

***O Comércio do Porto* as a cross-border space between Portugal and Spain. Photographic portrait of the Spanish Civil War¹**

Beatriz de las Heras
Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Instituto de Cultura y Tecnología
bheras@hum.uc3m.es
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0289-811X>

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Abstract

The Spanish Civil War is considered the first modern conflict to be photographed, day by day, by Spanish and foreign photographers. Those snapshots taken between 1936 and 1939 are today memory supports to recover the history of the Spanish conflict. However, in their context they became another tool for winning the war in the field of propaganda. The aim of this article is to reflect on the role that a Portuguese newspaper, *O Comércio de Porto*, played in the coverage of the war. The newspaper carried out an extraordinary photographic follow-up of the events and happenings in Spain. And it did so as Franco's official mouthpiece in Portugal. We will first profile the 1,099 photographs published between July 1936 and April 1939, and then analyze how these images were used to maintain Allied morale,

Resumo

A Guerra Civil de Espanha é considerada o primeiro conflito moderno a ser fotografado, dia após dia, por fotógrafos espanhóis e estrangeiros. Esses instantâneos tirados entre 1936 e 1939 são hoje suportes de memória para recuperar a história do conflito espanhol. No entanto, no seu contexto, tornaram-se mais uma ferramenta para ganhar a guerra no domínio da propaganda. O objetivo deste artigo é refletir sobre o papel desempenhado por um jornal português, *O Comércio de Porto*, na cobertura da guerra. O jornal fez uma extraordinária cobertura fotográfica dos acontecimentos em Espanha. E fê-lo como porta-voz oficial de Franco em Portugal. Começaremos por traçar o perfil das 1099 fotografias publicadas entre julho de 1936 e abril de 1939 e depois analisaremos a forma como essas imagens foram utilizadas

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criticize the enemy, and convince foreigners of the need to collaborate with the common political cause.

Keywords: Spanish Civil War; Photography; Memory; Strategy; *O Comércio de Porto*.

para manter o moral dos Aliados, criticar o inimigo e convencer os estrangeiros da necessidade de colaborar com a causa política comum.

Palavras-chave: Guerra Civil Espanhola; Fotografia; Memória; Estratégia; *O Comércio de Porto*.

Introduction

The Spanish Civil War, an event that forms the backbone of Spain's Contemporary History, has become a period of inexhaustible inspiration for photographic researchers. This is due to several factors. The first one is the alborcurrent consideration of photography as a primary source of information in the historian's work. The fact that photography is no longer regarded today as a mere illustration has helped to activate its interest.

Moreover, in the case of the period 1936-1939, other aspects coincide, such as the great visual production and international monitoring of the Spanish conflict, the proliferation of graphic magazines since the 1920s, the complexity of a century that had already shown the need for visual propaganda as a strategy, and a public demanding this "reality" that asked for information about the great events and happenings that took place in a world characterised by political tension. All these factors combined to turn photography into another weapon for winning wars. As the photo-historian Susan Sontag states, the Spanish War was "the first war to be witnessed ('covered') in the modern sense: by a corps of professional photographers at the lines of military engagement and in the towns under bombardment, whose work was immediately seen in newspapers and magazines in Spain and abroad"².

The thousands of snapshots that portrayed the Spanish front and rearguard flood the archives, albums, boxes full of memories and spaces to be discovered in corners all over the planet³ this collection, with great patrimonial and historical value, seems inexhaustible in view of the discoveries that surprise us every year. Among the most recent, the collection of 5. 000 photographs by Antoni Campaña that appeared in a garage built in Sant Cugat de Barcelona in the 1940s⁴ or the negatives of Margaret Michaelis' photographs taken for the Comissariat de Propaganda de la Generalitat de Catalunya, kept at the International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam and discovered by the historian Almudena Rubio, who had already traced, in the same collection, 514 negatives by the photographer Kati Horna⁵.

We also located a large collection of photographs among the pages of newspapers and magazines from 80 years ago. The press became the channel

² Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, New York, Picador, 2003, p. 19.

³ Antonia Salvador Benítez, "Fuentes fotográficas para el estudio de la guerra civil. Archivos, fondos y colecciones", *Letra Internacional*, 126 (2018), p. 33-64.

⁴ Arnau González Villalta; Plácido García-Planas; and David Ramos, *La capsa vermella. La Guerra Civil fotografiada per Antoni Campaña*, Barcelona, Editorial Comanegra, 2019.

⁵ Almudena Rubido Pérez, "Las cajas de Ámsterdam. Kati Horna y los anarquistas de la CNT-FAI", *Historia Social*, 96 (2020), p. 21-39.

for the (re)presentation of victory and defeat, survival and death, joy and sorrow during the three years of war.

These media included photographers from what has been called the golden generation of Spanish photojournalism. Professionals of the importance of Alfonso, P. Luis Torrents, Centelles, Albero and Segovia, the Mayo brothers, José María Casariego and Santos Yubero, among the reporters who covered the development of the conflict from the perspective of the anti-fascists. Also José Demaría Vázquez (Campúa), José Serrano, Nicolás Ardanaz, Calvache and Compte, to name but a few of the names who worked for the rebels. As those photographers who worked for CIFRA GRÁFICA, such as Hermes Pato, Manuel Iglesias, Antonio Verdugo or other local reporters who contributed to covering the war from all corners of Spain did⁶.

In the case of the international press, the coverage was exceptional. Foreign reporters included Robert Capa, Gerda Taro, Jean Moral, David Seymour, Luis Bressange, Walter Reuter and others who worked for the AP, Keystone View Company, Planet News, World Wide Photo, Central Press and London News Agency Press, to mention the most important agencies. The results of their work were published in newspapers and illustrated magazines all over the world, such as *L'Illustration*, *Paris-Soir*, *Vu*, *Regards*, *Daily Mail*, *The Illustrated London News*, *Picture Post* and *Life*. In addition to this follow-up by foreign professionals and media, the work of Spanish photographers was distributed abroad and managed by the Foreign Press Office of the Ministerio de Estado, the Photographic Service of the Ministerio de Propaganda in the hands of the photographer Lladó Fábregas, the Propaganda Commissariat of the Generalitat de Catalunya, the Propaganda Department of the Junta de Defensa de Madrid, some embassies in London and Paris, and through organisations such as the Spanish Information Bureau in the United States⁷. Among the foreign correspondents who photographed the war from the rebel side, the work of the prestigious photographer Albert-Louis Deschamps, who covered the conflict for *L'Illustration* from 1938, stands out. In addition, the activity of the rebel sub-delegations abroad of the Delegation for Press and Propaganda was fundamental. Thanks to the collaboration of volunteers such as Frederick Ramón Bertodano and Joan Estelrich, these organisations were very active in distributing publications full of snapshots (such as the *Preliminary Official Report* in October 1936). Also noteworthy was the enormous work of

⁶ Beatriz de las Heras, *Imágenes de y para una guerra. España, 1936-1939*, Madrid, Síntesis, 2017.

⁷ Beatriz de las Heras, "La Guerra Civil Española en Crónica (1929-1938) durante el primer año de contienda. Poética fotográfica como información y estrategia", *Revista General de Información y Documentación*, 30 (2020), p. 609-629.

Herbert Charles O'Neill's press agency, which published a weekly magazine -*Spain*- with extensive reports on the war, daily life in the rebel rearguard and popular culture in rebel-held towns from September 1937.

The aim of this article is to recover a part of that history through visual narration. And to do so, moreover, in its essence. That is to say, by attempting an approximation to its meaning in its original context: that of the reader who first had access to the images. And we will do so using the press of the time as a channel. The proliferation of newspapers and weeklies in the 1930s means that we have many options for undertaking this study. Among them all, we have chosen *O Comércio do Porto*, the most widely read newspaper in the city of Porto, which formed the fifth most sold newspaper in Portugal, together with the Lisbon newspapers *Diário de Notícias*, *O Século*, *A Voz* and *Diário de Lisboa*.

