent). Not one of Franco's ministers had served at that rank during the Second Republic, although the Spanish

<sup>10</sup> The difficulty in distinguishing cabinets as a unit of analysis is examined by Miguel (1975: 30-31). A study of Spanish newspapers from the 1940s reveal talk of relief—a term with military resonance—within the government, but they never speak of a new government. For his part Serrano Suñer confirms that 'the different governments that followed', were in reality 'always one and the same' (1947: 266).

<sup>11</sup> This is the understanding adopted by Baltasar Garzón in his statement to Spain's national court (Audiencia Nacional) on 15 December 2006 at the opening of proceedings to determine the responsibilities of the insurgents against the Second Republic.

Confederación of the Autonomous Right (CEDA—Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas), the second largest parliamentary party between September 1933 and February 1936, which had seven ministers—including its leader Gil Robles—supported the military uprising. The only two with previous ministerial experience, General Martínez Anido and Eduardo Aunós had served under Primo de Rivera. This situation is altered slightly for the new regime if we consider the parliamentary experience of Franco's ministers, where a total of 11 had been deputies: six during the republic; two during the constitutional monarchy; and three who served in both—representing approximately 9 per cent of the regime's 120 ministers (7 per cent if we consider only those who served during the republic).<sup>12</sup> However, since nine of the ministers with previous parliamentary experience had been ministers before 1945, the proportion of former deputies in this initial period rises to almost one-third of the 34 ministers of the war years, and to one-fifth when we take into account only those who were deputies during the republic. Discontinuity at this level was far from being the rule at the beginning. As a matter of fact, all except one of the five civilian ministers of the first Franco cabinet were still deputies, at least in theory, since they obtained their seat in parliament only two years earlier (the republicans did not dissolve parliament).

This changed radically after the Second World War (only two former deputies were appointed minister during the following 30 years). Aware of Primo de Rivera's failure to obtain the support of Restoration period (1874–1923) politicians, Franco made no special effort to restore specialist politicians from the past (Jerez Mir 1982). Only 8.4 per cent of the consultative assembly's 359 members, and 3.1 per cent of the 992 elected to one of the republic's three parliaments, sat in Franco's non-democratic parliament, which had more than 550 members in each of its ten legislatures—and most of these had been members of the 1933 parliament (Linz 1972; 1979).

<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, it should be noted that two of these former deputies—one of whom did not reach ministerial rank until July 1945—were military officers, while the third was Serrano Suñer.

One of the defining characteristics of Franco's regime as an authoritarian regime was its 'limited pluralism' (Linz 1964; 2000). It was a pluralism that included not only the social forces that occupied the conservative side of the political spectrum; it also incorporated people from a range of political backgrounds who had different aspirations. The concept of society, its institutional goals and social linkages that were expressed by the Falangists, the Traditionalists, the authoritarian Catholics in the Catholic National Association of Propagandists (ANCdeP—Asociación Católica Nacional de Propagandistas) and the monarchists, were all quite different and had their roots in pre-regime society;<sup>13</sup> however, this diversity was not incompatible with loyalty to the Caudillo, and was used by him as he consolidated and maintained himself in power. The regime's limited pluralism meant people connected to and supported by different groups entered into a sort of coalition government, whose members were chosen by Franco. These members were not chosen to represent their supporters, and they all had to swear their undying loyalty to the Caudillo. The main goal of the coalition supporting the uprising was to put an end to democracy in Spain: to overthrow a system that had allowed the introduction of policies that were a direct threat or in opposition to its member's interests. The policies were varied, and extended to education, church-state relations, army reform, political decentralisation, labour laws, agrarian reform, etc.

While Italian Fascism provided more inspiration to the Franco regime than Salazarism (Pinto 2002: 437ff.), the political strength of Franco's regime lay with the army and the Catholic Church—to a much greater extent than in either Italy or Nazi Germany, where the army was clearly subordinate to the regime party. As has been said above, Franco initially created an institutional system that included such bodies as the political junta and the national council, to which he added the corporatist parliament created in 1943, and the council of the realm (Consejo del Reino) in 1948. In 1940 he also re-established the council of state (Con-

<sup>13</sup> From the beginning of the 1950s ACNdeP's activities within the catholic sector were gradually taken over by Opus Dei.

sejo de Estado), appointing the monarchist general and former foreign minister, Gómez Jordana, as its first president. In 1943 Gómez Jordana was succeeded by another monarchist, Callejo de la Cuesta, who was in turn replaced in January 1945 by the *camisa vieja*, Raimundo Fernández Cuesta, who had been the single party's first secretary-general and the minister of agriculture in the first government.

The 50-member national council was appointed by Franco in October 1937—just five months after the unification decree—to represent the new political factions. Three of its members were women, one of whom was Pilar Primo de Rivera, sister of the founder of the Falange, while another was Mercedes Sanz Bachiller, widow of Onésimo Redondo, the founder of JONS.<sup>14</sup> No fewer than 13 members of this body were to go on to achieve ministerial rank: seven who may be considered more or less Falangists out of approximately 20, including the Falangist sympathiser, General Yagüe and four *camisas nuevas* (neo-falangists) (CEDA deputy, Serrano Suñer, friend of José Antonio and executor of his will; the former propagandist, Gamero del Castillo, who had links to the Urquijo banking family; two others—one of whom came from the monarchist Spanish Action (Acción Española)—that some authors consider to have been simply 'technicians'; two traditionalists from II; one monarchist from five; and four generals from nine military officers (including both Yagüe and the *camisa vieja* Fernández Cuesta, who was a lieutenant in the navy's legal staff) (Linz 1970: 145; Payne 1987: 187). For several months Franco was to postpone nominating members to the new political junta, which the party's statutes defined as a 'permanent organ of [the party's] government', in fact, he did not name anyone until March 1938, six weeks after the formation of the Burgos government. The political junta was made up of

<sup>14</sup> The former, who was the national delegate of the Women's Section since the creation of this organisation, was the first name on the list, while the latter, who was the national delegate of social assistance—another FET-JONS organisation, was tenth on the list. The third woman was a member of Traditional Communion, and was a candidate on their list in 1933, was 14th on the list. She had been national delegate for fronts and hospitals during the first months of the war.



