Assessing Regime Survivability During Civil Wars: A Comparative Analysis of the Russian (1917-22) and the Spanish (1936-39) Civil Wars

by

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Assessing Regime Survivability During Civil Wars: A Comparative Analysis of the Russian (1917-22) and the Spanish (1936-39) Civil Wars

Koç University

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To my beloved family,

ABSTRACT

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Master of Arts in Political Science and International Relations

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Interwar Europe witnessed numerous civil wars that tested the resilience and survivability of various political regimes. Two notable instances of this phenomenon were the Russian Civil War, which ensued after the Bolshevik seizure of power in Russia in 1917, and the Spanish Civil War, which erupted in 1936 between the Republicans and the Nationalist factions. These revolutionary changes in Spain and Russia were met with opposition from conservative factions within the military and society, who aimed to counter these transformative events. While the Bolshevik regime in Russia emerged victorious over counterrevolutionary forces and served as a successful case study in regime survivability, the Spanish Republicans were unable to achieve a similar result, and instead the insurgent forces were victorious in overthrowing the Republican regime. The divergence in outcomes observed between these cases, despite their initial similarities, warrants careful examination to better understand the factors and mechanisms that contribute to a regime's increased likelihood of survival during such conflicts. Therefore, this study seeks to shed light on the connections between three analytic variables—"Party Cohesion," "Support of Professional Military," and "Mobilizing Social Support"— to come at compelling results concerning this crucial phenomenon. It appears that the Bolsheviks in Russia and the Nationalists in Spain were successful in emerging victorious from their respective conflicts with a combination of factors including their having a higher party unity, operationalized with their administrative cohesion and charismatic features of their leaders, a stronger support from the professional army corps, measured with the available data regarding the distribution of officers to the belligerent factions, and their successfully mobilizing social support, apparent with both the national and international mobilization of a more robust support for their campaigns.

Keywords: Armed Forces, Civil Wars, Conflict Analysis, Party Cohesion, Regime Survivability, Russian Civil War, Social Support, Soviet Union, Spain, Spanish Civil War

ÖZETÇE

Rejimlerin İç Savaşlardaki Dayanma Güçlerinin İncelenmesi: Rus (1917-22) ve İspanyol (1936-39) İç Savaşlarının Karşılaştırmalı Bir Analizi

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Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler, Yüksek Lisans

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Birinci ve İkinci Dünya Savaşları arasındaki dönem Avrupası'nda çeşitli siyasi rejimlerin dayanabilme ve ayakta kalabilme güçlerinin test edildiği çok sayıda iç savaş yaşanmıştır. Bunlar arasından en dikkat çeken iki örneği Bolşeviklerin 1917'de Rusya'nın kontrolünü ele geçirmeleri sonrasında patlak veren Rus İç Savaşı ve 1936'da Cumhuriyetçi ve Milliyetçi güçler arasındaki mücadeleye tanıklık eden İspanyol İç Savaşı oluşturmaktadır. Hem Rusya'da hem de İspanya'da yaşanan devrim niteliğindeki değişiklikler toplumun ve ordunun içerisindeki çeşitli muhafazakâr gruplar tarafından tepkiyle karşılaşmıştır. Rusya'da Bolşeviklerin karşı devrimcileri yenilgiye uğratıp kurdukları rejimin ayakta kalması rejim dayanıklığı açısından başarılı bir örneği oluştururken İspanya'da Cumhuriyetçi rejimin yenilgiye uğrayarak Milliyetçiler tarafından alaşağı edilmesiyse bu durumun olumsuz bir örneğini oluşturmaktadır. Her iki çatışmanın da benzer koşullar altında başlamalarına karşın sonuçlarında yaşanan bu denli büyük farklılaşma, rejimlerin dayanma güçlerini etkileyen durum ve süreçlerin detaylı bir incelemesini zorunlu kılmaktadır. Bu nedenle bu çalışmanın amacı "Parti Bütünlüğü", "Profesyonel Ordu Desteği" ve "Sosyal Seferberlik" değişkenleri üzerinden bu farklılığın nedenleri üzerine elde tutulur bir sonuca varmaktır. Rusya'daki Bolşeviklerin ve İspanya'daki Milliyetçilerin kendi iç savaşlarından zaferle ayrılmalarında, idari uyum ve liderlerinin karizmatik özellikleriyle ölçülebilen daha yüksek bir parti bütünlüğüne sahip olmaları, subayların savaşan gruplara dağılımına ilişkin mevcut verilerle ölçülen profesyonel ordu birliklerinden daha önemli bir destek almaları ve seferberlik çabaları kapsamında hem ulusal hem de uluslararası bağlamda daha gözle görülür ve sürdürülebilir bir destek elde etmeleri ölçüsünde belirginleşen toplumsal desteği başarılı bir şekilde harekete geçirmeleri gibi faktörlerin birleşiminin etkili olduğu görülmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Silahlı Çatışma, İç Savaş, Çatışma Analizi, Taraf Bütünlüğü, Rejim Dayanıklığı, Rus İç Savaşı, Toplumsal Destek, Sovyetler Birliği, İspanya, İspanyol İç Savaşı

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ABBREVIATIONS

CEDA	Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Rights
CHEKA	All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
IR	Republican Left
UR	Republican Union
UGT	The General Union of Workers
CNT	National Confederation of Labor
NKVD	The People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs
PCE	Communist Party of Spain
POUM	Workers' Party of Marxist Unification
PSOE	Spanish Socialist Workers' Party
SR	Socialist Revolutionary Party
Left SRs	Left Social Revolutionaries
NEP	New Economic Policy
ER	Republican Left of Catalunya
PNV	The Basque Nationalist Party
PG	Galicianist Party

Chapter 1:
SETTING THE SCENE

Revolution was not an unknown concept in twentieth-century European politics. Especially throughout the interwar years, there were numerous attempts to overthrow the last representatives of *ancien régime* and replace them with socialist governments. Some of these attempts were more radical and bloodier, like in the case of the Bolshevik Revolution that took place in the former Russian Empire in 1917. On the other hand, there were also examples of a smoother transition period, including the proclamation of the Second Spanish Republic in 1931. Interestingly, both revolutionary experiences eventually faced a counter-revolution attempt coming from the conservative elements in the armed forces and society. Civil Wars erupted and devastated the lands that once belonged to Bourbon and Romanov dynasties.

One should note that under General Francisco Franco's leadership, the counter-revolutionary forces prevailed in Spain following the three years long bloody civil war, between 1936 and 1939. In Russia, rebellious factions could not achieve to overthrow the Bolshevik rule established in Moscow. Such differentiation in the outcomes is worth mentioning, especially considering a great variety of factors were quite similar, if not identical, in Spanish and Russian contexts. Therefore, it is beneficial to briefly discuss the similarity of underlying conditions in these contexts before diving into the possible causes of different outcomes of the civil wars.

Socialist regimes in both the Spanish and Russian contexts benefitted from a firm control of the heartland of their countries in the first moments of erupted civil wars. In Spain, for instance, following the primarily unsuccessful July 1936 *coup d'état*, the Popular Front government was holding the capital Madrid and many other most populated cities in Spain. Republicans (Popular Front) were firmly controlling Barcelona, Valencia, Malaga, Murcia, Bilbao, and even a great part of rural Seville, among the very few urban areas that fell to the Nationalist (Counter-Revolutionary and Mainly Conservative Factions) hands. Other than Seville, Nationalist forces were successful in Zaragoza and several historically conservative cities, including Salamanca, Leon, and Burgos. Nevertheless, throughout the conflict, the Nationalist forces under the leadership of Francisco Franco would prove themselves victorious. They could occupy most of these territories before the eventual fall of the republican government in April 1939.

Although Bolshevik control on the vast territories of the former Russian Empire was not always firm, their dominance in the heartland, their control was relatively strong throughout the course of the Russian Civil War, from 1917/18 to 1922. There were several instances where White forces under Anton Denikin, Alexander Kolchak, and Nikolai Yudenich threatened the significant cities in this region, including Moscow and Petersburg (prospective Leningrad). Nevertheless, all these attempts were foiled, and Bolshevik armed forces, or Red Army, emerged victorious. On the other hand, Bolshevik control of periphery regions like the Baltics and Ukraine, as well as the vast wilderness of Siberia, was not a settled matter. That being said, Bolshevik power in the major industrial centers with great population bases remained as an almost sealed deal. Several studies argue that this fact was fundamental in securing a long-term Bolshevik victory in the Russian Civil War.[1]

What else was a common feature for Spanish and Russian settings, other than the solid socialist/left governmental control of the major industrial and population centers? It would not be wrong to argue that another striking similarity arises from the levels of foreign interventions in both contexts. Indeed, Spain and Russia provided a good ground for the competing powers struggling to projectile their strength to their rivals. The nature of such interventions varied; however, many of the contemporary global powers of these times opted for a way to support a faction in these civil wars.

As many authors underlined, it would not be wrong to conceptualize the Spanish Civil War as a prelude of the upcoming Second World War.[2] Indeed, a significant part of the Iberian Peninsula was once again, after more than a century following Napoleon's invasion, a battleground for rival factions where they could put the most recent additions to their arsenals into action. Hitler's Nazi Germany and Mussolini's Fascist Italy were among the leading supporters of rebellious Nationalist units. On the other hand, Stalin's Soviet Union emerged as the arguably only major power that provided substantial aid to

[1] Pavel Osinsky and Jari Eloranta, "Why Did the Communists Win or Lose? A Comparative Analysis of the Revolutionary Civil Wars in Russia, Finland, Spain, and China," *Sociological Forum*, June 2014, Vol. 29, No. 2, 318-341; Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited, 2011), 142-143.

[2] Michael Peck, "The Spanish Civil War: A Trial Run for World War II," *National Interest*, 24 July 2016, https://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-spanish-civil-war-trial-run-world-war-ii-17086; Willard C. Frank, "The Spanish Civil War and the Coming of the Second World War," *The International History Review*, August 1987, Vol. 9, No. 3, 368-409; Patrick Branly, *The Spanish Civil War: Prelude to World War II* (Airframe Extra, 2016); John T. Whitaker, "Prelude to World War: A Witness from Spain," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1942, Vol. 21, No. 1, 103-119.

the Republican government. Britain and France opted to stay neutral due to several important reasons. One of the most striking was the public fear that any involvement risks triggering another world war. While the Democratic states were reluctant to intervene, Spain became a fighting ground for the Socialist and Fascist ideologies.

Contrary to the Spanish Civil War, the foreign intervention to the Russian Civil War reflected an ongoing world war, rather than being an intro of it. Central Powers and Triple Entente supported various groups throughout the conflict, depending on the sensitive balance of power of the ongoing World War. For instance, although the Germans winked and, to a certain extent, supported Bolsheviks to seize power, they did not hesitate to support rebellious white and nationalist movements next to their borders to further weaken Russia by forcing the Bolsheviks to agree on harsh peace terms.[3] On the other hand, the Allied intervention remained a critical aspect of the Russian Civil War as many nations in the Triple Entente did not hesitate to supply White Armies as well as several rebellious nationalist factions throughout the conflict.

Considering these critical similarities, one might expect to observe a similar outcome of these respective Civil Wars. Nevertheless, as we all know, Bolsheviks emerged victorious against counter-revolutionary White Armies arguably by the end of 1922, whereas Popular-Front government lost the struggle against Franco-led Nationalist forces and ceased to exist after April 1939. This critical marginalization of the outcomes motivated me to pursue dedicated research on which I can base my thesis work further to investigate the other potential reasons behind this significant rift. By comparing the Spanish and Russian Civil Wars through a number of independent variables, which I will further discuss in detail, I aim to come up with a modal of measuring the regime survivability of governments against rebellious and/or counter-revolutionary factions. On that ground, my tentative comparative puzzle / research question is "Which factors contributed to the survival of the Bolshevik regime in the Russian Civil War and the collapse of the Republican regime in the Spanish Civil War?".

[3] Evan Mawdsley, "The Obscene Peace: Soviet Russia and the Central Powers, October 1917 – November 1918," in *The Russian Civil War* (Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited, 2011), 49-64.

1.1 Independent Variables and Their Operationalization

During my initial research, I realized several key conceptual distinctions exist between the Spanish and Russian cases that can make the development of an analytical modal of measuring a regime's survivability possible. I would like to configurate my research framework over these conversion points, over which I will conceptualize the necessary independent variables of this qualitative thesis work. It is possible and beneficial to categorize these independent variables under three main courses: "Administrative Cohesion", "Loyalty of Professional Military", and finally, "Mobilizing Social Support". These three fundamental sections constitute the backbone of my prospective modal to measure the survivability of regimes in the case of an armed rebellion or counter-revolution takes place. Following this brief introduction, I would like to expand my scope to discuss further each of these sections and my proposed methods of operationalizing them.

1.1.1 Party (Faction) Cohesion

Ensuring the political authority is vital to resist armed rebellions and counter-revolution attempts targeting a regime. Therefore, I believe, in the event of a civil war, a regime should pay a considerable attention to take the necessary steps to secure its ability to establishing control over the tools of governing. Moreover, preserving indivisible integrity of the governing body gains prominence to ensure political stability. Considering this vital role of ensuring a solid administrative cohesion, I decided to focus on several indicators to demonstrate how it influences a regime's survivability at the dawn of a counter-revolution or armed rebellion attempt.

I would like to operationalize this concept by analyzing the administrative structure of government-in-charge. I will achieve this by making several charts and tables to demonstrate the administrational structure of the Popular Front in Second Spanish Republic and Bolshevik Party in Soviet Russia. I will look at the individuals and institutions that were at the core of each faction during these respective conflicts. My hypothesis is that if an administrative body is fractional and represents a loose alliance, it decreases the survivability chance of the government.

In Spain, the leftist government – or the Popular Front – came to power through a democratic process following the February 1936 elections. Moreover, this was an electoral alliance between numerous parties from the central-left to the radical-left political spectrum with a clear intention to victory against other right-wing factions in the elections.[4] On the other hand, the Bolshevik regime seized power over the vast territories of the former Russian Empire through a political coup that took place in November 1917. Although Bolsheviks had some critical support from other left factions, their regime was clearly not an alliance, and they put even many left-wing movements into their target, claiming that these groups were betraying the March Revolution. Due to the one-party nature of Bolshevik rule and the mechanism and tactics they initiated, many political scientists and historians evaluated this regime as a clear example of totalitarianism.[5] This underlying difference later would play a vital role in determining the survival capabilities of these regimes. Thus, my expected observation is to conclude that the loose coalitional structure of Popular Front decreased the survivability of the Republican regime against Franco's Nationalists. On the other hand, I expect to observe the strong cohesion of Bolsheviks under the Lenin as a fundamental factor in determining their eventual victory over counter-revolutionaries.

Last, but not least, I would like to emphasize that the measurement of administrative cohesion is not limited to the governments. I believe that the administrative cohesion also represents a vital role in determining the success potential of the counter-revolutionaries/rebels. I expect to find out Franco's ability to unite anti-Republican base under his leadership was essential in their eventual victory. On the other hand, the White Army was far beyond being a single-handled force under a central command, and a considerable inter-factional rivalry negatively affected their operations against Bolsheviks during the Russian Civil War.

1.1.2 Support of Professional Military

When the diplomacy and negotiation is no longer on the table, and first guns get shot, the final result will be highly dependent on the battlefield dynamics. Considering

[4] Pagès i Blanch, Pelai, *War and Revolution in Catalonia, 1936-1939* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill Books, 2013) Vol. 58, Historical Materialism Book Series.

[5] Stephen E. Hanson, *Time and Revolution: Marxism and the Design of Soviet Institutions*. (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 130. ISBN: 9780807846155.

this, I decided to keep a track of the loyalty of professional military forces for the rival factions of civil wars. Securing the support of well-trained and equipped army corps in the beginning and continuation of such conflicts can play a vital role in empowering a faction against its enemies. Focusing on that fact, I developed a hypothesis that ensuring loyalty of professional military, both officer corps and fighting men, is crucial for a regime's survivability.

I would like to operationalize this independent variable by respectively focusing on the data of support of professional armed forces for fighting factions. I will measure the level of support of Spanish army and its officers for the Republicans and Nationalists respectively, and a similar process will be carried out on the remnants of Tsarist army for Red and White armies. Naturally, due to the unstable nature of loyalty, my analysis will be periodically rather than ephemerae.

Spanish and Russian Civil Wars significantly differ on the origins of fighting factions. For instance, it would not be wrong to conceptualize the Spanish Civil War as the continuation of a generally failed coup attempt, as the backbone of Nationalists were the Spanish officers dissatisfied with the electoral victory of left-oriented Popular Front.[6] Of course, the course of war also witnessed the introduction of conscripts on the both sides, but as I aim to demonstrate, their operational effectiveness was mostly limited, and the main breakthroughs were more relied on the support of better-trained and equipped professional army corps. Nationalists were in an apparent advantage as they had the support of majority of Spain's regular army and generals.[7] Moreover, I believe units including *Ejército de África* (Army of Africa) strengthened their hand over the Republicans, who were supported by a smaller number of professional officer corps as well as regular army units, and eventually more reliant on the support of ideological volunteers supporting their cause.[8] These facts secured a greater operational efficiency

[6] Helen Graham, *The Spanish Civil War: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2005); Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), Cambridge Essential Histories; Michael Alpert, *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Cambridge University Press, 2013); James Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors: Republican Popular Army and Nationalist Army Conscripts in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); David A. Messenger, "Organizing the Fight Armies and the Spanish Civil War," *History: Reviews of New Books*, Vol. 42, No. 3, 2014, 78-81.

[7] Michael Alpert, "The Clash of Spanish Armies: Contrasting Ways of War in Spain, 1936-39," *War in History*, Vol. 6, No. 3, 1996, 332.

[8] Michael Albert, "The Spanish Army in 1936," in *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War 1936-39* (Cambridge University Press, 2013).

for the rebelling Nationalist forces, and subsequently lowered the survivability of Republican regime.

It is a common mistake to conceptualize the White Army as a faction that enjoys a higher level of professional army corps during the Russian Civil War against Red forces. Unlike this popular belief, many of the Red Army officers were coming from the ranks of Tsar's army, and this was even more apparent in the structure of Soviet General Staff.[9] Nevertheless, their loyalty to Bolsheviks was far beyond being stable, and there were numerous instances when these officers changed sides and supported the movements of White armies.[10] There are even works that consider Red Army as a force superior in numbers, due to mass conscription ability of Bolshevik government holding the Russian heartland, rather than being better equipped or trained than their White counterparts.[11]

Red Army's focus on numbers might be a case; however, we should also acknowledge the role of dysconnectivity between different White factions over their fragmented, and therefore, relatively lower ability to fight back Bolsheviks throughout the Civil War. Alexander Kolchak was active throughout the Trans-Siberian Railway and its hinterland; whereas Anton Denikin was rightfully leader of Volunteer Army in Southern Russia and there were relatively strong White formulations including Nikolai Yudenich's Northwest Army. All these factions have a different story that needs to be analyzed carefully, but it is a fact that their disconnect operations from each other resulted in the overall ineffectiveness of counter-revolutionary operations against the Soviet power. On the other hand, Red Army was under a more reliable central command structure, which enabled them to focus on the separated White forces one-by-one – a factor that turned out vital in securing the final Red victory in the Civil War.

1.1.3 Social Mobilization

Administrative Cohesion and High Loyalty of Professional Military are very influential in sustaining the stability of a political regime the most during the initial steps

[9] Evan Mawdsley, The Russian Civil War (Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited, 2011), 134.
[10] Evan Mawdsley, The Russian Civil War (Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited, 2011), 366.
[11] Evan Mawdsley, The Russian Civil War (Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited, 2011); Baklanova Irina Semyonovna, "Otechestvennaya Istoriografiya o voinskoy Distsipline v Beloy i Krasnoy Armiyah (Domestic Historiography on Military Discipline in the White and Red Armies)," Научный вестник Московского государственного технического университета гражданской авиации, Vol. 13, No. 95, 2005, 11-14.

of a conflict or armed struggle like a Civil War. Nevertheless, equally to them, obtaining a great level of support coming from the society is utmost importance. Naturally, there exists several methods to ensure such a popular support, which are collectively fundamental for the operationalization of this independent variable. I believe that the path to mobilize social support starts by providing a good rhetoric on abstract narratives, for the purpose of this research these are ideologies, and proceeds with the utilization strong propaganda campaigns to attract more supporters to their factions. Therefore, it is beneficial to focus on each of these significant concepts respectively to understand their direct or indirect role over maintaining the mobilization of social support for the survival of a regime.

Providing people with a unique and striking narrative that takes its origin from the ideological roots is more critical than people mostly believe. Indeed, since most of these ideological claims occur due to people's socioeconomic demands, it should not be surprising to observe a higher level of mobilization among society to support the struggle of a fighting political faction in the case of a Civil War. To operationalize this aspect of our independent variable, we should look at the appealing attempts of each faction during the Spanish and Russian Civil Wars, respectively. I believe we will observe a strong link between the survivability of a political regime and the strength of their ideological claims. I expect to observe a pattern that suggests a stronger ideological appeal to the public results in the recruitment and mobilization of more into the ranks of a faction, therefore, directly influencing the survivability of a political regime on the edge of a Civil War.

When one re-evaluates the Spanish Civil War, it should be visible that both Republicans and Nationalists were attempting to legitimize their struggles over ideological concerns as the Republican groups were advocating for the victory of socialist – and even in some cases anarchist – premises whereas the Nationalists were keen on the conservative concepts – and even debatably Fascist narratives. Nevertheless, I will illustrate that the Nationalist camp was more successful in giving an inclusive narrative to the conservative areas of Spain and united them in their cause against the Republican government, which they illustrated as the "Anti-Christ" and "Soviet-puppet traitors" to the Spanish people.

On the other hand, it is evident that Bolsheviks were the arguably the only and greatest faction following the downfall of Tsarist regime that provided a considerably

strong ideological narrative, which was fruitful in the maintaining of social support for the Bolshevik party. On the other hand, the disintegrated structure of Anti-Bolshevik forces, whether they are Left-SRs like Komuch or hardliner Monarchist within the ranks of White forces, prevented them from coming up with a strong and singly united ideological narrative that could united the disillusioned masses in the depths of the territories under Bolshevik control. Bolsheviks were more successful in this, and although there were civilian uprisings on the both sides, Bolshevik supported and supporting partisan forces were a key asset in their ensuring an eventual victory over the counter-revolutionaries, thus signaling a potentially critical aspect of the regime survivability.

Before starting our discussion concerning the regime survivability within the Russian (1917-1922) and Spanish (1936-1939) Civil Wars, it is better to take a brief look at the existing academic debates on the dynamics facilitating a faction to emerge triumph from a civil war. Expectably, while trying to figure out who might be the so-called winner of a civil war, many scholars came up with their own ways to measure each side's chances of winning. To try to figure out why one side emerged victorious in the end, it is best to look at each of these compelling models from the literature on civil wars.

1.2 The Literature on Dynamics of Regime Survivability in Civil Wars

One of the most striking contributions to the literature concerning defining factors of a faction’s emerging successful from a conflict of this type comes from Mason, Weingarten Jr., and Fett (1999), who come up with an interesting model that attempts to figure out not only what makes one side of a civil war win in the end, but also what might lead to a peaceful settlement to the conflict. Given the significance of these phenomena, it is useful to investigate their respective justifications in further depth.

They argue that the strength of the government's armed forces is the most decisive factor in determining which side wins in a civil war, as it increases the likelihood that the government will win and decreases the likelihood that the opposition will win or that a compromise would be struck.[12] Given the prevalence of civil wars in which a government in charge of a bigger military force was overcome by a much smaller and core-sized rebel group, this is a fascinating but problematic thesis to a certain extent. While such an

[12] T. David Manson, Joseph P. Weingarten Jr and Pattrick J. Fett, “Win, Lose, or Draw: Predicting the Outcome of Civil Wars,” *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (June 1999), p. 245.

argument may be fascinating in explaining the factors behind the Bolshevik success in the Russian Civil War, the numerical strength argument fails when one takes the Republican failure in the Spanish Civil War.

On the other hand, there exists scholars who believe the length of a conflict plays the most important role as Stam and Allan (1996) argued that decision-makers revise their confidence in their capacity to bear costs and mete out punishment as a conflict carries on.[13] Studies of civil wars that share this perspective appear to have shown that coercive ability is a crucial component. If the government's coercive capacity remains constant and stable, Mason (1996) argues that an increase in the size of opposition or rebel forces will reduce the probability of any more rebel casualty, making the opposition's task easier in recruiting more supporters and, ultimately, increasing the likelihood of a rebel or opposition victory.[14] Furthermore, Lichbach (1995) argues that if the opposition keeps proving itself to be superior, a bandwagon effect will develop, increasing the odds of a rebel triumph even more.[15] Once again, when we take the case studies of this research, it appears this perspective fails to put forward a compelling explanation as the longevity of conflict does not always necessarily mean the insurgent groups may emerge triumph, as the Russian Civil War reflects this reality clearly.

There is also a fascinating analysis by DeRouen Jr. and Sobek (2004), who employ the idea of state capacity to provide a theoretical framework for estimating civil war duration and results. They discovered that strong state bureaucracy reduces the likelihood of rebels or opposition forces emerging triumphant from such a battle but does not ensure success for the government or the group in power, via their examination of conflicts they term civil wars that took occurred in various areas of the post-colonial globe between 1944 and 1997.[16] These results provide credence to the claims made by Snyder (2001), who argued that a fragile central government, with a low state capacity, might give an

[13] III. Stam and C. Allan, *Win, Lose, or Draw: Domestic Politics and Crucible of War* (Ann Anbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), p. 71.

[14] T. David Mason and Patrick J. Fett, "How Civil Wars End: A Rational Choice Approach," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (1996), p. 546-68.

[15] Mark I. Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), p. 115-116.

[16] Karl R. DeRouen Jr and David Sobek, "The Dynamics of Civil War Duration and Outcome," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (2004), p. 303-304.

advantage to rebels during a civil war.[17] Without a doubt, state capability is a crucial driver of the final outcome of a civil war; hence, we will also incorporate this to our thesis work by focusing on the party cohesion of the competing factions. This will be a major ground of our analysis regarding the party unity of the belligerent factions of the civil wars under our scope, as this perspective will facilitate our understanding the process much easier.

In addition to this, it is critical to have a solid understanding of the ways in which civil conflicts eventually conclude. To that end, it is preferable to make use of some of the available data work to gain a deeper understanding of the possible processes that decide the ultimate outcome of civil wars.

For instance, Toft (2010) presents some insightful data that highlights the three different potential outcomes of the civil wars that took place between the 1940s and the 1990s that she observed. Her research demonstrates how civil conflicts have altered considerably since the 1940s. Between seventy-five and one hundred percent of wars were resolved during the 1980s due to a rebel or government victory. However, just 41% of civil conflicts in the 1990s were resolved through victory. Furthermore, between 1940 and 1989, only a small number of civil conflicts were resolved by negotiated agreements. By the 1990s, however, they had successfully ended 41% of all civil conflicts. She also claims that the 1990s saw the end of two-thirds of all civil conflicts thanks to negotiated agreements.[18]

Uppsala University's Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), on the other hand, presents global data on non-state conflict, or armed conflict between two groups that are not the state, which we can conceptualize as civil wars, and is an interesting dataset to examine in greater detail to understand the ultimate outcomes of civil wars. Existing datasets on armed conflict have either overlooked this form of violence or grouped it into civil war; this dataset fills this gap by include fights between rebel groups and other organized militias.[19] By doing so, it aims to overcome many informational gaps in the

[17] Richard Snyder, "Does Lootable Wealth Breed Disorder? States, Regimes, and the Political Economy of Extraction," Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in San Francisco, CA (30 August – 2 September 2001).

[18] Monica Duffy Toft, "Ending Civil Wars: A Case for Rebel Victory?" *International Security*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (Spring 2010), p. 13-14.

[19] Ralph Sundberg, Kristine Eck and Joakim Kreutz, "Introducing the UCDP Non-State Conflict Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (2012), p. 351-352.

study of civil wars. It supplements existing civil war datasets and, hopefully, encourages researchers to examine rebel-on-rebel violence as a phenomenon by providing disaggregated data on all conflicts which occur between rebel groups and between rebel groups and other organized groups, which can be seen in the intriguing work of Hanne Fjelde and Desirée Nilsson (2012).[20] Analyzing such an extensive data on the different dynamics of civil wars will undoubtedly further enforce the attempts on understanding the eventual outcomes of such conflicts.

This thesis study acknowledges the importance of each of these approaches to understanding the dynamics and mechanisms behind the occurrence of civil wars and the factors that play a crucial role in determining the eventual victor in them, and it then places particular emphasis on three factors that it considers fundamental in determining the outcome of civil wars. This constitutes the potentially most apparent strength of this thesis, and moreover the arguably biggest contribution it makes to both broader civil war and regime survival literatures. In an attempt to demonstrate the connection between these two essential phenomena, in this study, the party cohesion, the support of the professional military, and the social mobilization serve as independent variables. Considering this, it is necessary to examine the relevant literature on each of these concepts respectively.

1.2.1 The Literature on Party Cohesion

It has previously been established that the civil wars are an example of a conflict that may be caused by a wide variety of different factors amongst numerous factions. Yet, it is a frequent occurrence for the government or the party that is currently in power to be on one side of such conflicts. When this is taken into consideration, one can make the argument that the stability or cohesion of the party or government that is currently in power plays an essential role in determining how likely it is that such a political regime will be able to survive the armed conflicts, which also ultimately include civil wars.

In studies of regime survival, party cohesiveness is a key factor, especially when looking at the survivability of authoritarian regimes. It has been argued by scholars such as Magaloni (2006) and Levitsky and Way (2010) that political parties can help ensure

[20] Hanne Fjelde and Desirée Nilsson, "Rebels Against Rebels: Explaining Violence Between Rebel Groups," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 56, No. 4 (August 2012), p. 604-628.

the survival of a regime by rallying public support in its favor.[21] On that ground, the ability of ruling parties to ensure elite cohesion appears to be an essential pillar of sustaining the survivability of a political regime during the times of crises. Elite cohesiveness, as defined by Levitsky and Way (2012), is the extent to which a regime's leaders can keep their friends loyal and working with them. They claim that in cohesive societies, ministers, allied parliamentarians, and local authorities consistently back the central government and work together. Internal revolt or defection is thus less likely to occur, and when it does, it usually has a small following. However, Levitsky and Way (2012) state that incumbents frequently face insubordination, revolt, or defection in areas with inadequate cohesiveness, which often contributes to regime failure.[22]

It is possible to provide support for these claims by referring to the respective arguments of other prominent academics such as Geddes (1999), Brownlee (2007), Magaloni (2008), and Svolik (2012). These scholars propose that ruling parties have the potential to enhance regime stability because they encourage elite cooperation over defection.[23] It is best to assess each of their useful recommendations and assertions individually to have an understanding of the power and significance of each of their arguments.

Geddes (1999) and Brownlee (2007) contend that by establishing institutional procedures to limit access to the rewards of public office and by extending actors' time horizons through the availability of future possibilities for career development, governing parties "create incentives for long-term allegiance," so ensuring the survival of a regime.[24]

Moreover, both Brownlee (2007) and Magaloni (2008) underline that ruling parties establish "collective security," or a "feeling among power holders that their immediate

[21] Beatriz Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Steven R. Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[22] Steven R. Levintsky and Lucan A. Way, "Beyond Patronage: Violent Struggle, Ruling Party Cohesion, and Authoritarian Durability," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (December 2012), p. 870.

[23] Barbara Geddes, "What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 2, p. 115-144; Jason Brownlee, *Durable Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Beatriz Magaloni, "Credible Power Sharing and the Longevity of Authoritarian Rule," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 4 and 5 (2008), p. 715-41; Milan Slovik, *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[24] Barbara Geddes, "What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 2, p. 129-131; Jason Brownlee, *Durable Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 215.

and long-term interests are best served by remaining inside the party organization," which leads to the development of long-term cohesiveness and the preservation of political stability.[25] While that might be the case in Russian Civil War, the puzzle appears to be much more complicated in the Spanish Civil War, as against all odds, the Nationalist insurgency movement emerged triumph and appears to foil such theoretical expectations as a result.

One should also be aware that there is a counterargument to these claims. Scholars like Slater (2010) think that "accessing the spoils of public office" is a weaker source of administrative cohesion because political parties are vulnerable to different types of crises that can threaten their ability to stay in power, which makes it less likely that different factions and cliques within that political movement will stay loyal to the party.[26] Taking this into account, Levitsky and Way (2012) argue that a mass defection of policymakers to the opposition might be triggered if a crisis of this kind persuades the elites of the ruling party that prolonged devotion threatens their future access to power and patronage.[27] Since one of the primary goals of this thesis is to assess how such crises affect the ability of political parties to remain cohesive, this is an argument worth mentioning. Moreover, it is possible to attribute the Nationalist victory to these theoretical grounds, which allows us to better understand how such mechanisms can determine the eventual outcome of such conflicts.