There are three reasons that justify this approach to the object of study. The first one is that this newspaper was published in Portugal, a country determined by the special political circumstances of living under the Salazar government. This control, typical of a dictatorship, meant that the image projected of the war in Spain could be considered an official photograph of the conflict: the one that benefited the rebels. The second reason is the intense follow-up of the Spanish conflict in the Portuguese country, which resulted in an unprecedented visual exposure of the war. Especially during the first 12 months of the war. In addition to these two motivations, there is a third. Although the Portuguese press has been the subject of relevant studies on its position in the Spanish conflict⁸, these works focus on the analysis of the chronicles and the chroniclers, and not so much on the photographs and their strategic use.

In order to carry out this research, we have accessed the collection through the issues preserved on paper, in a magnificent state of preservation, in the library of the Faculdade de Letras of the Universidade do Porto. Then, we treated the 1,099 snapshots published between July 1936 and April 1939 about the war in Spain as if they were part of an archaeological find. Each photograph has been analysed as a piece to be located among the thousands of pages of the newspaper, its constituent elements have been determined and the information they contained has been detected, in order to link them with other fragments of visual information that would allow us to reconstruct that past time from the singular perspective of a newspaper controlled by Salazarism in the end. In this way, we approached the research from the perspective of Historiophotography⁹. We do not use images

⁸ Alberto Pena-Rodríguez, *El Estado Novo de Oliveira Salazar y la Guerra Civil española: información, prensa y propaganda (1936-1939)*, PhD diss, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2003.

⁹ Hayden White, "Historiography and Historiophoty", *The American Historical Review*, 93 (1988), p. 1193-1199; Beatriz de las Heras, "La fotografía como arqueología de la Historia

to make history out of them, but they serve as an instrument of analysis for the recovery of the past. In short, as a source of memory that allows us to reconstruct a place, an event, an occurrence or to recover a propaganda strategy¹⁰.

There are three phases of work. First, as already mentioned, we carried out an individualised cataloguing of each of the photographs, identifying relevant data. Secondly, we created profiles taking into account the number of snapshots, the period of publication, the authorship and the subjects portrayed with the intention of discovering a trend that would provide more information about the context. The result of this work is quantitative. Finally, and as a third stage, the interpretation based on the data and the integral analysis of each snapshot. The method is based on a controlled observation of a set of photographs – in this case those published in Portugal through the pages of the newspaper *O Comércio do Porto* during the three years of war – with the intention of recording those camouflaged behaviours that allow us to extract information that is in the snapshot itself, but is presented as veiled if we apply an abstracted analysis.

Therefore, we will transcend the recognition of the visual elements seen in the snapshots, that is, the study of the photograph as an illustration, to delve into the interpretation of the image from a historical-cultural perspective and treat it as a source of knowledge that reveals the use that the dictator Salazar, Francisco Franco's ally, made of the Spanish war in Portugal in an unsettling context in which the world was preparing for the Second World War.

O Comércio do Porto: a Franco speaker in Portugal

Founded on 2 June 1854 by Manuel de Sousa Carqueja and Henrique Carlos de Miranda, *O Comércio do Porto* was the expression of the change that took place in the city from 1851 onwards¹¹. The newspaper became a means of economic information and independent of political ideologies. This obviously changed when Salazar came to power in 1932. Salazar understood the need to control the press.:

... chego a concordar que a censura é uma instituição defeituosa, injusta, por vezes sujeita ao livre arbítrio dos censores, às variantes do seu temperamento,

Contemporânea. De instante eterno a fuente de memoria”, *Fotocinema. Revista científica de cine y fotografía*, 28 (2024), p. 35-63.

¹⁰ Beatriz de las Heras, *Fotografía e Historia. El testimonio de las imágenes*, Madrid, Vincent Gabrielle, 2011.

¹¹ Helena Lima, “Oporto newspapers and the city readers: the construction of editorial and audiences identities”, *RIHC. Revista Internacional de Historia de la Comunicación*, 1 (2013), p. 75-92.

às consequências do seu mau humor... Ora o jornal é o alimento espiritual do povo e deve ser fiscalizado como todos os alimentos¹².

He passed very restrictive control measures such as the executive order 26589 (14 May 1936) and executive order 27003 (14 September 1936)¹³.

This moment coincided with the change of management of the newspaper, which passed into the hands of Paulina Carqueja Seara Cardoso, granddaughter of one of the founders and who received the legacy of her father (Bento Carqueja), after his death on 2 August 1935, and her husband – Fortunato Seara Cardoso. Despite wanting to maintain the same direction as the founders, censorship in the media meant that *O Comércio do Porto* became just another organ of Salazarism. In spite of this, and as the researcher Eduardo Filipe Cunha de Silva¹⁴ points out:

Soube, contudo, conservar incólumes as suas principais características editoriais. Preservou o cariz regional, permaneceu umbilicalmente ligado à sociedade civil portuense (em particular à pequena e média burguesia), continuou a identificar-se com os valores laicos e republicanos (nomeadamente os que enformam o sistema democrático) e manteve-se como um jornal de causas e com notória actividade de assistência social¹⁵.

It was at this difficult time when the newspaper was confronted with the monitoring of the July uprising and subsequent war in Spain between 1936 and 1939¹⁶. We know that journalists Eduardo dos Santos and Emilio Sari

¹² António Ferro, *Salazar*, Lisboa, Edições do Templo, 1978, p. 93-95.

¹³ Graça Franco, *A Censura à Imprensa (1820-1974)*, Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1993; Jorge Ramos, “Censura” in Fernando Rosas and José María Brito Brandão (ed.), *Diccionario de História do Estado Novo*, Lisboa, Bertrand, 1996; Goffredo Adinolfi, *Ai confini del fascismo. Propaganda e consenso nel Portogallo salazarista (1932-1944)*, Milán, Franco Angeli, 2007; Alberto Pena-Rodríguez, “Tudo pela Nação, nada contra a Nação. Salazar, la creación del Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional y la censura”, *Hispania. Revista Española de Historia*, 240 (2012), p. 177-204.

¹⁴ Eduardo Filipe Cunha da Silva, *A estrutura gráfica das primeiras páginas dos jornais: O Comércio do Porto, O Primeiro de Janeiro e Jornal de Notícias entre o início da publicação e final do séc. XX: contributos para uma ferramenta operacional e analítica para a prática do design editorial*, PhD diss, Universidade do Porto, 2006, p. 59.

¹⁵ Own translation: “However, it managed to preserve its main editorial characteristics unscathed. It preserved its regional nature, remained umbilically linked to Oporto civil society (in particular to the small and medium bourgeoisie), continued to identify itself with lay and republican values (namely those that shape the democratic system) and remained a newspaper of causes and with notorious social welfare activity”.

¹⁶ The Portuguese government’s control over the media during Salazarism was mainly in the hands of two institutions: the National Propaganda Secretariat and the Direcção dos Serviços de Censura (Censor Services Bureau). The National Propaganda Secretariat was particularly active

were sent to Spain¹⁷. Dos Santos was sent to the North, an experience that was captured in the book *A rota de guerra do norte de Espanha* and which shows the chronicler's inclinations in favour of the uprising. Emilio Sari sent some chronicles during the first week of the war from Madrid.

It is not known whether the newspaper sent a photojournalist to illustrate the chronicles of Eduardo dos Santos or Emilio Sari¹⁸. However, our hypothesis is that, although the name was not recorded, this was the case. On page 3 of the 16 December 1936 issue of *O Comércio do Porto*, two photographs were published of a snowy rural spot near the city of Valladolid. Underneath the second image one can read, in brackets: "Clichés do repórter-fotográfico de "*O Comércio do Porto*"". We know, also from the images themselves, that the newspaper had external collaborators. For example, on 21 November 1936 an aerial photograph of Ciudad Universitaria de Madrid to illustrate the military operations of the rebels in the capital of the Republic was published. There is no record that the picture was taken during the conflict, but everything suggests that it was taken before, as there is no sign of combat in this sector where important battles were fought in November. The caption reads: "The photograph was loaned by João Hitzemann"¹⁹.