12 members, including three ministers—Serrano Suñer, who was minister of the interior, and the ministers of education (an Alfonsist monarchist) and of justice (a Carlist)—and another three who were to go on to serve in the next government (a general and two *camisas nuevas*).<sup>15</sup> At least one of the following day's newspapers stated that 'General Asensio is the chairman of the political junta', what is clear is that nobody actually assumed the position until five months later, on the same day the 'Victory' government was formed—his nomination going to Serrano Suñer, who assumed this position in addition to the ministry of the interior. Serrano Suñer strengthened the chairmanship as an independent institution with respect to the junta, in such a way that the junta's chairman effectively became number two in the regime, with the position of the secretary-general being reduced to little more than a secretariat—at least until the reform of May 1941, which coincided with the first significant reshuffle of the 'Victory' government and the nomination of Arrese to the position that had been vacant for 14 months. During this interval, FET-JONS finally became an orderly and disciplined party. After Serrano Suñer's fall from grace and removal from the government in September 1942, the political junta and its chairman, who was now Franco, became a pointless organisation: the Falange was always 'Franco's Falange' (Chueca 1983: 215ff; Jerez Mir 1982; Linz 1970; Payne 1965; Preston 1996).

Although FET-JONS had become a largely empty bureaucratic apparatus by the 1940s, many of its ancillary organisations—particularly the vertical unions and the women's organisation—were to continue playing an important role until the end of the regime (Aparicio 1980; Gallego Mendéz 1983; Otero 1999; Linz 1970: 151ff).<sup>16</sup> All of

<sup>15</sup> In total, those of the dozen members for which we have more detailed information include five Falangists (two *camisas viejas*, two from CEDA and one who had been a minister in Primo's regime), three Carlists, one Alfonsist and one soldier, General Asensio, who became minister for the army in 1942, and whom the press claimed was the junta's chairman (*Patria* 21 October 1937).

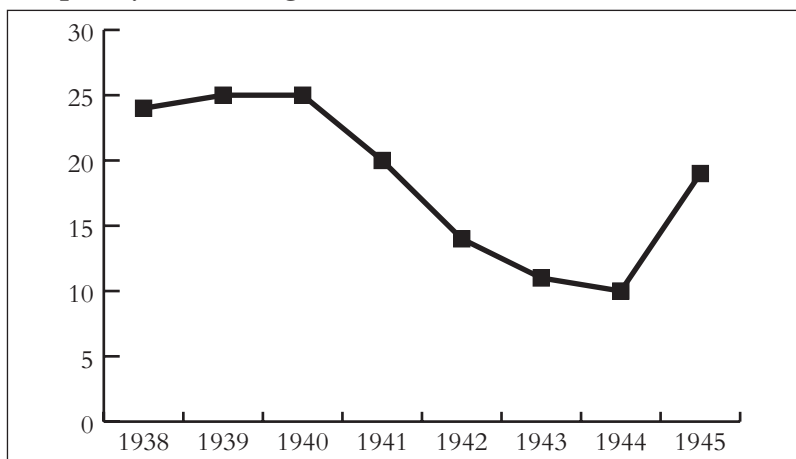
<sup>16</sup> Already in the summer of 1937 the party had created a structure that mirrored that of the state's civil administration, in theory duplicating such services as commu-

these institutional bodies were created through a series of fundamental laws that the regime used in its attempt to institutionalise itself as a representational system, different from the pluralist Western democracies without, however, making the regime's official single-party the dominant power centre within the system. Corporatist ideologies would serve Franco and his supporters as they created the political institutions they hoped would continue after Franco's death. As is usual in both totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, none of the legal texts recognised the separation of political power between the legislature, executive and the judiciary: sovereignty neither rested within, nor was it shared with the legislature (Linz 1979).

The cabinet, which was headed by Franco, was the real centre of power in a manner that was in stark contrast to the situation in other dictatorships, such as the Soviet Union (where the *Politburo* was the supreme body), Fascist Italy (where the Fascist Grand Council functioned in parallel with the cabinet) and Nazi Germany (where Hitler made unilateral decisions). As a matter of fact, there was never any difference—not even during earlier phases of the regime—between the council of ministers as an institution and as a body (López Garrido 1992: 157). Furthermore, when ministers enjoyed Franco's confidence, they were often allowed to exercise a considerable degree of autonomy in their areas of competence: although this was perhaps less true in certain strategic ministries, such as defence and foreign affairs. To be a minister under Franco meant one had reached the apex of power: FET-JONS's political junta was never a threat, and for years was moribund. In contrast, as Serrano Suñer notes in his memoirs, during the regime's early years 'political life always rested with the ministers' (1947: 66). Frequent cabinet reshuffles were Franco's main

communications and transports and foreign affairs (until 1944 and 1945, respectively), education, justice and health (Jerez Mir 1982: 470ff). This all created a bureaucracy that by autumn 1945 is estimated to have employed 20,000 people, who were all receiving regular salaries from the party (*El País* 23 May 1980: 7). Curiously, in 1946, the year in which, for the second time, the position of secretary-general had been left vacant, the number of employees in the two main sections—administration and support—increased from 866 to 2084 (Chueca 1983: 205).

**Figure 7.1**  
**Frequency of meetings of the council of ministers (1938-45)**



**Table 7.1**  
**Frequency of meetings of the council of ministers (1938-45)**

	< 1month	1 month	2 months	≥ 3 months	Total*
1938 <sup>1</sup>	1	1	5	4	23
1939	0	3	5	4	25
1940	0	4	5	3	25
1941	0	7	2	3	20
1942	1	8	3	0	14
1943	3	7	2	0	11
1944	4	6	2	0	10
1945 <sup>2</sup>	1/1	5/0	1/2	0/2	7/12
Total	10/1	41/0	25/2	14/2	

\*Total number of meetings of the council of ministers held each year.

<sup>1</sup> February to December.

<sup>2</sup> Until/after 5 July.

Source: *Ideal* and *Patria* newspapers (February 1938–October 1939); Archivo de la Presidencia del Gobierno (21 October 1939–45).

means of implementing policy changes. Through them, the Caudillo altered the regime's internal balance of power by weakening one of its political families while strengthening another. From 1939 the single party was itself officially represented by the secretary-general of FET-JONS, who discussed party affairs either within cabinet or directly with Franco.<sup>17</sup>

The frequency of meetings of the council of ministers was very high during the first three years (rarely were there fewer than two meetings each month), progressively declining from April 1941 before increasing again after October 1945 (see Figure 7.1 and Table 7.1). According to Franco Salgado-Araujo, Franco's cousin and head of his office until 1941, during the civil war meetings of the council of ministers often took place outside of Burgos, in locations designated 'terminus' situated close to the Aragon Front, from where Franco left each morning to review military activities and to speak with his senior commanders. The ministers, who because of a housing shortage within the Nationalist zone, were spread across different provincial capitals, travelled from their respective homes. In such cases, the meetings would begin in the morning and almost always finish before supper. In Burgos the meetings went on longer, often not finishing until after 11pm (Salgado-Araujo 1977: 258). Until the autumn of 1945, when the practice of holding cabinet meetings on Friday was introduced, there was no fixed day for the meetings, and they were often held on Saturdays or even Sundays.