Another research that can help us understand the elements that affect a revolutionary political regime's ability to endure conflicts and post-conflict situations, such as civil wars, is Levitsky and Way's (2013) focus on the longevity of revolutionary regimes. They argue that armed liberation struggle, post-revolutionary state building, and violent conflicts sparked by attempts to implement radical social change leave four legacies that enhance authoritarian durability: the destruction of independent power centers, cohesive ruling parties, tight partisan control over the security forces, and powerful coercive apparatuses - four pillars of a revolutionary legacy that helps to immunize revolutionary

[25] Jason Brownlee, *Durable Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 39 and 138; Beatriz Magaloni, "Credible Power Sharing and the Longevity of Authoritarian Rule," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 4 and 5 (2008), p. 716.

[26] Dan Slater, *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[27] Steven R. Levintsky and Lucan A. Way, "Beyond Patronage: Violent Struggle, Ruling Party Cohesion, and Authoritarian Durability," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (December 2012), p. 871.

regimes against a possible regime failure or breakdown.[28] The last three of these legacies that they think about make up the independent variables for this thesis study. To better comprehend the theoretical framework of this thesis, it is essential to assess each of these thoroughly. On these premises, it appears logical to argue that the Bolsheviks were much more successful in establishing such consolidated institutions that allowed them to have a better chance of regime survival, whereas in Spain the revolutionary alliance failed to achieve a similar outcome, thus paved a way to their eventual defeat.

As previously noted by Levitsky and Way (2013), the cohesion of ruling parties is a crucial feature of a regime's sustainability. In support of this claim, Huntington (1968) proposed that revolutions frequently produce powerful governing parties and, thus, more cohesive governments.[29] This tendency, as Levitsky and Way (2013) suggest, military struggle gives rise to cohesive organizations. The realities of armed confrontation led revolutionary organizations to institutionalize military-style discipline, a trait that frequently endures beyond the acquisition of power.[30] Here, the significance of the Russian case during the Russian Civil War becomes apparent. According to Service (1979), Soviet Russia's cohesiveness stemmed from post-revolutionary turmoil. In 1917, the Bolshevik party was characterized by "anarchy and indiscipline," but the battle against the Whites persuaded party members that "iron party discipline" was the only way to win the life-or-death conflict. In 1921, he claims, "discipline and obedience had become defining characteristics of Bolshevik awareness and conduct."[31]

Party unity is simply one factor—albeit an important one—in ensuring the survival of a regime through conflicts and other violent challenges, such as civil wars. The next factor has more to do with making sure the professional military supports a faction, preferably the party or government in charge, such conflicts from the start and throughout. Here we'll take a look at how scholars have measured a political regime's survivability

[28] Steven R. Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, "The Durability of Revolutionary Regimes," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (July 2013), p. 6-7.

[29] Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 327-328.

[30] Steven R. Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, "The Durability of Revolutionary Regimes," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (July 2013), p. 8-9.

[31] Robert Service, *The Bolshevik Party in Revolution, 1917-1923: A Study in Organizational Change* (London: MacMillan Press, 1979), p. 92-133.

through literary analyses of the role and effects of professional military support throughout civil wars.

1.2.2 The Literature on Support of Professional Military

Scholars are frequently seen paying close attention to the strategic decisions made by professional army corps, whom they view as playing a crucial role in deciding the viability of opposing sides in conflict. Considering this, it is insightful to examine the roles played by the professional armies of various countries throughout the duration of civil wars to better comprehend the potential impact of the former Tsarist armies in the Russian and Spanish civil wars on the survival of their respective political regimes.

Hattaway and Jones (1991) present a common viewpoint on this concept when they argue that the decisions made by a professional army become even more significant in deciding the survivability of a political regime in the event of a conflict, since strategy, management, and execution matter more than superior numbers and resources in dictating the outcome of armed conflicts, including civil wars.[32] In point of fact, guaranteeing the assistance of professional military may provide a group or regime an advantage over its opponents in terms of having a superior plan and a stronger tactical mindset. This can give them the upper hand in terms of being capable of fighting. This one simple truth demonstrates how essential it is to get the backing of military forces for any side in a civil war that desires to achieve a swift or at the very least an uncomplicated victory throughout the conflict.

Scholars such as Debs (2010) and Svolik (2013) further show the usefulness of having the support of military forces by saying that the groups with such a backing would have certain specific advantages in coercive capability relevant on suppressing any opponents or rebellious movements through their ability to dissuade by threat of force to crush any such initiatives.[33]

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[32] Herman Hattaway and Archer Jones, *How the North Won – A Military History of the Civil War* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991), p. 5-6 (Introduction).

[33] A. Debs, *Living by the Sword and Dying by the Sword? Leadership Transitions In and Out of Dictatorships*, Presented at the Annual Meeting of Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago, IL (2010); M. W. Svolik, "Contracting on Violence: The Moral Hazard in Authoritarian Repression and Military Intervention in Politics," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 57 (2013), p. 765-94.

However, one should also acknowledge the existence of a counterargument to these claims. This counterargument is supported by scholars such as Geddes (1999), who argues that such apparent advantages do not necessarily make regimes with military backing or direct military rules more stable or more able to survive politically. Instead, those who support this counterargument claim that such regimes can survive even less in length in comparison to their democratic or other autocratic regimes counterparts.[34]

In the event of a civil war, whether as an authoritarian dictatorship with the assistance of professional military or directly as a military regime constituted by diverse portions of the armed services to administer the nation, Geddes, Frantz, and Wright (2014) intend to place more emphasis on the humanitarian implications of having such a support. Their research suggests that autocracies run by the military are more likely to commit human rights abuses and get involved in civil conflicts than those run by other types of governments. They believe that since the dictator and his military allies share the same training and attitudes toward compromise that increase reliance on force to deal with challenges, it is possible that the distinction between military strongmen and military regimes has little bearing on the propensity to use violence against opponents.[35]

As we discussed briefly in the previous section, the four legacies theorized by Levitsky and Way (2013) are also worth to mention as they acknowledged the importance of having a tight partisan control over the security forces among the factors necessary for ensuring the longevity of a regime's survival. Taking a cue from Perlmutter (1977), they introduce a novel notion they name "a revolutionary army" to the literature, which investigates the impact of guaranteeing the backing of a professional army to a fighting party.[36] This phenomenon is arguably a highly partisan and devoted professional army that may draw from the old army to serve the ideological aims of a particular regime, hence greatly enhancing the regime's chances of survival in military confrontations like civil wars.[37]

[34] Barbara Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review Political Science*, Vol. 2 (1999), p. 115-44.

[35] Barbara Geddes, Erica Frantz and Joseph G. Wright, "Military Rule," *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 17 (2014), p. 160.

[36] Amos Perlmutter, *The Military and Politics in Modern Times* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 206.

[37] Steven R. Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, "The Durability of Revolutionary Regimes," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (July 2013), p. 10-11.

Barany's (2012) perspective to the contemporary military's part in maintaining regime stability or facilitating a peaceful political transition is novel and encouraging. He contends that whether a democratic consolidation is achievable depends on the political choices of military leaders. His argument is that regimes in the midst of a fundamental political transformation are especially susceptible to domestic instability and external challenges. Given this, he claims that all states need the backing of their military elites during challenging times, even if only tacitly.[38]

There is an equally solid theoretical foundation for the idea that the function of professional military personnel should be distinct from that of other institutions and based on a sense of professional autonomy. Huntington (1957) and others of similar stature argued that troops needed to be distinct from their fellow people whose core beliefs sprang from liberalism in order to be effective. He maintained that the military had to keep itself separate from politics and the general public to maintain its credibility as an impartial institution.[39]

Conversely, academics like Janowitz (1960, 1977) have argued that more accurate estimates of military effectiveness are fundamental to maintaining civilian control of the armed forces. For instance, he undervalued the potential weight and direct influence on citizen supervision from the several available institutional structures.[40]

Given the significance of the roles performed by the Russian and Spanish military forces, it is essential to comprehend the extent to which they supported the warring groups throughout the civil wars and the impact that this assistance had on the final outcomes of both conflicts. Therefore, to better understand the processes behind guaranteeing a political regime's survival, it is preferable to have a deeper look at the function and effect of securing popular support for the belligerent actors in the civil wars, another component of this complete paradigm.

[38] Zoltan Barany, *The Soldier and The Changing State – Building Democratic Armies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2012), p. 3-4.

[39] Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and The State* (Cambridge MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957).

[40] Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1960); Morris Janowitz, *Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977).

1.2.3 The Literature on Social Mobilization

Any regime's chances of emerging victorious from a civil war can be improved by rallying public support behind the effort and its aims. In light of this, it is beneficial to look into the extensive literature on the impact of building public support on the long-term survivability of a political regime for the purposes of this thesis study.

Geddes and Zaller (1989) are among the backers of a so-called "mainstream opinion," which promotes the importance of political communication in giving a regime a higher level of political legitimacy by increasing its chances of staying in power through the successful use of such instruments of political communication.[41] The most useful insight from this angle is the emphasis it places on the significance of such instruments in helping a political regime win a civil war and, by extension, increase the likelihood that it will survive.

An intriguing theory proposes that political regimes throughout the spectrum, from the most democratic to the most autocratic, employ incentives and threats to win over new adherents. Scholars such as Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2003) suggest that the party in power may simply buy off support for the government or political system since doing so is very affordable.[42] However, there is a fairly strong counterclaim from scholars like Fearon (2000) and Oi and Zhao (2007), who argue that dictators or those in charge of political regimes can rather direct resources to the disconnected, thereby increasing the burden on the shoulders of the regime and reducing its ability to survive through such crises.[43]

On the other hand, Wallace (2013) makes an important contribution to these debates by putting more attention on the strategies that political leadership and the wider regime carry out through larger urban centers. He also supports an old idea—that capital cities are important for regimes—and shows how hard it is for regimes to make up for urban grievances. Over the near run, he thinks cities are more stable when policy is skewed

[41] Barbara Geddes and John Zeller, "Sources for Popular Support for Authoritarian Regimes," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (May 1989), p. 320.

[42] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Altair Smith, Randolph Siverson and James Morrow, *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003).

[43] James Fearon, "Why Use Elections to Allocate Power?" Unpublished Manuscript from Stanford University (2000); Jean Oi and Shukai Zhao, "Fiscal Crisis in China's Townships: Causes and Consequences," in *Grassroots Political Reform in Contemporary China*, ed. E. J. Perry and M. Goldman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 75-96.

toward the urban populace. The urban-rural dynamics of countries, he argues, are reshaped over time because of this bias, leading to a greater concentration of people in cities.[44] Extremely dense metropolitan areas, due to their enormous populations, can give a larger basis for political support, and, as a result, boost the likelihood of a government surviving in the event of a civil war provided it maintains strong control over these major urban centers, where it can deploy various strategies of political communication.

As Fearon and Latin (2003) suggest, one should acknowledge the fact that the presence of civil or interstate conflict may also be expected to harm regime survival. This is because the presence of conflict makes it less likely that a political regime will be able to successfully utilize the appropriate political communication tools. They claim that the peripheral areas are where civil wars are most frequently waged.[45] Nevertheless, several experts, notably Kalyvas and Balcells (2010), feel that the dominance of insurgency-in-the-periphery as the technology of civil conflicts is on the decline following the conclusion of the Cold War.[46] Although this is a highly debatable claim because there exists a wide variety of such conflicts even since the fall of Soviet Union back in 1991.

Among the many proposed methods for assessing the impact of political communication tools on a regime's long-term survivability, these are just a few of the most common. Further investigation into the strengths and limitations of these arguments may, however, be preferable to placing an even larger focus on the electoral factors. This thesis argues, after all, that observing the statistical data to see the distribution of popular support and the effectiveness of different popular mobilization initiatives is wiser.

The theoretical discussions centering on the significance of electoral contestation in averting the prospect of civil war and enhancing the odds of a political regime surviving such challenges by providing it with an additional layer of legitimacy. The theoretical groundwork for these arguments is established by scholars like Coppedge, Alvarez, and

[44] Jeremy Wallace, "Cities, Redistribution, and Authoritarian Regime Survival," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 75, No. 3 (June 2013), p. 640.

[45] James Fearon and David Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 91, No. 1 (2003), p. 75-90.

[46] Stathis Kalyvas and Laia Balcells, "International System & Technologies of Rebellion: How the End of the Cold War Shaped Internal Conflict," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 104, No. 3 (2010), p. 415-29.

Maldonado (2008) and Dahl (1971).[47] Deriving from these respective argumentations, Bartusevičius and Skaaning (2018) contribute the literature by putting forward an interesting model with four essential mechanism through which they observe the possible influence of electoral contestation on these debates. Restricted electoral contestation, in their view, encourages the opposition to resort to violence in place of electoral competition, legitimizes anti-government violence, "self-selects" opposition recruits into violence, and ultimately weakens the incumbent.[48] Moreover, they provide the literature with a new way of thinking about how specific features of regimes, as opposed to broad categories, might affect conflicts. By empirically evaluating the risks of conflict within regime types that represent meaningful and ordered categories, they provide substantial insights into the connections between various electoral features and conflict.[49]

After acknowledging the need of legitimacy for maintaining political stability, Dawisha (1986) argues that political figures and regimes are always working to earn the support or at least acquiescence of their populations, typically by portraying themselves as the saviors of the people.[50] This view places a greater focus on political participation as a means of bolstering political regimes' legitimacy and survivability in the times of crisis. This becomes especially relevant with the leadership question in boosting the social mobilization further, as it will be further investigated within the Bolshevik success embodied with Lenin's charismatic leadership and more accurate strategies on accelerating the social mobilization in comparison to their rivals.

After providing a more in-depth discussion of some of the most significant debates that already exist in the existing body of research with regard to the concerns of this thesis, it is now best to provide an additional insight on the uniqueness of this study and the potential contributions it introduces to both the regime stability or survivability and civil war literatures.

[47] Michael Coppedge, Angel Alvarez and Claudia Maldonado, "Two Persistent Dimensions of Democracy: Contestation and Inclusiveness," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 70, No. 3 (2008), p. 632-647; Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971).

[48] Henrikas Bartusevičius and Svend-Erik Skaaning, "Revisiting Democratic Civil Peace," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 55, No. 5 (September 2018), p. 626.

[49] Henrikas Bartusevičius and Svend-Erik Skaaning, "Revisiting Democratic Civil Peace," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 55, No. 5 (September 2018), p. 626-627.

[50] Adeed Dawisha, "Power, Participation, and Legitimacy in the Arab World," *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Summer 1986), p. 525.

1.3 Potential Contributions of The Thesis to Literature

This thesis research is undertaken to provide new insights to the current literature on civil wars and the long-term survivability of political regimes. There appears a need in the literature when it comes to linking these many works together, even though the current works do a wonderful job of providing the essential theoretical foundation to analyze their specific phenomena. On that ground, it is possible to suggest that the most important thing I'm attempting to do with this thesis study is to build a bridge between studies on civil wars and political regimes' ability to stay in power.

While attempting to build such a theoretical bridge, I highlight three concepts with a great interest. To begin, party cohesiveness is the phenomena most often studied by scholars as a concept to assess the dynamics within a party. Although it is true that it is an important part of such studies, my goal with this thesis work is to add new perspective to the field by focusing more on the possible reasons of regime survivability during times of crisis including civil wars by focusing more on the political figures and their respective policy-decisions during these challenging times.

On the other hand, ensuring the support of professional soldiers is a paradigm that is widely regarded as significant by researchers in their understanding of political transition, particularly attempts at democratization of formerly authoritarian governments. Noting this aspect of such studies, I attempt to explore the percentage of support the fighting factions acquire during the civil wars to explain the potential role and influence these professional armies might have in both sustaining survivability for their respective regimes and determining the ultimately victorious faction of such civil war instances.

Finally, I try to go deeper into the significance of public support in understanding the processes that allow a political system to endure through difficult times and the variables that allow a side to emerge triumphant from civil wars. Although previous works have examined many facets of this popular support phenomena, I focus on the longer-term consequences of factors including political participation and electoral support on the sustainability of political regimes while also putting an effort to shed light on the existing mechanisms behind civil wars.

I believe the Russian Civil War (1917-1922) and Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) provide two major case studies through which we can examine the implications of such a

theoretical bridge this thesis would like to establish. Although various studies including already asked which factors determined the Bolshevik victory in the Russian Civil War while the Popular Front government eventually lost the Spanish Civil War, this work helps to provide a multi-dimensional approach in explaining the mystery behind this comparative puzzle. On these grounds, I am attempting to provide this mostly needed perspective to the literature by putting this multi-dimensional approach through my thesis work.

Chapter 2:
The Russian Civil War

The Russian Civil War (1917–1922) is an instructive case study for those interested in both the causes and consequences of civil war. Moreover, it clearly shows what might lead a political regime or faction to triumph as well as failure in such conflicts. These causes and origins behind the outbreak of the Russian Civil War may be traced back to the preceding decades, as is the case with many other such conflicts took place in the interwar Europe. With that in mind, the first part of this chapter will focus on establishing the context of the impending civil war by discussing the major social factors of the time. Following that, an empirical and comparative examination of the two main factions - Reds and Whites - will be explored in depth, beginning with the onset of and throughout the Russian Civil War.

2.1 The Brief Scene Prior to 1917: Roots of the Bolshevik Revolution

It is possible to make the claim that the conditions for the outbreak of the Revolutions of March and then October 1917 were there for a considerable time, with the escalation of political tensions being most evident after the bloody events took place around the 1905 Revolution. Given this, an in-depth examination appears to be essential to comprehend some of the most crucial components of the forthcoming Russian Civil War, as well as the circumstances that reinforced the final triumph of Bolshevik forces in it.

The House of Romanovs, a Germanic dynasty that ruled the enormous territories of the Russian Empire at the turn of the 20th century, was burdened by economic and social problems that had persisted for centuries. As with other dynastic empires of the period, Russia's multiethnic composition caused it to face a variety of problems. Moscow had a more difficult time than ever on exerting full authority over the vast territories of the empire, and the challenges caused by the recent shift from a late feudal to a contemporary socioeconomic system (*Mir*) were evident. This economic explanation attempt on the causes of 1905 Revolution is quite fundamental as there were interesting studies conceptualizing the backward *Mir* system as an integral part of the social unrest that

caused the vastly agricultural Russian society back then to become more radicalized against the policies of Tsarist administration.[51]

On the other hand, as for the question of how such a powerful opposition could have found itself a footing to finally ignite the 1905 Revolution, numerous academics have placed greater stress on the growth of an educated new class with a plethora of new institutes and higher education bodies being founded around the empire.[52] Although each of these issues merits its own extensive study, it is certain that they all contributed to creating the conditions that ultimately led to the 1917 revolutions, the subsequent civil war, and the establishment of Bolshevik control over the vast majority of the former Tsarist Empire. Extending our understanding of how these circumstances arose will benefit from a closer look at the years between the revolutions of 1905 and 1917.

As a matter of fact, this barely more than a decade-long episode may be viewed as one of the most crucial chapters in Russian history, unquestionably determining not just the fate of Russia and her peripheries of the time, but also the history of humanity as a whole. Given its significance, this period's shifting dynamics warrant cautious treatment. To provide a more complete picture, it is more useful to examine developments in Russian political, social, and military life of the period in further details.

2.1.1 The Changes in Russian Political Life Between 1905 and 1917

As if the Tsarist government was not already struggling enough, the catastrophic consequences of the Russo-Japanese War of 1905 further added to the pile of problems it faced. Although the implications of this conflict in international politics are more popular in scholarly works, the domestic consequences of Russia's defeat in the war are decisive in the following years of instable Russian politics. Among these domestic consequences, the establishment of State Duma, a Russian legislative body elected by the people for the first time in the country's history because of the subsequent declaration of 1906 Constitution (or the October Manifesto), is a solid application for the overall analysis of this thesis work. An in-depth analysis of this new institution will contribute

[51] Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, 3rd Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008): 15; Ian D. Thatcher, "The 1905-07 Russian Revolution as a 'Moment of Truth': An Overlooked Contribution from Menshevism," *Revolutionary Russia*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (2021): 178-179.

[52] Susan Morrissey, *Heralds of Revolution: Russian Students and the Mythologies of Radicalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998): 20-22; Sidney Harcave, *The Russian Revolution* (London: Collier Books, 1970): 24-25.

the later discussions, where the main idea will be to come up with a decent explanation of how the social dynamics of civil wars developed and play a crucial part in defining the overall capability of regime survivability throughout such conflicts.

From an institutional point of view, the establishment of the First State Duma (or Imperial Duma) on April 27, 1906, a legislative body that Tsar Nicholas II both allowed to be established and had the power to dismiss if he pleases, can be seen as the most outstanding product of the 1905 Revolution on the Russian politics. This institution provided a long-awaited ground for different political movements to finally being able to operate officially, in a country where the autocratic or the traditional politics of House Romanov were also taking place simultaneously.[53] As a surprise for no-one, the establishment of this legislative body did not solve the problems existing but rather reinforced them and complicated the functioning of political arena furthermore.

Imperial Duma, although being a great example of political compromises, failed to satisfy practically all actors of Russian politics. While the Tsar and his close circle was looking for ways to re-establish their strong central authority by imposing firm restrictions on the power of Duma, the elected delegates were advocating a more radical and rapid period of reformation, which will force the Tsar to share power with the parliament.[54] Eventually the confrontational actions of the first two Dumas prompted a government attempt to restrict its suffrage in 1907.[55] Prior to the establishment of the later Russian Constituent Assembly in 1917, two more of a more controlled and arguably less democratic bodies of State Dumas were established under the Nicholas II's autocrat rule. As a follow-up to this brief introduction, it is helpful to examine the four parliamentary elections that occurred during this time to better grasp the nature of Russian politics prior to the Revolutions of 1917.

1906 Russian Legislative Elections and the First State Duma

During the brief term of the First State Duma (April 27– July 8, 1906), moderate socialists and two liberal parties were elected and advocated more reforms. For this reason, it is sometimes described to as "the Duma of Public Anger (*Дума народного*

[53] Walter Gerald Moss, *A History of Russia: Since 1855* (Anthem Press, 2004): 97–106.
[54] Walter Gerald Moss (2004).
[55] Beryl Williams, "The Concept of the First Duma: 1905-1906," *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (2010): 158

гнева)",[56] representing the public's desire for dramatic changes in the quality of social and political life and, perhaps, the final chance for the Tsarist administration to make the concessions it needed to survive this period in Russian history. Arguably, both because it was the first ever legislative elections took place during the Russian history and the Tsarist regime still felt a necessity to restrict the political participation in general, numerous difficulties emerged. The election regulations enacted in December 1905, which expanded voting rights to male residents over the age of 25 and facilitated voting via four electoral colleges, were largely responsible for these complications.[57] Furthermore, women, soldiers, and officers were excluded from voting, and the constituencies' sizes varied widely. Indeed, the topics such as women's suffrage remained to be a controversial subject even in the coming decades, as Russian – and then Soviet women had to fight for a substantial time to acquire these rights.[58] Considering these, it is possible to argue that 1906 Russian Legislative Elections were neither universal nor equal.

The very brief period of operation, along with the ensuing retaliation from the Tsarist authorities, calls the legitimacy of the available statistics on election outcomes into question. Moreover, the available data only illustrates the ideological affiliations of those participated in the sessions of this short-lived Duma, thus they do not necessarily represent the specific share of votes of political parties allowed to participate in these elections. Nonetheless, a number of scholarly investigations, most notably Walsh (1950), confirm the validity of these data,[59] so they may be also utilized for the purposes of this thesis work accordingly.

[56] Pavel Vinogradov, "Дума народного гнева» не сделала ничего," (The Duma of Public Anger Did Nothing), *Federal City* (April 26, 2019), https://federalcity.ru/5603-duma-narodnogo-gneva-ne-sdelala-nichego.html

[57] J. H. L. Keep, "Russian Social-Democracy and the First State Duma," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 34, No. 82 (December 1955): 180-182.

[58] Carol Eubanks Hayden, "The Zhenotdel and the Bolshevik Party," *The Russian History*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1976): 154.

[59] Warren B. Walsh, "Political Parties in the Russian Dumas," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1950): 144-150.

Table 2.1 Ideological Affiliations of Deputies in the First Imperial Duma (April 27–July 8, 1906)[60]

Ideological Affiliation	Number of Deputies	Share of Deputies
Moderate-Right Wing	184	37,02%
Left-Wing	124	24,95%
Independent	112	22,54%
Right-Wing	45	9,05%
National or Religious	32	6,44%
Total Deputies	497	100%

Indeed, scholars share the belief that the First Duma had considerable promise and even a chance to avert what was to come.[61] Contributing and agreeing on with this point of view, I believe that the Romanov dynasty had very little chance of succeeding in establishing a legal framework that would have allowed the voices of the opposition to be heard from the very beginning. After all, the existing evidence shows that even the Tsar's himself was strictly against the operation of such a legislative body, and he was simply waiting for the right opportunity to dissolve it to reinstate the centuries-old autocracy he was insisting for as "unlimited and autocratic".[62] Following a number of blood-and-guts arguments, the Tsar is believed to say "Curse the Duma. It is all Witte's[63] fault!"[64] Arguably, this harsh attempt to restrict the revolutionary from the nature parliament to function later on resulted in the further empowerment of political actors advocating for a more radical agenda. 1907 Russian Legislative Elections and the Second Duma it gave a birth to further illustrate the validity of this argument.

[60] Warren B. Walsh, "Political Parties in the Russian Dumas," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1950): 145.

[61] J. E. Zimmerman, "Between Revolution and Reaction: The Russian Constitutional Democratic Party, October 1905-July 1907," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation (New York: Colombia University, 1968): 149.

[62] Richard Wortman, "Nicholas II and the Revolution of 1905," in *Russian Monarchy: Representation and Rule* (Academic Studies Press, 2013): 207.

[63] Count Sergei Yulyevich Witte was a Russian statesman who served as the first Prime Minister of the Russian Empire, succeeding the Tsar as the head of government following the famous October Manifesto of 1906, which he drafted.

[64] Michael Lynch, *Access to History: Russia 1894-1941 for OCR*, Second Edition (Hodder Education, 2015).

January 1907 Russian Legislative Elections and the Second State Duma

Trudoviks, a social-democratic movement that by this point already more radical in comparison to *Kadets*, arguably emerged the most victorious from January 1907 Russian Legislative Elections and gained even more of the parliamentary share. This electoral triumph may be traced back to the shift in strategy that left-wing parties have been pursuing recently. The socialist parties, including those advocating for more radical policies as well as more moderate social democrats, came to the realization of the Duma's political significance, decided to end their boycott to participate in official elections and made a more determined attempt to fight the Kadets during the election campaign, going so far as to study the stenographic records of the First Duma for acquiring information that they may use against their liberal opponents.[65]

Nevertheless, one should not confuse the electoral strategies and successes of these different leftist factions. An account of the leftist composition is further illustrated by the relatively timely analysis of Pares (1923), who argued that an organized leftist labor faction existed, but it was not a party and had no clear leadership. They did not begin to coalesce into a coherent political force until the latter days of the first elections, and their First Duma participation was mostly symbolic. This time, both revolutionary parties ran under their own names—the Socialist Revolutionaries and Social Democrats—but their leaders, who were too well-known and had every motive to stay outside, could not run for election. Still, they helped make this Duma a more accurate reflection of political Russia than any before it: in 1917, following the demise of the autocracy, these were the -two parties for which practically everyone voted.[66]

The electoral results of January 1907 Legislative Elections, like its predecessor, are difficult to follow, and instead of a composition of electoral share, the available data appears to be most valid in terms of the proportion of seats in parliament, as shown in the table below:

[65] Stephen Lovell, *How Russia Learned to Talk – A History of Public Speaking in the Stenographic Age 1860-1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020): 195.

[66] Bernard Pares, "The Second Duma," *The Slavonic Review*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (June 1923): 46.

Table 2.2 Ideological Affiliations of Deputies in the Second Imperial Duma (February 20 – June 3, 1907)[67]

Ideological Affiliation	Number of Deputies	Share of Deputies
Right Wing	151	29,05%
Nationalist Groups	94	18,08%
Social Democrats	66	12,67%
Left-Wing	150	28,85%
Others	59	11,35%
Total Deputies	520	100%

This second attempt of a constitutional monarch under the rule of the Nicholas II, who was nostalgic to the "unlimited and autocratic" reign of his ancestors, lasted for quite a short period. After a brief 103 days, Prime Minister Pyotr Stolypin, an intellectual and monarchial political figure, accused the *Trudoviks* on secretly working for an-armed revolt, a ground over which the Tsarist government once again dissolved the parliament on June 3, 1907, by an imperial decree (*ukase)*.[68]

October 1907 Russian Legislative Elections and the Third State Duma

Only a decade before the major shift in Russian and international history, parliamentary elections for a new state duma began, one that will continue far longer than its two predecessors. From its establishment on November 7, 1917, until its demise on June 3, 1912, this Duma represented a far less democratic outlook than its predecessors, owing in large part to the structural limits imposed upon its composition by the iron fist of the Tsar. Fundamental Laws of the Empire stated that no modification to the electoral legislation should be made without the cooperation of the duma itself, however this was violated after the dissolution of the second duma and before the election of the third.[69] This alteration emerged due to the empowerment of wealthier urban class following a new system establishing a more disproportional representation method in comparison to previous two legislative elections.[70] As if that were not enough, obvious gerrymandering

[67] Warren B. Walsh, "Political Parties in the Russian Dumas," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1950): 146.

[68] Vladimir Iosifovich Gurko, *Features and Figures of the Past. Government and Opinion in the Reign of Nicholas II* (Russell & Russell, 1970): 8.

[69] A. Levin, *The Second Duma* (New Haven, 1940): 307-49 and S. N. Harper, *The New Election Law for the Russian Duma* (Chicago, 1908), both quoted by Walsh (1950).

[70] Warren B. Walsh, "Political Parties in the Russian Dumas," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1950): 148.

was enforced, and several areas either lost their capacity to represent themselves in the manner they used to or were surrounded by other regions that made it nearly difficult for them to reflect their more radical and reforming agenda.

It is evident from the distribution of seats that the Duma has become less democratic and more accommodating with Tsarist authority. The reformist and radical groups lost their control over the legislative process, and in exchange, Tsar enabled the third and succeeding fourth dumas to operate in line with his desire.

Table 2.3 Ideological Affiliations of Deputies in the Third Imperial Duma (November 7, 1907 – June 3, 1912)[71]

Ideological Affiliation	Number of Deputies	Share of Deputies
Right-Wing	319	74,36%
Nationalist Groups	52	12,12%
Social Democratic	19	4,43%
Left-Wing	14	3,26%
Other	25	5,83%
Total	429	100%

There is an argument to be made that the goal here was to create a legislative body that is more loyal to the "autocrat and unlimited" authority of the Tsar, after two previous attempts at doing so ended in failure due to an insurmountable rift between reformists and autocrats. Several authors defined this new parliament as “The Duma of the Lords and Lackeys” or “Master’s Duma”.[72] It is interesting to explore the possibility that these efforts to appease the opposition really served to strengthen it. This perspective holds that the opposition's growth was catalyzed when it was either pushed underground or compelled to accept more authoritarian terms with the government in the state duma.[73]

September 1912 Russian Legislative Elections and the Fourth State Duma

In 1910, the government started preparing for the elections to the Fourth Imperial Duma, putting in a lot of work to form the right kind of deputy corps and getting the church involved as much as possible. The Tsar and his administration saw the clergy as a

[71] Warren B. Walsh, “Political Parties in the Russian Dumas,” *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1950): 148.

[72] Alexander M. Semyonov, “Imperial Parliament for a Hybrid Empire: Representative Experiments in the Early 20th Century Russian Empire,” *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (2020): 32.

[73] I. Gerasimov, “The Great Imperial Revolution,” *Ab Imperio*, Vol. 2 (2017): 21-44.

potential friend in their efforts to win over the Duma to their political agenda, and they saw this as essential to their survival.[74] An approximate number of thirty-nine deputies belonged to the ranks of clergy.[75] However, it is also important to highlight the fact that the Orthodox Church has its share of critics within its own ranks, with some arguing that the official church's close ties to the Russian government have hampered the growth of an independent Orthodox Christian approach to social problems, thereby undermining its standing in the eyes of slowly growing number of workers in the urban centers.[76] It is reasonable to assume that this helped set the stage for an anti-clergy posture under the Bolsheviks who came after.

At the same time, the government rallied its supporters to keep the domestic political situation from worsening in advance of the elections, to conduct the polls "quietly" and with the aid of "pressure" on the law to keep and maybe even enhance its grip on the Duma and avoid a possible movement to the "left."[77] As was to be anticipated of an autocratic state like Romanov's Russia, the censorship was implemented at the highest level. Consequently, the government found itself even more cut off from the populace, as the Octobrists had now firmly moved with the Cadets into the legal opposition, and the moderates had begun acting with a high degree of unity, even with certain members of the extreme wings, against the autocracy.[78] Over half of individuals elected to the fourth and final Imperial Duma were members of the nobility, making this body notable for its large proportion of noble legislators.[79] This was just another sign that the Duma was no longer a mirror of society, but rather a tool in the hands of the Tsar and his "unlimited and autocratic" regime.

[74] A. Badayev, "The Elections to Fourth Duma," in *The Bolsheviks in the Tsarist Duma: The Election Campaign and the Beginning of the Work of the Fourth State Duma* (1929), Available Electronically at https://www.marxists.org/archive/badayev/1929/duma/ch01.html, Date of Access: February 20, 2023.