Apart from *O Comércio do Porto*'s own reporters and photographers who collaborated on an occasional basis, we know that the newspaper published

during the Spanish Civil War and this was reflected in its budget. If the average budget of the Secretariat was 2 million escudos per year, in August 1936 the figure rose to 525,336 escudos, according to Alberto Pena-Rodríguez, "Tudo pela Nação, nada contra a Nação. ...", cit., p. 185.

In fact, propaganda about Spain was so important that it had a specific budget line ("Movimento Revolucionário em Espanha"), which was responsible for financing the publication of books and pamphlets -most of them published by the Império publishing house-, radio broadcasts on international radio stations and projects such as "Propaganda anti-comunista pela fotografia" or "Propaganda anti-comunista pelo cinema".

¹⁷ Alberto Pena-Rodríguez, "Los periodistas portugueses en la Guerra Civil Española: sensacionalismo y propaganda" in L. Esteban; C. Almuiña; R. Martín de la Guardia; and J. Vidal (ed.), *Perfiles de periodistas contemporáneos*, Madrid, Fragua, 2016, p. 307-320.

¹⁸ The photographers who worked in Spain for Portuguese newspapers, as documented, are: Teodoro Medel de Aquino, Firmino Marques da Costa and Ferreira da Cunha who worked for *Diário de Notícias*; Deniz Salgado and Alfonso Pereira de Carvalho who worked for *Diário de Lisboa*; and M.R. who worked for *O Primeiro de Janeiro*.

¹⁹ Although there is not much information about this person, we know that he was a photographer representing AGFA who worked in Portugal in the 1930's. The trace of this man is lost during the war, but we know that he was in Spain because he was summoned to attend a trial in Madrid (Municipal Court number 7) on 29 March 1940 "for damages". We know from the summons that he was registered in Oporto. The request was published in the *Boletín Oficial de España* (Spanish Official Gazette) on 12 March 1940, No. 62, p. 4.

images taken by other Portuguese reporters who went to Spain after the uprising. This was a common practice among professionals in the 1930s. The difficulty lies, in most cases, in discovering who they were, as their names are not recognised and we must decipher their authorship through exhaustive research. Let us take an example. On 5 October 1938, a photograph was published on the front page showing the moment when several men tried to clear the railway tracks after an accident in Martorell, a town 40 kilometres from Barcelona. The caption reads: “Conforme “*O Comércio do Porto*” noticiou registrou-se, ha dias, próximo de Martorell, em Espanha, un gravissimo desastre ferroviario”²⁰. The same image was published in Spain in the newspaper ABC, Seville²¹ on 11 October 1938. In other words, the photograph was published earlier in Portugal than in Franco’s Spain. What the Spanish newspaper gives, unlike the Portuguese one, is the name of the photographer: “Foto Correira”. Only Félix Correira, correspondent of the *Diario de Lisboa*, answers by that name. This would therefore demonstrate the exchange of photographs between different Portuguese newspapers.

We should not close this section without pointing out that, despite these exceptions, the majority of the photographs published in the Portuguese press were usually taken from Spanish sources. Both photographs of the Republican authorities and of the rebel forces. It was common for Portugal to ask the Junta de Defensa Nacional de Burgos in Lisbon for photographic material - which was sent via the Foreign Relations Secretariat - to illustrate the newspapers.

It is important to highlight that the name of the photographer was never given in the information accompanying the image in *O Comércio do Porto*. This was despite the fact that the photographs were recognised in Spain and other countries. An exemplary case in this regard was published on 8 August 1936. A few days after the military uprising of July 1936. The newspaper included in the news from Spain a photograph illustrating one of the most shocking episodes of the beginning of the conflict. The image shows dozens of dead in the courtyard of the Cuartel de la Montaña in Madrid. *O Comércio do Porto* does not mention the authorship, but we know that only two photographers worked in that situation: Alfonso and the reporters from the photographic label Albero y Segovia.

²⁰ Own translation: “As “*O Comércio do Porto*” reported, a serious rail disaster has been registered, some days ago, near Martorell, in Spain”.

²¹ During the Civil War, *ABC* had two different editions. One in Madrid, controlled by the anti-fascists, and one in Seville, in the service of the rebels. On 20 July 1936, it was announced that the newspaper published in the Spanish capital was to be seized, and after the occupation by representatives of the UGT graphic union, the first issue came out on 26 July. Meanwhile, on 20 July, the first military-controlled issue was published in Seville.

To this collection must be added, finally, the inclusion in the pages of *O Comércio do Porto* of snapshots taken by foreign photographers and agencies. Many images were published, but, once again, no mention of authorship was made in the newspaper. Even some of them were very recognisable. For example, the recreation of a shooting by militiamen of the sculptural ensemble of the Sagrado Corazón in the Cerro de Los Ángeles in Getafe, Madrid, after its seizure on 6 August 1936. Agencia Paramount took snapshots of the event. These images were first published by *L'Illustration* (the first time in August and a second time on 28 November 1936) and the *Daily Mail* under the caption: "The 'Spanish Reds' war on religion"²². In Spain, the snapshot was published in *Fotos* magazine on 27 November 1937 under the headline: "The Godless in Spain". *O Comércio do Porto* included one of the photographs in the 22 August 1936 issue, but did not acknowledge the agency's authorship.

Another example is that of Raymond Vanker. On 15 September 1936, *O Comércio do Porto* published an image of this French journalist who worked for Agencia Keystone running, with a child in his arms, over the Avenida Bridge in Irún. The caption reads: "correndo sobre a ponte internacional, levado uma criança que encontrou abandonada em Irune a quem salvou con sacrificio da propria vida"²³, although there is no information on who the person rescuing the child is. The photograph was also published in France, specifically in *L'Illustration* on 12 September 1936. Once again, the Portuguese press was ahead of the news, as the action took place on 6 September 1936 and only a week later it was published in the Portuguese newspaper. We know, thanks to the work of tracing the image in other media, that the snapshot was the work of the American Horace Abrahams and that it is kept in the Hulton Archive. We also know that the action is preserved in moving images and that another man can be seen carrying a second child. This appears to be Jean Fontenoy, who, just before the event, was photographing the international brigaders with Valker²⁴.

²² The images were also distributed in motion in the newsreel Éclair Journal under the title "The great Spanish anguish", in Pathé Journal on 13 August 1936, British Paramount News on 17 August 1936 and by Universal Talking News on 24 August 1936. Afterwards, they were transferred to archive films such as "Geibel der Welt" (1937), "España heroica" (J. Reig, 1938) or "Vía Crucis del señor en las tierras de España" (J.L. Sáenz de Heredia, 1939), as mentioned by Rafel Rodríguez Tranche, "El cine documental de la guerra civil española. De un bando a otro: iconografías del dolor y la destrucción" in Beatriz de las Heras (ed.), *Imagen y Guerra Civil Española: carteles, fotografía y cine*, Madrid, Síntesis, 2017, p. 161-176.

²³ Own translation: "he ran across the international bridge, carrying a child he found abandoned in Irune, whom he saved by the sacrifice of his own life".