Franco's first regular cabinet was formed at the beginning of 1938 to replace the administratively weak civilian JTE. The junta's two presidents—generals Dávila and Gómez Jordana, both monarchists—were members of the first government of the Nationalist zone which then represented just over half of Spanish territory. The former was minister of defence, while the latter was minister of foreign affairs

<sup>17</sup> Article 43.6 of the party's new statutes established that one of the duties of the secretary-general was 'to participate, as a minister, in the tasks of government'. The secretary-general had previously attended meetings of the council of ministers in his capacity as minister of agriculture.

and vice-president of the government, a position first introduced to Spanish politics by Primo de Rivera (there was only a remote precedent in 1840), and which ceased to exist until 1962 when it was filled once more by a general. A third member of the government, the head of Syndicalist Action and Organisation (OAS—Organización y Acción Sindical), was to head the commission on industry, commerce and supplies. Given that this cabinet was formed by just 12 people at the moment of its creation (the fewest number of ministers in the regime's history) and the importance of the positions, continuity was very significant: including Franco, one-third of the members of this first government had formed part of Nationalist Spain's first executive.

Serrano Suñer, who displaced Nicolás Franco as secretary of the executive and accumulated the interior ministry, enjoyed Franco's full confidence, and played a decisive role both in creating this ministry and in shaping its political orientation in the direction of Mussolini and Italian Fascism. As was true of all of Franco's governments, this first ministry was a coalition of many, but not all, of the forces supporting the Nationalist cause; nevertheless, not all of Spain's many right-wing tendencies were involved, and those that were did not necessarily obtain representation proportional to their electoral strength during the Republic (Salgado-Araujo 1977; Tusell 1992; Linz, Jerez Mir and Ortega 2006: 325).

The distribution of portfolios established a pattern that was to be repeated throughout the dictatorship's existence, without actually becoming a rule: the Falange occupied the social ministries—agriculture and unions; the Traditionalists received the ministry of justice (which was responsible for the regime's relations with the Church); two of the more technical portfolios—finance and public works—went to the moderate monarchists who had been radicalised into extreme right-wing positions during the republic; the third technical ministry—industry and commerce—was occupied by a naval lieutenant colonel of engineering who had been born and raised in El Ferrol at roughly the same time as Franco. The interior ministry, which was divided into two separate portfolios in an experiment that was not

repeated, was shared between Franco's Falangist and CEDA deputy brother-in-law, Serrano Suñer and Martínez Anido, who died during the war without being replaced as minister of public order (Viver Pi Sunyer 1978; Jerez Mir 1982; Baena del Alcázar 1999).

Of all the military officers called to political office by Franco, Martínez Anido, Gómez Jordana and Dávila were the only 'old generation' generals. However, the military continued to occupy important portfolios even after Franco's death and the end of his regime: these included the ministries of the interior (1941-73, 1979-80) and those linked to the area of defence (1939-79) as well as the office of prime minister—winning ministerial rank in 1945—until Carrero Blanco's death in 1973. Moreover, military figures were frequent incumbents of the more technical ministries, at least until the mid-1960. The contentious education portfolio was initially awarded to an extreme right-wing monarchist who was not particularly favourable towards the Church, although it soon passed to another monarchist with clear pro-Church sympathies, and who remained in office throughout the 1940s. In essence, Franco presided over a governing coalition of conservatives and monarchists (three of the two military officers were monarchists), in which there was only one representative of the Falange 'old guard' (*camisas viejas*), who was in charge of a ministry that could be described as being of lesser importance. The *camisas viejas*, who were indignant at the nomination of a pro-British general to head the foreign office (the Falange had a special predilection for the theme of Gibraltar and 'perfidious Albion'), were compensated by being given control of the press and propaganda, whose nominal leader was Serrano Suñer. Through what Payne claims is 'the first of Franco's compromises', and under the direction of Ridruejo—the 'Spanish Goebbels'—and Tovar, two young intellectuals appointed by Serrano Suñer, the Falangists came to control the regime's official rhetoric until the Colonel Galarza rose to the ministry of the interior in May 1941 and, to a lesser extent, until 1953 when it was incorporated into the services under the vice-secretary of popular education (Payne 1987: 145; Jerez Mir 1982).

At no time during the regime would the ministry represent such a range of ideologies as that achieved in this first government (Equipo Mundo 1970: 46). During cabinet meetings, according to one of the ministers, 'Franco did not speak much about the war, and only in certain circumstances' (Bayod 1981: 36), allowing them to speak openly. Responding to a pattern of behaviour that would change radically over the years, when he would speak laconically either for or against the proposals under discussion, Franco proved to be very loquacious, extending his interventions and frequently getting lost in the 'minute detail', according to his then minister of justice, who also noted Franco 'never wore a watch'. Regarding the level of the debate, the then minister for home affairs described them as 'chats over coffee', presided by someone who—with respect to these affairs—was 'on the moon'. The opinion of the then minister of education was no more favourable: 'This man has a huge store of useless information' (Tussell 1993: 313-4).

This first Franco ministry had a short life: during the regime only Carrero Blanco's 1973 government had a shorter existence. Nevertheless, it passed some important political measures. Amongst these was the labour charter (*fuero del trabajo*), the first of the regime's fundamental laws. Inspired by the Italian Fascist *carta di lavoro*, the first draft of the labour charter was discussed at the cabinet's first meeting—a discussion that led to a heated debate between the Falangists and the monarchists, with an unusually angry intervention by Franco, within the party's national council (Preston 1996: 298-9). In an attempt to win support for the new regime from the workers, a series of measures were adopted to remove the legislation introduced during the 'two reformist years' of 1931-3. The included legislation related to the organisation of the agrarian counter-reform (with the creation of the Institute for Economic and Social Land Reform [Instituto de Reforma Económica y Social de la Tierra]); by removing the 'concessions' granted to the peripheral nationalists (by prohibiting the use of names in languages other than Castilian); and those affecting Church-state relations (from the secondary education reform law to the prohibition of civil marriage—including the annulment of civil marriages

that had taken place—through to the reintroduction of Easter holidays and the banning of Carnival). It was no vain threat of Franco's when he made clear, from a very early stage, his intention to construct a state that would be the 'antithesis' of that which 'the Reds' sought to create (González Bueno 2006: 98).