[75] For an excellent analysis of the "clergy deputies" of Fourth State Duma, see A. Vasiliev, "православное духовенство в iv государственной думе российской империи," (Orthodox Clergy in the 4th State Duma of the Russian Empire," Вестник СПбГУ, Вып. 3 (September 14, 2014): 25–35.

[76] Reginald E. Zelnik ed., "Workers and Intelligentsia in Late Imperial Russia: Realities, Representations, Reflections," Research Report, No. 101 (University of California at Berkeley, 1998): 12

[77] An interesting account of such repressions is visible in Geoffrey Swain, "The Elections to Fourth Duma," in *Russian Social Democracy and the Legal Labour Movement, 1906 – 1911* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1983): 133-147.

[78] Theofanis G. Stavrou, *Russia Under the Last Tsar* (University of Minnesota Press, 1969).

[79] Theofanis G. Stavrou, *Russia Under the Last Tsar* (University of Minnesota Press, 1969): 108.

Another key development witnessed by the Fourth Imperial Duma was the anticipated separation of socialist revolutionaries, and the eventual emergence of Bolsheviks with a more radicalized doctrine on their own. Up until this moment, the umbrella identity of "Social Democratic Party" was consisting of both Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. Nevertheless, this came to an end during the second session of the Fourth Duma, where the Bolsheviks decided finally to break off and entered the session under their new banner, Russian Social Democratic Workers Party.[80]

Table 2.4 Ideological Affiliations of Deputies in the Fourth Imperial Duma (November 15, 1912 – October 6, 1917)[81]

Ideological Affiliation	Number of Deputies	Share of Deputies
Right-Wing	253	57,89%
Left-Wing	14	3,20%
Nationalist Groups	109	24,95%
Social Democratic	14	3,20%
Others	47	10,76%
Total	437	100%

2.2 Decisive Moment: The February Revolution

Russia and the centuries-old Romanov monarchy collapsed in the face of mounting social and political turmoil during World War One, ushering in a new era for Russian politics. The 22nd of February 1917 marked the beginning of the February Revolution, which followed a series of military actions that were both inconclusive and destructive.

Strikes broke out at the city's notable workshops, where a sizable portion of the urban working class lived, just after Tsar had departed for the front. The women of Saint Petersburg went on strike on February 23 (International Women's Day) to call for women's suffrage, an end to Russian food shortages, and the conclusion of The Great War.

[80] Warren B. Walsh, "Political Parties in the Russian Dumas," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1950): 149.

[81] Warren B. Walsh, "Political Parties in the Russian Dumas," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1950): 148.

It is a fact that The Tsar and his military tactics had driven Russia to the brink of societal collapse, but what made these protests even more historic were the changing loyalties of armed forces. This time even the army was protesting. Although many of the high-ranked officers were still loyal to Tsar and monarchy from their hearts, this loyalty was almost not existent in the lower ranks and among the most of drafted soldiers. Tsar's predicament was compounded by the fact that all the Imperial Guard regiments, together with their officers, and all the line infantry battalions were sent to the front at the start of the Revolution, leaving the little amount of still loyal parts of the garrison vulnerable against the growing number of protesters.[82]

It is safe to say that by early January 1917, the number of troops serving in the Russian Army had already swelled to about 2,170,000.[83] Moreover, these troops were much more exposed to the external factors, in comparison to their comrades served in the armed forces in the previous years. These replacement soldiers were assembled in big units and trained in various populated places and locations in a zone stretching behind the front. The proximity of one of these training institutes to a significant number of companies in and around Petrograd made these recruitments more exposed to the influence of urban working class, who were the backbone of the demonstrators already occupying the streets.[84]

Here, it is worth stressing that a considerable number of scholars view the withdrawal of military backing for the monarchy to be the single most important event that contributed to the downfall of the Tsarist regime and the triumph of the February Revolution.[85] Some even go as far as perceiving the February Revolution as a military event rather than a social event, claiming that the armed forces mutiny was the single most important factor in the outcome.[86] This thesis would be bolstered by subsequent events in Russian ranks, especially after a thorough examination of pivotal moments like

[82] A. M. Nikolaieff, "The February Revolution and the Russian Army," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Autumn 1946): 17.

[83] Nikolai Nikolayevich Golovin, *The Russian Army in the World War* (Forgotten Books, 2018/1931): 116.

[84] A. M. Nikolaieff, "The February Revolution and the Russian Army," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Autumn 1946): 20 and S. E. Kryzhanovsky, *Vospominaniya* (Memoirs) (Berlin: Unknown Publisher, 1938): 160, as quoted by Nikolaieff (Autumn 1946).

[85] Allan Wildman, "The February Revolution in the Russian Army," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (July 1970): 3-23.

[86] Tony Ashworth, "Soldiers Not Peasants: The Moral Basis of the February Revolution of 1917," *Sociology*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (August 1992): 455-470, especially 456.

the Kornilov Affair and the early White Army formations that occurred on the road to the second revolution, the October Revolution, during which the Bolsheviks firmly established their iron hold on the core of the former empire.

The political situation had become much more complicated and unresolvable. Tsar's Duma, which had the largest number of deputies from the nobility and the church, was now refusing to follow his orders and held a secret meeting. Once communication with the Tsar was severed on the evening of February 27, the Russian Council of Ministers met for the final time at the Marinsky Palace and publicly resigned. It was not long before a handful of Duma members organized themselves into the Provisional Committee that would be henceforth called as "The Provisional Government".[87]

The Provisional Government resolved on 2 March 1917 that the Duma would not be convened again. The State Duma was officially dissolved by the Provisional government on 6 October 1917 in the wake of the Kornilov Affair and the declaration of the Russian Republic. On 20 October 1917, the Provisional Council of the Russian Republic was constituted as a transitional parliament in advance of the election of the Russian Constituent Assembly.[88]

The most important developments occurred in the short time span from February 1917 to October/November 1917, and discussing this timeline quickly is the best approach to set the stage for the October Revolution. To that purpose, it is better to investigate the Kornilov Affair, the actions of the Bolshevik leadership, and the emergence of anti-revolutionary ideas within the ranks of Russian military and politics.

2.2.1 The Provisional Government

Members of the Provisional Committee, who had been stymied in their efforts to rule by the Tsar's autocratic grasp since September 1912 as part of the Fourth and last State Duma, formed a new administration on March 15, 1917, to deal with the chaos and power vacuum that had emerged following the demise of the centuries-long Tsarist regime. This new administration, known as The Russian Provisional Government (*Временное*

[87] The State Duma, "History of the State Duma," http://duma.gov.ru/en/duma/about/history/information/

[88] Iurii Vladimirovich Got'e, ed. Terence Emmons, *Time of Troubles: The Diary of Iurii Vladimirovich Got'e* (Princeton University Press, 1998).

правительство России), or "The Provisional Government" in short, was a product of the negotiations among different players of February Revolution.

Most notably, The Petrograd Soviet accepted the formation of this transitory body and supplied a substantial number of socialists and revolutionaries for minister seats, despite the strong resistance from the Bolsheviks. It is possible to argue that the compromise reached on several prominent social issues, including eight-hour working days and the establishment of a republic, which denied the previous practices embodied within the Tsar's autocratic and unlimited rule, led to the emergence of this reluctant alliance between the moderate right and left.[89] Of course, it is important to note that numerous historians believe that the capability to form a coalition between these two opposing ends of the arguably moderate political spectrum was only achievable because the Petrograd Soviet was still under the authority of Mensheviks and SRs (Socialist-Revolutionaries), who were staunch opponents of more radical factions like Bolsheviks, in the immediate aftermath of the February Revolution.[90]

Many socialists and revolutionaries saw these events as a necessary step on the road to transforming Russia into a Marxist utopia, and so they reluctantly accepted working with the bourgeoisie to advance without triggering further anarchy, which could lead to a full-scale military intervention by the conservative and reactionary elements within the Russian Military Staff. Likewise, because they were afraid of the widespread upheaval that the Bolsheviks were calling for, the more moderate elements of the conservative right reluctantly decided to form this coalition.[91]

Lenin, on the other hand, was extremely critical of this coalition, accusing the SRs and the Mensheviks of abandoning the masses and working to undo the progress made during the February Revolution.[92] As the SRs and the Mensheviks preferred to work with a bourgeoise democracy, he argued that this undermined the actual interests of workers and peasants and made it unlikely that power would be given to the Soviets, or the land

[89] Kunal Chattopadhyay, "Revolutionary Democracy in 1917 and the Bolsheviks," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 52, No. 44 (November 2017): 62-72, especially 63-64.

[90] Herbert J. Ellison, *History of Russia* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964): 296; Sidney Harcave, *Russia: A History* (Chicago: Lippincott, 1959): 463.

[91] Karl F. von Loewe, "Challenge to Ideology: The Petrograd Soviet, February 27-March 3, 1917," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (April 1967): 164-175, especially 167-169.

[92] Lenin, "Na Chto Mogli Rasschityvat' Kadety, Ukhodya Iz Ministerstva?" *Sbornik*, IV, 3 July 1917: 315–316.

would be transferred to the peasantry.[93] This strategy of the Bolshevik Party, together with its staunch opposition to Russia's continued participation in World War One, would eventually prove to be vital in winning over the masses.

After this foundational discussion, it is prudent to briefly introduce the First Provisional Government's cabinet members. The initial distribution of ministerial seats reveals a great deal, even if the government would have to go through numerous substantial changes, notably amid the additional political turbulence faced by the memorable July Days.

Table 2.5 Ministers of First Provisional Government[94]

Ministry / Title	Name	Political Identity
Prime Minister & Minister of Interior	Georgy Lvov	Independent, Aristocrat
Minister of Agriculture	Andrei Shingarev	Kadet
Minister of Education	Alexander Manuilov	Kadet
Minister of Finance	Mikhail Tereshchenko	Independent
Minister of Food	Alexey Peshekhonov	Popular Socialists
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Pavel Milyukov	Kadet
Minister of Justice	Alexander Kerensky	SR
Minister of Labour	Matvey Skobelev	Menshevik
Minister of Post and Telegraph	Irakli Tsereteli	Menshevik
Minister of Trade and Industry	Aleksandr Konovalov	Progressist
Minister of Transportation	Nikolai Nekrasov	Kadet
Minister of War and Navy	Alexander Guchkov	Octobrist

2.2.2 The Petrograd Soviet

The Petrograd Soviet is undoubtedly the most important actor in any meaningful examination of the factors and mechanisms that resulted in the downfall of Tsar Nicholas II and the end of monarchical rule of the Russian domains. This revolutionary-era organization would have to undergo substantial changes in structure and political

[93] According to Kingston-Mann (1972), the Mensheviks' belief that Russia's capitalist economic underpinnings were adequately matured for socialism explains this hesitant partnership. He contends that the Kadets, as representatives of the bourgeoisie, were seen by many as the best choice to rule the new Russia. See Esther Kingston-Mann, "Lenin and the Beginnings of Marxist Peasant Revolution: The Burden of Political Opportunity," *The Slavonic and Eastern European Review*, Vol. 50, No. 121 (October 1972): 570-588, especially 572-573.

[94] This distribution of Ministerial seats shows the situation in March 1917. In April 1917; however, several seats changed. Minister of Foreign Affairs Pavel Milyukov, who was a Kadet, replaced with Mikhail Tereshchenko, an Independent. Minister of War and Navy, Alexander Guchkov, an Octobrist, replaced with Alexander Kerensky, an SR, who left his position as Minister of Justice to another SR, Pavel Pereverzev.

affiliation throughout the course of the ensuing years of political instability in Russia, but they would retain a great deal of influence and authority over the many factions engaged in the country's intense power games.

After the February Revolution, Russia descended into political anarchy, and no matter whatever administration tried to establish its authority, the Petrograd Soviet remained the de facto ruling body and could rightfully be dubbed a Kingmaker. For instance, this institution, which housed a preponderance of left-wing groups, was instrumental in thwarting a supposed Bolshevik coup attempt during the July Days by supporting Kerensky and his Provisional Government. Yet, the same organization would later play an obviously crucial part in yet another anticipated coup attempt, this time by conservative and even reactionary elements allegedly led by Kornilov. This would be done at the expense of Kerensky's leadership, as the Bolshevik forces led by Lenin and Trotsky would be given even more effective backing, allowing them to overthrow the Provisional Government and declare a "dictatorship of the proletariat" once they gained control.

The most significant legacy of the February Revolution was the Petrograd Soviet. Until 1926, it would continue to serve the country through the administrations of Lvov and Kerensky of the Provisional Government, as well as through the turbulent years of the Russian Civil War and its immediate aftermath. It was most powerful, however, when it was working in tandem with the Provisional Government. Because of this co-existing of two administrative and competing institutions, between the February Revolution (when the Tsar abdicated) and the October Revolution (when the Bolsheviks overthrew the Provisional Government), a time of political instability in Russia occurred that came to be known as *Dvoevlastie* (or "Dual Power").

2.2.3 Combating For Power: Dual Authorities

It is not uncommon for a bicameral regime to be set up in countries where it is desired to use the second, or upper house, as a means of political stability to balance the acts and decisions of the lower house. However, the situation witnessed in the political arena following the end of Tsarist rule in Russia was a much more exceptional case. This distinction emerged in part due to the political instability of the time, and in part because the new government entrusted with ruling the country during the transition period lacked

the genuine means of power necessary to implement its will and authority throughout the vast territories under their supposed jurisdiction.

As its name implies, the Provisional Government was only meant to serve as a temporary authority to oversee the remaining regions of the former Russian Empire until the awaited "free and fair" democratic elections could be held and a new government could be established. Taking advantage of the power vacuum and the lack of legitimacy, the Petrograd Soviet would look even stronger, as it enjoyed the backing of the great majority of the same soldiers and workers who had overthrown the centuries-old Tsarist regime in the February Revolution.

A major divergence between the two branches of authority in the immediate wake of the revolution was that it was nearly difficult to determine who could be considered as an equivalent of an upper or lower house, as well as whether these two bodies indeed had the legitimacy to rule as they aimed to. Most of the Provisional Government, at least those who had not fled the country by then, were elected, albeit under considerably murkier circumstances under Nicholas II's absolute rule. Yet, it is generally accepted that the majority of the members of the Petrograd Soviet were radicalized soldiers and members of the urban working class who were high on the triumph they had lately earned in toppling the Tsar.[95]

The official narratives of the Soviet regime depicted this period primarily as a competition between an oppressed but genuine representative of the people, the Petrograd Soviet, who were predominantly Bolsheviks and were working for a working class revolution, and the Provisional Government, which was a body of an unholy alliance of bourgeoise democrats and conservatives, who could formed a coalition with revolutionaries who turned their backs on the revolution to prevent the people's inevitable establishment of a dictatorship of proletariat, which they believed was the main motivation behind the February Revolution after all.[96]

[95] For a further discussion on the nature of this dual power and the most apparent topics of competition between these two institutions, see Roger W. Pethybridge, "The 1917 Petrograd Soviet and the Centralist Issue," *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (Summer 1970): 327-344, especially 327-331.

[96] I. P. Leiberov, "Petrogradskii Proleteriat v bor'be za Pobedu Fevral'skoi Burzhuazno-Demokratischeskoi Revolyutsii v Rossii," ("The Petrograd proletariat in the struggle for victory in the February bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia"), *Istoriya SSR*, No. 1 (1957): 64; I. Petrov, *Strategiya i Taktika Partii Bol'shevikov v Oktyabr'skoi Revolyutsii* ("Strategy and tactics of the Bolshevik Party in the October Revolution") (1957): 31; E. D. Chermensky, *Fevral'skaya Burzhuazno-*

On the other hand, increasingly critical assessments of this chapter of Russian history, as well as the link and influence the Bolshevik Party had over the running of the Petrograd Soviet, began to emerge over time, with a significantly different narrative. Among these accounts, arguably one of the most striking and critical came from E. G. Burdzhalov, whose arguments and works, published in 1956, would spark a union-wide discussion wave in the Soviet Union, and had serious implications for the Communist Party's inner-party dynamics in the aftermath of Joseph Stalin's recent demise. These arguments, subsequently dubbed the "Burdzhalov Affair," elicited an instant and vehement reaction from prominent historians who constructed the very original narrative that was the most popular during the three-decade-long Stalin era.[97]

Burdzhalov's striking remarks already talk a lot regarding the reasons behind there appeared such a massive reaction from the old elites of Communist Party. For instance, in the first article he wrote in this context, Burdzhalov he put forward three substantial claims that offered a great disjuncture with the official Soviet narratives had provided so far:[98]

1) Bolshevik leadership was not aware of the revolutionary importance the Petrograd Soviet had in the initial aftermath of revolution.
2) Bolsheviks did not have a single and united approach regarding what to do and how to use the Petrograd Soviet.
3) Establishing the Petrograd Soviet was not a Bolshevik idea – instead, both the idea and initiative came from Mensheviks, arc enemies of Bolsheviks with whom they decided to differentiate their ways years ago by finding them "so compromising" with the bourgeoise class.

But is it feasible to produce sufficient proof that the Bolsheviks had indeed little influence or control over the Petrograd Soviet between the February and October

Demokraticheskaya Revolyutsiya 1917 g. v Rossii ("The February 1917 Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution in Russia") (1959): 127, as quoted in detail by Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, "The Bolsheviks and the Formation of the Petrograd Soviet in the February Revolution," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (January 1977): 86-107.

[97] Leonard Schapiro, "Continuity and Change in the History of the CPSU," in John Keep (ed.), *Contemporary History in the Soviet Mirror* (New York and London, 1964): 69-82; Nancy Whittner-Heer, *Politics and History in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971).

[98] E. G. Burdzhalov, *Vtoraya Russkaya Revolyutsiya: Vosstanie v Petrograde* (1956), as quoted by Hesegawa (January 1977). For the first argument, see 152-159; for the second argument, see 201-202, and the third or final argument, see 268-270.

Revolutions? As previously stated, obtaining reliable data on the political allegiance of each member of the Petrograd Soviet remains a challenge to this day. Yet, a deeper study at the three well-known leaders it had when the Petrograd Soviet functioned already reveals a lot, and we may draw conclusions based on the political backgrounds of these key men.

Table 2.6 Executive Presidents of the Petrograd Soviet

Name	In Office	Political Alignment
Nikolay Chkheidze	March 12 – September 19, 1917	Georgian Menshevik
Leon Trotsky	25 September – 26 October, 1917	Bolshevik
Grigory Zinoviev	December 13, 1917 – March 26, 1926	Bolshevik

Chkheidze appears to have been a major Menshevik figure, and it is true that Bolsheviks were less powerful during his time in office than they would be during Leon Trotsky's. It may be argued that the Bolsheviks were shut out of the other left-wing factions that made up the bulk of revolutionaries, and that it was only after the political shock of the heightened anarchy and political disorder following the Kornilov Affair that the Bolsheviks were able to climb to power.

Considering all this important chapters of the Russian Revolutions, indeed, the emergence of such a critical approach to these previously dominant accounts of Soviet history took place as a consequence of the fact that, contrary to what the Communist Party and the Central Committee would later argue, there was a very critical and significant disunity among the revolutionaries in the political arena following the February Revolution. This disagreement would remain and play a crucial part in first driving the Bolshevik Party underground, and subsequently fighting against the Red Army under Trotsky's leadership, becoming a significant front and threat to the Bolshevik leadership. For this reason, it is more instructive to look into the larger power struggles that occurred during this unstable period of Russian politics, especially the way in which the Bolsheviks vanished into the chaos at the outset of the revolution before eventually becoming the dominant political force in the country.

2.2.4 July Days: Bolshevism as a Lost Cause?

With the establishment of a Provisional Government, the political situation in the so-called "Russian Republic" were changing swiftly. Bolsheviks, who played a pivotal role in Nicholas II's toppling in the February Revolution through the Petrograd Soviet, an

institution wielding the actual authority in the capital since numerous sailors, armed men from the garrison, and the radicalized elements within the urban working class would dare for even greater power, nearly ensuring the movement's destruction.

The so-called July Days and the Bolshevik attempt to seize power in Petrograd were precipitated by a government crisis emerged in the Provisional Government, which was a development to be expected given the new administration's instability in the midst of the continuing anarchy that pervaded every facet of Russian political and social life. A prominent component of the Provisional Government with five ministers in the cabinet, the moderate liberal Kadet party has criticized the government's ineffectual programs and lack of action in the face of its shortcomings. As four Kadet ministers resigned in protest on July 2nd, the Provisional Government was now mostly composed of moderate left socialists. To make the matters even worse, Prime Minister Georgy Lvov informed the cabinet that he also intends to resign on July 7th, further contributing to the escalating political instability and chaos in Russia.[99] The political climate was cloudy, but a defining moment was practically inevitable to appear given that neither the more leftist nor the more rightist factions were satisfied with the current situation.

By the time public demonstrations erupted in response to this political crisis, Bolshevik agitators had already established themselves as leaders among the masses, especially among the working class. On July 3-8, fairly significant events took place in the capital as the First Machine Gun Regiment, one of the most well-known units with a high degree of enthusiasm for the Bolshevik agenda and adherence to the Petrograd Soviet, covertly planned for protests in the city.[100]

Armed soldiers led by the First Machine Gun Regiment began a march through the streets of Petrograd on the evening of July 3, and they were soon joined by workers and other divisions of soldiers as they headed toward the Tauride Palace, where the Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet were positioned at the time. Several of the protesters carried signs reading "All Power to the Soviets," indicating that they wanted the organization to not only grab but also employ the authority it had acquired.[101]

[99] Mark D. Steinberg, *Voices of Revolution, 1917* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2001): 150.
[100] Mark D. Steinberg, *Voices of Revolution, 1917* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2001): 77.
[101] Mark D. Steinberg, *Voices of Revolution, 1917* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2001): 152.

One of the most important Bolsheviks and a major actor in the events that came to be known as the July Days, Leon Trotsky, afterwards claimed, "Blood has poured on the streets of Petrograd. It is a tragic new chapter in the history of the Russian Revolution..."[102] Certainly, it would prove to be one of the most remarkable episodes in the history of Russian politics, and the point at which many would likely regard the Bolshevik cause to be a lost one in the face of severe repressions, resulting in their loss of any actual political authority afterwards.

Alexander Kerensky, the Minister of Defense, was already seeking for a pretext to suppress Petrograd Soviet and eliminate the Bolshevik troublemakers, whom he and many other moderate revolutionaries and right-wing groups regarded as a major menace that needed to be eliminated. The Provisional Government used public outrage targeting Bolshevik involvement in the July Days' bloodshed to its advantage and began steps to undermine the Party. Furthermore, they took other measures, like effectively silencing the Bolsheviks to reduce their influence. For that purpose, they even went so far as to shut down the Bolshevik media outlet *Pravda*.[103]

Whether on purpose or by accident, the Bolsheviks fell into this trap, providing their political opponents with the justification that they had overestimated their power and caused more anarchy. Despite the fact that the Provisional Government could not force its agenda on the entire country, it retained some measure of support from the political and social establishment since it was seen as "the best of the bad" and because many Russians were cautious of the more radical ideas that the Bolsheviks were advocating.

The Provisional Government was able to gain at least some of the support of the military forces that the Tsar had failed to secure during the February Revolution. After quickly rallying the backing of the notoriously anti-Bolshevik army staff, they issued a call to action to the loyal troops and Cossack corps, who were now tasked to re-establish peace and order in the capital.[104] Yet, Bolsheviks were not willing to give up

[102] Leon Trotsky, "The July Uprising," *Leon Trotsky: The Struggle for State Power* (July 1917). Electronically available at https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1917/power/art04.htm, Date of Access: February 21, 2023.

[103] Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution, Volume Two: The Attempted Counter-Revolution* (1930; Electronically, 2014), https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1930/hrr/ch24.htm, Date of Access: February 21, 2023.

[104] Nikita A. Khlystov, "The Flame That Turned into a Fire: An Analysis of the July Days, 1917," MIT Online Paper for the Project "The Deepening of the Russian Revolution – 1917". Electronically

without a fight, and so, violent street skirmishes broke out. These clashes lasted for three days and resulted in hundreds of causalities, most of them among the ranks of protestors and Bolshevik forces.[105]

Even though the Bolshevik leadership, including Lenin, was at first hesitant to back the protestors, the political fallout of the July Days was devastating for the Bolsheviks. Their adversaries wasted no time painting them as radicals who sought greater anarchy rather than order. As a matter of fact, even Lenin, whose backing was crucial to the growth and continuation of the protests, declined to meet with the representatives of the mostly Bolshevik protesters.[106] Afterwards, he delivered a brief statement in which he criticized the reactionaries and the government for the mayhem, without showing any evidence of backing the violent approach demonstrators opted to take.[107] Although the Bolsheviks and Lenin shortly after opted to take a more hardliner approach to seizing power, some of the earliest differences of opinion and early rifts were sowed in this time, and would later prove to be decisive.[108]

When viewed through the Bolshevik leadership's lens, however, these events took on a very different meaning. According to Trotsky, tensions between the Bolshevik and Provisional leadership grew after Lunacharsky and Trotsky, two prominent Bolsheviks, appeared to back for sending a final batch of protestors to the front during a farewell session in the House of People. He depicted the Bolsheviks and the Provisionals going back and forth, each seeking to lure the other into the danger zone.[109]

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available at: https://web.mit.edu/russia1917/papers/0703-TheFlameThatTurnedIntoAFire.pdf, Date of Access: February 21, 2023.

[105] Joe M. Feist, "Railways and Politics: The Russian Diary of George Gibbs, 1917," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (1979): 178-199, especially on 193; Michael Kort, "The July Days," in *The Soviet Colossus: History and Aftermath* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 210): 103-105, especially on 104.

[106] Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks Come to Power: The Revolution of 1917 in Petrograd* (Haymarket Books, 2009).

[107] Nikita A. Khlystov, "The Flame That Turned into a Fire: An Analysis of the July Days, 1917," MIT Online Paper for the Project "The Deepening of the Russian Revolution – 1917". Electronically available at: https://web.mit.edu/russia1917/papers/0703-TheFlameThatTurnedIntoAFire.pdf, Date of Access: February 21, 2023.

[108] For an extensive account of opposition within the ranks of Bolshevik Party against Lenin, I recommend seeing Paul Avrich, "Bolshevik Opposition to Lenin: G. T. Miasnikov and the Workers' Group," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (January 1984): 1-29.

[109] Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution, Volume Two: The Attempted Counter-Revolution* (1930; Electronically, 2014), https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1930/hrr/ch24.htm, Date of Access: February 21, 2023.

Making the matters even worse for the Bolshevik Party, substantial evidence was generated indicating Bolshevik leader Lenin had intimate political and financial links with the German government, which the government hoped would weaken support for the Bolsheviks and the likelihood of a conservative coup d'état.[110] Lenin sought refuge in Finland, while others, including Trotsky, were imprisoned,[111] forcing the remaining senior Bolsheviks to once again go underground in order to prepare for what was to come.

2.2.5 Kerensky's Failures: The Chaos in Russian Military and Politics

In the wake of Nicholas II's abdication as the last Russian Tsar and the subsequent establishment of the Provisional Government under the leadership of a prominent Kadet, Aleksandr Kerensky, the political realm was anything but stable. It is arguable that the Provisional Government, based in Petrograd, was never able to exert complete authority over the vast areas it sought to rule. In the newly formed Russian Republic (and the subsequent Russian Democratic Federal Republic), the Provisional Government's such claims were heavily contested by the new factions, with the Bolsheviks empowered by the Petrograd Soviet emerging as the most influential. The political situation in Russia was still far from reaching a final destination, and high-ranking officers in the Soviet armed forces with heavy aristocratic links were getting more dissatisfied with the way things were going.

Although it was clear that dissatisfaction with the ongoing war and Russia's participation in it was the driving force behind the mobilization of the people and the armed forces that led to the victory of the February Revolution, the Kerensky government still opted for staying loyal with their military commitments with Allies. Such a fateful decision was certain to have long-lasting implications. Most importantly, if it could ever exist in the first place, the early surge of enthusiasm for the Provisional Government among the Russian people was shattered by this terrible choice, and the social and economic consequences for Russian society only increased.[112]

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[110] R. P. Browder and A. F. Kerensky (eds.), *The Russian Provisional Government 1917,* Third Ed. (Stanford, 1961): 1364, 1378-79; For the More Detailed Description of SRs and their Deputies on Suppressing Bolsheviks, *Izvestiya*, No. 111 (7 July 1917) and No. 114 (11 July 1917).

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[112] Boris Elkin, "The Kerensky Government and Its Fate," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (December 1964): 716-736.

The events of February and March 1917 did not deter Kerensky from assuring the Entente that Russia would be able to carry out its plans for a summer attack. The offensive was planned by supreme commander Aleksei Brusilov. Nevertheless, it is believed that Brusilov told Kerensky that there was little excitement among the troops in the front line for an attack. Seeing this, Kerensky went to the front lines, in words of Prit Buttar, "...exhorting the men to fight valiantly in defense of the revolution, which he warned them was endangered by German imperialism." This offensive, or as it is widely known, “The Kerensky Offensive” (*Наступление Керенского*), failed to achieve any strategic gains and still costed the lives of an estimated 400,000 men.[113] However, the Russian losses significantly outweighed these men, as the demoralized army, or what was left of it, retreated in an uncontrollable manner that smashed what little order and discipline remained among its lines.

It is worth to note that the repeal of the death sentence, as well as the strong presence of revolutionary troublemakers at the front, notably Bolshevik agitators who advocated an anti-war message, contributed to the further deterioration of order among the ranks. The situation was made worse because the High Command did not do what was necessary to fix it; they were not quick enough to respond to the problems the officers had encountered, and they did not do enough to stop the politicization of the army. To restore officer authority and maintain control over the body of soldiers, the Russian high command (Stavka) had a limited number of orders that could be enforced without being disregarded by the men.[114]

Such a disorder among what is left out of army soon proved even more influential over the existing political chaos, as Brusilov was blamed for the failure of armed forces and replaced with Lavr Kornilov, an officer Kerensky would trust with restoring the order but would fatally mistake for a second time.[115] The steps he was about to take set the stage for the period, during which Kerensky's already fragile and inefficient government proved itself vulnerable and powerless in the eyes of the public and their opponents, particularly the Bolsheviks, who were recurring their power before moving the matters to a next level.

[113] Prit Buttar, *Russia’s Last Grasp: The Eastern Front 1916-1917* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2017): 138-155.

[114] Thomas Hingston, “Officers and the Revolution: February – October 1917,” PhD Dissertation at Queen Mary University of London, 2017.

[115] Prit Buttar, *Russia’s Last Grasp: The Eastern Front 1916-1917* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2017): 189-198.

2.2.6 Lavr Kornilov: "Failed Napoleon" of Russia

Because of his bold actions while serving in the Tsar's army during The Great War, Kornilov was a well-known figure in the Russian military even before the events of the years that followed the February Revolution. His bravery and willingness to take risks were quickly recognized by his superiors, and Brusilov, the man who would eventually being replaced by him, summed up Kornilov's abilities and the respect of his troops thusly: "The general (Kornilov) never neglected his division... He sustained horrifying losses but never left the front... The officers and soldiers loved him for he trusted them... He had a lot of courage, yet he would occasionally rush to the front without thinking."[116]

His reckless pursuit of fame, however, would eventually prove disastrous to the forces he commanded. When engaged in battle with German and Austria-Hungarian forces in the Carpathian Mountains, his division was cut off from supplies and eventually annihilated due to a combination of factors, including Kornilov's "foolish eagerness" to assault without first thoroughly calculating the risks.[117]

Kornilov was often emphasized on this "fighting" character as well as a striking opponent of politics and sociology of major urban areas. For instance, Luckett compared Kornilov with the older generation of Russian generals, stating "He famously had an emotive phrase, [which] conjured up the picture of a leader of men who was the antithesis of the desk-bound staff officer or bureaucrat, who would never hesitate to expose himself to danger, a hero in the sense of General Skobelev."[118]

Nonetheless, his worst defeat up to that point would somehow ultimately help propel him to the heights of fame and renown. Soon after his capture by the Austrians, he managed to escape, and news of his audacious but ultimately successful action spread through the people, who were seeking for any positive development at all in their fight against the Germans and their Austrian allies in The Great War.

The Russian Army quickly put this information to use, quoting one of their representatives, Naval Admiral Bubnov in Stavka, who commented on General Kornilov as, "General Kornilov was by nature an infinitely brave, honorable, upright, and

[116] A. A. Brusilov, *Vospominaniya* (Moscow: Olma Press, 2004): 172. Translation of these important documents is done by Onur İşçi.
[117] Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front: 1914-17* (New York: Charles Schribner's Sons, 1975): 137.
[118] Richard Luckett, *The White Generals* (New York: Viking, 1971): 62.

straightforward man, totally imbued with a feeling of his military duty… While he was tough and rigorous in his expectations on the men, they adored him and were committed to him because of his personal courage, proven in battle, and his heroic escape from German (in reality Austrian) captivity."[119]

Following the disastrous years for Russian army, Kornilov has been characterized as a traditionalist who considers the death penalty and other forms of corporal punishment necessary for maintaining social order and discipline.[120] He was well aware that the lack of severe punishments in the army had contributed significantly to the breakdown of what little order and discipline had persisted within the army corps in the aftermath of the revolutionary turmoil of February 1917. On this account, Kornilov despised anyone who objected to his use of such methods or tried to stop him from doing so.