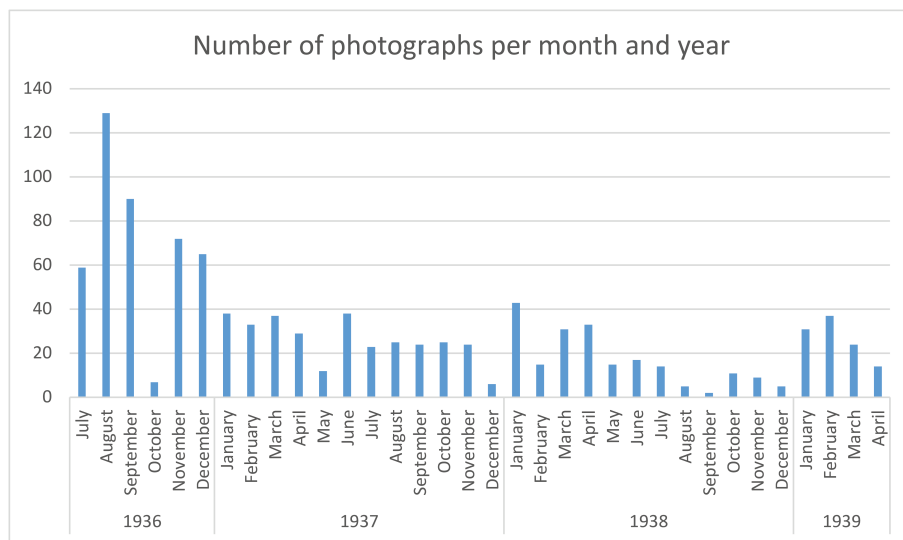
²⁴ There are reasonable doubts on the subject, as such a heroic deed would have been the subject of the protagonist's account. In his book "Fontenoy ne reviendra plus", Guégan recounts

Extensive Photographic coverage of the Spanish Civil War

As we have mentioned, in order to work with the collection of snapshots published in the newspaper, we have established three stages. The result of the first and second of these stages is presented below. Firstly, an individualised cataloguing of each of the pieces in which the date of publication, the situation of the photograph in the newspaper, the authorship and a summary of the subject have been identified in order, finally, to assign a descriptor taking into account three issues: the virtual space in which the photograph was taken – distinguishing between front, rear and military rearguard –, the geographical space (population, region and country) and the subject. Secondly, the creation of profiles taking into account the number of snapshots, the period of publication, the authorship and the subjects portrayed with the intention of discovering a trend that provides more information about the context. The result of this work is quantitative. It indicates, numerically, the degree of attention given to different topics at different times. The result, supported by objective data, becomes the pillar that explains different visual communication strategies during the conflict.

According to the cataloguing carried out, 1,099 photographs were published between July 1936 and April 1939. The large coverage of the first year of the war stands out, with a total of 481 snapshots published in the newspaper, accounting for 43.76% of the total. In 1937, 312 photographs were published (28.38%), in 1938, 200 photographs (18.19%) and in 1939, 106 photographs (9.64%) were published. If we follow the timeline, there was a downward trend with the highest number of photographs published in the first year. From then on, the number of photographs gradually decreased as the war progressed. This is interesting because it is proportional to the number of photographs published in the Republican press during the war and inversely proportional to the number of photographs published in the rebel press. If we make a more intense study by month, we can see that the attention that the newspaper gave to the Spanish situation from the photographic point of view coincides with the evolution of the war itself. This shows how *O Comércio do Porto* followed the Spanish Civil War closely. The months with the greatest photographic coverage coincide with the beginning of the war (August 1936), the beginning of the siege of Madrid (November 1936), the Battle of Bilbao (June 1937), the Battle of Teruel (January 1938) and the offensive on Catalonia (January 1939), as shown in Graph 1.

Fontenoy's experiences in Irún, but at no point does he mention the passage of the boy and the bridge. Gérard Guégan, *Fontenoy ne reviendra plus*, Paris, Folio, 2013.

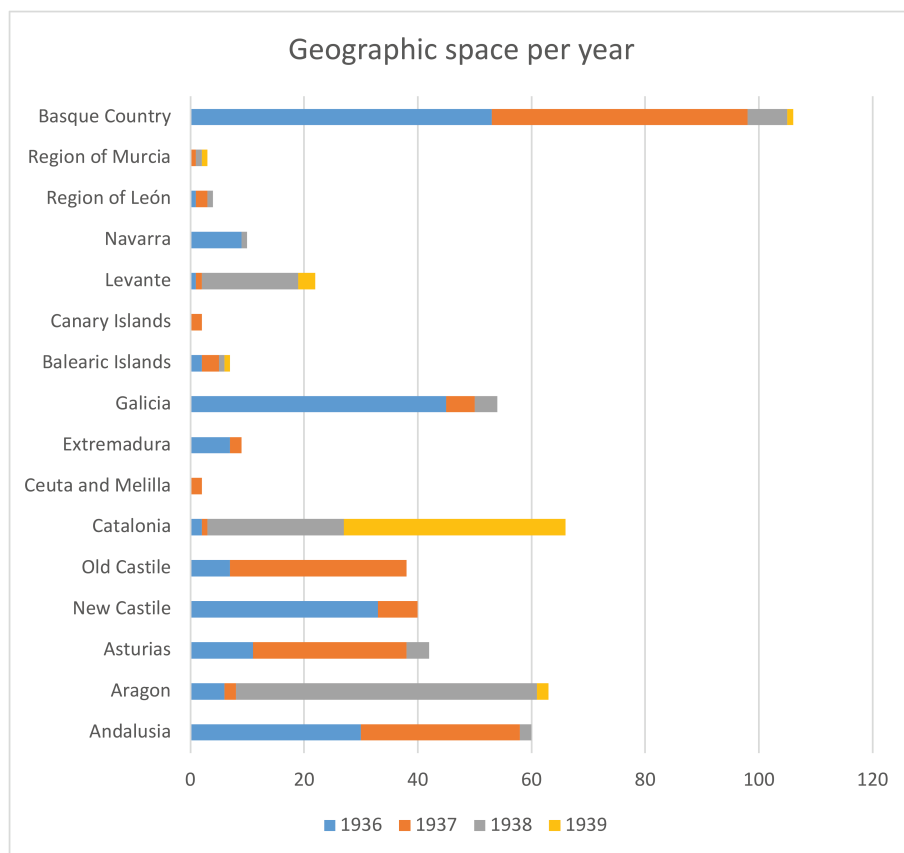


Graph 1 – Own elaboration based on the data extracted from *O Comércio do Porto*.

If we look at the representation of the spaces in which the snapshots are taken, we can distinguish between photographs taken on the front line (front), in the rear, in the military rearguard (space in the rear that is occasionally occupied by military troops. For example, during a parade or when soldiers are resting) and the photographs which were taken in other countries but which are directly related to what is happening in the Spanish war. If we make this distinction, the result is as follows: 462 photographs (42.03%) were taken in the rearguard, 383 photographs (34.84%) at the front, 147 photographs (13.37%) abroad and 107 photographs (9.73%) in the military rearguard. It is important to note that of the snapshots taken in the rear, 150 are images of different views of towns and villages which the newspaper used to illustrate the news and which are archive images taken before the war. If we subtract these images from the total number taken in rearguard areas, we can conclude that more photographs taken at the front were published than in the second line. This is interesting because it follows in the footsteps of the rebel newspapers, which published more snapshots showing the progress of the war than of the survival of the civilian population, a theme more developed in anti-fascist publications in Spain.