Following the end of the civil war, the new regime issued the law of 8 August 1939, which reorganised the state's central administration. The more important changes introduced by this law were:

- a) The abolition of the office of vice-prime minister, although this was compensated for by the creation of the office of the under-secretary to the prime minister (*subsecretaría de la presidencia*), which was granted ministerial rank in 1945.
- b) The ministry of defence was divided into three separate portfolios, one for each branch of the armed forces: army (*tierra*), navy (*marina*), and air force (*aire*), probably in order to increase the number of political appointments that could be used to reward the loyalty of their comrades-in-arms, as well as to reduce any potential opposition from senior ranking officers.
- c) Responsibility for labour relations was divided between the ministry of labour—which would remain without a minister until May 1941—and the national labour delegation (DNS—*Delegación Nacional de Sindicatos*), which originally reported to the secretary-general of FET-JONS, and whose national delegate was elevated to cabinet rank in 1969.

The day after this law was approved the composition of Franco's second cabinet was announced, the first to have authority over all of Spain. At the beginning the cabinet was made up of 15 members, all except three of whom were new. In addition to Franco and his brother-in-law, who had been appointed president of the political junta and who continued as interior minister and council secretary, was the monarchist Peña, who continued as minister of public works. With three separate ministers in the area of defence, and the inclusion into the cabinet of the party's secretary-general—to which position Franco appointed General Muñoz Grandes, who was also head of the FET-JONS militias, the only novelties with respect to the gov-



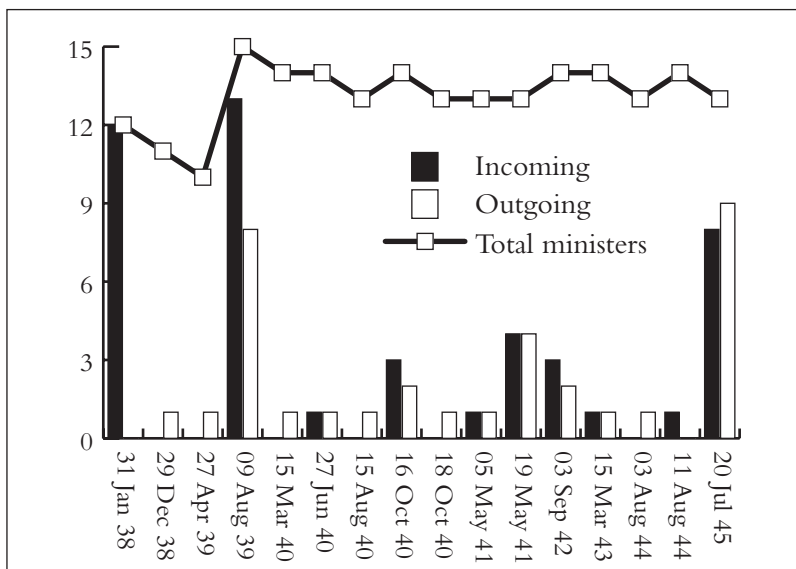
ernment's formal composition was the abolition of the position of vice-president and the appointment of two ministers without portfolio, both of whom were Falangists who were to remain briefly in positions for which there was no tradition in Spanish politics—only during the second two years of the republic and during the civil war—and which was to disappear with their exit from the cabinet until the appointment of a new minister without portfolio in 1957. Finally, it should be noted that the labour portfolio remained vacant until May 1941 (when it was assumed by the *camisa vieja*, Girón). Vacancies were to occur with the position of secretary-general of the Movement twice: the first time for 14 months between March 1940 and May 1941, and a second much longer period at the end of the Second World War (until 1948). The position of minister of the interior was vacant for eight months between October 1940 and May 1941, during which time its interim occupant was Lorente Sanz, one of Serrano Suñer's men who was also a state advocate and *camisa nueva* with Catholic origins.

This second government, which lasted until 1945, experimented with two significant reshuffles, both of which were the consequence of internal problems. The first reshuffle took place in two stages during May 1941, and was caused by the unrest of an important sector of the army over what it believed was the excessive protagonism of the Falange and its leader, Serrano Suñer. Franco's response was skilful: on 5 May he appointed Colonel Galarza—a notorious anti-Falangist—to the position of minister of the interior, which had been vacant since the incumbent had been moved to the foreign ministry (the most significant ministerial change up until that moment);<sup>18</sup> and, in order to counter Falange outrage, a few weeks later he appointed three *camisas viejas* to the cabinet: José Antonio Primo de Rivera's brother at agriculture, while the other appointments were made to fill the vacant position at the head of the ministry of labour and secretary-general

<sup>18</sup> Payne (1987), Preston (1995) and Ellwood (2001) note that Franco had taken charge of this ministry at this time, although this is not confirmed in the official bulletin (*Boletín Oficial del Estado*).

of the Movement. With this new cabinet Franco placated the military and calmed the Falangists, who were now finally ‘domesticated’ (Payne 1987: ch.13; Preston 1996: 431ff).<sup>19</sup>

**Figure 7.2**  
**Mobility of ministers in Franco’s government 1939–45**



The second cabinet reshuffle took place during the summer of 1942, in the wake of the ‘Begoña events’ in the Sanctuary of Bilbao, in which the traditionalist and anti-Falangist army minister, General Varela, led a religious ceremony in honour of those who fell during the civil war. The clashes between the Carlists and Falangists resulted in a bloody attack by one Falangist. General Franco, on Carrero Blanco’s advice, stripped his brother-in-law of his ministerial rank and dismissed him from the position of president of the political junta. He

<sup>19</sup> On the day following these appointments, a decree was approved that transferred to the party—specifically to the vice-secretariat for popular education—the press and propaganda services that had reported to the interior ministry, the new appointments fell to the Falange.

also removed Varela, who was replaced by the Falangist sympathiser, General Asensio (Payne 1987: ch.13; Preston 1996: 465ff). Franco restored the anglophile general Jordana to the foreign ministry while appointing the neo-Falangist, Pérez González—a professor of civil law and member of the army's legal staff—to the interior ministry, where he was to remain for almost 15 years. With these changes, Franco resolved the most serious crises of the period, if not of his entire time as prime minister. As Preston said, 'he would never again be as dependent on one man as he had been on Serrano Suñer. Franco now knew that his greatest political talent, the one upon which his personal survival depended, was his ability to balance the internal forces of the nationalist coalition' (1996: 471).

If this was the beginning of the period of greatest cabinet stability, it paradoxically coincided with the gradual change in the war in favour of the Allies. Until July 1945, the month in which a total of eight new ministers were appointed, of whom three had served in the Burgos government, there had only been two ministerial changes: when the minister of justice was appointed to preside over the new parliament; and when the foreign minister, Jordana, died and had to be replaced.