Another significant aspect of his personality was his political views. An anti-Bolshevik sentiment was the defining feature of his philosophy. He had always been a faithful Tsarist, yet he embraced the February Revolution and the Provisional Government with much reluctance. But even if he could barely tolerate Kerensky, he was absolutely opposed to socialist ideology. He was a staunch opponent of socialism and socialists, saw the Petrograd Soviet as a criminal organization, and suspected Lenin of being a German spy out to ruin Russia.

His military career advanced quickly, as is typical for men of his talents in the uncertain years following a revolution, and on July 16 he was promoted to command the South-West front of the Russian forces under the instructions of the Provisional Government, which soon was followed by his getting in charge of the whole military.[121] These promotions were made possible in part by Kornilov's strong relationship with Boris Savinkov, a former revolutionary zealot who is now Kerensky's right-hand man in

[119] A. D. Bubnov, *V Tsarskoi Stavke* (New York, 1955): 349-350; Onur İşçi, "The Kornilov Affair: Paving the Way for Bolshevism," Master's Thesis at Department of International Relations, Bilkent University, Ankara / Turkey (May 2005): 35.

[120] Lindsey M. Holland, "The Kornilov Affair: Fighting for a Lost Cause," MIT Online Paper for the Project "The Deepening of the Russian Revolution – 1917". Electronically available at: https://web.mit.edu/russia1917/papers/0827-KornilovAffairFightingForALostCause.pdf, Date of Access: February 21, 2023.

[121] E. I. Martynov, *Kornilov: Popytka voennogo perevorota* (Leningrad, 1927): 16–20, as quoted by Holland (2023).

military matters, as he saw Kornilov as a viable candidate "capable of reviving the combative heroism of the army."[122]

When the public's favorable view of Kerensky and his administration faded after the Bolsheviks were demonized, these views came in handy for Kerensky, who was already searching urgently for a replacement for Brusilov. While it appears to be a reasonable choice, Kerensky's indecision is an essential part of the tale because it explains how rapidly Kornilov was appointed to command of the Russian army.[123] The quick pace at which Kerensky made choices on the Russian military and government played a significant role in the development of this outcome.

Kornilov was eager to reconstruct the Russian Army, which had degenerated into a disgrace, into the pristine force it once was. He decided to work with Kerensky, an unlikely ally, in large part because, like Kerensky was a Socialist Revolutionary who believed in the principles of a revolution that military men like Kornilov hated from their hearts. Kornilov, however, believed that any degree of order was preferable to the total anarchy that Bolsheviks and other radicals were advocating for. The prospective White general Anton Denikin, who would later head the Anti-Bolshevik troops in Southern Russia—likely the most active front of the conflict in the coming years of the Civil War—wrote that Kornilov had proposed various conditions before agreeing to such an important promotion and assignment.[124] Kerensky himself elaborated on four of these prerequisites in his memoirs,[125] including the need for a very broad and comprehensive authority over the whole military forces and the elimination of any "destructive politics" inside the armed forces:

1) Kornilov would be responsible only in front of people and his own conscience,
2) The administration would not intervene to his military orders, which include the various assignments and appointments he would intend to do,
3) Focusing on the Front with all available resources, the reallocation of any reserves to the purposes of sustaining order and security in borders,

[122] Boris Savinkov, "L'Affaire Korniloff," in *Mercure de France*, Vol. 132 (1919): 387.
[123] Onur İşçi, "The Kornilov Affair: Paving the Way for Bolshevism," Master's Thesis at Department of International Relations, Bilkent University, Ankara / Turkey (May 2005): 39.
[124] General A. I. Denikin, *The Russian Turmoil, Memoirs: Military, Social, and Political* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1922): 303.
[125] A. F. Kerensky, *The Prelude to Bolshevism: The Kornilov Rebellion* (London: T. Fischer Unwin, 1919): 53.

4) A complete acceptance of all these demands.

Such calls for power may appear reasonable at times of crisis and obvious disorder and anarchy within the ranks of the army. Yet, if one takes the time to observe carefully, it becomes clear that no government could ever agree on such demands since doing so would effectively establish a separate state within the existing one. Denikin was well aware of this, and he made it plain that such demands would give the army a new shape unlike anything else in the world at the moment.[126]

Yet, Kerensky did not think twice about agreeing to these requests, which surprised many at the time. There were two main reasons for this. Firstly, he was extremely anxious to create a new storyline, one that would provide him and his administration with widespread legitimacy in the eyes of the people while also satisfying the needs of a cooperative and coercive military staff. Second, in his estimation, Kornilov was simply a naive idealist army man whom he could still manipulate politically through providing him a perception of authority and power over army that would ultimately benefit his administration.[127]

Kornilov's reputation as a fine soldier but lacking in political ability was shared by other renowned colleagues, as evidenced by General Alexeev, one of the first White generals as well as the legendary Chief of Staff during the turbulent days that saw the end of the Tsarist monarchy in Russia, who described Kornilov as "a politically ignorant general with the brevity and heart of a lion while also having the brain of a sheep."[128] Kornilov's flaws were well-known in the military and political circles of the period, but his and Kerensky's shared vision of rebuilding Russia's fighting capabilities to guarantee its continuing obligations to the Entante secured the deal. Chamberlin gives a compelling depiction of the interaction between this naive army member and the revolutionary, albeit rather conservative, politician:[129]

[126] Denikin (1922): 303. For an extensive discussion on his comments regarding Kornilov's requests, see Onur İşçi, "The Kornilov Affair: Paving the Way for Bolshevism," Master's Thesis at Department of International Relations, Bilkent University, Ankara / Turkey (May 2005): 42-43.

[127] A. F. Kerensky, *The Prelude to Bolshevism: The Kornilov Rebellion* (London: T. Fischer Unwin, 1919): 54.

[128] Brian Moynahan, *Comrades* (London: Hutchinson, 1992): 230.

[129] William Henry Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution, 1917-1921* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935): 194.

Had Kerensky been a revolutionary of the uncompromising type and had Kornilov been an out-and-out monarchist, anxious to replace the Romanovs on the throne, the appointment of the latter would never have taken place, or at least the irrepressible conflict between the two men would have burst out much sooner than it actually did. But as a matter of fact, the desires, and objectives of the Socialist Revolutionary Premier and of the Cossack General ran along parallel lines to a certain extent.

The fact is that neither man was anywhere close to becoming a radical based on his political beliefs. Kerensky was a revolutionary, although one who was rather moderate in contrast to other socialists. While he was a staunch opponent of the corrupt and archaic rule under a monarch or Tsar in the case of Russia, he was willing to work with more conservative minded people to advance his broader alliance with right-wing elements under the canopy of a "bourgeoise republic." Kornilov, on the other hand, was fiercely opposed to the chaos and disorder that he and many others in the army ranks blamed on politicians like Kerensky. Yet, he may still do their bidding if it meant stopping more extremist groups from seizing power and leading his "beloved Russia" down a far darker road. This ability to reach a compromise that is serving to the interest of both parties eventually enabled Kornilov to gain command of the whole Russian army. Naturally, on this outcome his high reputation in the eyes of Savinkov and the notion within political circles that he is a man who can be controlled while commanding the army on their behalf were influential as well.

2.2.7 The Rising Tensions Between Kornilov and Kerensky

At first, it appeared that things were looking well for the Provisional Government and its new leader Kerensky. Nevertheless, it was not long before conservative elements began to rally around Kornilov, considering him as a possible candidate who would restore the Tsardom to Russia and wipe out the final vestiges of revolution by overthrowing the largely socialist revolutionary government of Kerensky.

These two leaders, who initially got along very well, became embroiled in a struggle because of severe attacks from German forces along the Eastern Border, which evolved into a mash that was unfortunate for Russians to continue battle over the obligations made to Allies by Kerensky and his government, anxious for international recognition and assistance. Kornilov was appointed Commander-in-Chief of Russian forces after his

requests, one of which required total authority over military decisions, were granted. However now, as the enemy's attacks reached their height, the army chief and the prime minister were turning against one other and engaging in a conflict that would ultimately result in the downfall of both men.

The greatest chapter of this struggle arose when Kornilov anticipated a German attack on Riga – a daring maneuver that may threaten even the capital Petrograd – and concentrated most of his forces in this region to thwart such an effort. The military position, however, was catastrophic. Even the Entante diplomats in the region were not optimistic about the capabilities of the remaining armed forces under Kornilov. For instance, French diplomat Louis de Robien was noting the disastrous state of the Russian army and portraying Kornilov as a man who "had a lot of aspirations based on unreasonable goals":[130]

“It is everywhere: Russian forces are withdrawing and fleeing. There is no telling when or where they will stop. General Polovtsov told Chambrun, "On the Volga." Knowing full well that he was fired in the wake of the recent occurrences makes me aware of his tendency to see the worst in situations. Nevertheless, General Kornilov, the military's top officer, is not any more optimistic about the situation. He said in a public letter, "It is foolish to conceive of beginning an attack before the end of September, and that the full army must be pulled back."

To make matters worse, there was widespread speculation that a Bolshevik assassination plot against Kornilov was going to be carried out.[131] Kornilov, though, was certain that he could bring order back to the army and ultimately stop the advancing Germans. The tensions rose between Kornilov and Kerensky, when Kornilov was enthusiastically describing the extent of reforms that needs to be implemented on the army and Kerensky tried to stop him from getting more in the details of these proposals.[132] Kornilov interpreted this move, which in reality came as a result of Kerensky's suspicions that one of his ministers was spying on behalf of the Soviets and may pass on this

[130] Louise de Robien, *The Diary of a Diplomat in Russia: 1917-1918* (London: Michael Joseph, 1969): 89.

[131] Onur İşçi, “The Kornilov Affair: Paving the Way for Bolshevism,” Master’s Thesis at Department of International Relations, Bilkent University, Ankara / Turkey (May 2005): 50.

[132] Onur İşçi, “The Kornilov Affair: Paving the Way for Bolshevism,” Master’s Thesis at Department of International Relations, Bilkent University, Ankara / Turkey (May 2005): 50.

confidential information, as further proof that socialist revolutionaries and Kerensky were not more reliable in governing Russia.[133]

Growing hostility between the two men sprang from a shared anxiety. Originally, they were able to come to a settlement that was based on shared aims and worked to limit the influence of extremist groups. Yet as time went on and tensions rose, both men began to see the other as an instrument of the more radical factions that embraced them; Kornilov saw Kerensky as more of a revolutionary than a stateman, while Kerensky saw his Commander-in-Chief as a focal point for reactionaries. And this was not based on nothing but wild guesses, either.

The main charge against Kerensky is that once he purged Bolsheviks from power in the wake of the July Days, he saw the right wing as the greatest threat and did absolutely nothing to contain factions on the left spectrum that were trying to acquire more power at the expense of more moderate and right-wing minded groups.[134] On the other hand, Kornilov was really becoming an influential figure, who seemed as a rescuer in the eyes of more radical right-wing or even reactionary elements. As Denikin underlined, "Kornilov became a banner, one of counterrevolution for some, while as the salvation of the motherland for the others."[135]

A glimmer of hope remained, however, for the restoration of cooperative working ability between the social revolutionary Provisional Government and the conservative or even reactionary army command. To this end, on August 12–13, a Moscow State Conference was convened as a forum that could serve the ultimate interests of the entire Russian population by stressing the importance of banding together to fight the foreign invasion and radical groups undermining the social harmony, or what was left of it.

Moscow State Conference: Promoting Kornilov, Depressing Kerensky

Moscow State Conference met with extremely high hopes. By suppressing and eliminating the attempts coming from more radical factions to jeopardize this political alliance, the apparent split between the army and the government would be repaired, and the compromise between moderate right and left would be re-established. In other words, expectations were high, and the political atmosphere was thought to be favorable, for

[133] Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolutions* (New York: Knopf, 1990): 445.
[134] N.N. Sukhanov, *The Russian Revolution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955): p.492.
[135] A.I. Denikin, *Ocherki Russkoi Smuty* (Paris, 1922): p.112.

realizing these objectives. The meeting, however, would achieve none of these goals and instead served as further evidence of Kornilov's growing influence at the expense of Kerensky and his administration.

While both men delivered their prepared speeches, it was Kornilov whose address was the most memorable and engaging of the two. He presented himself as an enthusiastic patriot, willing to do whatever was necessary to prevent the destruction of his country.[136] Kornilov's brother-in-arms, General Lukomsky, remembers a particular part of the general's speech that demonstrated this interest further in which Kornilov said, "I have no personal desire. To that end, I am willing to work under a strong Interim Government to safeguard Russia."[137]

On the other hand, Kerensky proved that he was unable to take advantage of the politically favorable climate for him, albeit it might be argued that this chance had already gone with the catastrophic Brusilov Offensive. With the *Generalissimo* overshadowing his speech and presence at the conference, his political and social support was diminishing even faster. Even Kerensky's closest political allies and followers reportedly found nothing to cheer about during this socialist revolutionary's speech and began cheering before he finished, a gesture that was widely regarded as an attempt to hasten the end of Kerensky's apparent suffering.[138] Kerensky's failure at the conference was seen by some as the defining moment of the lawyer's political and moral decline, as his administration had missed an opportunity to capitalize on the political vacuum left by the Bolshevik Party's suppression and had instead given the military and conservatives increased influence, jeopardizing the progress made since the February Revolution.[139]

In a nutshell, nearly none of the objectives of the state conference were met. As Kerensky departed the meeting without any practical gains and even highlighted the ineffectiveness and anarch inside his cabinet, Kornilov left with growing popularity and

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[136] F. A. Golder, *Documents of Russian History, 1914-1917* (New York & London, 1927): 494. A more detailed analysis of this speech and the most exciting parts of it is available in Leonid I. Strakhovsky, "Was There a Kornilov Rebellion? A Re-Appraisal of the Evidence," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 33, No. 81 (June 1955): 372-395, especially 384-386.

[137] Alexander Kerensky and Robert Paul Browder, *The Russian Provisional Government 1917: Documents*, Vol. 3 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), Document No. 1263, "General Lukomsky's Account of the Kornilov Affair".

[138] V. Vladimirova, *Kontrrevolitsiya v 1917 g (Kornilovshchina)* (Moscow, 1924): 83, as quoted by Figes (1998).

[139] Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution: 1891-1924* (Penguin Books, 1998): 449.

support, particularly among legislators and notable army officials with a more conservative mindset. On the other side, the working class and socialist elements within the society were becoming increasingly frustrated as they worried about a possible counter-revolution led by Generalissimo and saw that the ineffective SR and Mensheviks were unable to prevent the empowerment of right-wing and reactionary forces under his direction. Chamberlin, aware of this situation, argued that these groups were already excluded from attending a conference that was supposed to provide a higher national unity, and it played a central role in the alienation of Kerensky in the eyes of his follow revolutionaries:

"The original intention of the State Conference was to serve as a focal point for fostering national unity. There was zero success at all in this regard. The vast numbers of workers and soldiers who had already begun to rally behind the Bolshevik banner were excluded from the conference, and from the time it opened, the delegates were divided into two factions who would never be able to work together."[140]

These anti-conservative elements, most of whom were previously sympathetic to the Bolshevik program but only distanced themselves from them owing to untimed chaos transpired during the July Days, were seeking for a solution, also a savior for them and their revolution, and soon this old friend would once again resurface, and this time effectively present itself as "the vanguard of revolution".

2.2.8 Kornilov Affair: Paving the Way for Bolsheviks

One can reasonably believe that the moment Kornilov's decision to march into Petrograd and these hardline revolutionaries stepped off for the mission to defend the February Revolution against this allegedly military coup attempt was when the Bolsheviks first appeared as the most appealing alternative for the mission to fill the power gap emerged following the demise of the Tsarist regime in Russia. Several experts consider the Kornilov Affair as "prelude to Bolshevism" since it exposed the Provisional Government's seeming vulnerabilities while simultaneously highlighting the opposition's capabilities.[141] Newspaper reporters in Britain were quick to note that

[140] William Henry Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution, 1917-1921* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935): 201.

[141] Abraham Ascher, "The Kornilov Affair," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (October 1953): 235-252.

Russia's political climate was shifting, stating that "The Kornilov Affair was the beginning of the end for what at this time may rightly be termed the Kerensky Government."[142]

There were some social revolutionaries who went so far as to blame the moderate factions of betraying the February Revolution by abandoning the Provisional Government and handing the country over to the Bolsheviks, who had been undoubtedly on the verge of losing power before this incident.[143] One may argue that the Kornilov Affair and growing concerns of a counter-revolution from traditionalist and right-wing military forces gave the Bolsheviks the much-needed enthusiasm to rise from the ashes as the saviors of the revolution and to cast blame on the Provisional Government and Kerensky for collaborating with reactionaries.[144]

Considering all these, even today, it is difficult to come to a definite conclusion as to what was happening and what was anticipated by the parties involved, which is why it is still better to describe this series of events as an allegedly attempted military coup. There was widespread confusion and conflicting reports, which helped the Bolsheviks—the opponents of both Kornilov and Kerensky—rise to power.

Researchers such as Abraham Ascher (1953) and Robert D. Warth (1954) stated that what Kornilov was doing and trying to achieve was a military coup that would get rid of the last of the socialists and revolutionaries in power in Russia by putting him and the conservative forces in charge.[145] One may argue that one of the main motivations for such narratives is the widespread view that Kornilov overestimated his political and social influence and took advantage of his emergence as a more powerful figure following the inconclusive Moscow State Conference.

On the other hand, those such as Strakhovksy (1955) were in position more neutral position on such claims and believed that Kornilov did not act with an intention to destroy the Provisional Government. In fact, what Kornilov was aspiring to achieve, they argued, was restoring order and discipline in the capital and its government by preventing the

[142] Arno Dosch-Fleurot, *Through War to Revolution* (London: John Lane, 1934): 174, as quoted by Ascher (1953).

[143] Michael Karpovich, "The Russian Revolution of 1917," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (June 1930): 258-280, especially 270.

[144] Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolutions* (New York: Knopf, 1990): 439.

[145] Abraham Ascher, "The Kornilov Affair," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (October 1953): 235-252; Robert D. Warth, *The Allies and the Russian Revolution* (N.C: Durham, 1954).

emergence of a power vacuum that extremists like Bolsheviks could exploit.[146] His close associates and brothers-at arms Generals Denikin and Lukomsky went as further as putting the whole blame of the outcome on the shoulders of Kerensky.[147]

It is a well-known fact that the aristocratic and landlord elements, which wielded great power under the Romanov dynasty but are now staunch enemies of the new order emerged after the February Revolution, provided the most significant backing for Kornilov to take a more direct action and put his iron fist on the Russian politics. As an example, on August 26, Kornilov received a telegram from the Landowners' Union in the Bel'tsy district, who urged him to take decisive action against the insurgent local peasantry.[148] Yet, support for Kornilov and his goals was rather widespread, including not just landlords and aristocrats but also some segments of the newly emerging bourgeoisie and entrepreneurs. For example, a substantial proportion of this support came from the elite business communities of Petrograd and Moscow, centered mostly on the industrial and banking guilds of these two urban centers of Russia.[149]

Kerensky and the Provisional Government are said to have to have had existing knowledge of Kornilov's ambition and menace. This understanding grew more serious following Kornilov's remarks at the Moscow State Conference, as Kerensky began to regard his Commander-in-Chief not just as a rival, but also as the most likely leader of a potential counter-revolution spearheaded by reactionaries and radical forces within conservative groups.[150] Yet what really had Kerensky and his inner circle on edge was not Kornilov but rather the growing number of businessmen, landowners, and aristocrats who saw the favorable circumstances for rallying under his favorable Commander-in-Chief.[151]

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[146] Leonid I. Strakhovsky, "Was There a Kornilov Rebellion? A Re-Appraisal of the Evidence," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 33, No. 81 (June 1955): 372-395.

[147] Michael Karpovich, "The Russian Revolution of 1917," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (June 1930): 258-280, especially 273.

[148] *Razgrom Kornilovskogo Myatezha* (Moscow, 1959): 421, as quoted by White (October 1968).

[149] James D. White, "The Kornilov Affair: A Study in Counter-Revolution," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (October 1968): 187-205, especially 187-188.

[150] P. N. Milyukov, *Istoriya Vtoroy Russkoy Revolyutsii*, Vol. 1, Part II (Sofia, 1921): 149, as quoted by White (October 1968), as quoted by White (October 1968).

[151] James D. White, "The Kornilov Affair: A Study in Counter-Revolution," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (October 1968): 187-205, especially 204-205.

It is clear that Kerensky was anxious, and one might make the case that he was more terrified of Kornilov than the other way around.[152] For example, when Kerensky's inner circle informed him that Kornilov had scheduled a trip to Petrograd without his authorization, he immediately sent Kornilov a telegraph declaring, "The Provisional Government did not call for you, nor did it urge on your coming and consequently does not bear any responsibility in this issue, in sight of the 'existing strategic conditions'."[153] Obviously, Kornilov was not the type of man to adjust his plans in response to such soft warnings.

Furthermore, Kerensky was aware of the international support Kornilov was receiving from various diplomats and military attachés from Entante nations, the majority of whom saw him as a more stable and viable option than the socialist revolutionaries in Kerensky's administration, whom they detested among those who deposed their partner in the Russian throne. They were accusing the new rulers of compromising the Entante's eastern boundaries and providing the Germans an advantage on other fronts. Kerensky made a fair attempt to rid his administration of these allegations and icy attitude, but Entante powers would still prefer to have a more conservative leader on whom they could count to keep Russia committed in the Great War.

According to some accounts, British military attaché Brigadier-General Alfred Knox was a strong backer of Kornilov, and Kerensky would subsequently hold Knox responsible for giving Kornilov's followers a large amount of operational ground.[154] These allegations reached as high as suggesting that several British servicemen protecting the British mission in Russia were involved in the Kornilov Affair by providing armored support for the suspected plotters.[155] However, it is still better to discuss the extent and influence of this support while discussing the Kornilov Affair in a greater extent.

With these new developments, the two men and the increasingly eager groups behind them were making preparations for what was ahead. By the end of August, when the long-awaited escalation of German attacks finally began, the Russian Homefront had become

[152] Leonid I. Strakhovsky, "Was There a Kornilov Rebellion? A Re-Appraisal of the Evidence," *The Slavonic and Eastern European Review*, Vol. 33, No. 81 (June 1955): 372-395, especially 382.

[153] P. N. Milyukov, *Istoriya Vtoroy Russkoy Revolyutsii*, Vol. 1, Part II (Sofia, 1921): 107, as quoted by White (October 1968).

[154] Richard Ullman, *Intervention and the War* (Princeton University Press, 1961): 11-13.

[155] Keith Nelson, *Strategy and Supply: The Anglo-Russian Alliance* (Routledge, 2014): 282-290; Michael Hughes, *Inside the Enigma: British Officials in Russia, 1900-39* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 1997).

more precarious, with both sides accusing the other of abandoning Russia and leading her more exposed to the possibility of a second revolution at a time when the country desperately needed unity.

Kornilov Marches to Petrograd

Once the Germans took Riga on September 3, it was clear that the capital was no longer safe from German assault. The Provisional Government, with Kerensky at the helm, was at a crossroads just as the time for the most decisive action had arrived.[156] The dilemma began when decisions were to be made about the city's garrison, the majority of whose members had taken part in the July Uprisings and were therefore politically very untrustworthy.

At first, it was decided to send all these units to the freshly created frontlines, which were subject to constant change due to the rapid German advance and nearly nonexistent resistance. Unfortunately for the Provisional Government, the political climate in Petrograd was unfavorable. Kerensky, concerned about the chaos and rising discontent from extreme right-wing and left-wing elements, chose to replace these units with politically more dependable troops, most of which were cavalry divisions evacuating Finland's borders to guard the city from the Germans and a potential right-wing or left-wing counter-revolution attempt.[157]

As a result of this decision, the government notified Kornilov that they expected a Bolshevik insurrection to take place in the capital in the coming days, and that these forces were essential to either prevent such an effort from happening or, if it did happen, to put a stop to it. As Kornilov requested to be briefed, if not totally granted this authority, when such military installations were being created, it was agreed that recently appointed Deputy Minister of Defense Savinkov, an SR famed for the elaborate assassinations he and his followers carried out against Tsarist officials during the reign of the Romanov monarchy, would notify Kornilov about this decision and the Provisional Government's

[156] Michael T. Florinsky, *Russia: A History and an Interpretation*, Vol. 2 (New York, 1953): 1438.
[157] P. N. Milyukov, *Istoriya Vtoroy Russkoy Revolyutsii*, Vol. 1, Part II (Sofia, 1921): 156, as quoted by White (October 1968).

intentions behind it. On September 6, he notified the Commander-in-Chief, allegedly saying:[158]

"Hence, I am requesting that you direct the Third Cavalry Corps to be consolidated in the Petrograd region and make it subject to the Provisional Government. Even if just the most radical Petrograd Soviets try to overthrow the government, we'll be able to use these soldiers under our command to crush their rebellion before it can escalate."

This was a brilliantly planned move on the part of the Provisional Government and Kerensky. By removing the Third Cavalry Corps from Kornilov's leadership and assuming charge of it themselves, they were not only testing the waters against the Bolsheviks and other potential radical revolutionaries, but also against Kornilov himself. Perhaps more importantly, they were using Kornilov's fear of a Bolshevik uprising as a wedge to force him to make this decision. In that regard, Kerensky's situation appeared to be a win-win scenario.

It may sound interesting, but one can even speculate Third Cavalry Corps was idealized as the Roman legions, who were protecting the Senate against advantageous and ambitious generals and their coup attempts. Just like these historical units were tasked to protect Rome against politically ambitious generals, Third Cavalry Corps would also protect Petrograd not only against the insurgents from radical elements of left-wing but also right-wing as well. Now the decision that will lead into this outcome was completely on the shoulders of Kornilov, whose decision would prove itself vital and as a determining moment for what was coming ahead.

It is difficult to say if Kornilov really comprehended the implications of such a request, but he apparently did not give them much thought because he was so focused on restoring some kind of order and discipline to the remaining forces under his command. Indeed, there are scholars who say that, while initially it was a faithful circumstance that it was Kerensky standing as Prime Minister rather than anyone else at that era, as he was the most potential candidate that a guy like Kornilov could work under without difficulties, what was initially helpful in the long run became a terrible condition now as Kerensky's quest for more authority and jealously to share his power with anyone else

[158] P. N. Milyukov, *Istoriya Vtoroy Russkoy Revolyutsii*, Vol. 1, Part II (Sofia, 1921): 162. Please see Leonid I. Strakhovsky, "Was There a Kornilov Rebellion? A Re-Appraisal of the Evidence," *The Slavonic and Eastern European Review*, Vol. 33, No. 81 (June 1955): 372-395, especially 386.

intensified.[159] Now, Kerensky was looking for even further concessions from his Generalissimo.

Kerensky was confident that a right-wing and conservative coup was imminent, a conspiracy that "developed slowly, systematically with a cool calculation of any possible scenarios were calculated with a direct decision to remove he and socialist revolutionaries from power regardless," as he wrote in his own records.[160] Because of such expectations, this chain of events has been dubbed a "Kerensky Affair" by some, rather than a "Kornilov Affair" by others.

It is possible to argue that such lack of faith in his Chief of Staff and the subsequent portrayal of him as a hub for counter-revolutionary conservative and even reactionary groups, the possibility of a return to the status quo peacefully was eliminated. For example, Pipes (1990) argued that the "Kerensky Plot" was devised to discredit the general as the ringleader of an imaginary but widely anticipated counter-revolution, the silencing of which would elevate the Prime Minister to an unrivaled position of popularity and authority, letting him to face the growing threat from the Bolsheviks unguarded.[161]

The problem emerged when Kerensky decided to test where Kornilov's real loyalties were lying. The context emerged when V. N. L'vov, a member of the Kadet and former Procurator of the Holy Synod in the First Provisional Government, came to speak with Kerensky, asking him whether he would think to implement several governmental reforms that could be beneficial in re-generating some sort of united front against radicals once again.[162]

It is uncertain if Kerensky was truly interested in implementing such reforms because he was a politician who did not want to share even a small portion of his power and authority, but one can assume he found this proposal highly appealing because it allowed him to simply conduct the test, he had intended to accomplish for quite some time. It is worth noting, though, that there's a substantial rebuttal to this view, which argues that Kerensky did not find L'vov's visit particularly intriguing since he had to sit through such discussions frequently at a time when Russia's political fate was still up in the air and

[159] George Vernadsky, *A History of Russia* (New Haven, 1929): 243.
[160] A. F. Kerensky, *The Catastrophe* (Milwood, 1977): 288.
[161] Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution 1899-1919* (London: Collins Harvill, 1990): 467.
[162] Leonid I. Strakhovsky, "Was There a Kornilov Rebellion? A Re-Appraisal of the Evidence," *The Slavonic and Eastern European Review*, Vol. 33, No. 81 (June 1955): 372-395, especially 387.

there were conflicting ideas for how to move forward.[163] Even the most unacceptable propositions, such as L'vov's offer to include even ministers with well-known monarchial sympathies with a moderate ideological position under the umbrella of Provisional Government,[164] might be addressed in such a situation, even if Kerensky is a staunch opponent of this plan as a socialist revolutionary, if not a Bolshevik.

There are conflicting comments on this initial meeting on September 4 L'vov and Kerensky had; nevertheless, it seems almost certain that the impression L'vov got through this initial talk was not only a sense of encouragement, but even he felt himself indirectly tasked by Kerensky to act as a mediator between he and Kornilov on discussing what can be done within the Provisional Government to prevent further unrest.[165] Feeling this mission on his shoulders, he immediately set for meeting with Kornilov and wanted to get his opinion on which reforms could be adopted.

What exactly did L'vov deliver to Kornilov, though? Did Kerensky actually make any ideas to his *Generalissimo*, and if so, how extensive were they? There are challenges in verifying these testimonies once again, but L'vov claims that Keresky mentioned three potential scenarios in their conversation.[166]

1) Forming up a new Provisional Government, this time having Kornilov as its "dictator",
2) Establishment of a new government equipped with the most extensive powers, and having Kornilov as an important minister in this government,
3) Kornilov's becoming both the Supreme Commander and the Dictator of the new government.

Neither Kornilov nor L'vov, unfortunately, present any substantial evidence that such proposals were actually made by Kerensky, who afterwards strongly denied having made any such offers. It is hard to imagine, however, that a politician like Kerensky, who has proven time and time again that he is not willing to share either his or his government's

[163] Abraham Ascher, "The Kornilov Affair," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (October 1953): 235-252, especially 247; A. F. Kerensky, *The Prelude to Bolshevism: The Kornilov Rising* (New York, 1919): 127-130.

[164] Leonid I. Strakhovsky, "Was There a Kornilov Rebellion? A Re-Appraisal of the Evidence," *The Slavonic and Eastern European Review*, Vol. 33, No. 81 (June 1955): 372-395, especially 387.

[165] Abraham Ascher, "The Kornilov Affair," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (October 1953): 235-252, especially 247.

[166] Abraham Ascher, "The Kornilov Affair," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (October 1953): 235-252, especially 247.

power with external figures, whether or not they are his Commander-in-Chief, would make such offers, especially in the context of a talk he supposedly did not take seriously.

Nonetheless, it is still plausible to hypothesize that at this point he realized his government had almost no power or effective governability, and therefore that it would be best for him to step down from politics and let his successor to deal with whatever was coming. He could do this for two reasons: to protect himself from becoming caught up in the chaos and to seek vengeance on his adversaries, chief among them Kornilov, whom he knew had been plotting against him and his administration for quite a time.

What exactly L'vov and Kornilov discussed during their meeting at Stavka on September 7 remains unknown. Kornilov, on the other hand, very certainly would have been willing to take all measures required to stop a potential Bolshevik attempt to reclaim power and establish themselves to become the final faction in control of what was left of Russia. Those who believe the Generalissimo responded favorably to Kerensky's alleged offers have emphasized that Kornilov was almost certain of this upcoming challenge, and that to prevent it from happening, he actually pledged the complete support and loyalty of himself and the forces under his command to Kerensky, and that he was ready to accept these offers only as a means to take actions before it might already be so late.[167]

Certain sources maintain, however, that Kornilov did not want Kerensky and some of his associates completely removed from power when he accepted the "call to duty" to become the military dictator and form a new and this time predominantly conservative administration. Instead, he reportedly insisted that he and some of his ministers, including Savinkov, be part of the next administration that would be constituted under his leadership. Denikin, his brother-at-arms, would go as far as recounting a call Kornilov made to Kerensky and Savinkov, whom he could not guarantee their safety any longer owing to this "expected Bolshevik takeover", and they should come to his high-quarters as soon as for him it would be possible to "protect them".[168]

Obviously, this response was more than enough to convince a somewhat paranoid politician like Kerensky that Kornilov was using the pretext of a Bolshevik takeover that does not look as close as his predicted coup, to take down him and his administration

[167] Harvey Asher, "The Kornilov Affair: A Reinterpretation," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (July 1970): 286-300, especially 294-295.
[168] Anton Denikin, *Ocherki Russkoi Smuty* (Paris and Berlin, 1921 & 1925): 47-49.

from power. His remarks on the reports of this debate only serve to further illustrate his frustration and concerns over what he sees as the ever-growing threat of a Kornilov coup.[169] Notwithstanding the fact that he took several unfortunate decisions—most of which we have already covered—blaming him for everything would be unfair. Instead, we should recognize that Kornilov's offer appears so suspect even today, and that any politician would feel intimidated under these circumstances, given the power games played out in Russia at the time.