And if we talk about places, we should bear in mind that, subtracting the 103 snapshots that are photographic portraits, the 147 photographs that are taken abroad and the 77 photographs that are not located in any identifiable

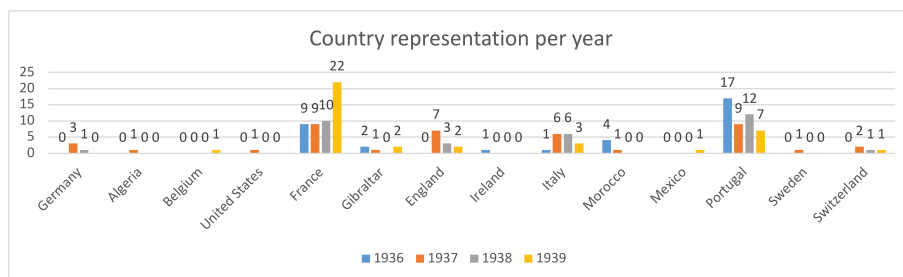
space, the collection of images is centred, especially, on the portrait of the city of Madrid. In total, 178 photographs portraying the capital of the Republic were published, which represents 16.19% of the total. Valencia and Barcelona were portrayed in 6 (0.54%) and 12 (1.09%) photographs, respectively. Even the rebel capitals, such as Burgos and Salamanca, did not acquire as much interest as Madrid. Of these two cities, 21 (1.91%) and 27 (2.45%) photographs were published, respectively. The rest of the regions, with a total of 528 photographs, are divided as shown in Graph 2. Of particular visual interest for *O Comércio do Porto* were the regions of the Basque Country with 106 photographs (9.64%), Catalonia with 66 photographs (6.0%), Aragon with 63 photographs (5.73%), Andalusia with 60 photographs (5.45%) and Galicia with 54 photographs (4.91%).



Graph 2 – Own elaboration based on the data extracted from *O Comércio do Porto*.

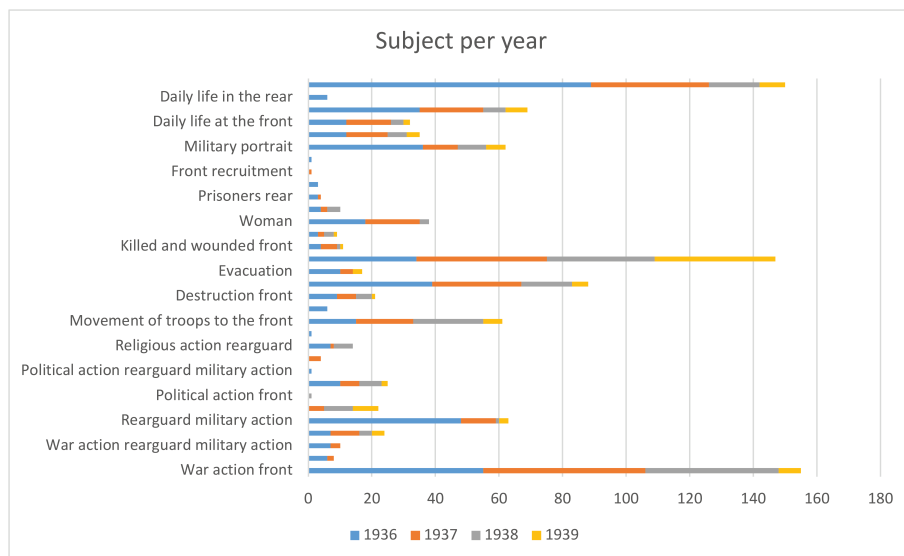
If we focus on the 147 photographs (13.37% of the total) published abroad, we can see that they portrayed 14 countries: Germany, Algeria, Belgium, the United States, France, Gibraltar, England, Ireland, Italy, Morocco, Mexico, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland as shown in Graph 3. Most of these snapshots show images of evacuation, collaboration, fraternisation and institutional visits.

O Comércio do Porto paid special attention to France with 50 photographs (4.54%) and Portugal with 45 photographs (4.09%). In the French case, especially portrayed by the newspaper's interest in the evacuation of civilians and the flight of the militiamen. In the Portuguese case, the collaboration that Salazar and the Portuguese offered to rebel Spain is portrayed.



Graph 3 – Own elaboration based on data extracted from
O Comércio do Porto.

If we focus on the topics or subjects portrayed in the photographs published, we can observe, both in the photographs taken at the front and in the rear, the military nature of the snapshots. The main subject of most of the photographs taken at the front is the portrait of war actions with 155 photographs (14.10% of the photographs), the portrait of soldiers and soldiers with 62 photographs (5.64% of the photographs) and the movement of troops with 61 photographs (5.5% of the photographs). If we carry out the same research in the rearguard, the most photographed aspects are the destruction of spaces with 88 photographs (8.0% of the photographs), images of the daily life of civilians with 69 photographs (6.27% of the photographs) and the representation of military acts in the rearguard with 63 photographs (5.73% of the photographs), as shown in Graph 4.



Graph 4 – Own elaboration based on data extracted from *O Comércio do Porto*.

Photographs to Win a War Abroad. Information and Strategy

Having described some of the data that outline the profile of the collection, it is now time to analyse how the photographs were used and with what intentions. During the Spanish Civil War, photography became a tool for trying to win on the two opposing sides and in the two spaces that opened up as a breach after the uprising: the front and the rear. This would justify the exhaustive control that was exercised to prevent it from being counterproductive²⁵. The aim of this propaganda, of this visual communication strategy, was threefold: to maintain

²⁵ As was published in the government newspaper *El Socialista* on 19 February 1937: “Las imágenes son al mismo tiempo que medios eficaces para la propaganda, elementos peligrosos que pueden revelar al enemigo datos de interés para la ofensiva. Es, pues, elemental medida previsor, cuya omisión sería imperdonable, emplear medios para tener la seguridad de que quienes utilizan las reproducciones fotográficas son personas leales a la causa antifascista”. Own translation: “Images are at the same time effective means of propaganda, dangerous elements which can reveal to the enemy information of interest for the offensive. It is therefore an elementary precautionary measure, the omission of which would be unforgivable, to employ means to be sure that those who use the photographic reproductions are persons loyal to the anti-fascist cause”.

the morale of the Allies, to criticise the enemy and to convince outsiders of the need to get involved in a struggle presented as the test laboratory of the Second World War, also in terms of the use of photography as a propaganda medium²⁶.

Ninety years later, these photographs are presented as memory. They bear witness to history because they document a time and fold the past into the present by preserving moments that have happened but have not passed thanks to their preservation in a material form. And it is this capacity to retain time that allows photographs to be memory. This makes photographs a source of knowledge that helps us to recover the story of a period. As stated in the caption of a photograph published in *O Comércio do Porto* on 19 February 1937, which shows a dead militiaman, “nada melhor do que a fotografia para documentar certas informações”²⁷.

To achieve this status of photography as a working source for recovering the past, each photographic unit must be subjected to an exhaustive analysis that begins by transcending sight and advocating the gaze. An essential exercise that distinguishes the mere recognition or perception of what is portrayed from interpretation. This involves immersing oneself in the context in which the image was produced in order to understand its meaning.

However, there is a boundary between strategy and memory. A narrow boundary that the historian working with photographs should not cross and that has to do with the idea of (re)presentation. Photography does not show reality. It is a partial and interested version of that reality. It is a fragment and as a part, and not all of it, it is a selection of the photographer who decides, by will or under the guidance of a client, to leave out of the frame another part of what exists and is in front of the camera.

We say that the photographer intervenes in reality through selection, but there is also a second intervention. This is the one that takes place on the image itself when it is cropped, labelled under a headline or re-contextualised with a caption. These actions are intensified when the snapshots reflect an event or occurrence during a war. In addition to the intervention of the photographer and the channel – or means of communication through which the image reaches the visual reader – there is also the intervention of the authority, which uses the photograph to mobilise or redirect the visual reader. For example, on the front pages of 8 October 1936 and 17 January 1937, *O Comércio do Porto*

²⁶ Beatriz de las Heras, “Estrategias de comunicación visual. (Re)presentar la guerra desde la fotografía”, in Beatriz de las Heras (ed), *Imagen y Guerra Civil Española. Carteles, fotografía y cine*, Madrid, Síntesis, 2017, p. 145-158.

²⁷ Own translation: “there is nothing better than a photograph to document certain information”.

published the same photograph to illustrate different events in time and space. It is a snapshot of a light aircraft attacking an enemy position. The first time a photograph was published, the caption was added: “Bilbao sofreu um novo ataque aéreo dos nacionalistas”. Whereas when it was published the second time the caption specifies: “Un éxito de bombardeamento nacionalista em plena acção na frente de Madrid”²⁸. The same photograph serves to illustrate two different cities in two different years.