In respect of the relationship between the forces within the government—in purely quantitative terms—members of the armed forces predominated until the spring of 1941, at which time their numbers were narrowly overtaken by Falangists until the end of the period (Table 7.2).<sup>20</sup> As in the cabinet, so too in the third level of the central administration (directors general), where military officials predominated, followed by Falangists. The Falangists were in the major-

<sup>20</sup> The military officials with a clear ideological preference—generally monarchist—have, with four exceptions, been counted as such. Generals Yague and Alarcón de la Lastra (who was a CEDA deputy in 1933) have been counted as Falangist and Catholic, respectively, and Fernández Cuesta and Pérez González have both been counted as Falangists. A fifth officer, naval engineer Suanzes, who was from El Ferrol and a colleague of Nicolás Franco, has been counted as a technocrat, given that he had retired many years before to work in the business world.

ity at the secondary level, that of under-secretary, where the Catholics were also to obtain their best representation (Jerez Mir 1982: 415).

**Table 7.2**  
**Political 'family' to which cabinet members belonged**  
**(1938-45)\***

	Army	Falange	Traditio- nalist	Monar- chist	Techno- crat	Catho- lic	Not spe- cified
31 Jan 1938	6	3	1	2	2	1	0
27 Apr 1938	6	3	1	1	2	1	0
09 Aug 1939	7	4	1	1	1	4	1
15 Mar 1940	6	4	1	1	1	4	1
27 Jun 1940	6	3	1	1	1	4	1
15 Aug 1940	6	2	1	1	1	4	1
16 Oct 1940	5	3	1	1	1	3	1
05 May 1941	5	3	1	1	1	3	1
19 May 1941	5	6	1	1	1	3	1
03 Sep 1942	6	7	1	1	1	3	1
15 Mar 1943	6	7	0	2	1	3	1
11 Aug 1944	5	7	0	3	1	3	1
N	16	10	2	4	2	4	1

\*Political background classification is obviously debatable in some specific cases and at different dates some men should be counted differently. We used the pre-unification decree (April 1937) public identification. Some individuals are counted twice since they have two 'family' identities.

N = Number of individuals.

Source: Jerez Mir (1982).

With regard to the issues dealt with by the government during these years in the absence of the minutes of meetings of the council of ministers (until 1957), information is only available through the *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, which kept a record of the agreements and resolutions, and the official statements published in the press by the minister in charge, which was usually the interior minister. The codification of the data provided by these references, which have been

conserved in the Archivo de la Presidencia since the government was transferred to Madrid in October 1939, enables us to show the evolution that took place during the following six years.

**Table 7.3**  
**Subjects of agreements**  
**at meetings of the council of ministers 1939-45 (%)**

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	Total 1939-45	
								%	N
Presidency	14.3	42.3	60.0	63.0	81.8	90	83.3	60.3	70
Foreign affairs	42.9	50.0	36.7	18.5	18.2	20	50.0	33.6	39
Interior	57.1	61.5	60.0	29.6	81.8	100	83.3	60.3	70
Army	57.1	57.7	40.0	40.7	81.8	70	83.3	54.3	63
Navy	57.1	73.1	50.0	40.7	81.8	70	83.3	60.3	70
Air Force	57.1	57.7	36.7	40.7	72.7	70	66.7	51.7	60
Justice	85.7	80.8	50.0	48.1	63.6	60	50.0	61.2	71
Finance	100	65.4	60.0	37.0	81.8	60	50.0	60.3	70
Industry and commerce	85.7	34.6	46.7	44.4	63.6	40	0.0	44.8	52
Agriculture	57.1	65.4	40.0	37.0	45.5	30	0.0	44.0	51
Education	57.1	53.8	56.7	40.7	45.5	30	0.0	46.5	54
Public works	71.4	76.9	50.0	40.7	36.4	0.0	0.3	47.4	55
Labour	42.9	50.0	50.0	37.0	36.4	10	0.0	39.7	46
Movimiento	0.0	3.8	16.7	14.8	0	0	0.0	8.6	10

N = Number of known cases.

Source: Elaborated from data supplied by the government to the press as 'informal notes from the council of ministers', Archivo de la Presidencia del Gobierno.

Table 7.3 shows that the issues that received the greatest attention during the first 25 months were those connected to the finance: justice, public works, defence and interior (including industry and commerce in the autumn of 1939), followed by education and agriculture (1939-40) and, in 50 per cent of all references, labour and the

foreign office (this latter with the lowest values during the third year, in which industry and commerce increased). In 1942 there was a clear inflection, where only the issues relating to the prime minister's office were referred to in more than half of all cases, and when those concerning the foreign office did not manage 20 per cent. During the rest of the period—a time of great uncertainty with respect to the regime's continuity—matters relating to the internal ministry clearly predominated (years during which uncertainty concerning the regime's chances of survival led to an increase in the repression of the defeated supporters of the republic), followed by the prime minister's office and the ministry of defence (the army and the navy received equal attention, while the air force was normally some way behind), then by finance and justice (both with 50 per cent or more) and industry and commerce (in 1943) and foreign affairs during the first half of 1945 (see Table 7.3).

### **Recruitment criteria and a socio-biographical profile of the ministers**

During the course of 40 years, a total of 34 individuals (including Franco) held at least one ministerial portfolio. The main factor in explaining any individual's selection for ministerial office—and indeed the criteria for attaining any senior political position under Franco—was the individual's membership of at least one of the Movement's 'political families', links to more than one group or 'political family' usually facilitated a political career. The only *a priori* condition was absolute loyalty to General Franco, with even the slightest suspicion of anything less leading to immediate dismissal. Many of the other factors leading to ministerial positions being offered to individuals during the Franco regime are common to most political regimes: family ties, wealth, friendship and membership of certain bureaucratic bodies—in other words, being well-connected. Certainly, in an extremely personalist regime, and in a country in which cliques and power clans proliferated, the 'best connected' in terms of political usefulness were the ones retained by Franco and other influential leaders around him.

In reality, however, it was Franco who established the ground rules when, in October 1936, he appointed his brother Nicolás as secretary of the state technical council, and when, one year later, he gave Serano Suñer a large degree of autonomy in the formation of his new regime's first government, allowing him to occupy the interior ministry and remain as cabinet secretary (Tusell 1992). He also tended to promote his comrades in arms from El Ferrol, his own birthplace, and those military leaders whose seniority was similar to his. Nevertheless, this in no way minimises the fact Franco was willing to reward personal competence and professional ability, particularly during the second half of his regime, in his choice of cabinet ministers (Jerez Mir 1982; 1996). Leaving aside military and ideological factors, one of the main considerations adopted for appointing someone to Franco's cabinet was his increasing use of—to use Parsonian terminology—'adscriptive achievement'. Irrespective of an individual's social background, a brilliant academic record and success in the competitive examinations of any of the administration's leading professional bodies—state advocate (*abogado del estado*) or an advocate of the state council (*letrado del Consejo de Estado*), for example—represented an 'adscriptive' mark. Often the accumulation of such achievements, including being a university professor or a member of one of the elite engineering professional bodies was even more important than any nepotistic ties. Naturally, if these individuals had also had some form of relationship with either the Falange, the Catholic organisations (such as the ACNdeP and, later, Opus Dei), or if they had entered the military legal service, this was a bonus.