It is unclear why Kerensky decided to act so hastily, but it is safe to assume he did not stop to carefully weigh the repercussions of his choices. It is true that doing so would wipe out any chance of a Kornilov administration assuming office, but in doing so, he'd hand power back to his ultimate rivals the Bolsheviks while opening the door for them to crush any chance of a compromise with more conservative and right-wing elements. As a matter of fact, one may say that Kerensky's choice to, of course at that time inadvertently, invite Bolsheviks back to the game as this time the primary player in it, caused the terrible years shortly to come with an oncoming upheaval and civil war that would decide the fate of Russia irrevocably.

2.2.9 Stopping Kornilov and the Return of Bolsheviks

Kerensky was put in a position where he needed to make a significant decision under such circumstances once again. Now that his Chief of Staff likely saw him as an untrustworthy Prime Minister whom he must depose to preserve Russia from the oncoming Bolshevism, he had to recruit new supporters — and he had to do so very fast. He made a quick assessment and realized he needed to make a decision if he did not want to lose his position without a fight.[170] There would be a struggle that he had incorrectly believed he could win; instead, it would benefit neither man but rather their mutual foes, the Bolsheviks.

Yet, by that time, it is clear that Kornilov is convinced that he must depose Kerensky if he is to preserve Russia from Bolshevism. He had previously entertained hope that he may be able to work with the Provisional Government; however, he now knows that doing

[169] A. F. Kerensky, *The Prelude to Bolshevism: The Kornilov Rebellion* (London: T. Fischer Unwin, 1919): 137-138.

[170] O. N. Chaadaeva, *Kornilovshchina* (Moscow and Leningrad, 1930): 139, as quoted by Asher (1970).

so will be nothing more than a burden if he ever manages to eliminate any surviving revolutionary, since his supporters have long been pressuring him to avoid making any further concessions. Kornilov ultimately decided it was time when an unduly quick declaration made by Kerensky, at a time when it was more difficult than ever to establish the veracity or reliability of any information flowing, attacked him personally and branded the general as a traitor. This prompted him to declare that he was cutting all ties with the Provisional Government and ordering an assault on the Winter Palace to apprehend and bring to justice the perpetrators of Russia's current state of chaos and disarray.[171]

This sudden change in circumstances made it clear that Kornilov could no longer be trusted with the remaining forces. Even though it was widely known that Bolshevism and revolutionary sympathies were widespread throughout the ranks of the armed forces, the disciplinary actions adopted by *Generalissimo* were fruitful in maintaining the residual feeling of order among the soldiers. Also, one might argue that Kornilov and his staff were successful in keeping the conservative and right-wing oriented officers in charge of the command and army centers out of the key industrial towns, making it more difficult than ever for Bolshevik or any other revolutionary agitators to turn the troops against their commanders.

Kerensky, though, could still utilize the left-wing groups because to his ties with the Petrograd Soviet. After the bourgeois democracy experiment, which was supported by moderate groups like the Mensheviks and the SRs, failed to address the most pressing concerns of the people—the unpopular war and Russia's pointless participation in it, and a land reform that everyone could get behind—support for the Bolsheviks soared again. This, along with several other significant events, was a major factor in the growing marginalization of socialist and revolutionary forces operating under the Bolshevik Party banner. Hence, it might be argued that Kerensky had to make common cause with these left-wing forces, especially those that were active in the Petrograd Soviet and the ones that promised actual solutions for the people's issues, most notably the Bolshevik Party, if he wanted to survive Kornilov's arguably counter-revolution attempt.

[171] For the entire statement see A. J. Sack, *The Birth of Russian Democracy* (New York, 1920): 477.

Kornilov's plan to depose Kerensky ultimately fell through. Kerensky, on the other hand, would be unable to envisage a return to power. Instead, this chain of events would prove to be the catalyst for what history would label as a "prelude to Bolshevism".[172] While it is clear that both sides made poor choices at crucial junctures, deciding who is at fault has become an ideological issue. Yet one might argue that both figures overestimated their own powers, which in turn empowered their opponents. Now as the scene was set for them, the Bolsheviks were about to play their cards that would embark a new and indeed revolutionary age for the world politics as a whole.

2.3 The Bolshevik Takeover and the Path Going to Civil War

One of the best ways to start our discussions on the Russian Civil War (1917-1922) is to identify the mechanisms and processes through which it eventually erupted. This pushes a very important question to pop up: how did the Bolsheviks come out of this stronger than ever, in a position where they were almost able to push for the second phase of the revolution they had always advocated for? Before delving into the specifics of the Red and White fronts in during the Russian Civil War, it is helpful to take a quick but thorough look back at the events leading up to the October Revolution and the shifting dynamics of Russian political life that would prove crucial in the years to come.

2.3.1 The Bolsheviks' Rise to Power

It was not shocking that the Bolsheviks would emerge as one of the most probable factions willing to resort to any measures required, including violence, to stop a counter-revolution effort like the one in which Kornilov found himself at the heart. But even before then, it was obvious that the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, were looking for means to impose their dictatorial rule, as they saw the state as an apparatus that must be under the control of revolutionary forces for the revolution to ever succeed. Lenin was very concerned with this problem as he stated just a couple of days after Tsar was overthrown, "The fundamental problem in any revolution is the problem of state power. Unless this problem is understood, there can be no conscious participation revolution, not to speak of

[172] Harvey Asher, "The Kornilov Affair: A Reinterpretation," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (July 1970): 286-300, especially 299-300.

its leadership."[173] Indeed, taking complete power over the government was a top priority for the Bolshevik Party. This objective would subsequently have a broad variety of direct and indirect implications on their eventual victory not just against a muddled White coalition, but also against other socialist or revolutionary opponents such as Anarchists, Mensheviks, and SRs.

In investigating how the Bolsheviks achieved such widespread popularity, while also maintaining features of an arguably totalitarian regime, one needs consider the larger picture of the political circumstances surrounding the revolution in Russia and how it actually occurred. Here, it is important to highlight the fact that the February Revolution did not have a clear leader team, an aspect that was emphasized by numerous scholars, including Chamberlin.[174] Still it is possible to argue that, a few influential people, who the revolutionaries nicknamed "sub-elites" later, played a pivotal role in channeling the popular movement into a full-scale uprising against the political establishment.[175] These individuals could be politically motivated free agents, or they might be agents for or sympathetic to underground revolutionary movements like the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks initially appeared to be effective in employing these "sub-elites," and many of them went on to become important members of the Bolshevik faction in the Civil War's final years.

Nevertheless, this early challenge that the Bolsheviks encountered in reaching out to the masses can be seen in the remarks of Leon Trotsky, who acknowledged how difficult it was to get in contact and subsequently creating a "sub-elite" required for the revolution. He would argue that the February Revolution began as a popular uprising with no apparent leadership; nonetheless, he felt that over time, "aware and tempered workers, indoctrinated for the most part by the Lenin's party" would emerge as the most key players of it.[176] Taking this into account, it is possible to infer that the Bolsheviks regarded it as their responsibility to educate the people under their envisioned doctrine. They may

[173] V. I. Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, 5th Edition, Chapter 31 (Moscow, 1962): 145.
[174] William Henry Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution, 1917-1921* - Vol. 1 (New York: MacMillan, 1935): 73.
[175] Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, "The Problem of Power in the February Revolution of 1917 in Russia," *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (Winter 1972): 611-633, especially 613-615.
[176] Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. 1 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1937): 152.

have done so in the hopes of creating and maintaining an organic link with the public to further advance with their revolutionary ambitions.

Indeed, it was Bolsheviks, who had to go underground twice – once before the February Revolution and once after it – as they had a clear agenda that made it mandatory for them not to cooperate with any rivalry faction, regardless it is from the left-wing or right-wing sides of the political trajectory, that would in time really could establish a solid and organic bond with the masses. Furthermore, it is possible to argue that this connection was even stronger and more visible in the major urban centers, such as Moscow or Petrograd, where a substantial worker class was living in that could easily align themselves with the revolutionary goals of Lenin and his Bolshevik friends, who was promising them real solutions to their problems.

One other thing that further distinguished them from any other factions was their strategy, through which, instead of looking for cooperation with other factions, they were honestly advocating for a program through which they would achieve all this, by establishing a dictatorship of the proletariat. Finally, it would be workers of Russia who would "rule themselves" in according to "their own interests". Bolsheviks were promising an utopia where there would be no imperialist wars and workers would only work for what they need – they would serve to no one, instead, their "old dictators" would this time have to live under their dictatorship.

2.3.2 Debates on How Bolsheviks Really Rose to Power

At this juncture, it is also more helpful to outline the dominant narratives in Western historiography regarding the Bolsheviks' rise to power. Until the late 1970s, Western historiography of 1917 had been concerned primarily with political explanations, placing an emphasis on the importance of governmental forms and ideas while underestimating the more fundamental role that social and economic structure and conflict played in the rise and fall of the Provisional Government and the succeeding October Revolution.[177] One could make the case that the political concerns directed at the Soviet Union up until the 1970s, such as the initial fears of a further spread of Communist ideology to Western

[177] Ronald Grigor Suny, "Toward a Social History of the October Revolution," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 88, No. 1 (February 1983): 31-52, especially 32.

Europe and the escalating hostility against the Soviet Union throughout the Cold War, provided substantial ground for this common approach.

Some of the most well-known accounts of this period emerged from Western researchers, and they took an approach to the Russian Revolutions and the ascent to power of the Bolsheviks that emphasized analytics working from the top down. These narratives were primarily concerned with the politics of the Tsarist and Provisional Governments, as well as parties and revolutionary organizations.[178] They placed a great deal of importance on the political mindsets of these individuals and institutions, which may seem like a strength at first glance, but they failed to account for the attitude of the average Russian, which played the most crucial part in the chain of events.

On the other side, there were notable publications that presented a distinguished opinion on how the February Revolution and the October Revolution differed greatly from each other. Among these is Billington's fascinating viewpoint, which holds that 1917 was a pivotal year for Russia, ushering in a revolution from below to the top in the form of the February Revolution, and then a revolution from above to the bottom in the form of the October Revolution. He goes on to suggest that public discontent with the Bolsheviks' takeover sparked a civil war that would end up being pivotal not just for Russia but for the humanity as a whole.[179]

Through a careful analysis of such works, one can easily find out that initially the society was not that much keen on the control of state apparatus, a critical part of the Bolshevik agenda. For instance, the workers themselves did not support Bolshevik-style direct worker control of the state through the establishment of a proletariat dictatorship, with the exception of the more militant sections like the metalworkers of the Vyborg area.[180] The people, workers, and soldiers were all revolutionary in their desire to bring down the Tsarist system, but they were not actually advocating for a that much major shift in power. It is hardly surprising, however, that more moderate revolutionary groups

[178] J. Shelton Curtiss, *The Russian Revolutions of 1917* (Princeton, 1957); Adam B. Ulam, *The Bolsheviks The Intellectual and Political History of the Triumph of Communism in Russia* (New York, 1965); George Katkov, *Russia 1917: The February Revolution* (New York, 1967); Rex A. Wade, *The Russian Search for Peace: February to October 1917* (Stanford, 1969) and John M. Thompson, *Revolutionary Russia, 1917* (New York, 1981).

[179] James H. Billington, "Six Views on the Russian Revolution," *World Politics*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (April 1966): 452-473, especially 452-453.

[180] Ronald Grigor Suny, "Toward a Social History of the October Revolution," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 88, No. 1 (February 1983): 31-52, especially 35.

like the Mensheviks and the SRs would gain traction among the people under these conditions, as they looked to provide a more reasonable compromise and a faster route to establishing a politically stable administration. Workers, for example, were optimistic that, confident of their allegedly significant influence in newly founded organizations such as the Petrograd Soviet, as well as their ultimate command of the means of industrial production through their firm control of factories, they could still control the policies of any new government that arose from the ashes of Romanov's dynasty.[181]

Yet, this situation of being unprepared for a direct takeover, as advocated by the Bolsheviks, began to shift with time. When we were presenting some of the most crucial turning moments in Russian history at the time, society - particularly workers and soldiers - began to develop apparent sympathy for such a move. Some striking narratives, such as that provided by Hasegawa, suggest that the revolutionary groups were shifting towards a more proactive position and taking over state institutions, such as the formation of numerous industrial committees and "soviets" of different worker and peasant groups.[182]

While setting the scene for the Bolshevik front during the upcoming Civil War we are going to evaluate carefully, it is better to briefly discuss two of the most significant views among scholars regarding debates on whether the October Revolution and Bolshevik takeover were really inevitable or there could be a chance to prevent them from taking place in the first place. These two contradicting views, a heroic-inevitable explanation on the one side and an accidental-pathetic explanation are vital to understand if one really would like to understand some of the most significant reasons behind the erupting Russian Civil War and how the major factions during this conflict attempted to justify their causes.

Heroic-Inevitable Explanation

When it came to Soviet and Russian historiographies, it was a common among those who identify themselves a Marxist or at least follow the official narrative on this

[181] Chris Goodey, "Factory Committees and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat (1918)," *Critique*, Vol. 3 (1974): 27-47; William G. Rosenberg, "Workers and Workers' Control in the Russian Revolution," *History Workshop*, Vol. 5 (1978): 89-97.

[182] Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, "The Formation of the Militia in the February Revolution: An Aspect of the Origins of Dual Power," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 32 (1973): 303-322; "The Problem of Power in the February Revolution of 1917 in Russia," *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, Vol. 14 (1972): 611-632 and "The Bolsheviks and the Formation of the Petrograd Soviet in the February Revolution," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 39 (1977): 86-106.

important matter to approach to evaluate the October Revolution as an inevitable conclusion of the decades if not centuries long popular unrest. For these accounts, in a nutshell, it was common to contending that at the price of a certain inconsistency that Lenin's "personal genius" had to be present to take the last and most needed step and to make the revolution finally take place.[183]

This approach, which combines heroism with inevitability, is widely held not only by Soviet historians but also by a considerable number of Western scholars, including many arguably Marxist leaning authors like John Reed. He offered a lyrical justification for the inevitable conclusion of the revolution by saying things like, "when the huge pulsing cities rushed faster and faster while unrolling pageant of the Russian masses all engaged in a narrative of cosmic liberty, it was now unavoidable for the revolution to conclude...".[184]

In this context, it is crucial to mention not only Lenin but also the other major Bolshevik leaders, with special emphasis on the two men who are often considered to be the party's most important figures: Trotsky and Stalin. These men played rival roles inside the party for many years after Lenin's death and ultimately fought amongst themselves for control of his ultimate legacy: CPSU. While they would disagree on many critical issues in the years to come, they did share a common belief that the nature of the Bolshevik takeover and the path leading up to the October Revolution were inevitable and centered substantially in the success of Lenin and his Bolshevik Party.

Understanding Trotsky's views on this process and the reasons behind the eventual Bolshevik triumph is even more important considering the fact that even today it is a common approach among scholars to enthusiastically consider him as the historian of the revolution, whose remarks and arguments have constituted most of the knowledge we have today regarding how the Bolshevik leadership were reading the developments taking place during this politically highly unstable period.[185] Although while evaluating his views on the October Revolution and the Bolshevik's rise to power it is common to take a closer look at his well-known *The History of the Russian Revolution*, his earlier works,

[183] Robert V. Daniels, "The Bolshevik Gamble," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (October 1967): 331-340, especially 331.

[184] John Reed, *Ten Days that Shock the World* (New York, 1919): 41, 16.

[185] Norman Geras, *Literature of Revolution, Essays on Marxism* (Verso Books, 2017): 3-41; Cliff Slaughter, *Marxism, Ideology and Literature* (Palgrave HE, 1980), Chapters 3 & 12.

such as *1905* are also vital to understand how this inevitable revolution argument first appeared and then found the support among the Bolshevik Party's inner circle during the years preceding the upcoming Russian Revolutions of 1917.

For instance, in *1905* he came up with a fascinating argument suggesting that the industrialization of Russia after the late 19th century would play a significant role in bringing the country towards the inevitable revolution since the importation of capital and its social interactions was nearly comparable to placing a time bomb under the Tsarist regime and these advances would undoubtedly weaken the expired techniques of authoritarian monarchal authority in Russia. He believed what remained to be answered was only what would follow up the destruction of such an impractical regime, which he was self-confident that a proletariat revolution was now in the horizon and looked sooner than it could ever had.[186]

One can easily argue that *The History of the Russian Revolution* was not only the most influential book Trotsky ever written but even the most striking account of the changing dynamics of Russian politics during this era of turmoil. Various scholars would subsequently contend that Trotsky was fascinating any average reader of his memoirs and thoughts by utilizing diverse writing techniques such as changing the tense from past to present correlative with the shift from context to the actual unfolding events, which strengthened the reader's integration to the narrative even more obviously.[187] To give one example, Beilharz would describe Trotsky's writing talent by stating that he possessed a "strange power to express the intensity of events," and that this, in addition to his literary abilities and first-hand experience, resulted in a work of great importance and value.[188]

Evidently, Trotsky was a fervent believer in a sure Bolshevik victory, as seen by his amazing study of events leading up to the February Revolution and following developments, in which he maintained that both social life and the norms of nature, in a fashion he defined as "dialectics," were subject to the government of law, and hence predictable.[189] Based on these premises, Trotsky constructed a teleology that guarantees

[186] Leon Trotsky, *1905* (Haymarket Books, 2016).
[187] Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution, Volume One: The Overthrow of Tsarism* (1930): p. 110.
[188] Peter Beilharz, "Trotsky as Historian," *History Workshop*, No. 20 (Autumn 1985): 36-55, especially 39.
[189] Peter Beilharz, "Trotsky as Historian," *History Workshop*, No. 20 (Autumn 1985): 36-55, especially 40.

the eventual triumph of the Bolsheviks by all means necessary, including the destruction of all their rivals.[190]

On the other hand, it was Stalin, who had always shown a strong interest in the application of Leninist theory, contended that "without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary action," contradicting the popular perception of him as a man more concerned with practice than theory.[191] Stalin, like Trotsky, thought the Bolshevik Party was an accurate embodiment of Leninist doctrine and would help give the country's newly empowered working class actual power. However, it is still debatable, even today, whether he played as significant a role in this process as other prominent figures such as Trotsky did; thus, it is advantageous to investigate more closely the interpretations that attempted to explain both his role in the path that led to the triumph of Bolsheviks and his firm belief in the inevitability of this outcome.

One of the most striking works attempting to explain how the Bolsheviks obtained ultimate control came from Daniels, who, although acknowledging the importance of Lenin's personal magnetism and the measures he took, attributed the eventual Bolshevik victory to luck rather than design or deliberate preparation.[192] The question of how much of a hand Stalin might have played in this process then naturally emerges.

Stalin was one of the well-known editors working for the Bolshevik cause and explaining or addressing the issues that represented an essential concern for the party, thus his engagement in this lengthy process indicates a lot about his views on the Bolshevik agenda. Yet his involvement was not equal or comparable to that of others, such as Trotsky, who later condemned Stalin's attempts to rewrite the history of the revolution, said, "... strain my memory as I will, I cannot answer the question in just what consisted, during those key days, the function of Stalin. I never sought his counsel or sought to work with him. Never once did he take the initiative or make a suggestion of his own."[193]

Though at this point is will be futile to try putting an analysis of the broader role Stalin had during the politically instable period between two Russian revolutions. Instead,

[190] Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution, Volume One: The Overthrow of Tsarism* (1930): 18, 51.
[191] Joseph Stalin, “Ob Osnovakh Leninizma,” in *Voprosy*, 11th Edition (1945): 14.
[192] Robert V. Daniels, *Red October: The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917* (New York, 1967): 216.
[193] Leon Trotsky, *The Stalin School of Falsification* (New York, 1971): 14.

what we need to pay a closer attention to is whether he was really a firm believer of the inevitability of Bolshevik's rise to power. Here, Stalin goes farther by offering an intriguing explanation for this phenomenon, specifically, that the revolution was and is not only inevitable but also the right thing to happen. When it comes to "a qualitative shift for the better," he says, the revolution is inevitable and for the good of humanity collectively.[194]

Intriguingly, Stalin also expressed a perspective on the concept of war and its prospective ramifications on the Bolshevik agenda for advancing towards a worldwide revolution. Even after changing his mind on internationalism and getting into a debate with many other senior Bolsheviks, including Trotsky, Stalin still kept a close eye on developments outside of the central one-state socialist model he favored. In fact, Stalin argued that a future international war against the Soviet Union would one day spark a new wave of revolutions throughout the world, allowing the Bolsheviks or CPSU by that time to focus on their long-avoided main purpose.[195] He believed this would happen in the same way that the Great War was a tool through which the Bolshevik Revolution was able to create the necessary conditions to fulfil its premises.[196]

Those who believe the heroic and inevitable narratives about the revolution are more likely to be Marxists or devote greater attention to the accounts about Bolshevik Party's program and how it made the revolution undeniably only path and what was coming. However, those with more traditional worldviews or who were initially opposed to the Bolshevik takeover often provide what is likely the most compelling alternative account, which provides a differentiated explanation of how the revolution actually occurred.

Accidental-Pathetic Explanation

The opposite side of the argument holds that the events of October 1917 were not a popular movement and an inevitable conclusion, but rather a violent Bolshevik coup that ended the final credible attempt to achieve a solution for the political turmoil and instability that had erupted across the former Russian Empire. In a way it even acted as a last piece of stone that was required to trigger the years long Civil War that would cost

[194] I. Stalin, "Beseda c Nemetskim Pisatelem Emilem Liudvigom," *Bol'shevik*, 30 April 1932: 33.
[195] Historicus, "Stalin on Revolution," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (January 1949): 175-214, especially 190-191.
[196] From Stalin's Election Speech in February 1946, *Pravda*, 10 February 1946: 1, as quoted by Daniels (1967).

the lives of thousands while also putting the country to a dark path that embodied with Soviet dictatorship and autocracy.[197] This intriguing viewpoint goes so far as to suggest that the brief period of time between the February and October Revolutions was the only democratic experience Russia could ever have had, and that the disappearance of one authoritarian power, the Tsar, was followed by the appearance of another, not much less brutal, in the form of the Bolsheviks. Notwithstanding the impossibility of offering a final judgment on the subject, there can be little question that a thorough investigation of the concept of "autocratic cycles" as applied to Russia's historical development would enrich future research into the country's political system.

One of the most interesting interpretations on how Bolsheviks really rose to power comes from Sergei Petrovich Melgunov, a witness of what was happening during then without having a major participation in this series of events. He was a staunch opponent of those who propose an "inevitable conclusion" theory to explain the Bolsheviks' ultimate ascent to power, and he began by making it clear that his view differed from the conventional wisdom that the October Revolution was the inevitable culmination of the February Revolution.[198]

Melgunov's method is noteworthy since he focuses so heavily on Lenin's character to deduce the true mechanics behind the Bolshevik seizure in October. As far as he was concerned, Lenin's obsession with establishing a proletarian dictatorship was the sole reason for the revolution as he identified Lenin as the mastermind behind converting the Bolshevik Party's central committee from moderation to the radical alternatives of seizing power by force.[199]

Taking this into account, one could say that Lenin effectively ensured the coming to power of his party by distinguishing the Bolsheviks from the more moderate factions of Russian Social Democrats earlier. Therefore, the October Revolution was not the inevitable result of the political circumstances that arose after the February Revolution, but rather the Bolsheviks' acting right at the right time in achieving their ultimate reason

[197] Robert V. Daniels, “The Bolshevik Gamble,” *The Russian Review*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (October 1967): 331-340, especially 331.

[198] S. P. Melgunov, *Kak Bol’sheviki Zakhvatili Vlast’: Oktiabr’skii Perevorot 1917 goda* (Paris, 1953), which would later on translated by S. G. Pushkarev. For this translated work, see Sergei G. Pushkarev, *The Bolshevik Seizure of Power* (Santa Barbara, 1972).

[199] S. P. Melgunov, *Kak Bol’sheviki Zakhvatili Vlast’: Oktiabr’skii Perevorot 1917 goda* (Paris, 1953): 5.

for existence as it was indoctrinated by Lenin and the Central Committee under his leadership.

Daniels, who also focused heavily on a so-called "Lenin cult" and Lenin's own personal virtues, offered another intriguing reason for the Bolshevik triumph both in the October days when they rose to power and in their eventual emerging victorious from a forthcoming civil war. In outlining these game-changing aspects, he contended that Lenin's movement was unique in its capacity to keep power thereafter, both against the inner divisions who would want to put forward an alternative program for the newly founded Soviet Union and against the reactionary elements and the probability of a counter-revolution if the White forces under Kolchak or Denikin could somehow succeed in seizing power.[200]

Furthermore, one could argue that the Bolsheviks' success in creating a military dictatorship and quickly taking harsh measures against any counterrevolutionary attempts ensured their long-term survival for this same reason. Some researchers, including Black, have placed a strong emphasis on a such narrative that emphasizes the Bolsheviks' achievement in modernizing the programs of Marxist movements, which was crucial to their long-term success. From his vantage point, the Bolsheviks stood out not because their revolution was inevitable or heroic but because they were more disciplined and determined than other key actors in the erupted violence or revolutionary attempts in Europe during the interwar period.[201] This, according to these accounts, combined with Lenin's exceptional leadership, allowed the Bolsheviks to succeed where others had failed.

Hence, it further demonstrates that the Bolsheviks' rise to power cannot be fully comprehended by focusing solely on Lenin's political persona. Instead, it would be the cult he supported and used favorable conditions to propagate among disillusioned worker and soldier communities that would ensure his success in the end. He grasped the desires of the people, who wielded true societal power, and proposed a well-thought-out platform

[200] Robert V. Daniels, “The Bolshevik Gamble,” *The Russian Review*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (October 1967): 331-340, especially 333-334.

[201] C. E. Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization – A Study in Comparative History*, 1st Edition (Harper & Row, 1966).

that not only provided solutions to the issues at hand but also set itself apart from the numerous other political alternatives that are available on the right and the left.

Which conclusions, if any, can be drawn from these opposing narratives that seek to comprehend the underlying causes behind the ultimate Bolshevik triumph and the success of the October Revolution? As a necessary corrective to the other, it seems that these competing explanations provide a compelling reason for the emergence of each other, which is one of the most important conclusions we can draw. To put it another way, just as the pathetic-accidentalism school sees itself as the sole consistent opponent of a generalization so narrow that it yields nothing but political myths, so do their proponents of the heroic-inevitable argument perceive themselves as the most powerful and effective guardian of the alternatives to a world view that emphasizes the "meaningless chance and despair".[202]

Now that we have fulfilled our analysis of these significant viewpoints on the rise to power of the Bolsheviks, it may be time to begin our in-depth discussion on the state of Bolshevik forces in terms of political and militaristic means, and how they performed during the Russian Civil War. This will demonstrate that a revolutionary regime could really survive in Russia, which is traditionally considered to be a conservative political realm.

2.4 The Bolshevik Party and "Red Russia"

The Bolshevik Party, led by Vladimir Lenin, came to power in Russia after the October Revolution of 1917 and subsequently established the first socialist state in the world. Indeed, in 1917 with the October Revolution, a new chapter was opened in Russia's history. Once the Bolsheviks toppled the Provisional Government and installed their own Soviet government, the country's political, economic, and social structures underwent dramatic shifts.

This new state was in fact an outstanding political experiment that would demonstrate whether a socialist state and the new institutions and practices it brought along could survive against a strong backlash coming from both domestic and international actors that

[202] James H. Billington, "Six Views of the Russian Revolution," *World Politics*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (April 1966): 452-473, especially 460.

would put the Bolshevik Party to a serious test. This experiment would demonstrate whether a socialist state and the new institutions and practices it brought along could survive against a strong backlash.

As it sought to cement its authority and construct a socialist state in Russia in the wake of the October Revolution, the Bolshevik Party encountered numerous obstacles. The economy was in disaster, the military was in disarray, and competing political factions were vying for control of the country. By a mix of political savvy, military might, and popular support, the Bolsheviks would eventually be able to triumph over these obstacles. They swiftly took control of the country's most important institutions like the government, the military, and the police, and set out to transform Russia into a socialist society through a number of radical socialist programs. This chapter's goal is to provide a comprehensive and satisfying answer to the question of how and why these methods proved so effective for the Bolshevik Party.

2.4.1 Establishment of a Soviet Government

The establishment of the Soviet Government was a significant departure from preceding forms of governance and is often seen as a defining feature of this revolution. The Bolsheviks were distinctive not only because of their emphasis on ideology and the creation of a new economic model that prioritized the empowerment of workers and peasants across the state. In addition to these, they were unique because of the novel way in which they established a Soviet government, which did not simply prioritize the control of Russia's heartland but rather a system that would allow even reaching to the outreaches of the former Tsarist Empire, now eagerly or worryfully awaiting the fall of the Soviet Union.

The discipline that accompanied the Bolsheviks' firm control of the major urban centers of Western Russia, particularly Petrograd and Moscow, ensured the initial dominance of this new revolutionary administration. But, beyond the use of discipline and an undeniable emphasis on the eradication of any political unrest that remained in these big population centers, what gave the Bolsheviks longer-term victory was the successful application of five strategies in which Lenin and his comrades integrated different political and militaristic tactics. These strategies, which may be thought of as the centralization under the existence of a military dictatorship that was vital for the

Bolshevik agenda, would prove crucial for the longer-term success of the Bolsheviks, and in time would also insure their superiority against any forthcoming rivals that would rise against them during the tense days of a potential Russian Civil War.

Use of Propaganda

The Bolsheviks used propaganda extensively after the October Revolution to consolidate their power in the country's metropolitan areas. The Bolsheviks employed propaganda to win over urbanites to their cause.[203] Leaflets, newspapers, posters, speeches, and slogans were all used to spread the message. In fact, although the use of such materials have always been an essential part of any Marxist movement, Bolsheviks were those who could maximized the efficiency that any movement could acquire from employing these methods. Furthermore, they succeeded in securing the long-term survival of their control over the population as several scholars including Service (2000) highlighted the importance of propaganda in maintaining their social control in the years and even decades after the October Revolution.[204]

A critical aspect of these materials was their heavy use of an ideological language, an essential aspect of the Bolsheviks' propaganda. These materials were pushing for a classless society, worker ownership of businesses, and a socialist revolution. Likewise, it shed light on the inadequacies of the Provisional Government, which was widely criticized for its inability to effectively handle the issues facing the people in any place. Bolshevik promises, including the improved working conditions, higher income, and greater political freedom were just some of the solutions played a crucial role in establishing the bridges necessary to reach the urban populace, who have been struggling with problems including these for quite a long time already.[205]

Workers, soldiers, and intellectuals were only some of the urban populations that the Bolsheviks aimed their propaganda at. They targeted various demographics by employing various channels and catchphrases. The Bolsheviks' propaganda, for instance, emphasized the importance of workers in the struggle for power and promised to improve

[203] Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Cornell University Press, 1994): 55.

[204] Robert Service, *Lenin: A Biography* (Harvard University Press, 2000): 312.

[205] Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Revolution: A New History* (Basic Books, 2017): 158. McMeekin discusses in further details on how the Bolshevik revolutionaries found for these propaganda methods a good use in creating a more favorable environment for the new regime.

their working and living conditions if they supported the revolution. Soldiers were viewed as essential to keeping the peace and crushing dissent, therefore the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" was popular among them.[206] The growing Bolshevik sympathies among the armed forces would be crucial in understanding how they could truly survive not just during the instability preceding the October Revolution, but also in the long run, particularly during the Russian Civil War that was about to begin in a very violent manner.

The Bolsheviks' reliance on propaganda as a key instrument in strengthening their social and political base likely has roots in their genuine concern that a counter-revolution may destroy everything they were working so hard to establish. These concerns turned out to be well-founded, as anti-Bolshevik factions on the political left and right were getting ready to launch connected and disconnected uprisings against the new Soviet regime.

Scholars such as Rabinowitch (2004) believe that Bolsheviks framed these actions of theirs as a necessary policy to protect the revolution and the people from reactionary insurgencies, and that this view can be seen in the works of the Bolsheviks themselves. He would even go so far as to claim that the Bolsheviks used these many forms of propaganda to create a sense of crisis and urgency, depicting the revolution as a tremendous achievement that should not be abandoned by being idle.[207] Like some others, such as Service (2019), would later argue, this sense of crisis and urgency not only ensured the Bolshevik success in consolidating central authority in the immediate aftermath of the October Revolution, but also led to the emergence of potent images and symbols embodied with emotional concerns and public fear regarding a backlash, such as a counter-revolution attempt from the conservative staff of army.[208]

Among the urban masses, where a significant working class and the sympathetic soldiers for the Bolshevik principles would indeed come behind the banner of the new Soviet government, the Bolsheviks' propaganda would be really crucial in formulating an

[206] Steven J. Main, "The Red Army and the Soviet Military and Political Leadership in the Late 1920s: The Case of the 'Inner-Army Opposition of 1928'," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (March 1995): 337-355.