Another example is a photograph published on 29 January 1937. The photograph depicts a man carrying a woman, who appears to be injured, in his arms, surrounded by other nervous people who seem to have been in a very tense situation. *O Comércio do Porto* describes the photograph as “Uma cena de terror, nas ruas de Barcelona, provocada pelas recentes colisões entre elementos anarquistas e comunistas”²⁹ while we know, thanks to work in photographic archives in Spain, that the snapshot was taken by the photographic agency Antifafot Madrid in November 1936 and that it portrays the instant after a bombing by rebel aircraft in the Madrid neighbourhood of Tetuán de las Victorias. Thanks to the caption, *O Comércio do Porto* manages to re-semanticise photography by distancing the visual reader from reality, in an exercise of (re)presentation. This curious phenomenon of appropriation and circulation of images – or “migration of images”³⁰ – was one of the usual strategies in the propaganda/counter-propaganda binomial, especially employed in the rebel media.

What is undeniable is the great power of photography during the Spanish conflict. Let us take an example of one of Ferreira da Cunha’s works. This Portuguese photographer took a snapshot of a group of 59 soldiers in a truck. As specified by correspondent Jacques Berthet in *Le Temps*, the picture – published on 19 August 1936 in *Diario de Noticias* – depicts the handing over by the Portuguese authorities of 59 communists who had fled Badajoz and were imprisoned in the Quartel de Caçadores (Elvas), to the Moroccan regulars under the command of Spanish General Yagüe. This description could pose a diplomatic conflict for Portugal, just at a time when the Non-Intervention Pact, which it officially joined on 21 August 1936, was being negotiated. 48

²⁸ Own translation: “Bilbao suffered a new air attack by the Nationalists” and “Un éxito de bombardeamento nacionalista em plena acção en la frente de Madrid”.

²⁹ Own translation: “A scene of terror, in the streets of Barcelona, caused by recent collisions between anarchist and communist elements”.

³⁰ Vicente Sánchez Biosca, “Migración de imágenes de la guerra civil española”, in M.G. Besse and M. Ralle (ed.), *Les grands récits: miroirs brisés?, les grands récits à l’épreuve des mondes ibériques et ibéro-américains*, Paris, Indigo - Côté femmes, 2010, p. 232-250.

hours after the photograph that would prove the Portuguese non-neutrality was published. Faced with the serious accusation, the Gallic journalist was named *persona non grata* for Salazar and expelled from the country, and the photographer and other journalists were interrogated by the *Vigilância e Defesa do Estado* police to clarify the matter. The photographer recanted and stated that the 59 communists were arrested in Spain and by Spaniards³¹. If the original photograph is recovered, as we have done, the truth comes out. It is not a lorry carrying 59 communists but members of the Moorish troops in the service of General Franco. That is, according to the caption of the photo: “Uma das camionetas com regulares marroquinos que foram a buscar os 59 comunistas presos pelos carabineiros do posto do Caia”³². That is to say, at the time the photograph was taken, the battalion was moving to pick up the communists “arrested by the carabinieri from the Caia post”, which would corroborate Berthet’s interpretation of the affair, which the Salazarist government tried to cover up after the publication of the image.

The start of the war

With these considerations in mind, it is time to analyse the photographs of the Spanish Civil War that were published in *O Comércio do Porto*. The first photographs to be published date from 20 July, just 48 hours after the military uprising. The newspaper showed 7 portraits of those responsible: Queipo de Llano, Fernando Capaz, Núñez del Prado, Martínez Anido, Gómez Morato, Franco and, prominently, a portrait of General Sanjurjo. The day before, the Portuguese were informed of the conflict situation in Spain by graphically covering the assassination and funeral of José Calvo Sotelo with 3 snapshots that portray the car in which he was transferred, an agent collecting evidence in the vehicle and the crowd that surrounded the coffin on the day of his burial. The event took place in the early hours of 13 July, when he was kidnapped and executed by the socialist Luis Cuenca, Indalecio Prieto’s bodyguard³³. It is interesting to note that an event that took place between 13 and 14 July was reflected in the Portuguese press at the start of the conflict, almost as a visual justification for the military uprising that was to take place days later.

³¹ Alberto Pena Rodríguez, *Salazar, a Imprensa e a Guerra Civil de Espanha*, Coimbra, Minerva, 2007, p. 202.

³² Own translation: “One of the vans with Moroccan regulars that went to pick up the 59 communists arrested by the carabinieri from the Caia post”.

³³ Stanley Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, Cambridge University Press, 2012.

If we focus on the first photograph published in the newspaper, which depicts what the paper considers to be a scene after the uprising, we have to go back to 21 July. On the front page, illustrating the news “A revolta militar em Espanha. Anuncia-se oficialmente que foi dominada a sublevação militar de Madrid. O Governo afirma que reina calma em Espanha, com excepção de Saragoça e Valladolid que estão o em poder dos revoltosos”³⁴, a snapshot of a group of civilians surrounding a tank on a street in Madrid is included. Curiously, this image seems to portray a pre-war scene. In fact, and although it is not specified in *O Comércio do Porto*, it is a snapshot taken by Jos. Völk of Waldshut (Baden, Germany) on 3 March 1935, according to the back of a copy circulating among collectors with the following caption: “Unruhiges Spanien’. Nach dem großen Sieg der Linkspartelen in Spanien sind die Unruhen und Feuergefechte in den Straßen von Tag zu Tag gewachsen”³⁵.

Another example of images of Spain that were published in those days, although they do not depict a war scenario, is the set of four snapshots published on 22 July, which reproduce the accident that cost Sanjurjo his life as he was on his way from Portugal to Spain to lead the uprising. A mosaic of four photographs shows two images of the wreckage of the aeroplane, a photograph before the accident – when the pilot poses in front of the plane – and an archive family image showing Sanjurjo with his wife and son. The composition is rounded off with another snapshot showing two members of the Spanish Falange guarding the coffin of the Spanish soldier during the funeral mass in Estoril.

In order to locate the first photograph taken during the war, shot in situ, which does not show general views before the uprising or portraits of generals or politicians, we must go back to 26 July 1936 when *O Comércio do Porto* published a snapshot taken in the city of San Sebastián, under the headline “O rastilho da revolta em Espanha”³⁶. The image shows a group of wounded civilians after an attack before the memorial mass for the death of Calvo Sotelo. The caption of the photograph in which the newspaper’s position on the assassination of the politician “was barbarously assassinated” is made explicit is noteworthy.

It was not until the issue of 30 October 1936 that the first image of the front was published in the newspaper. It was published on the front page and is a

³⁴ Own translation: “Military uprising in Spain. It is officially announced that the military revolt in Madrid has been subdued. The Government declares that calm reigns in Spain, with the exception of Zaragoza and Valladolid, which are in the hands of the insurgents”.

³⁵ Own translation: “Troubled Spain. After the great victory of the left-wing parties in Spain, the unrest and firefights in the streets have grown day by day”.

³⁶ Own translation: “The fuse of revolt in Spain”.

scene at sea. It shows a group of government soldiers in the water waiting to be rescued and “begging for mercy”, according to the caption. The group was part of the company aboard a submarine that attacked a rebel army ship and was eventually shot down in the port of La Coruña after a “violent battle”. Apart from showing the defeat of the anti-fascists, the aim is to highlight the goodness of the rebels by pointing out that “they were picked up by the victorious ship”.

On the same day, the first image depicting a scene of military mobilisation and street riots was also published. In the first case, a group of soldiers ready to be transferred to the front with vehicles in the square of a village in northern Spain, according to the caption. In the second case, and under the caption “Os horrores da guerra civil”, two snapshots taken in Plaza de Cataluña in Barcelona in which “extremists” are burning belongings and setting fire to cars.