Within the government, the party's secretary-general occupied a special position. The secretary-general represented the integration of the single party into the state and its government, which through its various organisations, and, for some time within the public administration, increased its standing in the state's estimation. With the advent of democracy, many of these activities were transferred to different ministries. There existed a certain dualism between the party's secretary-general and the interior ministry, which incorporated a political factor—largely dominated by the large contingent of Falangists—in

respect of nominating representatives at the provincial and local levels. Apart from the early years of the regime, none of FET-JONS's secretaries-general obtained the power enjoyed by their Italian Fascist counterparts.

All of the ministers occupying the three military portfolios were professional officers. During the constitutional monarchy, the ministries of war and navy were often given to civilians, while that was the rule during the Second Republic, where prominent leaders, such as Azaña, Martínez Barrio, Lerroux, Gil Robles and Casares Quiroga, occupied the ministry of war. Even during the republican civil war cabinets, officers occupied the ministry of war only during the first two governments, being replaced by civilians for the remainder of the war while the navy portfolio—later navy and air—was held by civilians all the time. In addition to their monopoly of the military portfolios, officers during this period were also appointed to other senior cabinet positions. For example, generals Gómez Jordana and Beigbeder were both ministers of foreign affairs during the first years of the regime, and navy engineer Suances was minister of industry and commerce (1938–9), and again in 1945–51. Similarly, a member of the army's legal services, who was also a professor of civil law, held the ministry of interior; and another—a lawyer and notary—was both minister of agriculture and the first of FET-JONS secretaries. Additionally, General Muñoz Grandes occupied the new position of minister secretary-general of FET-JONS in the first government after the civil war (a military officer was appointed to head the official party for most of the time between 1939 and the late 1960s—indeed, the party was led by an officer at the time of Franco's death). In total, some 47.1 per cent of the cabinet's members were career military officers, a proportion that was to decline significantly in later years to the extent that the average fell to one-third of the total (Table 7.4).

In addition to what has been said in respect of the group's political identity, we also seek to discover who these ministers were and what their political career was before, during and after this period. In first place, and in a necessarily synthetic fashion, we will examine the data variables relative to their sociological profiles.



**Table 7.4**  
**Ministerial portfolios held by the military\***

	Military only		Military and civilian		Civilian only		Total military	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	% <sup>1</sup>
1938-45	6	37.5	0	0.0	10	62.5	16	47.1
1938-75	18	45.0	0	0.0	22	55.0	40	33.3

\* Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding. Portfolios held *ad interim* were not considered.

<sup>1</sup> Of total Ministers.

With respect to the age at which they first obtained ministerial rank, the average was 47.6, which is three percentage points lower than the average age of all ministers of the regime (Table 7.5). As expected given fascism's exaltation of youth, the youngest ministers were Falangists: neither Girón nor Gamero had reached their 30th birthday when they were appointed ministers, while Arrese and Miguel Primo de Rivera were 36 when they were appointed to the cabinet: the same age as Serrano Suñer. The sixth cabinet member who was under 40 when first appointed was the 35-year-old monarchist, Larraz. As for the military officers, the majority were of the same generation as Franco, who was 43 when he became head of state and 45 when he became prime minister. Of the military ministers, only Fernández Cuesta and Muñoz Grandes were younger than Franco, while three were in their 50s and two were in their 60s. Only two were older than 65, both of whom died in office. The generals of Franco's generation had learned of the loss of the final fragments of Spain's overseas empire in the Cuban war while they were still at school, while the two oldest military ministers had actually fought in that conflict. Almost all were, like Franco, infantry officers and Africanists, who had lived with the humiliation of Miguel Primo de Rivera's 'treacherous' withdrawal from Spanish Morocco. Probably very few of them received the Second Republic with any enthusiasm (one

took advantage of Azaña's law to become involved in politics, and was elected to parliament in 1933), a regime against which some—including

**Table 7.5**  
**Age distribution (%) and average age of ministers\***

	Age groups (%)**					Total	Average age
	<30	30-39	40-49	50-59	≥60		
1938-45	5.9	11.8	41.2	23.5	17.6	100	47.6
(N)	(2)	(4)	(14)	(8)	(6)	(34)	
1938-75	1.6	7.5	40.8	26.6	23.3	100	51.0
(N)	(2)	(9)	(49)	(32)	(28)	(120)	

\*Age at the time of the first appointment.

\*\*Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

N = Number of cases.

ing the aforementioned Colonel Galarza, who would become interior minister—openly conspired against in 1932.

One-third of all ministers—11 in total—and 25 per cent of the regime's entire leadership were born in Madrid. Madrileños comprised half of the Burgos government's cabinet, which is surprising given that the country's capital remained in republican hands until the end of the war. The second largest group were those from Franco's birthplace and the home of Spain's navy, El Ferrol, situated in the north-west of the peninsula. El Ferrol was the birthplace of three of Franco's ministers, all of whom were military officers. If we take into account those who formed part of the first Nationalist government, then—including the president—one-quarter of the inaugural cabinet were from El Ferrol, which was unparalleled, at least in Europe, given that it is a provincial town with fewer than 80,000 inhabitants. The rest of the ministers came from Andalucía (three, which is very few considering it is the region with the greatest population), Aragón and the Basque Country (each with three), Old Castile, Levante and the densely populated Catalonia (each with two).

With respect to level and type of education, all but one of Franco's ministers had at least an undergraduate degree—which was true for the entire duration of his regime. One-third of his ministers had obtained their doctorates (Tables 7.6 and 7.7). Approximately one-quarter of the civilian ministers were lawyers—not counting the military jurists—which corresponds to the traditional patterns of a Euro-Mediterranean pattern that dates back to the 19th century, and which in the case of Spain was less true of the republican governments during the civil war and, to a lesser extent, of the present democratic regime (Linz and Jerez Mir 2003: 93). The second most common qualification among ministers was engineering and related subjects, with 28 per cent of the total—which was double the proportion for the regime's leadership as a whole. The next group, with 17 per cent, is those with qualifications in the humanities, which is in line with the regime average (Table 7.8).