[207] Alex Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks Come to Power: The Revolution of 1917 in Petrograd* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004): 232.

[208] Robert Service, *The End of the Cold War, 1985-1991* (New York: Public Affairs, 2019): 143.

arbitrary sense of unity and purpose.[209] These tactics would be important in legitimizing their use of force against any and all opponents, setting the stage not only for the Russian Civil War but also laying the groundwork for the CPSU to launch an internationalist campaign and become the vanguard of a global revolution, something that had long eluded the Bolshevik leadership.[210]

These ways through which Bolsheviks also utilized propaganda to portray their opponents in an unfavorable light and undermine their credibility were indeed worth to pay a close attention to. They painted a picture of a Provisional Government riddled with corruption, incompetence, and a lack of concern for the interests of the people. They also cast aspersions on other socialist groups, such the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries, painting them as betrayers of the people's best interests.[211]

On the other hand, Bolsheviks used these methods in a move favorable way to put forward a more appealing picture of themselves in the eyes of public.[212] Indeed, the Bolsheviks successfully used propaganda as a tool to consolidate power in large cities. It aided them in getting their message out, winning over the populace, and bringing down their rivals. It was the Bolsheviks' propaganda that paved the way for the Soviet government to be established and for their authority to be consolidated.[213]

Formation of the Red Guard

It was not surprising that the Bolsheviks, who were putting a clear emphasis on the implementation of aggressive means if required, including building a militaristic dictatorship of proletariat to suppress any counter-revolutionary activities, would soon find themselves with the challenge of establishing a new armed force that would prioritize the interests of the revolution before everything else. Under these conditions, the Red

[209] Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution 1891-1924* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1996): 593; Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks Come to Power: The Revolution of 1917 in Petrograd* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004): 232.

[210] John Archibald Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges: The Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered, 1933-1938* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985): 30; Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997): 46.

[211] Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks in Power: The First Year of Soviet Rule in Petrograd* (Indiana University Press, 1997): 20.

[212] Stephen A. Smith, *The Russian Revolution: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2002): 46.

[213] Robert Service, *Lenin: A Biography* (Harvard University Press, 2000): 312.

Guards would seem to become a crucial instrument of the new Soviet government in establishing firm authority, especially over the major industrial urban centers.

It was in response to the violence and turmoil that followed the fall of the Tsarist state that the Red Guard was established; its members were workers and soldiers who had created self-defense units during the February Revolution. Moreover, scholars including Eklof (1976) underlie the fact that the Bolshevik Party promptly realized these groups could help them achieve their political aims and set about organizing and mobilizing them. These ideological irregular forces would be crucial in establishing Bolshevik authority throughout the country, from farms to cities to factories and beyond.[214] This would make it easier to put down any rebellion that could try to seize these vital economic manufacturing facilities.

Even though the Red Guard was founded as a volunteer organization, it soon became a more direct tool of Bolshevik power. The Red Guard served as a bodyguard for Bolshevik officials, a weapon against the opposition, and an enforcer of city law and order.[215] Key government and military buildings, including the Winter Palace in Petrograd (the headquarters of the Provisional Government), were seized with the help of the Red Guard.[216]

A successful Bolshevik seizure of large cities relied heavily on the Red Guard. The Red Guard played an important role in consolidating Bolshevik rule over urban centers and silencing critics.[217] Moreover, they were also active if there could appear any opposition to the Bolshevik control or any rival faction could try to remove them from power in these regions. For instance, when other factions, including the Cossacks, fought back against the Bolsheviks' capture of power, the Red Guard was called upon to keep the peace.

Although the Red Guard indeed served the initial goals and needs of the Soviet government well, there has been several instances the semi-autonomous structure it had

[214] Maurice Brinton, "The Bolsheviks and Workers' Control," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 85, No. 1 (1970): 28-47.

[215] Christopher Read, "From Petrograd to Moscow: The Bolsheviks' Rise to Power," *History Today*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (1978): 78-85.

[216] Richard Pipes, *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919-1924* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993); Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994): 93.

[217] Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Revolution: A New History* (New York: Basic Books, 2017): 159.

caused some real trouble for the Bolshevik leadership, proving them, it is vital to transform these forces to a more centralized army that could serve the interests of the Bolshevik Party while also acting as the official armed forces of the country they were working relentlessly to establish.[218] Because of this decision, in the years following the Revolution, the Red Guard evolved into the Red Army, the major weapon of Bolshevik power. The Soviet government employed the Red Army to quash domestic dissent, repel foreign invaders, and spread the party's ideology across the country throughout the course of Russian Civil War, as we will discuss this process in more details.

One can argue that this tendency is quite popular in the revolutionary movements that experience a counter-revolution attempt coming from the domestic insurgencies as well as the foreign invasion accompanying these attempts. For instance, even during the Turkish War of Independence (1919-1922), the nationalist government in Ankara would soon decide to establish an army commanded by Kemalist and nationalist officials rather than relying on *Kuva-i Milliye*, or the national forces, an autonomous group of irregular fighters who would also prove themselves politically unreliable and militarily out of any discipline.

To sum this strategy, one can argue that Bolsheviks' establishment of the Red Guard was an important strategy for consolidating their power in large cities after the October Revolution. When the Red Guard was transformed into the Red Army, it was a major factor in the Bolsheviks' ability to maintain control of the country in the years not only after the revolution but even the upcoming civil war.

Controlling Transportation and Communication

One of the most difficult difficulties confronting the Bolsheviks in the aftermath of the October Revolution was preventing opposition groups from gathering against them. The Bolsheviks understood that they would need to take charge of critical infrastructure tools like transportation and communication to succeed in their objective.

The Bolsheviks set up a centralized system of control over the railways and other means of transportation in the cities to ensure their own dominance. In fact, the railroads would play one of the most essential roles in the long struggles throughout the Russian

[218] Abraham Ascher, “The Red Guard and the Problem of Authority in Revolutionary Petrograd,” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (1986): 35-57.

Civil War, as both White and Red armies would prioritize controlling these railway lines, the most notably and crucial one of these would become the Trans-Siberian Railway.[219] Bolsheviks acknowledged this critical use of these lines of transportation and communication and planned their strategies accordingly to keep the cities under their control supplied and operational, while preventing their opponents from doing the same for the regions under their control.[220] To this purpose, the People's Commissariat of Communication Routes was set up in the immediate aftermath of the October Revolution in November 1917 to control the rail network and channel its resources toward Bolshevik goals.

Even Lenin personally emphasized the importance of keeping the railway lines operational as they were basically what useful left from the Tsarist regime that could helped Bolsheviks bringing the revolution to the most outreach extents of the territory they were fighting to establish a firm control on. Moreover, through the perspectives of Taylorism, Lenin argued that railroads should work fast and orderly, in a fashion he would conceptualize as “the precision of clockwork”.[221]

Beyond using what remained from the Russian Empire, Bolsheviks set up their own transportation systems, such as the Red Army Transport, to convey their troops and supplies across the cities. Because of this, the Bolsheviks were able to maintain command over the flow of commodities and people, and they were able to stop the opposition from utilizing the railways to coordinate their efforts especially through this newly adjusted and established new roads that were reflecting the needs and priorities of Soviet government even more.

Nevertheless, when one considers the fact that most of these railway routes pass through a variety of locations where Bolshevik power is either not so popular or has not yet arisen, raising the intriguing question of how the Bolsheviks truly succeeded in controlling these routes. Batten (1971) identifies four primary strategies that the Bolsheviks pursued that allowed them to acquire a foothold in most of these strategically essential routes of communication and transportation, which many other authors concur

[219] Roger Pethybridge, “Railways and Press Communications in Soviet Russia in the Early NEP Period,” *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (April 1986): 194-206.

[220] Roger Pethybridge, *The Spread of the Russian Revolution: Essays on 1917* (London, 1972): 15-16.

[221] V. I. Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, 5th Edition, Vol. 36 (Moscow, 1974): 155.

with this assessment. According to him, these four strategies were establishing a centralized system of control, cooperating with railway workers through their dissatisfaction with the regional corruption, applying to more coercive methods if necessary, and utilizing the new technologies and industrial superiority they had to advance further than their opponents could.[222]

From a countrywide perspective, it seems like the establishment of a centralized system of control is the most important of these strategies. Bolsheviks were apparently able to better organize the flow of troops and supplies once they decided to establish a centralized system of control over the railway lines, with armed Red Guard forces to protect them under the supervision of a small number of well-known Bolsheviks.[223] Although it was still hard to understand where loyalties of these people were in reality lying to, most of them were still trustworthy members of the Lenin's closer circle, thus more reliable than others.

Using preexisting concerns of railroad workers and tackling their problems head-on was another key tactic utilized by the Bolsheviks for this aim. The Bolsheviks, who were well-aware of the difficulties faced by these strategically significant workers, appealed to their desire for increased compensation and improved working conditions to win over their support.[224] Some authors, like Lincoln (1967), have noted the significance of this alliance and argued that the Bolsheviks and railroad workers' mutually beneficial cooperation allowed the Soviet government to establish itself as a more powerful and viable force.[225] Thanks to this unity, Bolsheviks were now able to extend their control over the vast territories by using these roads of communications, which were supervised by loyal Bolsheviks, who now also enjoying the significant support of railroad workers.

Of course, while describing the strategies that allowed Bolsheviks to further extend their control over the essential lines of communication and transportation, one cannot avoid the importance of their readiness to use any methods necessary, which does not

[222] Ralph L. Batten, "Railways and the Bolsheviks: A Study in Power," *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (November 1971): 606-623.

[223] Lewis H. Siegelbaum, "The Russian Revolution and the Railroad," *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (1986): 537-568.

[224] Donald R. Kelley, "The Bolshevik Revolution and the Railways," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (1961): 226-236.

[225] W. Bruce Lincoln, "The Bolsheviks and the Railwaymen: The Origins of Soviet Power," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (1967): 543-558.

exclude applying to more coercive tactics, if that would allow them to be more successful on this goal.[226] Indeed, Bolsheviks were not afraid to use force to gain control of the railway system when necessary. Especially when there could be a resistance arising from the railroad workers, despite of the more tolerant methods they were applying, Bolsheviks would not hesitate to force them to do their will. In such cases, they employed tactics such as sabotage and hostage-taking to force railway workers to comply with their demands and were prepared to use violence to put down any resistance to their rule.[227]

Last but not least, the Bolsheviks' superiority in the control of these communication and transportation lines was further cemented through their successful use of the more advanced technologies that were at their disposal as a direct result of their ability in fast establishment of a firm control over the urban industrial centers.[228] Moscow and Petrograd had been under their control from the start, and they had unambiguous support from the other industrial regions, including the Urals. There is some evidence to suggest that the Bolsheviks' ideological kinship with the possibly most revolutionary parts of society—the working class, from a Marxist point of view—helped them gain an upper hand in the management and manufacture of highly advanced industrial instruments, such as those needed to keep a tighter grip on the railroads. In contrast, their opponents, such as White Armies throughout the Russian Civil War, could have a much weaker industrial base that could not compete with the Bolshevik military-industrial complex.

Several of the most prominent scholars who made significant contributions to the debates about the potential implications of the technological supremacy of the Bolsheviks, or Red Army, during the Russian Civil War, provide compelling reasons in support of these claims. For instance, White (1997) suggests that the introduction of electric locomotives and the development of innovative systems for planning train

[226] Peter Kenez, "The Soviet Economy and the Red Army, 1918-1921," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (December 1976): 627-643.

[227] Victoria E. Bonell, "The Bolsheviks and the Russian Working Class, 1917-1921," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (Autumn 1985) describes these methods in more detail for the period that does not only include the immediate aftermath of the October Revolution, but even during the following Russian Civil War. On the other hand, a more recent accounts of these coercive tactics can be seen in David Mandel, "Revolution, Civil War and Railway Labor in Russia," *International Labor and Working-Class History*, No. 63 (Spring 2003): 31-49.

[228] Steven Kotkin, "The Bolsheviks and the Railways: The Politics of Technology in the Early Soviet Union," *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (April 1995): 226-263.

timetables contributed to the Bolsheviks' success in seizing control of the railways.[229] Moreover, as Siegelbaum (1986) would argue, the implementation of new signaling systems that were much superior to the obstacle ones that Russian Empire were using under the Tsarist regime and the White forces would have to use because of their much weaker arsenal, is another striking explanation of how Bolsheviks established a superiority against their rivals.[230] When taken in conjunction with the ideals of Lenin that we highlighted earlier, this viewpoint helps explain why the Bolsheviks were able to better manage logistics in the areas under their control and on the front lines, which were mostly based upon railroads, during the Russian Civil War.

Before finishing the broader explanation of this last category of strategies they adopted to embrace a superior control of these railroads, one should also mention that Bolsheviks recognized the significance of controlling communication in order to prevent opposing groups from assembling against them. Using such a centralized system with high cooperation of the railroad workers – and use of coercive methods if they do not, they were able to monitor and restrict the flow of information between various groups and individuals in urban areas connected by telegraph or telephone. As a result, it was harder for anti-Bolshevik groups to coordinate their efforts and form a united front.

These debates get more significance once one considers the fact that Bolsheviks established their own communication networks and utilized censorship to manage the flow of information in the urban areas. For instance, *Glavlit* was developed to exercise editorial control over all media outlets and ensure that they adhered to Bolshevik principles.[231] Indeed, some scholars who could analyze the importance of institutions like these would go as further as claiming the control over information paved the way for a total domination of social and political life in the Soviet Union by the Communist Party in the coming years.[232] Considering this, one can believe that these actions made it so

[229] James D. White, "The Bolsheviks and the Railways, 1917-1921," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (March 1997): 315-346.

[230] Lewis H. Siegelbaum, "The Russian Revolution and the Railroad," *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (July 1986): 537-568.

[231] Arch Getty, *The Origins of the Great Purges: The Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered, 1933-1938* (Cambridge University Press, 1985): 26-27, 33-34.

[232] Oleg Khlevniuk, *Stalin: New Biography of a Dictator* (Yale University Press, 2015): 17-18, 23-25.

only the Bolshevik message was broadcast in the cities, and it stopped the opposition from using the media to organize against them.

Therefore, it is possible to claim that Bolsheviks were able to keep their authority and stop opposition groups from organizing because they monopolized all modes of transportation and communication. They were able to move troops and supplies around the cities using the railway system and other modes of transportation, as well as regulate communication to keep tabs on and crush any opposition.[233] This aided in establishing Soviet control in the metropolitan areas after the October Revolution as well as keeping them under their control.

Establishment of Cheka and the Execution of Red Terror

With the power of the state machinery at their disposal, as well as the police and other instruments that a typical state would employ to keep a tight control over the society, it is not surprising to see the Bolsheviks looking for more direct methods to exercise a direct control over it. Bolsheviks, expectably, took this phenomenon even more seriously, and virtually did not waste any seconds to establish their own secret police organization that would be known as "Cheka", or in its full name “All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage”.

Cheka's brutal tactics, which included arrests, torture, and murders of suspected foes of the state, swiftly earned it a bad reputation.[234] It has local offices in the country's major cities like Moscow and Petrograd, allowing it to reach out to a broad geographical region. However, their firm control reached beyond these major towns and further contributed the consolidation of Bolshevik or Soviet power in the coming years during the Russian Civil War. To monitor and repress dissent to the Bolshevik dictatorship, the Cheka created local offices throughout the Soviet Union. These regional branches, known as "Cheka Extraordinary Committees," were set up in both big cities and smaller provincial towns, and they were manned by faithful Bolsheviks tasked with carrying out the orders of the Cheka's top brass.[235]

[233] E. A. Rees, “Building the Bolsheviks’ Railways: The Role of Technology and Expertise, *Slavonic and Eastern European Review*, Vol. 82, No. 3 (July 2004): 435-462.

[234] Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution* (Oxford University Press, 1984): 135-136.

[235] Walter Laqueur, “The Soviet Secret Police,” *Commentary*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (1963): 45-52; Edward W. Walker, “The Bolshevik Secret Police,” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (1975): 1-11.

For instance, Cheka's extensive authority included targeting those suspected of being counter-revolutionaries or enemies of the new Soviet state. These people were subject to arrest, imprisonment, and possible execution at the discretion of the local Cheka offices. Moreover, these local offices were also tasked with anticipating risks to the government and eliminating them before they could cause harm.[236] One might argue that this latter objective would play a crucial role in the emergence of so-called Red Terror, as these people, rather focusing more on the achieving their desired objectives than the methods they followed up or the reliability of the information they were acquiring.

Especially during the Russian Civil War, when the Bolsheviks encountered strong opposition from many factions, such as anti–Bolshevik forces, nationalist movements, and peasant uprisings, the local Cheka offices found themselves an extensive use as the new regime was desperate in identifying and suppressing any insurgency attempts. The Cheka's use of terror and repression was especially effective at this time since it helped to silence critics and keep the order in their regions in the face of serious threats to Bolshevik authority. Vegezzi (2014) later gave a more in-depth analysis of the approximate size of Cheka during this period and argued that their numbers skyrocketed from just a 1,000 personal in April 1918 to 37,000 in January 1919. According to his estimates this figure would exceed 143,000 people in 1921.[237]

On the other hand, looking at the varying numbers of people who were subjected to these brutal tactics enabled by the Cheka during the early years of Bolshevik power as well as the early years of the Russian Civil War may be beneficial because it can further reinforce our understanding of the extent to which the Bolsheviks used this institution as well as the extent to which they executed Red Terror against their opponents and rivals. Although determining the precise number of individuals affected by Cheka operations remains difficult, looking at some of the most interesting narratives focusing on this period may help to shed light on what was going on.

[236] For a more extensive description of how Bolsheviks employed local Cheka offices during this period, see Catherine Merridale, *Red Fortress: The Secret Heart of Russia's History* (Metropolitan Books, 2013): 145-151; Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Pegasus Books, 2015): 72-73; Richard Sakwa, *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Union: 1917-1991* (Routledge, 2018): 44-47.

[237] Charles Vegezzi, "КРАСНЫЙ ТЕРРОР" / БЕЛЫЙ ТЕРРОР" В РОССИИ. во время гражданской войны через призму исторических концепций 20-21 веков" (2014): 14. Electronically available at https://dumas.ccsd.cnrs.fr/dumas-01020052/document, Date of Access: March 8, 2023.

One of the most interesting explanations of the extend of Cheka's operations comes from Merridale (2014), who makes an estimation that "as many of 250,000 people may have been arrested and imprisoned during these tensions years, with probably thousands of these were sentenced for execution by the Red Terror that Bolsheviks unleashed through Cheka most notably.[238] On the other hand, Figes (1996) provides a more detailed explanation of the number of executions conducted by Cheka. He estimates that just in the first six months following its establishment, more than 10,000 people were executed by Cheka and there were no trials at all to determine whether these people really committed the crimes or treachery they were accused of.[239] Considering the coercive methods employed by Bolsheviks especially during the Russian Civil War, especially during 1918 and 1919 when the battles were raging at their peak, it is indeed hard to believe that there could ever be a functioning appeal procedure to these directives.

Some of the later reports from this period provide an extensive description of the Cheka activities throughout the Civil War front. For instance, according to one telegram, an engineer called Andreev could survive the Bolshevik assault on Yekaterinburg, which was changing hands once again, reported that more than 5,000 were shot in the city after being accused of "counter-revolutionaries".[240]

The Bolsheviks were, therefore, able to further keep control of the cities and consolidate their rule by deploying the Cheka to root out opposition and repress dissent in the populace. After all, it is possible to argue that this institution was a direct product of the Bolshevik fears of a coming counter-revolution from the conservative elements.[241] And when this attempt really emerged, throughout the Civil War, Cheka became a vital tool for the Bolshevik campaign. The Bolshevik government's objectives were enforced with the help of the Cheka, who were responsible for things like seizing food and supplies from the countryside and putting down strikes and other types of labor unrest.[242]

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[238] Catherine Merridale, *Red Fortress: The Secret Heart of Russia's History* (Penguin, 2014): 151.

[239] Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution 1891-1924* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1996): 595-596.

[240] Yu. G. Felshtinsky and G.I. Chernyavsky, *Красный террор в годы гражданской войны по материалам Особой следственной комиссии по расследованию злодеяний большевиков* ("The Red Terror during the Civil War based on the materials of the Special Investigative Commission to Investigate the Atrocities of the Bolsheviks") (Moscow: Terra Books, 2004): 122.

[241] Rex A. Wade, "The Origins of Red Terror Revisited," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 2 (2001): 259-282.

[242] Works on the extensive objectives of Cheka include George Leggett, "Chapter II: The Birth of the Cheka," in *The Cheka: Lenin's Political Police* (Clarendon Press, 1981): 13-27; Sean McMeekin,

The Cheka's well-developed framework and system for enforcing Bolshevik policies contributed to its success in silencing dissenters. Felix Dzerzhinsky, a close ally of Lenin, oversaw the organization, and the rest of its employees were dedicated Bolsheviks who would do what they were told.[243] The Cheka's large network of spies and informants helped them gather information on possible threats to the government and eliminate them first. Arguably, this constituted the long grievances and opposition towards the brutality of Bolsheviks even among the ranks of the other revolutionary factions such as Mensheviks and SRs. Although at first it was more likely that the conservatives and reactionaries would pose the real threat to Bolshevik dominance, radicalization of Bolshevik front would pave the way for insurgencies and rising opposition also coming from these factions on the left spectrum with time.

All things considered; one can easily argue that the foundation of the Cheka was crucial to the Bolsheviks' success in consolidating their authority over the cities after the October Revolution. The Bolsheviks were able to cement their power and construct the Soviet state with the support of these tactics of repression and terror, which silenced their opponents and kept the peace.[244] Cheka would soon become identical with the Bolshevik rule as many opponents of this regime would criticize the actions of Lenin and his followers by focusing on the brutality of the institutions, they created including these secret police organization. In fact, one could indeed argue one thing for sure: Tsar might have gone but a new Tsar – and one that would be even further ready to take more radical and bloody decision to stay in this position – took his place. Autocracy of Romanovs were in fact replaced by the proletariat dictatorship Bolsheviks built by using any necessary means possible at their disposal.

Now that we have finished discussing how the Bolsheviks were able to establish a strong Soviet government in the immediate aftermath of removing the Provisional Government from power following the October Revolution, we can move on to the broader structure of the Bolshevik front during the Russian Civil War. This discussion will focus on how the Bolsheviks were able to unite their faction against their rivals, as

"Chapter VI: War Communism: The Great Leap Forward," in *The Russian Revolution: A New History* (Basic Books, 2017): 192-221.

[243] Lynne Viola, *The Unknown Gulag: The Lost World of Stalin's Special Settlements* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007): 15-16.

[244] Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century* (Princeton University Press, 2014): 230-232.

well as the varied amounts of military assistance they could obtain from key members of the former Tsarist army. While analyzing the potential ramifications of these factors on their eventual Civil War triumph, we will also attempt to draw some conclusions about how these variables impact the survivability of a revolutionary political regime in such conflicts.

2.5 Debates on the Timeframe of Russian Civil War: A New Opinion

Before getting into the depth of our discussion on the structural features of Bolshevik front during the Russian Civil War, it might be first to start with the competing narratives on when exactly the Russian Civil War started and ended. It is important to understand the arguments of those who support each of these competing views as they allow us to come up with an alternative explanation on when exactly the Russian Civil War started and ended.

Regarding the debates on the start of Russian Civil War, the divergence seems to appear on the concerns of what exactly triggered the opposing parties to get involved with direct fighting. On these grounds, one side of the arguments believes that the Russian Civil War started with the Bolshevik takeover took place during the October Revolution in October 1917. For instance, Figes (1997) argues that Bolsheviks' unlawfully seizing power triggered a series of events that resulted with the start of this bloody conflict.[245] Agreeing with this perspective, Pipes (2011) puts a further emphasis on the radical agenda that Bolsheviks put into motion and believes that it was the real trigger that sparked the conflict.[246]

A rival viewpoint, on the other hand, places a greater focus on the Bolshevik decisions, which further alienated them in the eyes of their opponents. Some authors argue that the Russian Civil War began in 1918, with the Bolshevik decision to dismiss Russia's probably sole democratic constitutional parliament, as well as the rise of increasingly

[245] Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution, 1891-1924* (Penguin Books, 1997). Between pages 649-655 he elaborates his arguments for the October 1917 argument whereas between 674-683 he gives an account of arguments for the alternative explanation that believes the Russian Civil War started in 1918 instead.

[246] Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution* (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2011). Between pages 302-307 he elaborates his arguments for the October 1917 argument whereas between 310-311 he gives an account of arguments for the alternative explanation that believes the Russian Civil War started in 1918 instead.

organized counter-revolutionary forces led by right-wing army generals at the time. For example, Mawdsley (2007) argues that the most notable armed formations led by Tsarist generals began to materialize in early 1918 and peaked in the following months, a development he attributes to the onset of the Russian Civil War.[247] Smith (2002), on the other side, prefers to reach that conclusion by emphasizing institutional changes, arguing that the dispute began only after the Bolshevik Party decided to dissolve the Constituent Assembly in January 1918.[248]

When it comes to the disputes over when the Russian Civil War ended, this time the focus is on how people interpret what the end means. Some authors believe that the last real threat to Bolshevik power from Siberia and Southern Russia was suppressed in 1920, whereas another perspective holds the view that the civil war ended in 1922, with the complete dominance of Bolshevik power over the territories of the newly established Soviet Union, particularly in the Far Eastern borders.

Footman (1961) provides a classical view on this matter by constituting the backbone of arguments for those who believe the Civil War indeed concluded in 1920 after the Red Army could defeat the last possible real threats threatening the Bolshevik power. He believes that it was the Red Army's defeat of the last remnants of White Army in Siberia in 1920 after the leader of these armed forces, so-called "Supreme Leader and Commander-in-Chief of All Russian Land and Sea Forces," Admiral Alexander Kolchak was betrayed by Czechoslovakian Legion and was shot following his handling to the local partisans.[249] Another historian who believes it was indeed 1920 when the Red Army and Bolshevik government proved the world they triumphed in the devastating Civil War is Suny (2011), who argued that Bolshevik victory in Siberia secured their consolidation of power throughout the remaining territories.[250]

On the other hand, one of those who support the arguments that the Civil War reached to a conclusion only in 1922 is a very active person of this period. To the surprise of many, Trotsky (2017), as the real founder and one of the most prominent leaders of Red Army, argued that the end of Civil War could only be able to be seen in the horizon after

[247] Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Pegasus Books, 2007): 23-28.
[248] Steve Smith, *The Russian Revolution: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2002): 73-76.
[249] David Footman, *Civil War in Russia* (Faber and Faber, 1961): 224-235.
[250] Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Soviet Experiment: Russia, the USSR, and the Successor States* (Oxford University Press, 2011): 46-85.

the White Army formations occupied the Far Eastern port city of Vladivostok with the help of American and Japanese troops could be driven out in 1922.[251] Likewise, Sakwa (1999) also put forward the argument that the consolidation of Soviet power took much longer than the common estimates, and only by 1922, the Bolsheviks were able to make a claim that now they were dominating the most of territory they took over from the former Russian Empire.[252]

After briefly discussing the main arguments of these competing views on the start and end of Russian Civil War, I would like to voice out my explanation on these two periods. Differentiating from all these views, I believe that the Russian Civil War started much before the October Revolution. It is my view that there was a civil war already taking place on the immediate aftermath of February Revolution of that year earlier, and hence, I believe that the Russian Civil War started in February 1917.

According to this perspective, the power duality between the Petrograd Soviet and the Provisional Government was an important phenomenon of this earlier period of Russian Civil War. The violent clashes took place in the July Days, for instance, provides the violence necessary to attribute this earlier period as a start of the Russian Civil War. While saying so, I do not contradict with the undeniable arguments of civil war's peak point would be much later and it only became as a more serious and more nationwide event after the White Armies were established under the leaderships of some of the most prominent Tsarist staff officers as we will later discuss in more details.

As far as I am aware, besides several works such as the one came from Kort (2017), who indirectly argued that the Russian Civil War can be argued to be started as early as February 1917 as there was a visible and time to time armed conflict between the more radical factions like Bolsheviks and their rivals at this period of time already, this idea has not been raised in the current literature.[253] Considering this, although it does not necessarily contradict with the existing perspectives, it can be a potential contribution I am making with thesis to the existing literature.

On the other hand, my belief on the conclusion of Civil War might sound even stranger as I do not agree with neither of these traditional scheduling of the events.

[251] Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution* (Pluto Press, 2017), Volume 3: 1056-1065.
[252] Richard Sakwa, *The Rise and the Fall of Soviet Union, 1917-1991* (Routledge, 1999): 23-25.
[253] Michael Kort, *The Soviet Colossus: History and Aftermath*, 7th Edition (Routledge, 2017).

Instead, it is my view that the Russian Civil War, in another perspective, continued to take place even under the reign of Lenin's successor Stalin, and only could ended after his death in 1953 and being replaced by Nikita Khrushchev eventually. My reasoning is based on the fact that purges took place under Stalin's reign were merely the extensions of the political paranoid that was mostly caused by the Russian Civil War.

It is possible to argue that with the same purposes, Stalin utilized NKVD just like Bolshevik Party used Cheka against their potential rivals and enemies. Therefore, as all these arguably totalitarian actions that were caused by the political turmoil arisen as a legacy of the Russian Civil War came to a real end after Stalin passed away and his successor Khrushchev initiated a period known as "de-Stalinization", it is my view that the Russian Civil War came to a real end in political and social senses.

Likewise, to the start of Russian Civil War, as far as I could noticed, there were no scholars who argued that the conflict came to a real end by the death of Stalin. I would like to emphasize once again that here I am referring to the social and political aspects of the Russian Civil War, rather than the militaristic aspects of it, that I believe really ended with the end of Stalin's period. I believe this belief of mine under these arguments can be seen as a potentially further contribution for the existing literature on this topic.

However, it is important to highlight that within the framework of this thesis work, I acknowledge the consensus regarding the conclusion of the Russian Civil War, and with that basement, I will put forward my analysis regarding how the Bolshevik regime emerged triumphant from this specific conflict rather than providing a long and detailed overview of the Stalin's era. Nevertheless, I would like to argue that this potential breakthrough might result in the formulation of future research that might also put a closer look at the conflict while also acknowledging this alternative perspective.

We may now begin our in-depth discussions on the competitive structures of the Bolshevik Party and its military forces, the Red Army, and the different anti-Bolshevik groups, which sometimes teamed up and sometimes acted independently of each other, with being generally considered as the White Army, after defining the unique perspective I present in addition to the most striking and commonly acknowledged perspectives on these two essential aspects surrounding the time frame of the Russian Civil War.

2.6 The Bolshevik Party and the Red Army: The Rise of Soviet Power

While providing an in-depth discussion on the highlighted features of Bolshevik faction throughout the Russian Civil War, it is better to go through a structured analysis based on several significant themes rather than a complete description of what happened throughout the conflict, which would result in a complex and uncomfortable analysis through which the identification of the potential ramifications of our independent variables can be hard to track. Considering this, our analysis will focus on five important themes, which will constitute our sub-headings for our broader discussions on Bolshevik faction during the Russian Civil War.

Before diving into these themes respectively, it might be better to start by providing a brief introduction on what are we expecting to observe in each of them and how our analyses will be performed respectively. Based on this perspective, one can summarize the topics of interest this chapter has as the following:

1. The Bolshevik Party and the Establishment of Soviet Rule: Aims and Objectives
2. The Bolshevik Party and Evolution of Soviet Power: Factionalism and Power Struggles
3. Building the Red Army: Continuity, Recruitment, and the Ideology
4. Bolshevik Victory and Its Potential Implications on the Regime Survivability During Civil Wars

Firstly, we will offer a more in-depth examination of the primary political goals and objectives of the Bolshevik Party during the Russian Civil War. This will help us better understand what Lenin and his followers promised their supporters in the face of sometimes anti-revolutionary or sometimes just anti-Bolshevik factions. This viewpoint would be crucial since it has numerous significant consequences for the political and social triumphs the Bolshevik side ultimately accomplished.

Another significant aspect we will provide throughout our discussions on this topic, will based on a number of many relevant debates, such as what was the nature of the interaction between the Bolshevik Party and other socialist groups in this revolutionary political atmosphere of the civil war and whether Bolsheviks actually succeed in providing an umbrella or banner to gather behind for these revolutionary groupings amidst the counter-revolutionary forces emerged from the various sectors of

conservativism. While conducting these discussions we will provide a more detailed analysis of the relations between Bolshevik Party and some of these most notable revolutionary factions including Mensheviks and SRs.

Secondly, in a connection with the previous debates we will have had in the previous section, we will provide a more structural analysis of the Bolshevik Party and the nature behind some of its most striking decisions throughout this time of conflict to better understand how could Bolsheviks, in a way or another, accomplished establishing a more united front against the counter-revolutionary forces and what was the extent of influence the Bolshevik Party and its structural features had on this important phenomenon. This will allow us to better comprehend the importance of establishing a more consolidated front for a revolutionary political regime to increase its potential of surviving such conflicts, which constitutes the first independent variable we have provided as the party unity.