The end of the war

Three years later the war ended and *O Comércio do Porto* covered Franco’s success with little interest. Between 27 March 1939 – the day before the capture of Madrid – and 11 April 1939 – 10 days after Franco’s victory – 26 photographs were published. Other international news, related to the power of European totalitarianism and the climate of tension that, a few months later, led to World War II, were more prominent. All the snapshots represent Franco’s victory through three visual formulas.

The first formula is to glorify victory. With two different strategies: to show the victorious soldier and to invest him with authority. As in the front page photograph of 1 April 1939, showing Franco getting out of a vehicle and in the caption of the photo it is pointed out that he was dressed in his great uniform as Head of State. The second strategy was to show the representation of the new state associated with the bicolour flag, as in the photograph published on 6 March 1939 showing how the Spanish Embassy in Brussels was exchanging flags to replace the tricolour flag of the Republican government with the bicolour flag of the new government.

The second formula is to represent the defeat of the rival. And this is done, in the same way, through two resources. The first one is to show the enemy’s flight. As an example, the photograph published on 9 April 1939 shows Segismundo Casado and other members of the Madrid Defence Council³⁷, leaning out of

³⁷ Segismundo Casado, head of the Army of the Centre of the Republic, in collaboration with Julián Besteiro, Wenceslao Carrillo, Cipriano de Mera and General José Miaja, was responsible for

the window of a train in Paris who are trying to “seek refuge” in England after Franco’s victory. The second resource is to show the joy of a people who are presented as “liberated” after the defeat of the anti-fascists, as in the cover of 3 April 1939, which shows a scene of jubilation of thousands of citizens in the Puerta del Sol in Madrid before the arrival of the rebel troops in the city.

The third formula is to present the new Spain. A country in which new values were to be imposed, represented by Franco and revolving around the idea of the great Spanish family. On the front page of 27 March 1939, *O Comércio do Porto* published a photograph showing Franco and Carmen Polo – his wife – posing in front of families who, with their arms raised in the fascist salute, maintained an attitude that contrasted with the smile of the new head of state. Below the photograph is the headline, which shows Franco in Burgos after handing out subsidies to large families. Here Franco symbolises the great father of a Spain under reconstruction.

Visual strategies to win the war on the border

As we have mentioned, every visual strategy in war aims to exalt the ally, criticise the enemy and convince third parties. Starting from this point, *O Comércio do Porto* selected the photographs it published from one position: the allies to praise were the rebels and the enemies to criticise were the anti-fascists.

The simplest strategy was to exalt the ally. In the case of the photographs published in the rebel press or in the countries that collaborated with rebel Spain, the glorification of the rebels was always related to two fundamental aspects: heroism and magnanimity. These values were closely linked to military and religious values, respectively. Two of the fundamental pillars on which the Francoist state was to be built: military order and the Church.

This glorification was done by highlighting well-known figures, especially military figures, or by using as an example an anonymous person who becomes

a coup against the publican government of the socialist Juan Negrín in the face of his determination to continue resisting after the rebel victory in Catalonia in February 1939. Faced with this coup d’état, a National Defence Council was formed with the aim of initiating talks with General Franco and reaching an agreement to end the war. Segismundo Casado left the city of Madrid in the face of the imminent entry of the rebels into Madrid and from the port of the Valencian city of Gandía he took a British ship that would take him to Marseilles in France. In 1951 he went into exile in Venezuela and then Colombia. He did not return to Spain until 1961. That year he faced a trial for military rebellion from which he was finally acquitted. This is discussed in the book Ángel Bahamonde and Javier Cervera, *Así terminó la Guerra de España*, Madrid, Marcial Pons, 2000.

an inspiration for the people. The most numerous examples are to be found among the former. Obviously, the greatest exponent of military gallantry was Francisco Franco. This strategy was developed from the first weeks of photographic coverage of the war. And it was done by alluding to the military man's heroic past. As an illustration, the front page of 22 August 1936 published a photograph recalling the operation led by Franco during the Rif War (1912-1927). This image was originally published in the Spanish newspaper ABC on 20 November 1921. It portrays Franco, at that time head of the Tercio de Voluntarios, giving orders to his captains during the Assault on Ras-Medua.

Less numerous are the photographs of anonymous soldiers who, thanks to their exemplary behaviour in the fight against the enemy, became an example for the people. Not only is this archetype less numerous, but it also tends to occupy less prominent space in the newspaper. If the great military figures dominate the front pages, the examples of anonymous heroism are relegated to the inside pages, which does not detract from the importance of the photograph. On 1 October 1936, a photograph of a soldier – presented as Pedro Gómez – was published on page 7 under the headline “One against forty”. The caption is a tribute to the strength and courage of the young soldier: “... sem outro auxillo que não fosse o da sua espingarda-metralhadora desalojou quarenta marxistas entrincheirados numa casa dos arredores de Bilbao”³⁸.

Another characteristic that *O Comércio de Porto* emphasises about the heroes is their magnanimity in victory. The idea that rebel soldiers respect the rules of war is common. The idea behind the visual strategy is that justice is done (with victory) and, afterwards, they are benevolent towards the defeated. Words such as “generosity” are even used, as is alluded to in the caption of a snapshot published on the front page of 12 June 1937, which illustrates a group of foreigners who have been released “thanks to Franco's generosity”.

Heroism and benevolence are complemented by a third quality which, although less important in quantitative terms, also stands out: the affability of the rebel soldiers towards the civilian population. An image of closeness and kindness towards friends that balances the image of harshness in combat with the enemy. As an example, an interesting photograph published on 2 November 1936. In this image, General Luis Lomarte, in command of the Galician columns that took part in the conquest of Oviedo, surrounded by women, looks at the photographer with a smile. The caption leaves no doubt as to the military man's character: “... como se vê, um homem surpreendente e sociável. As jovens

³⁸ Own translation: “... without any help other than that of his machine-gun rifle he dislodged forty Marxists entrenched in a house on the outskirts of Bilbao”.

asturianas que o rodeiam acham-no, cetamente, encantador, achando-as êle, por seu turno – e não faz favor nenhum- ecantadoras...”³⁹.

As for criticism of the enemy, this can be designed through different strategies that focus on the military, not on civilians. It is interesting how the citizens left in the rearguard were shown as victims of the evil of the “vermelhos”. Moreover, the focus of prosecution and criticism was directed at the authority and the soldiers who took part in the battle on the anti-fascist side. In this way, civilians were depicted as suffering people awaiting salvation at the hands of the rebels. An example is a photograph published on 9 October 1936. It is a snapshot of a young woman, her face distorted, holding her baby in a street in the city of Toledo. This duality was highlighted in the caption. The pain caused by the Marxists to the civilian population and the joy of being saved by Franco:

A fotografia documenta, exuberantemente, a tragedia vivida, com heroísmo, pelos sitiados de «El Alcázar» de Toledo. Esta mãe, que aperta ao seio filho querido, nascido sob a ameaça dos tiros e das granadas, revela, nas suas lágrimas, a enorme alegria que lhe vai na alma no deparar com as tropas victoriosas do general Franco que, com todos os sitiados, salvarem aquele que é o sangue do seu sangue, vida da sua vida...⁴⁰.

Also of interest are the strategies used to criticise the enemy soldiers by accusing them of three reproaches – the first two ridiculing – which were visually reiterated: ineptitude, lack of respect and lack of scruples. Ineptitude was constantly alluded to when referring to the militiamen. Let us not forget that the rebel military took every opportunity to refer to the lack of professionalism of the government troops. They linked this lack of professionalism to the fact that the military leaders had to put the defence of their positions in the hands of civilians. Thus, the lack of discipline of the militias, a fundamental quality for the military, was emphasised. It was, therefore, a way of undermining the Republican army mocking the authorities who were constantly accused of forcing laymen to take up a fight they would lose to the all-powerful rebel army. Even reminding, constantly, the participation of minors in an adult war. As shown in

³⁹ Own translation: “...as can be seen, a surprising and sociable man. The young Asturian women around him find him quite charming, and he, in turn, finds them - and he does them no favours - charming...”.