As we shall see below, around half of the ministers were serving military officers at the time of their appointment (most of whom were generals at the time of the uprising), although this proportion falls to 41.2 per cent when we discount those who were also involved with the legal profession in one form or another. Apart from Suances, who was a naval engineer, there was only one other naval officer, which is not surprising given the ministry of the navy was only created with the formation of the 'Victory' government, and the incumbent remained unchanged for the remainder of this period (finding a replacement could not have been easy given the casualties caused within this officer corps by the republican navy). Among the civilian ministers, the most common professions were, in descending order: advocate, engineer and senior civil servants (of which three were state advocates and one was a member of the council of state). In later periods the number of senior civil servants, including career diplomats, lawyers and, above all, university professors, was to increase substantially while the number of military officers fell to around half during the period 1945-51, and was to continue falling between 1951 and 1957 (Jerez Mir 1982: 415), declining to one-third of the regime as a whole (Table 7.9).

**Table 7.6**  
**Educational level of ministers (%)\***

	Civilian non- university educated	Military non-graduate	Civilian university educated	Military graduate	N <sup>1</sup>
1938-45 (N)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	58.8 (20)	41.2 (14)	34
1938-75 (N)	0.8 (1)	0.0 (0)	70.8 (85)	28.3 (34)	120

\* Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

(N) = Number of cases.

<sup>1</sup> N = Total number of cases.

**Table 7.7**  
**University degree of civilian ministers (%)\***

	Incomplete	Graduate	Post-graduate	Doctorate	(N)
1938-45 (N)	0.0 (0)	66.6 (12)	0.0	33.3 (6)	18

\*Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

N = Number of cases.

**Table 7.8**  
**Fields of higher education of civilian ministers (%)\***

Fields of education	1938-45	1938-75
Agronomy and veterinary	0.0	2.5
Economics and management	0.0	8.8
Engineering	27.8	13.8
Humanities and social sciences	16.7	16.3
Law	72.2	81.3
Mathematics and natural sciences	5.5	7.5
Medicine	0.0	0.0
Other	0.0	2.5
N	18	80

\* Multiple coding has been applied because some ministers held degrees in more than one discipline. Hence, percentages do not add to 100.

N = Number of civilian ministers.

The data on education levels and professions contained in Tables 7.6, 7.7, 7.8 and 7.9, combined with the social background and paternal occupation that is presented in Cuenca Toribio and Miranda García (1998), demonstrates that most of the ministers were from the middle—and upper middle-class, with some members of the aristocracy (there were two counts in the Burgos government, one of whom was from the old aristocracy [with a title going back before the 19th century], while the other was a military officer elevated to the peerage by Primo de Rivera, both of whom were joined in the following government by another general, who was also a member of the old aristocracy) and some landowners. Another upper-class minister was Joaquín Benjumea, brother of the Count of Guadalhorce and a member of Seville's agrarian and financial bourgeoisie. Franco, whose only daughter married the son of Count Argillo, personally adopted the old custom of Spanish royalty and granted noble titles to some of his ministers, generally as posthumous awards to former military officers (Jerez Mir 1982: 217-22). At least half-a-dozen of the military ministers, including Franco, were the sons of military officers.

Finally, we shall briefly analyse the variable relating to the ministers' political careers. As we have seen, only two had served as ministers prior to the fall of the Second Republic (both of whom had served in Primo de Rivera's dictatorship), without the situation being very different in other senior positions within the executive. Nevertheless, a little more than one-quarter of the ministers had been members of parliament, the majority of them serving as deputies during the unicameral regime. Only two of these ministers had served within the senate: the two Carlists who joined the government who had also been deputies during the Republic. Of the seven ministers who were elected to a Republican parliament, three served only one term, two served two, while the remainder served three. Four of the five civilian ministers in the Burgos government had served in the opposition during the Republic: two were members of the small monarchist group *Renovación Española* (Spanish Renewal), another in the even smaller Carlist group and the last in CEDA, which was

**Table 7.9**  
**Ministers' occupational background (%)<sup>\*</sup>**

Occupational categories	1938-45	1938-75 <sup>**</sup>
	% (N) <sup>1</sup>	% (N) <sup>1</sup>
Military	47.1 (16)	33.3 (40)
<i>Army</i>	35.3 (12)	17.5 (21)
<i>Navy</i>	5.9 (2)	10.8 (13)
<i>Legal staff</i>	5.9 (2)	5.0 (6)
Judge or public prosecutor	0.0 (0)	3.3 (4)
Diplomat	0.0 (0)	7.5 (9)
Senior civil servant	11.8 (4)	26.6 (32)
Middle-rank civil servant	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Officer of state corporatist agencies	2.9 (1)	7.5 (9)
University professor	2.9 (1)	17.5 (21)
Teacher	2.9 (1)	0.8 (2)
Employee	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Writer or journalist	2.9 (1)	1.7 (2)
Lawyer	17.6 (6)	34.2 (41)
Medical doctor	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Engineer	14.7 (5)	5.8 (7)
Manager	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Businessman, industrialist or banker	2.9 (1)	1.7 (2)
Landowner or farmer	5.9 (2)	0.8 (2)
Full-time politician	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Other	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
N <sup>2</sup>	34	120

<sup>\*</sup> Occupations immediately prior to first ministerial appointment. Multiple coding has been applied.

<sup>\*\*</sup> At any moment before first appointment.

<sup>1</sup>(N) = Number of cases.

<sup>2</sup>N = Total number of ministers.

the second largest party in parliament. This is palpable evidence that what can be lost through the ballot box can be gained by force of arms. The most common political position previously occupied by ministers was that of either a national or local leadership role within the single party: either as members of the political junta and/or of the party's national council. However, given the short duration of the period being studied and since almost 60 per cent of all ministers were appointed for the first time before the autumn of 1940, only five had previously served as civil governors and three as mayors (Tables 7.10, 7.11 and 7.12).