Just like the first section, our discussion on this second part of our analysis will also initiate a number of very important debates, which will further reinforce our ability to better understand the Russian Civil War as well as the ultimate reasons behind Bolsheviks' emerging triumph from it. Among these debates, one of the most striking once will provide an extensive focus on the role of factionalism and power struggles within the Bolshevik Party concerning the considerations on the potential influence the internal power struggles or ideological differences can have over the survivability of a revolutionary political regime. Moreover, while conducting these discussions, we will raise the question whether these factionalism waves and power struggles hindered the Bolshevik Party's ability to effectively represent the interests of the Soviet people. Related to these debates, we will also aim to understand whether such internal conflicts was able to hinder the Bolsheviks and their Soviet government's ability to gain support from the wider population groups during the civil war.

Thirdly, we shall examine the genesis of the Red Army, the military forces aligned with the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet government. In this section, we will conduct a detailed analysis of the continuity trends between the Red Army and its predecessor, the Russian army under the Tsarist regime. This analysis aims to shed light on the support among the Russian military staff for the Bolshevik regime and the underlying motivations for this support. By doing so, we will seek to test the commonly held assumption that the

majority of Russian armed forces, especially the officers, were in favor of the White Army against the Bolsheviks during the conflict.

Apart from this legacy or continuity aspect, we will also address two other perspectives in our discussion of this third section, namely the recruitment strategies and the ideological grounds underlying the formation of Red Army forces. As we examine these perspectives, we aim to comprehend some of the most significant challenges faced by the Bolshevik Party in assembling new recruits for its army, and how it surmounted these challenges in both ideological and practical terms. The combined efforts to enhance our comprehension of the relationship between the Bolshevik Party and the Red Army will enable us to draw more inclusive conclusions on the second variable of this thesis.

In the fourth and final section, we will conclude our discussion of the Bolshevik front in the Russian Civil War by summarizing the critical factors and mechanisms that played a vital role in ensuring Bolshevik victory. This summary will enable us to draw more inclusive and meaningful findings regarding the roles of party unity, support of professional military, and popular support in regime survivability. These discussions and findings will pave the way for our future debates on the White Army and the factors and mechanisms that ultimately led to their failure to overthrow the Bolshevik regime from power.

2.6.1 The Establishment of Soviet Power: Aims and Objectives

As a matter of fact, we have already covered some of the most vital points in the initial Bolshevik success in toppling down the Provisional Government following their successful coup in October Revolution. So, we shall instead explore the Bolsheviks' ideological aims and objectives during the Russian Civil War, which impacted their struggle against the counter-revolutionary White Armies and their political adversaries on the left of the political spectrum, most notably Mensheviks and SRs.

Although it is challenging to compile a comprehensive list of Bolshevik goals and aspirations during the Russian Civil War, we can nevertheless identify a few particularly salient ones that give a firm foundation for our understanding of the broader forces that guided the Bolsheviks' actions. Moreover, such an understanding might take the discussion further from their immediate responses to the political upheaval of the period

to the more long-term ideological strategies that would prove crucial to both the domestic and international polices of the Soviet Union.

The following list can serve as a starting point for debates about the Bolshevik faction during the Russian Civil War because of the weight they have in relation to the larger goals and objectives of the Bolshevik Party:

1. Consolidation of Power
2. Creation of A New Socialist Society
3. Cultural Revolution

Consolidation of Power

Surprising to no one, as any other revolutionary regime would aspire to do, the foremost aim and objective of the Bolshevik Party was to ensure its political survival. For that purpose, they enacted a number of very critical policies during the Russian Civil War to further consolidate the power they have on the territories they are controlling and on these regions that they would eventually establish their control with time. The main idea was to create a strong state that could indeed protect the gains and promises of a proletariat dictatorship. To protect that dictatorship, the Bolsheviks will indeed demonstrate their readiness to take any necessary steps including sometimes even harsher measures than the ones were happening during the Russian Empire, to prevent their facing with a similar fate with their unlike predecessors Provisional Government and the Tsarist regime before them.

Establishing a Strong and Centralized State

As a matter of fact, we can argue that numerous scholars back up the idea that the Bolsheviks' ultimate goal was to construct a centralized and strong state that could operate as the vanguard of revolution, something they saw as essential to the survival of the Soviet rule amid the political climate of volatility filled with an ever-increasing political turmoil. Carr (1950), for instance, provides an interesting perspective among these academics by arguing that the Bolshevik Party had to ensure the centralization of their new state with necessary strong instruments to enforce its will over the populace, who he believed had always been a hard population to manage due to the wide expanses filled with every kind

of distinctions they inherited from the Russian Empire.[254] Contributing to this necessity argument, Service (1985) argued that such a transformation of the population and institutions they inherited from their centuries old Tsarist equivalents could not be succeeded unless such radical or strong measures would be taken.[255]

Here, a process-oriented viewpoint has a chance to contribute to these discussions. As a matter of fact, given the radicalization the Bolshevik Party embraced after being unfairly labeled as troublemakers during the July Days and their tremendous return during the Kornilov Affair, the party's signal in the October Revolution was simply that anything goes to attain its goals.

Given this context, the Bolsheviks' core premise—that a strong state apparatus must be established—is logically inevitable. Scholars who focus more on the connection between Bolshevik ideology and their choice to create a centralized government to protect the working class from counter-revolutionary right-wing groups and the army, as well as the so-called "apostatic" revolutionaries who do not collaborate with the bourgeoise, provide an alternative explanation for this narrative.

One of such ideological explanations comes from Avrich (1967), whose main focus was the alienation of Bolshevik Party from those who were rather advocating for a more radical and socialist society to be built upon an anarchical system. He believes that, although Bolsheviks had pretty similar methods to achieve their aims and objectives, they distinguished from those left-wing factions such as Anarchists, who are even more radical on their agendas, because of how they interpret the functions and the necessities of having a state figure in the political realm. He explains that, according to the Bolshevik interpretation of Marxist ideology, which is mostly labeled as Leninism, there was a necessity to have a very strong and centralized state apparatus, which should serve to the interests of the proletariat – a vision that Anarchists denied from the very core, and subsequently being seen as an equally potential threat to the survival of revolution and the Soviet government in the eyes of Bolshevik Party.[256]

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[254] E. H. Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1923* (MacMillan Publishers, 1950): 267-269, 277-278.

[255] Robert Service, *The Bolshevik Party in Revolution, 1917-1923* (MacMillan Publishers, 1985): 50-51, 75-76.

[256] Paul Avrich, *Russian Anarchists* (Princeton University Press, 1967): 176-179.

It should come as no surprise that the statements of the Bolsheviks' unmistakable leader throughout the Russian Civil War, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, are all that is needed to comprehend the primary reasons for this decision. From 1917 to 1921, Lenin wrote four illuminating works that, taken together, offer light on the shifting perspectives and the developing Bolshevik emphasis on the need for a centralized and strong state to serve the interests of the Soviet working class. In order to better comprehend the reasons for these shifts, it is preferable to provide a brief explanation of the most compelling arguments he presented in each of these books in a chronological order.

Lenin makes an introduction to the role and function of state apparatus in a proletariat dictatorship in his famous *State and Revolution*, where he makes strong arguments for the prospective use of state under the Bolshevik Party. According to him, the establishment of a strong and centralized rule through the means and tools state apparatus provides would be an essential step to consolidate the proletariat power and suppress any potential attempts to remove these so hard achieved gains that would come from the conservative and reactionary elements in the society.[257] In certain ways, one could argue that the framework Lenin outlined for state functions in a Bolshevik dictatorship provided a foundation for an authoritarian, and depending on the period and conceptualizations used, even totalitarian regime to establish its roots in the prospective Soviet Union.

On the other hand, as a result of the developing widespread opposition to the Bolshevik Party's severe policies implemented in the wake of the October Revolution, including from prominent socialists and other revolutionary figures across Europe, Lenin opted to play out his true profession as the lawyer of the regime he founded. With these purposes, a year after Bolsheviks rose to power, in 1918, he published his famous pamphlet, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, where he answered the criticisms of a specific German Marxist – Karl Kautsky – based on the Bolshevik use of violence and repression to maintain their power.

Kautsky considered that the deployment of such large-scale brutality by a so-called Marxist administration was nothing more than a betrayal of Marxist foundations, arguing that the Bolsheviks were breaking from the basic foundation of the Marxist global view. Furthermore, he thought the Bolsheviks were becoming what they swore an oath to

[257] Vladimir Lenin, *State and Revolution* (International Publishers, 1917): 28.

oppose was evidenced by the fact that they established themselves as a one-party dictatorship by even crushing other socialist factions – something we shall address in greater depth in the following sections.[258]

Lenin, on the other hand, took offense to being accused of such things. Instead, he maintained that the Bolsheviks were in a position where violent action was necessary to protect the victories of the proletariat revolution, which were under attack by a reactionary force. He stated that the current situation demanded the creation of an all-powerful central government that would not hesitate to use force to stop the return of the bourgeoisie and punish those who betrayed it.[259] His thoughts on this pamphlet might be summed up as the revolutionary justification for establishing an effective vanguard state, from which a revolutionary party like the Bolsheviks could unleash their entire strength against the reactionaries and rival revolutionaries.

His third work distinguishes itself from the other two preceding it, considering the fact that it was written a year after, in 1919, when Bolsheviks, although still being threatened by the possibility of a combined counter-revolutionary assault, were in a position when they could provide a more comprehensive and detailed state planning for the aftermath of the conflict that they were self-assured to emerge victorious eventually. This work, a speech to be precise, illustrates the vision of Bolshevik Party and its leader Lenin, on the future of Bolshevik Party and the Soviet state they were fighting to establish. After laying out the current situation, Lenin stated that the Bolshevik Party's top priority was to maintain internal party discipline and consolidate power in order to create a strong, centralized government that would have the international legitimacy to pursue the globally shared aim of establishing a communist regime on a global scale.[260]

In 1921, with triumph seemingly at hand, Lenin published his final work contributing to our knowledge of the shifting Bolshevik position on the need for a strong and centralized state. In it, he offered solid guidance to the party's future leaders and highlighted a plan for which he voiced his unwavering support. Lenin, in another of his famous speeches, hammered down the argument that the future of the Soviet Union

[258] Karl Kautsky, *The Dictatorship of Proletariat* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 1918): 77-80.

[259] Vladimir Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (Progress Publishers, 1918): 20.

[260] Vladimir Lenin, *Speech at a Plenary Session of the Petrograd Soviet* (Progress Publishers, November 1919): 4-5.

hinged on the success of the education and propaganda system. He maintained that the Bolshevik Party's primary focus should be on public education in order to gain the trust and support of the masses and thereby ensure the sustainability of the proletariat revolution he and his followers spearheaded.[261] One can indeed read his words as a final and substantial declaration of support for the maintenance of a powerful and centralized state to achieve these objectives, albeit it is hard to know whether he uttered them with a feeling that soon he would also parish like his greatest adversaries.

Combining the main arguments he made in all these four prominent works, one can argue that Lenin and Bolshevik Party under his guidance have always advocated for the need of establishing a strong and centralized state, through which the unified Bolshevik Party – now Communist Party – could focus on its long term goals in pursuing a worldwide revolution agenda, where the opportunities provided by the strong state apparatus at their disposal could further facilitate their struggle, now turning more towards the international arena after emerging triumph from the Russian Civil War.

While the building of a strong and centralized state was a top priority for the Bolshevik party, it is essential to remember that this was not their primary goal in the conflict. In fact, the Bolsheviks would take two other significant measures in response to the new circumstances: they would engage in so-called war-communism, which involved more radical and rapid planning, and they would decide to turn their new Soviet state into one with a one-party regime, which would be embodied after they dissolved the Constituent Assembly they initially allowed to be held, only to realize that people's decision was contradicting with their agenda. In doing so, Bolsheviks would demonstrate that party interests could outweigh those decisions of the public, whom they still viewed as an illiterate crowd incapable of choosing the right path for themselves. In such cases, they would not think twice about acting on what they considered was best for the people, even if that would not mean that was what people wanted.

War-Communism

The Bolsheviks were well aware that they had inherited a challenging legacy from their predecessors and would have to manage it. The political situation was much more

[261] Vladimir Lenin, *Speech on the Tactics of the United Communist Party* (Progress Publishers, 1921): 15-16.

precarious, and the economy was in no better shape than it had been when it prompted the masses to overturn the centuries-long Tsarist rule. Furthermore, even if the Germans were no longer the greatest challenge to their authority, various insurgency movements with a considerably more threatening stance were already operating against their rule across the territory where they were attempting to establish power. Given these facts, it was inevitable that a temporal policy, dubbed "war-communism," would be implemented, one with loftier industrial and economic ambitions. These policies would be influential not only on the successes and shortcomings of the Bolshevik regime during the Russian Civil War but would even have long lasting effects on the decades to come for the Soviet Union.[262]

By their very nature, Bolsheviks reject the idea of individual property rights. So, the wartime conditions facilitated their decision to nationalize any means of production or industry under the guise of allowing the leading state to prioritize wartime industrial demands. Some scholars, such as Lewin (1983), would go so far as to claim that such wartime nationalization choices on all means of production would prepare the way for future economic planning under Stalin's reign, which would also see a brief shift in economic policy during the NEP period.[263]

Centralizing economic control was another major move made by the Bolsheviks in this context, and it was closely related to the nationalization of all means of production. Assuming control over all economic activities, including the planning and execution of agricultural activity, the government would not restrict its purview to industrial production alone. This new system of requisitioning and rationing would allow for the redirection of resources in response to the shifting requirements of the government's fight against counter-revolutionary forces. Bolsheviks would go as far as implementing a forced grain requisitioning, which required peasants to give up a portion of their production to the use of state. Although it was a measurement taken to provide more food for the Red Army and starving cities, the resistance of peasants would cause long-term problems.[264] These policies would cause significant difficulties for the Bolshevik Party,

[262] Simon Clarke, *The Political Economy of Stalinism: Evidence from the Soviet Secret Achieves* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998): 18-36.

[263] Moshe Lewin, “War Communism and the NEP: Some Conceptual Issues,” *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (1983): 383-397.

[264] Jonathan Frankel and Baruch Knei-Paz, "War Communism in Retrospect," in *Revolution in Russia: Reassessments of 1917*, ed. Edward Acton (London: Routledge, 1992): 54-67.

particularly in Siberia and Ukraine, where they would inspire several uprisings among the peasantry who resented the state's intrusion into their agricultural activities.[265]

It could be argued that the Bolsheviks learned nothing from these insurgencies, and that the future, under the guise of the so-called collectivization of agricultural production in large and state-owned farms known as "Sovkhoz," would be fraught with mass problems because of the state's demand for production. If a farmer refused to work for the state or simply spoke out against the government, Stalin would label them a "kulak," an equivalent of a wealthy or rich peasant, and send them to a concentration camp, if not have them executed outright.[266] As Conquest (1986) would later argue, these policies would be famous as “terror-famine”.[267] In fact, this is just a further evidence that many of the features of Russian Civil War continued to exists in the war-torn Soviet society for the decades to come.

Establishing a One-Party State

As a matter of surprise for many, Bolsheviks were not looking forward to establishing a one-party regime in the new state they were establishing based on a proletariat dictatorship. They were very aware the fact that they were desperately in need of further legitimacy, especially more than ever during these violent days. With an aim to further explain the main Bolshevik motivations behind this decision, several authors provide their own explanations, which might also facilitate our understanding of the process towards the ultimate decision in January 1918 to effectively transforming the new Soviet state to one with a one-party political regime.

Read (1996) believes that the main reason behind Bolshevik decision to allow for the elections for a Constituent Assembly was their desperate need for further legitimacy in the eyes of public, most of whom were arguably already sympathetic to the Bolshevik

[265] Jonathan Frankel and Baruch Knei-Paz, “War Communism in Retrospect,” in *Revolution in Russia: Reassessments of 1917*, ed. Edward Acton (London: Routledge, 1992): 54-67.

[266] For the problemacy of collectivization and the economic struggles in post-Civil War Soviet Union see Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). The forced collectivization would result in the emergence of a critical famine, which would cost the lives of many and put the agricultural problems to a position even harder to solve. For the persecution of peasants unwilling to cooperate with Soviet regime see Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989) or Hiroaki Kuromiya, “The Soviet Famine of 1932-1933 Reconsidered,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (June 2008): 663-675.

[267] Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986): 48-65.

agenda though were not hardline supporters of the violent way they preferred to establish themselves to power.[268] Therefore, by allowing a Constituent Assembly to be held, they might presume people would vote for the Bolshevik Party and provide them a stronger stance in the conflict. Some others also agree with this argument and believe that Bolsheviks were ultimately seeking for a new tool that they could manipulate or use for their political agenda by providing them a stronger legitimacy shield.[269]

On the other hand, Keep (1976) offers an explanation based on another perspective of this phenomenon by putting the emphasis more on the intra-party relations between the revolutionary parties and Bolsheviks. He argues that one of the main aims of Bolsheviks on taking such a decision was to create a new atmosphere through which they might be able to work together with other prominent revolutionary factions and able to form a more unified front under the legitimacy of a Constituent Assembly to argue easier that they were indeed fighting for the achievements of Russian revolutions against the reactionary forces.[270]

However, things would turn much different than the Bolshevik leadership could predict. The election results provided an assembly distribution to the detriment of Bolshevik Party by over empowering these other revolutionary parties, and now Bolsheviks, who conducted the October Revolution, found themselves once again in a minority with other factions, especially SRs appeared much stronger. Bolsheviks got their fingers burnt for the politically problematic period between two revolutions, and they were not looking forward to finding themselves in the same secondary role once again. Therefore, one can argue that it could be no longer feasible for a political agenda like Bolsheviks' to still trying to work together with these groups. Indeed, the fate of Constituent Assembly seems to be set just after these arguably only real democratic elections took place in the Russian political history so far were conducted.

Here, we should emphasize the fact that these elections were held on November 25, 1917, just a few weeks after the Bolsheviks toppled-down the Provisional Government through the October Revolution and were still not in a position of fully consolidated their

[268] Christopher Read, *From Tsar to Soviets: The Russian People and Their Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996): 30-32.

[269] Rex A. Wade, *The Russian Revolution, 1917* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 172-174.

[270] John Keep, *The Russian Revolution: A Study in Mass Mobilization* (New York, 1976): 337, 471.

power. To better understand the position Bolsheviks found themselves following these elections, we can take a closer look at the distribution of seats in the Constituent Assembly as the following chart illustrates:

Table 2.7 The Distribution of Seats in the Constituent Assembly[271]

Party/Group	Votes	Share of Votes (%)	Seats	Percentage of Seats
SRs	15,848,004	38	419[272]	60
Bolsheviks	9,844,637	24	168	24
Mensheviks	1,364,826	3	18	3
Other Socialists	505,590	1	4	1
Kadets	1,968,601	5	17[273]	2
Ukrainian Nationalists	4,957,067	12	77[274]	10
Islamic Nationalists	942,736	2		
Other Nationalists	1,678,231	4		

Based on these results, one can reach two very important conclusions for the distribution of power in the beginning of Russian Civil War for each faction. According to these results, Bolsheviks seem to have a total control of the Russian heartland, in the industrial zones between Moscow and Petrograd, and they had the advantage of controlling some of the most vital lines of communication and transport. Furthermore, their control of these areas provided them a much stronger industrial base that they would not struggle to overcome the necessities of having a functional war economy.

On the other hand, the opposition forces were divided both politically and geographically. There were many regions where the Bolsheviks were either a minority or a force that could be ignored easily. However, it was also hard to predict who was holding the upper hand in these regions, and the level of possible collaboration between these anti-Bolshevik forces. These forces were handicapped by long fronts, mostly disuniting them geographically, and making it much harder for them to wage a unified war effort

[271] Oliver Henry Radkey, *The Election to the Russian Constituent Assembly of 1917* (Cambridge, 1950): 16-17, 21.

[272] This number is a total of the following distribution: Russian Social Revolutionaries 299, Ukrainian Social Revolutionaries 81, Left Social Revolutionaries 39.

[273] This number is a total of the following distribution: Constitutional Democrats 15, Rightists 2.

[274] This number is a total of the following distribution: Muslims/Bashkirs/Kirgiz 28, Armenians 10, Jews/Poles/Letts/Estonians 9, National Social Revolutionary Groups 19, Ukrainian Social Democrats 2, Cossacks 9.

against the Bolshevik Party.[275] Makin the matters even worse for them, in the initial beginning, they were lacking the advantage of having one single major industrial hub or the political capital such as Moscow or Petrograd for their campaigns.

Moreover, these forces had much diverse aims and objectives as some would fight for restoring the monarchy or at least a non-Bolshevik and more conservative regime by aiming to topple-down the Bolshevik Party whereas some others had much more national goals such as those in Ukraine or Turkestan, where the main objective was not to march towards Moscow or Petrograd but rather establish new independent nations during this opportunity provided by the power vacuum appeared in the Russian politics.

However, coming back to the election results, one thing was as clear as water: the people were not giving Bolshevik the authority or legitimacy they were looking for. There is no need to repeat the discussion on why Bolsheviks could not accept such a result. They already made it clear they would take any measures necessary to pursue what was good for the public, even if the people were not aware of that at that point of time. With such a motivation, it did not take long before they decided to disband the assembly. On January 6, 1918, just a day after the Constituent Assembly was held, the Central Executive Committee of the Congress of Soviets, under the influence of Lenin and dominated by the Bolshevik Party, issued the Draft Decree on the Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly as Lenin would accuse the institution being "nothing more than a deceptive form of bourgeoise-democratic parliamentarism".[276]

The consequences of this choice would have far-reaching implications. As a result of their actions, the Bolsheviks not only squandered any possibility of appearing to have the support of the people and provided additional ammunition for their critics—including, this time, more from the leftist groupings that appeared stronger in the elections—but they also set the path for the eventual authoritarian rule of a single party in the Soviet Union. Encouraging from this disastrous move, there were anti-Bolshevik left-wing revolutionaries such as Mensheviks and SRs, who would continue to try toppling-down these radicals from power by claiming the legitimacy that Bolsheviks could not get after

[275] William A. Dando, "A Map of Election to the Russian Constituent Assembly of 1917," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (June 1966): 314-319, especially 318.

[276] Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "Draft Decree on the Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly," *Selected Works*, Vol. 6 (Moscow, 1935): 460-462.

the elections for the Constituent Assembly.[277] Considering all these, one may argue that it was a watershed moment in the history of not just Russia, but all of Eastern Europe and possibly all of humanity.

Creation of A New Socialist Society

After making it clear that they would fight for their "proletarian dictatorship" through any means necessary and they would act as a vanguard of the achievements they made after the October Revolution, Bolsheviks could finally start to take more strategic decisions and implement the vision many authors would later conceptualize as the basis of future Soviet control. Within such a framework, the Bolshevik Party would work for establishing a revolutionary new polity which would become a paradise or utopia for the interests of the working class. However, this utopia would also become a dystopia for the critics of their rule and any opposition that could emerge to dare enough to challenge their power.

By establishing a strong and centralized Soviet state, Bolsheviks said, workers could take charge of factories and actively engage in the control of any means of production.[278] It is hoped that in this scenario, the people, rather than an elite group or dynasty, would rule and administer the state, allowing it to focus on the people's desires and interests at last.[279] This was their ultimate goal, and many of the actions they made throughout the conflict were motivated by a desire to bring about this vision.

As was previously described, these policies included the nationalization of industrial manufacturers and the implementation of state-supervised economy, with a concentration on agricultural production. The Bolshevik Party believed that no citizen of the Soviet Union should be wealthier than the average citizen as a result of such measures, which were intended to achieve a mandated equality among the citizenry. And yet, as some who favor a more capitalist outlook on these matters would attribute to human nature, such actions were not always well received. Although there has been extensive coverage of

[277] Vladimir Brovkin, "The Mensheviks' Political Comeback: The Elections to the Provincial City Soviets in Spring 1918," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (January 1983): 1-50, especially 2-4.

[278] Alan Wood, *The Origins of Russian Revolution* (Routledge, 1993): 139-140, 143, 148; Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Soviet Experiment: Russia, the USSR, and the Successor States* (Oxford University Press, 2011): 85-86.

[279] Thomas F. Remington, *The Bolsheviks and Workers' Control: The Politics of Labor in the Russian Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 1991): 12, 15.

peasant resistance, it is worth noting that, despite Bolshevik claims to the contrary, resistance sometimes arose within the working class as well.

During the conflict, workers resisted Bolshevik Party economic policies for a variety of reasons, and various authors have offered their own perspectives on these conflicts. Although the causes of such uprisings are complex, there are four main hypotheses that have been widely recognized. According to two of these perspectives, it appears that workers resisted because they were dissatisfied with the state's extensive involvement into their workplaces and the rising demands for industrial production without corresponding improvements in working conditions, despite the Bolsheviks' assertions to the contrary. Moreover, a third view argues that it appears that the Bolsheviks' resolve to use any means necessary, including violence and terror tactics, plays a further part in the creation of a strong opposition to such policies among the workers. Finally, another explanation contends that there were a number of groups that ignored the Bolshevik Party and its policies because they advocated for even more extreme measures and chose more anarchist possibilities for who should control the means of production.

Several works contend that workers were indeed dissatisfied with the increasing involvement of the Bolshevik Party's strong state apparatus to the management of their working places. Among these works, a general trend is to believe that several alternative bodies of controlling the industrial production to keep the state out of the game, including factory committees was an outcome of this dissatisfaction[280]. These movements would arise not only in the capital regions where there was a tighter grip of the Bolshevik administration but even in the more remote regions including Southern Urals, where there was a substantial industry.[281]

They, all-together, caused a considerable headache for the Bolshevik leaders, who found themselves once again with the dilemma of working for the interests of working class and violently suppressing them. Nevertheless, as one can expect, the party would not hesitate to use violence on these groups to disperse them as it early showed that

[280] Maurice Brinton, "Workers' Control in the Russian Revolution," *International Socialism*, No. 60 (1993): 25-27; Vladimir G. Treml and Nataliya S. Yurieva, *Города и деревни России в годы гражданской войны (1918-1920 гг.): экономика и социальная жизнь* ["Cities and Villages of Russia During the Civil War (1918-1920): Economy and Social Life"] (Ural University Press, 2004).

[281] For a more extensive analysis of these insurgencies one can see Russian sources such as Oleg M. Hlstun, "Протестные настроения в рабочей среде в годы Гражданской войны," ["Protest Moods in the Working Environment During the Civil War"] in *Tomsk State University Bulletin: History* (2007).

sometimes the interests of the Bolshevik Party could be even more important than the demands of these people, who in their eyes, still were not aware what was on the stake. These violent methods would play a crucial role in the increasing dissatisfaction among the working class against Bolshevik policies with time, and arguably affected some of their members' change of allegiance for sometimes other revolutionary but anti-Bolshevik groups or directly to the ranks of White Armies.

Contributing to these debates, several prominent works including Gatrell (1992), Shkliarevsky (1993), Reid (2002), Glebova (2013), Novikova (2016), and Matiev (2020) preferred to focus on the connection between the deteriorating working conditions and the unrest among workers against the Bolshevik administration. Interestingly, it seems that the Russian sources emphasis more on the connection between war-communism and the increasing dissatisfaction among the working class, whereas their Western counterparts pay a more attention on the actions these dissatisfied workers opted to take.

Glebova (2013) and Novikova (2016) make a good explanation on how and why some of the features of war-communism triggered a widespread opposition among the working class by contenting these measurements put aa heavier burden on the shoulders of an average worker and further deteriorated the already problematic working conditions.[282] Following this perspective, one can claim that workers were becoming the slaves of the system that on contrary claiming to establish their paradise and dictatorship above those who have exploited them for centuries. The Soviet state, in the eyes of these people, might seem like a new Tsar – just this time the Tsar seemed to have a better narrative with more agitators ready to take even harsher measures to keep him in the power.

Finally, Matiev (2020) offers a more practical explanation of this phenomenon by focusing on the impacts of the deteriorating working conditions in the North Caucasia, a region where would witness some of the most interesting examples of left-wing opposition during the Russian Civil War. He attributes the increasing opposition against the Bolshevik forces in the region to the forced grain requisitions and centralized control

[282] I. V. Glebova, "Экономическая и социальная ситуация в России в годы гражданской войны," ["The Economic and Social Situation in Russia During the Civil War""] *Izhevsk State Technical University Bulletin*, No. 5 (2013): 56-62; N. A. Navikova, "Рабочие и крестьяне России в годы Гражданской войны," ["Workers and Peasants in Russia During the Civil War"] *Scientific Result: Series Social and Humanities Research*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (2016): 33-37.

of the industrial production, two factors he underlined as the ultimate contributors to the resistance of workers to the Bolsheviks and emergence of anti-Bolshevik forces in the region.[283]

On the other side of the coin, Shkliarevsky (1993) contends that one of the main reasons behind workers decision to form alternative bodies to administer their factories was their dissatisfaction with the increasing demands of the Bolshevik program. Instead, he argues, workers opted more to establish trade unions to protect their interests and demand for more rights against this increasingly hungry interventionist state.[284]

The disputes about the workers' alienation from the Bolshevik cause are reinforced by Mandel's (1983) investigation. In his article, in which he focuses on the situation in Petrograd, the center of the Bolshevik zone, he argues that workers rebelled to the Bolshevik rule because they thought that their interests were being ignored, and that this resistance was driven in part by a loss of authority over the workplace.[285] According to this important view, workers' control arose as an answer to the loss of authority over the workplace brought on by Bolshevik policies and that the persecution of workers' control by the Bolsheviks fueled the resistance of workers to Bolshevik authority.

Before moving further, it is beneficial to briefly mentioning about the arguments supporting the first of the two remaining hypotheses. The main reason behind not discussing the last one comes from the fact that it has a more developed ground in the debates and arguments concerning the empowered trade unions and other institutions against the increasing control coming from the centralized Soviet state. Moreover, it is worth to mention that the ideological gap between the Anarchist and Bolshevik interpretations are already mentioned before, thus one can simply argue that it also had severe impacts on the workers with a more anarchial point of view turning against the Bolshevik vision with time.

After making this short put important point, now we may begin our brief summarization of the third school in these debates, which deals with the use of violence

[283] T. H. Matiev, “Горское Национальное Движение В Революциях И Гражданской Войне На Северном Кавказе (1917-1921)," [“The Mountain National Movement in Revolutions and Civil War in The North Caucasus (1917-1921)”] *UDK*, Vol. 94, No. 47 (2020): 87.

[284] Gennady Shkliarevsky, *Labor in the Russian Revolution: Factory Committees and Trade Unions, 1917-1918* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993).

[285] David Mandel, *The Petrograd Workers and the Fall of the Old Regime* (MacMillan,1983): 56-59.

by Bolsheviks even more. Those works that maintain the importance of Bolshevik's use of violence mostly make their cases by explaining the extent of Red Terror unleashed on the opponents of the new regime, with a specific emphasis is mostly given to the utilization of Bolsheviks' secret police force, Cheka. Among those researchers who make such claims, it is better to take a closer look at the perspectives provided by scholars like Mawdsley (2007) and Melgunov (1975) who provide a more general account of these events.

As a matter of fact, Mawdsley (2007) avoids from making any specific accusations on each side of the conflict as he maintained both Reds and Whites committed a wide-range of use of the violence to suppress their opponents in the zones they were controlling respectively. Still, he argues that the Bolshevik zone and the reflections of the conflict on these areas are mostly characterized the immense use of Cheka as a tool of brutally silencing and murdering the local populations who dared to speak, and in some cases not even speaking, against the Bolshevik Party and its policies.[286] However, one can argue that his more natural stance in this debate is unique as it is a common tendency among scholars to – intentionally or not – taking a side of the conflict and somehow illustrating the other party as a demon.

On the other hand, Melgunov's book is also strongly advisable because it provides a more in-depth description of the Red Terror's scope throughout the war and its impact on the growing discontent of the working class with the Bolshevik dictatorship. Melgunov (1975) presents a detailed description of the crimes committed by the Bolsheviks during the Civil War in his famous book, which he also conceptualizes as "Red Terror" — a strategy he says is a deliberate policy of the Bolsheviks, aimed to suppress resistance and cement their control.[287]

Furthermore, in an earlier edition of the English version of his book it is possible to find out he believes "about 100,000 workers perished during this period due to Red Terror".[288] Unfortunately, it is hard to track the accuracy of this figure. However, it might be useful to mention about Russian estimates on this matter. One of these estimations

[286] Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Pegasus Books, 2007): 283-291 and 307-319 respectively.

[287] Sergey Petrovich Melgunov, *Red Terror in Russia, 1918-1923* (Hyperion Press, 1975): 3-19 and 123-137.

[288] Sergey Petrovich Melgunov, *The Red Terror in Russia* (London: George Routledge & Sons Ltd., 1926): 133.

claims for an even higher number of victims, which comes from Rogovin (1937), who would go as far as claiming from the start of the Russian Civil War up until the Stalin's purges, which makes it hard to distinguish the exact amount he argues for the period Melgunov describes, an approximate of 1,000,000 people perished, which includes but not only limited to the workers who died.[289]

Of course, the Bolshevik vision on establishing a Soviet utopia was beyond the violence and suppression of the any insurgency attempts. In fact, the Bolshevik dream was to put a further focus in the developing and far-reaching education institutions that would both educate the illiterate masses and train people, especially youngsters, in align with the Bolshevik indoctrination. It is beneficial to take a closer look at the main principles they introduced in their new curriculum to understand the importance the education system had in the eyes of these combined efforts they took for establishing their ideal Soviet utopia.