⁴⁰ Own translation: “The photograph exuberantly documents the tragedy lived, with heroism, by the besieged of ‘El Alcázar’ in Toledo. This mother, clasping her beloved son to her breast, who was born under the threat of the shots and grenades, reveals, in her tears, the enormous joy in her soul on meeting the victorious troops of General Franco who, with all the besieged, saved the one who is the blood of her blood, the life of her life ...”.

a news item published on the front page of 8 January 1937, two days after Three Kings' Day (a celebration in which children are the main protagonists. In this way, the childish character of young people was emphasised), about how the Frente Popular recruited minors in France. It was accompanied by a photograph of a card from the Conserjería de Juventud de Sarriá (Barcelona) showing the details of a 14-year-old French boy (Henry Poeyo) enlisted in Barcelona in the anarchist battalion Columna de Hierro – an anarchist group that participated very actively between 1936 and 1937, especially on the Teruel Front – and who joined, according to the identification card, on 24 November 1936.

But criticism of the army for its ineptitude was based on ridicule and mockery, as we have already mentioned. We will highlight examples of the two forms that were most often repeated in the Portuguese newspaper. The first consisted of showing the listless attitude of the enemy army as portrayed in the photograph published on 26 September 1936 showing a group of militiamen in a trench in Madrid. The group is seated in different armchairs while contemplating the earthen sacks in their trench. The snapshot is captioned: "New combat tactic..." as "shown in this image".

The second way was to portray the lack of respect for the military uniform, as in this example published on 5 February 1937 showing communist political commissars, one of them badly uniformed, under the headline: "Como esta gravura mostra, os dirigentes militares madrileños usam no boné e no blusa o emblema soviético..."⁴¹. Apart from referring to the lack of decorum in the dress of the command, the image has another critical connotation, which is that of the power that communism maintained among the government army.

The disrespect attributed to the anti-fascists is usually associated with an attack on religion, one of the pillars of the state on which Franco wanted to rebuild the country after the victory of the rebels. On 11 November 1936 a snapshot was published that may serve as an example. In this photograph, two militiamen are picking up the remains inside a church. According to the caption, this is done to transform the metal into weapons.

Also recurrent was the allusion to the unscrupulousness of the enemy, who were capable of causing great suffering to civilians. A curious example is that of the alleged attempt to spread an epidemic in order to annihilate Franco's followers. The news item, published on 10 June 1937 and accompanied by two photographs, reported an "unnamed monstrosity" communicated by "reliable information". Two foreign spies (Witold Jedlinski and Jean Bouguennec) sent by the Soviets were

⁴¹ Own translation: "As this engraving shows, the Madrileño military leaders wear the Soviet emblem on their cap and blouse..."

supposed to have been arrested in the town of Irun on their way to introduce the lethal poison they were hiding under their skin. The images show the scarifications on the chest of the first one and on the leg of the second one. In these scarifications, the two detainees allegedly kept the poison. According to the archives of the Spanish Civil War Photographic Collection of the National Library), which has a copy of the series to which these two photographs belong, the images are signed by Foto Delespro and bear the stamp of Division 53 of the General Staff of the Technical Section of the Ministry of the Interior. Despite the existence of these images in Spain, we are not aware that the news item was published. What is clear is that abroad the photographs clearly served as a critique of the enemy who were shown to be capable of employing the most damaging tactics to win the war.

The third strategy, after defending the ally and criticising the enemy, was to convince third parties. In the case of Portugal, as a direct ally of the rebels, it was not necessary to design a specific campaign, although some photographs are aimed at mobilising other countries. An example is the photograph published on 1 September 1936 showing the British-flagged ship *Gibel Zerjon*, which, according to the text accompanying the image, was attacked by the government forces. It was added that the British had to send the battleship *Repulse* to defend it. The comment seems to implicate a third party – England – in the conflict and to demonstrate the violent character of the republican government.

What is more common, in terms of implicating third parties, is criticism of the rival's collaborators. This is evident on the back of the photograph published on 24 October 1936. The picture shows a portrait of the new Spanish ambassador to Paris, Luis Ariquistáin, at an official ceremony at the Élysée after meeting the French president. The newspaper took the opportunity to link the government of the Republic with communism: "Do papel do sr. Luiz Araquistáin nas manobras do comunismo internacional a favor do Governo de Madrid"⁴². The word "manoeuvres" implies a criticism of the Reds for manipulating the Spanish government and, on a second level of criticism, of the French government for accepting the visit of a communist.

Conclusions

Many propaganda tactics were employed during the Spanish Civil War through photography. Photography can be seen not only as a trace of the past

⁴² Own translation: "On the role of Mr Luiz Araquistáin in the manoeuvres of international communism in favour of the Madrid Government".

that helps us to immerse ourselves in the past (almost as if we were opening a door to the past). Photography is also revelation (which helps us to cross the threshold of that door). And the fact is that a photographic image, as an object of its time, offers us a great deal of information about, among other aspects, the context, the author, the media in which the photograph is published and the working circumstances of the photographers. It is only necessary that we learn to ask the relevant questions to the photographs so that these photographs respond to us⁴³. In order to do so, it is necessary to transcend sight and advocate looking, that is, looking rather than seeing. That is to say, to abandon the mere recognition of motifs (an act proper to sight and which treats the image as an illustration) in order to work on the interpretation of images (an act proper to the gaze and which treats the image as a source of knowledge).

Thanks to the analysis of the photographs, we have determined the use that *O Comércio de Porto* made of images by Spanish and foreign photographers, even if their authorship was not acknowledged in the caption. We have also demonstrated the newspaper's re-use of work by Portuguese photographers hired by other media during the war, or the use of snapshots taken before 1936. Finally, we have learned that the newspaper did send at least one photographer of its own.

After an exhaustive study of each of the photographs depicting the Spanish Civil War that were published in *O Comércio do Porto* from July 1936 to April 1939, we can highlight the newspaper's extensive coverage of what was happening in the neighbouring country. In the first twelve months of the conflict, the newspaper published almost 700 photographs. A figure that far exceeds the number of photographs published by the rebels in the Spanish media during the first year of the war. From the second year onwards, a gradual decline in the number of photographs published is confirmed. This decline coincides with a rise in the number of photographs published in the Franco-controlled Spanish press. The hypothesis is, therefore, that if the coup plotters made a propaganda effort abroad to consolidate their foreign alliances in the early stages of the war, from the spring of 1937 onwards they were more concerned with domestic propaganda, probably with the idea of preparing for the more than likely victory of the rebels at that point.

The visual account published in *O Comércio do Porto* is a self-serving narrative that would demonstrate the unconditional support of Salazar's Portugal for the rebels. To this end, photography was used as a (re)presentation of reality. Images, therefore, at the service of a cause to maintain the morale of the allies

⁴³ Boris Kossoy, *Lo efímero y lo perpetuo en la imagen fotográfica*, Madrid, Síntesis, 2014.

and criticise the enemies. And this representation, or even re-semanticisation of the snapshots, began from the start of the war. Sánchez Albornoz, Spain's ambassador in Lisbon, denounced this by stating that the Portuguese press was working hard to attack the Republic and extol the insurgents, censoring and disseminating false information. Even weeks before the military uprising of July 1936⁴⁴. A Portuguese press that was under the control of the Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional and the Direcção dos Serviços de Censura, institutions responsible for turning Portugal into Franco's photographic embassy.

⁴⁴ José Luis Martín, Claudio Sánchez Albornoz. *Embajador de España en Portugal (mayo-octubre de 1936)*, Ávila, Fundación Sánchez Albornoz, 1995, p. 15.