Outside the conventional political career reflected in political positions, it is important to mention another type of political experience—in the anti-system opposition: on the streets (in the case of the Falangists) and in conspiracies supporting the military rebellion—that could prove 'useful' in the advancement to ministerial office. Regardless of whether there was any direct relationship, what is certain is that within the Burgos government there were two ministers who had, shortly before, been in prison accused of conspiracy against the Republic (while at least one of them had been involved in an earlier military uprising). This was also the case in the second government, in which served three military officers who had been implicated in the military conspiracy (Galarza, Muñoz Grandes and Jordana) and in which there were no fewer than four others who had been prisoners during the civil war and the case of the Falangist Sánchez Mazas, who survived the firing squad (*El País* 11 January 2009). We might speak of a 'meritocracy of persecution', through which suffering for a political cause is transformed 'from personal liability to political activity' (Chueca 1983: 232). This thinking can be extended to those cases in which tragedy was experienced through the death of close relatives, as was the case for two people who were very close to Franco: Serano Suñer, who lost two brothers who were removed from a Madrid prison and killed; and Carrero Blanco, whose brother—also a naval officer—was killed by republican sailors. It is probable that these tragedies conditioned their attitude towards the repressive

**Table 7.10**  
**Political offices held by ministers (%)<sup>\*</sup>**

	1938-1945	1938-1975
	% (N)**	% (N)**
None	14.7 (5)	8.3 (10)
Mayor or local councillor	8.8 (3)	5.9 (7)
Prefect	14.7 (5)	16.6 (20)
Colonial governor	8.8 (3)	-
Parliamentarian	32.4 (11)	10.9 (13)
<i>Deputy</i>	26.5 (9)	9.2 (11)
<i>Peer or senator</i>	5.9 (2)	1.7 (2)
Member of the corporatist chamber	8.8 (3)	47.5 (57)
Secretary or under-secretary of state	5.9 (2)	26.6 (32)
Member of <i>cabinets ministériels</i>	0.0	0.0
Ministerial director	5.9 (2)	28.3 (34)
Minister	5.9 (2)	1.7 (2)
Local or national leader of the single party	62.1 (22 <sup>1</sup> )	-
Youth movement	0.0 (0)	0.0
Militia	0.0 (0)	0.0
Para-state corporatist institutions	0.0 (0)	0.0
Party officers	0.0 (0)	0.0
Others <sup>2</sup>	0.0 (0)	0.0
N <sup>3</sup>	34	120

<sup>\*</sup> Before first appointment to cabinet. Multiple coding has been applied. Percentages do not, therefore, total 100.

<sup>\*\*</sup> (N) = Number of known cases

<sup>1</sup> Including Franco, members of the political junta (13) and those of the Movement's national council.

<sup>2</sup> Including members of the technical junta (1936-8) and presidents of its commissions.

<sup>3</sup> N = Total number of ministers.



**Table 7.11**  
**Political offices held by ministers in democratic regime (%)\***

	% (N)
None	0.0 (0)
Mayor or local councilor	0.0 (0)
Prefect	0.0 (0)
Colonial governor	0.0 (0)
Deputy	75.0 (7)
Secretary or under-secretary of state	0.0 (0)
Member of <i>cabinets ministériels</i>	0.0 (0)
Minister	0.0 (0)
N	7

\* Prior to first appointment. Multiple coding has been applied. Percentages do not, therefore, total 100.

(N) = Number of cases.

N = Total number of ministers.

**Table 7.12**  
**Ministers' previous parliamentary experience**  
**in democratic-liberal regime (%)\***

	Number of times			
	1	2	3	≥4
%	42.9	28.6	28.6	0.0
N	3	2	2	0

\* Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

N = Number of cases.

policies imposed on the defeated republicans, for which Serrano Suñer was directly responsible.

The duration of ministerial careers was very uneven, with the majority of ministers serving between one and four years. Only Jordana and Franco served as ministers for seven or more years, while three served for less than one year. Some ministers, including Girón and Pérez González, served as minister of labour and interior minister, respective-

ly, for several years after 1945 (Table 7.13). Mobility between portfolios was also very limited: only Serrano Suñer led three ministries, while two men, Jordana and Benjumea, occupied two (Table 7.14).

**Table 7.13**  
**Duration of ministerial careers (%)<sup>\*</sup>**

	Years				
	< 1	1-3.9	4-6.9	4-7.9	≥ 8
1938-45	8.8	52.9	32.4	5.9	0.0
1938-75	10.0	37.5	0.0	29.2	23.3

<sup>\*</sup> Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

**Table 7.14**  
**Mobility of ministers through portfolios<sup>1</sup> (%)<sup>\*</sup>**

	Number of posts			
	1	2	3	≥ 4
	% (N)	% (N)	% (N)	% (N)
1938-45	91.2 (31)	5.9 (2)	2.9 (1)	0.0 (0)
1938-75	85.0 (102)	11.7 (14)	3.3 (4)	0.0 (0)

<sup>1</sup> Portfolios held *ad interim* were not considered.

<sup>\*</sup> Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

(N) = Number of cases.

## Conclusion

Francoism—which here includes its earliest years—was somewhat atypical in relation to those regimes normally considered fascist. In addition to the reasons outlined at the beginning of this article, it is a fact that its supreme leader became so largely ‘by accident’, as Brenan notes in his masterly work (1990). This presented no obstacle to Franco as he accumulated ever more positions—and probably more power—to his person than any other fascist leader, even to the

point where it can be said he had more power than any Spanish ruler (Payne 1987: 245).

Even the official single-party, which was the result of the forced union of two very disparate, even antithetical, political forces, did not manage to impose itself politically—not even during the period 1939-42, in which it had acquired its greatest power and influence—and finding itself subordinated to the army at crucial moments. Over time it gradually changed into a clientilistic parallel bureaucracy, although in reality it was subsumed into it—devoid of substance and largely without function: the union apparatus and, on a very different level, the woman's section being the notable exceptions. Prior to unification, the Falange was never more than a small group with uneven support throughout the country and with a very poor electoral record, as can be seen by the fact it had no representation in any parliament during the Second Republic. With the outbreak of the civil war, the members of the 'old guard' *camisas viejas* shone by their absence on the JTE, the first executive body created by the insurgents that was not strictly military.

Decision-making, which was invariably dependent upon Franco's approval, was from an early date channelled through the council of ministers, a body that met regularly. Franco's cabinets, particularly during the period being examined here, tended to reflect both the plurality of the forces that existed within the social and political group that had given origin and support to the regime, and the diverse political projects that they represented. Franco's role was essentially that of a mediator and arbitrator and he demonstrated a great ability to adapt to the circumstances. Ministers—who were mainly military officers and, after the civil war, Falangists—enjoyed a wide margin of manoeuvre, both in the exercise of their ministerial duties and in the appointment of senior officials within their departments.

Finally, the ministers' socio-biographical characteristics indicate they were traditional middle- and upper-middle-class, with the presence of some members of the aristocracy; the agrarian and—in at least one case—financial bourgeoisie; mostly Madrileños and, to a lesser extent, Galician (from El Ferrol); university graduates; or mili-

tary officers. Lawyers and engineers were the most common professions among the civilian ministers, and in a proportion that was almost equal to that among senior civil servants. The two ministers who had served in Primo de Rivera's government were the only ones within Franco's regime who had ministerial experience; however, a significant proportion of the civilian ministers had experience as parliamentarians, the majority of those serving during the Republic, so at this particular level, and after a fashion (because they were deputies belonging to anti-system or, in the case of CEDA, semi-loyal parties) representing a breach in the claim that there was complete discontinuity between the two regimes.

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