It is possible to argue that the first steps on that path were taken in the immediate aftermath of the October Revolution, when Bolsheviks realized that it will not be easy for them to establish the level of control they aspired on the population unless they will not introduce a brand new and Bolshevik education system. While the educational system did make some strides in the wake of the February Revolution, it was clear that a true revolution was still miles old due to the political upheaval that dominated the troublesome period that existed between Russia's two revolutions. In fact, one could say that the ghost of Tsarist regime was still strolling around the schools throughout Russia and waiting to be challenged by the Bolshevik revisionism. Moreover, this elitist, dual-track, inequal system was under the heavy influence of Orthodox church, an institution that Bolsheviks wanted to get rid of completely from the social life pursued them to follow a much more progressive stance in this field.[290] Under these conditions, Communists decided to take charge and alter the barrier system they had been criticizing for fostering an antagonistic atmosphere between students and educators, assigning an unfair amount of homework,

[289] Vadim Rogovin, 1937: Year of Terror (Mehring Books, 1998).

[290] N. K. Krupskaia: *Pedogogicheskie Sochineniia v Shesti Tomakh*, Second Edition, eds. A. M. Arsen'eva, N. K. Goncharova and P. V. Rudneva (Moscow: Pedagogika, 1978), as quoted by Rogovin (1998).

and enforcing harsh punishments for failure to perform well on tests, quizzes, and other forms of assessment.[291]

With these goals in mind, *Narkompros*, the People's Commissariat for Education – or Enlightenment depending on the translation one would prefer – was established on 26 October 1917, with the first of the People's Commissars would be Anatoly Lunacharsky. He was one of the right-hand aides of Lenin, and his loyalty to the Bolshevik cause paved the way for his rise to this very influential position in the first-ever Soviet government. He stayed in his post for an interestingly long period, until September 1929, and implemented several very important decisions that witnessed the transformation of the Russian education system and the reflections of their vision on the cultural front. He would take serious measures to first control and then weakening the existed religious education boards and performed interestingly autonomous as he would not hesitate to defend his point of views on the necessity of a transitional process against more radical Bolsheviks who would rather prefer a complete takeover of the educational system and immediate purge of clergy as a whole from the education.[292]

Four immediate steps were taken to first eliminate the obstacle legacy of Tsarism and then introducing the Bolshevik vision on the educational system. In a nutshell, these were those four primary policies and decisions taken by the Bolshevik Party to make a revolutionary stance in the sphere of education as well:[293]

1. Introduction of a free and compulsory general and technical education for all boys and girls up to age of seventeen,
2. Elimination of old textbooks, older practices of homework and examinations with a more Bolshevik and equal system to replace them,

[291] Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union 1921-1924* (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979): 7.

[292] Jay Bergman, "The Image of Jesus in the Russian Revolutionary Movement: The Case of Russian Marxism," *International Review of Social History*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (August 1990): 220-248.

[293] "Obrashchenie Norodnogo Komissara po Prosveshcheniiu," 29 October 1917; "Polozhenie ob Edinoi Truduvoi Shkole Rossiiskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Federativnoi Sovetskoi Respubliki," 30 September 1918; "Osnovnye Printsipy Edinoi Trudovoi Shkoly," 16 October 1918, all in *Norodnoe Obrazovanie v SSSR: Obshcheobrazovatel'naia Shkola: Sbornik Dokumentov, 1917-1973 gg.* A. A. Abamukov et al. Eds (Moscow: Pedagogika, 1974): 7-9, 133-137, and 137-145 respectively for the further descriptions of these policies.

3. Changing the basis of moral upbringing from the previously religious perspective to one with a Bolshevik worldview to recruit new members for the survival of Soviet revolution,
4. Under the leadership of Lunacharsky, the adaptation of a much more proactive and progressive methods of higher education.

From now on, the Soviet schools would educate the young generations throughout a more inclusive and free system that would base on the premises of the Bolshevik revolution. Old ideas were disbanded and replaced by the premises of some of the most influential Marxist thinkers such as Konstantin D. Ushinsky and John Dewey.[294]

Here it is also worth to mention that there exists a considerable opinion among the academia that one could base the entire success or efficiency of the Bolshevik education program on the personal struggles of the Commissar Lunacharsky, who would be attributed for the raising level of cultural awareness and education in Russia for a quantitively new and socialist culture.[295] Moreover, one could even go as far as arguing that the focus on education was not that much common within the ranks of Bolshevik Party as it is wrongly presumed. The signals of this unpopularity are even visible from the very own works of Lunacharsky, who would continue his struggle to demand for more and more attention from the Central Committee on the matters of education both during the civil war period and its aftermath up until his resignation in 1929.[296]

Indeed, Bolshevik policies and actions reflected mostly through the hard work of Lunacharsky, whose influence is essential to be understood well to get a better perspective on the cultural front of the Russian Civil War. Many authors acknowledged this fact and provided a detailed explanation of the actions he took in the name of Bolshevik Party during these days of turmoil. Among these scholars, Sites (1989), Koenker and Rosenberg (1989), and Fitzpatrick (2008) are some of the most notable ones who contributed the debate substantially.

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[294] Delbert Long, *Educational Reforms in the Soviet Union: Special Studies in the Comparative Education*, Faculty of Educational Studies and U.S. Department of Education: Office of Educational Research and Improvement's Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) No. 14 (State University of New York at Buffalo, November 1985): 9.

[295] Irina Lunacharskaia and Kurt S. Schultz, "Why Did Commissar of Enlightenment A. V. Lunacharskii Resign?" *The Russian Review*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (July 1992): 319-342, especially 320.

[296] A. Lunacharskii, "O sud'be, Nasilii i Svobode," *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, 23 December 1929, as quoted by Lunacharskaia and Schultz (July 1992).

One of the most notable contributions that Sites (1989) made comes from the perspective he framed with a specific attention to the changing policies of education throughout the Russian Civil War, and his explanation on the role the commissar of education had on such changes. According to him, Lunacharsky was a great believer that there was a need for a strong education system for a future Bolshevik triumph, and so he endorsed the implementation of a new curriculum that, as we briefly covered above, emphasized Marxist-Leninist doctrine, and sought to develop a new generation of Soviet citizens.[297] It is possible to make the case that Lunacharsky was just as important to the formation of the Soviet Union as Trotsky and Stalin. It was Lunacharsky who founded the Soviet educational system, just as Trotsky had supervised the formation of the Red Army and Stalin had been instrumental in the formation of numerous major institutions that would reflect the growing bureaucratization of the Soviet state.

Similarly, Koenker and Rosenberg (1989) provided an empirical analysis of the changing educational policies the Bolshevik Party implemented during the Russian Civil War, and they also emphasized the personal role Lunacharsky had over this period. They argued that Bolsheviks saw education as the key of achieving the longer-term objectives of October Revolution as they wanted to establish a new socialist society that they can indoctrinate with respect to the Marxist-Leninist worldview.[298] On this goal, the education seemed the most reliable method to achieve this, and Lunacharsky was the mastermind behind the implementation of this strategy. However, it is important to note that, contrary to what they expected to achieve, the Bolshevik strategy did not create similar results throughout the territory under their control as many conservative elements did not hesitate to rebel against the implementation of this new socialist curriculum.[299]

Although Fitzpatrick's (2008) study focused more on the larger history of the Russian Revolution, she did make a significant contribution to the arguments on the relevance of Soviet education reforms by briefly exploring the impact Lunacharsky had over this process during the Russian Civil War. She claims that Lunacharsky was the deciding player in how the Bolsheviks approached education and culture; both were crucially

[297] Richard Sites, *Revolutionary Dreams: Utopian Vision and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989): 114-136.

[298] Diane P. Koenker and William G. Rosenberg, *Strikes and Revolution in Russia, 1917* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989): 219-223.

[299] Diane P. Koenker and William G. Rosenberg, *Strikes and Revolution in Russia, 1917* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989): 231-233.

significant to him, and he laid the groundwork for the Soviet education system by introducing new ideas and practices during his time as commissar.[300] Taking into account all of these factors, one may make the case that Lunacharsky was the mastermind behind the future Soviet educational system.

After briefly mentioning these two different aspects of the vision that shaped the basis of Soviet rule, maybe it might be beneficial to discuss in short regarding the different perspectives some authors have over this concept. Due to the fact that Bolshevik Party did not hesitate to apply even more violent means to achieve such goals, many authors alienated with the reliability of considering their political experiment as a utopia, even for the working-class, whom Lenin and his followers argued that all of these were being done for. Before jumping to the next section, where we will discuss the cultural revolution Bolshevik Party implemented during and in the aftermath of civil war, it is better to briefly introduce some of these contributions with respect to our discussions.

Among these contributions, Suny (1998) makes the case more neutral by claiming that such a vision was filled with both positive and negative policies.[301] Likewise, it is possible to count Popper (2002) among those scholars who offered both strengths and weaknesses of Soviet regime, in the initial period and afterwards, who argued there were a number of undeniable evidence that Bolsheviks indeed pursued an arguably genuine attempt to create a more egalitarian society.[302]

Other than these few attempts, it appears authors either provide a more optimistic account of the vision behind the Soviet power and the Bolshevik actions in general, or in contrast a complete darker picture of these combined. Regarding the relatively optimistic or positive remarks on these aspects, one can say these were much rare in comparison to much darker depictures of this period.

One of the earliest works that provide a much positive narrative comes from Webb siblings, who analyzed the Soviet Union not in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War but rather in 1935 during some of the most horrific policies under Stalin's reign were taking place. Despite all the atrocities, they were quite sympathetic to the Soviet vision

[300] Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, 3rd Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008): 111-114.

[301] Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Soviet Experiment: Russia, the USSR, and the Successor States* (Oxford University Press, 1998): 8-10.

[302] Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (Routledge, 1945): 207-209.

and they went as far as claiming it represented a brand new and progressive form of civilization.[303] Such reflections are not limited to the early years of Soviet Union, as some other authors such as Hosking (2010) would not hesitate to argue that the Soviet chapter in the broader Russian political history represents relatively a period of progress and modernization for the Russian civilization.[304] Likewise, several other works aimed to focus further on the uniqueness of Soviet experiment and compared it with some of the other revolutionary movements and governments in the post-industrial world. Among these scholars, Djilas (1957), for instance, offered a more nuanced analysis of the uniqueness of Soviet project and would argue it was indeed a positive experiment if one considers the achievements made regarding further industrialization, a more accessible education, and social equality in reaching health services throughout the country.[305]

On the other hand, authors like Solzhenitsyn (1974) and Applebaum (2012) painted an even worse picture of this vision, and while they did not use the concept itself, they explained their reasoning behind their points, which we can use to contextualize our own understanding of the term. For Solzhenitsyn, it was not just that the Bolsheviks lied and manipulated the public; it was the cruelty of life in Soviet prisons during and after the civil war.[306] Applebaum, too, highlighted the regime's later massive manipulation of the populace to stress the dystopian aspect of the new state.[307] Last but not least, it is also worth to mention the interesting fact that even Trotsky would not hesitate to depict the Soviet Union after he had to leave as a dystopia, of course without acknowledging his potential role behind this outcome.[308]

[303] Sidney Webb and Beatrice Webb, *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?* (Longman & Green and Co, 1935): 7-12.

[304] Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire* (Harvard University Press, 2010): 318-322.

[305] It is important to note that most of applauses of Djilas on the Soviet system focuses on the early period, therefore, his arguments are valid for our analysis of the initial Bolshevik objectives and the establishment of the early Soviet rule especially during the period of and after the Russian Civil War. See Milovan Djilas, *The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System* (Harcourt, Brace and Co, 1957). On industrialization 43-50, on education 107-111, and on healthcare and social equality on 111-115 and 134-137.

[306] Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago* (Harper & Row, 1974): 59-64.

[307] Anne Applebaum, *Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe 1944-56* (Anchor Books, 2012): 18-22. Applebaum claims this dystopic nature also influenced the Cold War Eastern Europe under the Soviet hegemony.

[308] Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed* (Harper & Brothers, 1937): 40-45. Trotsky would argue that Soviet Union lacked the democracy, and it was the lying and deception that Stalin regime unleashed on the public to mask the true nature of his oppressive regime.

Cultural Revolution

Expectably, the reforms on education system were just one aspect of the broader transformation the state and society were undergoing with respect to the Bolshevik premises. According to Bolsheviks, not only institutions of the state, but even the way people were thinking and acting had to change to adopt better with the Marxist-Leninist worldview. As this fundamental vision emerged as an essential innovation in the Soviet government's, or the Bolshevik Party's, effort to build a brand-new socialist state, such a change in the cultural front was equally important and had to be initiated.[309]

Just as the October Revolution stormed the old political institutions and introduced new ones aligned with the Marxist-Leninist worldview to replace them, the cultural revolution would also strike the existing norms and traditions that had deep roots in the society with an attempt to create a new culture that would not only serve the aims and objectives of the socialism but also replace the old and obstacle one with a more modern and dynamic one that would allow the achievements of revolution to influence the decades to come.[310]

With this vision, the Bolshevik vision embodied the real strategy of red forces throughout the Russian Civil War. Step by step, Bolshevik forces would adopt these policies entangled with that vision on the territories they would seize from their rivals. This new vision, which would become an innovative method of governance, served well to the needs of Bolshevik Party in such a time of political turmoil, as it allowed to empower the local population by motivating them to participate further in the Red war-effort. This main objective was even illustrated in more details by no other but Trotsky, who described the Bolshevik grand-plan "as a radical strategy aimed to provide a radical break with the traditional ways of governance and was designed to allow the Soviet government to mobilize further support among the masses under its jurisdiction".[311]

Before going any further, it is vital to clarify that the cultural revolution in Russia during and after the Russian Civil War should not be viewed as the Chinese equivalent of

[309] Peter Kenez, *A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to the End* (Cambridge University Press, 2015).

[310] Moshe Lewin, *The Making of the Soviet System: Essays in the Social History of Interwar Russia* (The New Press, 1984). Especially in the Essay "Sovdepia Reconsidered".

[311] Leon Trotsky, "Chapter 34: 'Soviet Power Restored'," in *History of the Russian Revolution* (Haymarket Books, 2017): 991-992.

the revolution that occurred decades later. However, because of the devastating character of the Chinese cultural revolution that Mao would pursue, many people mistake the manner in which it occurred for the Russian context at the time. Yet, in terms of scale, approach, and objectives, these two periods were vastly different from one another and should not be mixed together. It might be helpful to take a closer look at how they differentiate from each other to better understand the goals the Bolshevik Party set for their cultural revolution under the banner of their vision.

The most notable difference between these two cultural revolutions was the extent of objectives. Although in both contexts, the revolutionary regime aimed to disintegrate the new state and society it was establishing from the ashes of past, the Chinese pursued a much broader cultural revolution that had even further ambitious goals and objectives than its Russian predecessor. Some authors such as Clark (2008) believe that this divergence emerged as a result of the main motivations behind these two different movements.

This theory holds that the Bolsheviks in Russia were less violent and ambitious than their communist counterparts in China because they were able to integrate some of the old institutions and traditions and present them within a new vision offered by the Marxist-Leninist worldview, while the Chinese communists intended to destroy all they got as a legacy from their political forebears.[312] Schram (2006) presents a similar point of view, however he focuses more on the methods adopted by the two revolutionary regimes in question during their respective cultural revolutions. He stressed that the Chinese Cultural Revolution was predicated on mass mobilization and political struggle, while the Russian Cultural Revolution was predicated more on propaganda and cultural revolution.[313]

Smith (2017) contributed to the discussion of this distinction by doing a comparative analysis of the desired outcomes of these two cultural revolutions. She explains that although the Russian Cultural Revolution was primarily focused on developing revolutionary culture, the Chinese Cultural Revolution was a more extreme and

[312] Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (Indiana University Press, 2008), especially in "Chapter 1: 'The Revolutionary Imaginary and the Avant-Garde Novel,'."

[313] Stuart R. Schram ed., *Mao's Road to Power: Revolutionary Writings, 1912-1949: From the Jinggangshan to the Establishment of the Jiangxi Soviets, July 1927-December 1930*, Vol. 4 (M. E. Sharpe, 2006): 37-38.

comprehensive effort to reform the Chinese civilization as a whole.[314] Another scholar, Yang (1996), would agree, and somewhat pave the way to her prospective arguments by offering an explanation that although the Russian Cultural Revolution promoted communist culture, the Chinese Cultural Revolution was more concerned with eradicating what were seen as capitalist and feudal components inside Chinese society.[315]

It is equally important to take a closer look at the debates regarding the impact of the Russian Cultural Revolution on the broader process of transforming the society along the framework provided by their revolutionary vision to further comprehend such a striking phenomenon. With that goal in mind, we can pay a closer attention to the ideals illustrated from this period in the eyes of Russian scholars, including those who witnessed or even played a key role in this period as well as those who would provide their insightful perspectives on this matter in the decades to come.

As one of the primary architects of the October Revolution and later its historian, Trotsky (2005) contends that the cultural revolution was an integral aspect of the socialist revolution and suggests that the creation of revolutionary art and literature played a significant role in this process.[316] He gave careful consideration to the subject of art, going so far as to argue that all forms of creative expression ought to be used to forward the cause of the revolution and spread the message of socialism as well as destroying what was left from "the old bourgeoise culture".[317]

Another prominent figure of the era, and one that we discussed in more detail while describing the educational campaign he pursued personally the most, Lunacharsky also gives some insightful remarks regarding the cultural revolution phenomenon for the Russian context. While describing the importance of a cultural revolution for moving forward, he argued that it was a necessity to ensure the sustainment of a healthy

[314] S. A. Smith, *Russia in Revolution: An Empire in Crisis, 1890 to 1928* (Oxford University Press, 2017), especially in "Chapter 10: 'Revolutionizing Culture,'."

[315] Yunxiang Yan, *The Flow of Gifts: Reciprocity and Social Networks in a Chinese Village* (Stanford University Press, 1996): 18-19.

[316] Leon Trotsky, "Chapter 4: 'The Formalist School of Poetry and Marxism'," in *Literature and Revolution* (Haymarket Books, 2005): 91-92.

[317] Leon Trotsky, "Chapter 8: 'Revolutionary and Socialist Art," in *Literature and Revolution* (Haymarket Books, 2005): 203-206.

transitional process to develop a new socialist culture for the Russian polity, which was poisoned by the centuries long monarchial and clerical rule.[318]

He went on to elaborate on how the revolutionary spirit played a part in birthing a new literary canon to meet the needs of the emerging Soviet culture. Lunacharsky believed that literature was one of the most effective ways to spread socialist ideas and encourage people to join the revolution. It was important to him that the struggles of the working class be reflected in writing. As an important part of the cultural revolution and a way to further socialist revolution's aims, he advocated for the creation of new revolutionary literature.[319]

Finally, it is important to highlight the novel criticism supplied by Shklovsky in making sense of the Bolshevik cultural revolution program that sought to shift the society of the former empire towards a more socialist stance. He argued that a new revolutionary culture could just truly represent the qualities of the working class, and that this divergence with the old imperial and bourgeoise past could be portrayed only through the cultural revolution.[320] Moreover, he was certain that this "great leap forward" had opened exciting new possibilities for Russian art and literature. He even went so far as to say that the cultural revolution gave rise to a new, more democratic writing style that anybody could enjoy, and that it inspired writers to try out new forms and techniques.[321]

Before wrapping off this part, it is also important to note the Bolsheviks' efforts at enhancing public health and hygiene, two other cornerstones of the cultural revolution they enacted to realize their vision. The success of these two campaigns would be critical not just for the improvement of life in the new socialist state, but also for the social transformation toward modernity that had its origins in Western European countries, which the Bolsheviks viewed with contempt as the strongholds of imperialists. Since the Bolsheviks needed more men to fight for them against the counterrevolutionary forces throughout the former empire, and because battles with these forces were deadlier than

[318] Anatoly Lunacharsky, “Revolutionary Art,” in *Revolutionary Silhouettes*, translated by Michael Glenny (Westport, Connecticut: Hyperion Press, 1973): 71-87.

[319] Anatoly Lunacharsky, “Revolution and Literature,” in *Revolutionary Silhouettes*, translated by Michael Glenny (Westport, Connecticut: Hyperion Press, 1973): 99-127.

[320] Viktor Shklovsky, “Art as Technique,” in *Bowstring: On the Dissimilarity of the Similar*, Edited and Translated by Viktor Duvakin and Richard Sheldon (Dalkey Archive Press, 1990): 7-24.

[321] Viktor Shklovsky, “The Resurrection of the World,” in *Bowstring: On the Dissimilarity of the Similar*, Edited and Translated by Viktor Duvakin and Richard Sheldon (Dalkey Archive Press, 1990): 25-47.

ever before due to the widespread prevalence of various diseases, this would also be a valuable consideration in improving health conditions across the country.

The Bolshevik Party placed an emphasis on fighting diseases as one of its primary goals. The key issue facing the new Soviet administration was the devastating influenza pandemic of 1918-1919 and other well-known diseases such as typhus, cholera, dysentery, and tuberculosis, which would cost the lives of thousands and severely damage the management and use of already scarce resources for the war effort. Understanding the significance of these campaigns of promoting hygiene and public health as an extension of the cultural revolution Bolsheviks underwent requires a close look at some of the most well-known estimates, even though it is difficult to know what the actual extent of these diseases and their financial cost for the Bolsheviks was.

Curiously, the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic in Russia was not a domestic problem, but rather a "gift" brought by foreign troops intervening in the country's civil war. Arkhangelsk, which became the northwest front of the Russian Civil War while seeing relatively low activity compared to other fronts in the conflict, is often cited as indication that the Entente forces were responsible for bringing in early October 1918 and then massively spreading of disease in the region.[322] There would be no way to stop the spread of disease during times of such upheaval and anarchy, since troops and refugees would flood the railways in waves. In a moment of blinking eye, there appeared reports of influenza spread in many different corners of the former empire.[323] This pandemic would cost the lives of an estimated 450,000 people, with a 2,8 of every 1000 lived during this time would parish directly due to this disease.[324]

A similar estimation suggests that somewhere about 25 million people would be impacted by a typhus outbreak during the civil war era, taking into account all of the

[322] Alfred W. Crosby, *America's Forgotten Pandemic: The Influenza of 1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989): 145-150; Leonid I. Van Strakhovsky, *Intervention at Archangel: The Story of Allied Intervention and Russian Counter-Revolution in North Russia, 1918-1920* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1971): 97.

[323] K. David Patterson and Gerald F. Pyle, "The Geography and Mortality of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic," *Bulletin of the History and Medicine*, Vol. 65, No. 1 (Spring 1991): 4-21, especially on 10.

[324] It should be noted that due to the Civil War, it was hard to track the exact amount of those who lost their lives in Russia because of disease only. However, these estimates are taken from United Nations, *United Nations Demographic Yearbook* (New York: United Nations, 1962): 14, 124 and Brian R. Mitchell ed., *European Historical Statistics 1750-1975*, 2nd Revised Edition (New York: Facts on File, 1980): 29-34.

territories under the authority of the various groups.[325] Furthermore, it is believed that one third of the entire 3500 Red Army doctors contracted the sickness, and an approximate thirty-five percent of them perished as a result, drastically diminishing the combat capacities of Red Army.[326] This proves the fact that these sicknesses severely reduced the war efforts, and therefore had to be dealt with by implementing new policies.

It is worth to note that, due to the nonexistence of a different approach the disease took over the fighting sides, it would be wrong to accuse it of making one side victorious over the other one. Nevertheless, there exists a substantial view that explaining the spread of disease over the combat failures of White Army groups, especially in the case of Kolchak's Siberian Campaigns, even further than the general consequences it had over all sides of the conflict.[327] Although it becomes an even harder to identify the exact causalities among the ranks of armies apart from more specialized accounts like the one we mentioned about the medics of Red Army, Soviet demographers would later estimate that the minimum amount of typhus related sicknesses and causalities in the Red Army were an approximate of 573,000 cases with 100,000 causalities as a result.[328] On the other hand, the official records gave a more general but higher morbidity rates from 204 per 1,000 in 1919 to 315 1,000 in 1920.[329]

Arguably, related to their emerging as the losers of the conflict, it remains an even harder task to come up with an estimate of typhus related cases and loses among the ranks of White Army. However, what we know for sure is there have been several cases that almost caused some of the most prominent White generals perish because of this disease. Among these figures, it is important to note General P. N. Wrangel, the mastermind behind the last White insurgency in the Southern Russia.[330] He was the famous general

[325] Daryl J. Kelly, Allen L. Richards, Joseph Temenak, Daniel Strickman and Gregory A. Dasch, "The Past and Present Threat of Rickettsial Diseases to Military Medicine and International Public Health," *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, Vol. 34, Supplement 4 (2002): 145-169, especially on 152.

[326] K. D. Patterson, "Typhus and Its Control in Russia, 1870-1940," *Med History*, Vol. 37 (1993): 361-381.

[327] K. D. Patterson, "Typhus and Its Control in Russia, 1870-1940," *Med History*, Vol. 37 (1993): 361-381, especially on 376. It is worth to note that by early 1920, an estimated number of 50,000 White Army soldiers under Kolchak's command would perish due to typhus. See Boris Urlanis, *Wars and Population* (Moscow: Progress, 1971): 164.

[328] E. I. Lotova and Kh. I. Idel'chik, *Bor'ba s Infektsionnymi Bolezhnyami v SSSR (1917-1967)* (Moscow: Meditsina, 1967): 112, as quoted by Patterson (1993).

[329] K. D. Patterson, "Typhus and Its Control in Russia, 1870-1940," *Med History*, Vol. 37 (1993): 361-381, especially on 376.

[330] K. D. Patterson, "Typhus and Its Control in Russia, 1870-1940," *Med History*, Vol. 37 (1993): 361-381, especially on 374.

who transformed Crimea to a stronghold against Red Army's raids, which would give him the nickname by Bolsheviks, "the Crimean Ulcer" from April to November 1920.[331]

In addition to the obvious effects on the White counterparts of the Red Army, there were other, more direct consequences of these diseases' spread through the ranks of the Red Army. White soldiers, notably those in Southern Russia under the direction of Anton Denikin and those in Siberia under the command of Alexander Kolchak, were in a considerably better position to fight back against the spread of them, especially against typhus, than the Red Army, because of the massive quantity of foreign supplies they received.[332] Moreover, Reds could not pursue the retreating White forces mostly because of the need they faced to fight with the rapid spread of these epidemics among their ranks.[333] Based on these developments, one could easily argue that the White troops were able to keep fighting for longer than they otherwise would have because of the unexpected spread of influenza and typhus among the Red Army, which seriously hampered the Bolsheviks' military operations.

The Bolshevik leadership realized the destructive consequences that quickly spreading diseases were having on the war effort of the Red Army, and they instituted new policies and measures to combat these illnesses among the populace they governed. With that awareness, through a state decree, followed the establishment of Soviet state's medical agency, the People's Commissariat of Public Health in July 1918, Lenin identified epidemics as one of the most dangerous threats that needs to be dealt with by the new state.[334] There were several important decisions made during the Russian Cultural Revolution that had an impact on public health and hygiene. These included the opening of public health clinics, the distribution of free medicine and immunizations, and the creation of a national public health system.

[331] Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Pegasus Books, 2015): 370.

[332] Peter Kenez, *Civil War in South Russia, 1918: The First Year of the Volunteer Army* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971): 189; Peter Kenez, *Civil War in South Russia, 1919-1920: The Defeat of Whites* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977): 23.

[333] J. M. Mitchell, I. N. Asheshov, and G. P. N. Richardson, *Typhus Fever, with Special Reference to the Russian Epidemics* (London: Balliere, Tindall and Cox, 1922): 9-14; Peter Kenez, *Civil War in South Russia, 1919-1920: The Defeat of Whites* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977): 222.

[334] Lenin would explain the dangers of these epidemics in his remarks during VII Congress of Soviets that took place during the later stages of the civil war, in 1919. See "Either Louses win Socialism or Socialism wins Louses," *Complete Works of Lenin Vol. 1* (Moscow, 1959) Ed. 39: 410.

Understanding the opportunities the backward rural areas provided to such diseases, the main focus on the Bolshevik campaign to establish new public health clinics specifically focused on these regions. With respect to the Bolshevik Party program, these new clinics would offer preferably free or at least very affordable and accessible health care service to the mass population groups, predominantly peasants, that had been living in these rural peripheries of the former empire, with most of whom had never had such an opportunity to meet with state sponsored medical services at all.

One should note that, as it was the case for any other fields of life, there was also a wide range of sentiments for the Bolshevik cause among the nurses and doctors. For instance, there were nurses who did not agree with the Bolshevik Party at all and rather preferred to volunteer for the White Army's less professional medical corps.[335] Nevertheless, as the decades to come would further demonstrate, the Bolshevik Party achieved to secure a vast majority of these professionals to work for them in these territories, whether on the front line or in these public health clinics that were being established.

Although it would not completely portray the loyalties or support among the medical professions for the fighting parties of Russian Cold War, considering the middle medical worker numbers that skyrocketed from an approximate number of 46,000 professionals in 1913 to an estimate of 719,400 in 1950, it is possible to argue that the establishment of these centers as well as the recruitment of necessary staff to work in these first-step and free health care service constituted a vital aspect of Soviet success in their campaigns against diseases.[336] It has been suggested in several studies, notably Grant's (2017), that the rapid expansion of health care institutions during and after the Russian Civil War is further evidence of the success of the Bolshevik or Soviet movement.[337]

Distribution of free medicine and vaccinations was a further attempt by the Soviet authorities in preventing the emergence of similar epidemics. Several vaccination campaigns were launched, even during the civil war, to prevent diseases such as smallpox and typhus from spreading among the population and once again disrupt the broader war

[335] Susan Grant, "Nurses Across Borders: Displaced Russian and Soviet Nurses After World War I and World War II," *Nursing History Review*, Vol. 22 (2014): 13-36.

[336] B. V. Petrovskii, *60 Let Sovetskoe Zdravookhraneniia* ["Sixty Years of Soviet Public Health"] (Moscow: Meditsina, 1977): 78.

[337] Susan Grant, "Nursing and Public Health Legacies of the Russian Revolution," *Am J Public Health*, Vol. 107, No. 11 (November 2017): 1725-1730, especially 1726-1728.

effort against counter-revolutionary forces.[338] Mawdsley (2008) would go on to describe the novelty and scope of such programs in further detail, noting that in 1919, the Commissariat of Health was able to undertake a vaccination campaign on a scale that had previously been impossible. In the first ever mass vaccination effort in Russia, he estimates that more than 2.5 million individuals were protected from contracting smallpox.[339]

Where the Tsarist officials failed in pursuing these campaigns, especially in the periphery regions where the population mostly belonged to a religious or an ethnic minority group of the empire, the Bolshevik Party succeeded.[340] This phenomenon emerged arguably partly because of their readiness to adopt these measures by using any means possible, even force if necessary, and party because of the fact that most of these troublemaking regions were not under their jurisdiction yet, or the conflict was raging these territories at the times of vaccination campaigns.

Although these policies and the introduction of an educational system where there would be further emphasis on the hygiene to educate people more on these matters constituted an important part of the Bolsheviks' cultural revolution aiming to eradicate these diseases, the most important step they took was the establishment of a national public health system, which would synchronize with these other measures taken. While earlier efforts focused mostly on reducing disease rates in rural areas, the implementations of the introduction of a national public health system had far-reaching effects in urban areas as well.

Gatrell (2013), whose description of the development of this new system is one of the most interesting, focuses on the difficulties experienced by refugees following the fall of the Russian Empire. While acknowledging the necessity of public health in establishing a socialist society, he would also point out the Bolsheviks' extensive efforts to do so during the Civil War. Even further, he would assert that the new system prioritized

[338] Susan Gross Solomon, *Health and People's Revolution* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002): 35-36.

[339] Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Pegasus Books, 2008): 198.

[340] For more information on these failed attempts during the Russian Empire, see N. F. Gamalea, *Smallpox Vaccination Institute: Works of Gamalea N. F.* Vol. 5 (Moscow, 1953): 223-230; M. N. Soloviev, "150 Years of Smallpox Vaccination and Its Results," *Vrachebnoe Delo*, No. 6 (1947): 513-518.

community health and illness prevention by instituting steps to curb the spread of contagious diseases and encourage better hygiene among its citizens.[341]

The innovative new rules came within this national public health system are further explained by Izmailova (1996), who would explain this phenomenon with respect to these two other prominent Bolshevik policies implemented as we discussed briefly. She argued that the nature of Bolshevik and subsequent Soviet policies on these matters were extremely.[342] Moreover, a further explanation of these new policies enacted along with the introduction of this new national health care system came from a more contemporary source of the time, and even arguably first-hand evidence, Semashko (1922). These innovative changes included but not limited to the free and accessible health care provided to the public despite the harsh conditions, abandonment of the sanctity of patient confidentiality, and the introduction of a new disease control system.[343]

The moment may be right to move forward with our discussions now that we have concluded our previous discussions on the Bolsheviks' fundamental vision and its significance for the Bolshevik Party's strategies throughout the Russian Civil War. Next, we'll look at the Bolshevik Party and the rise of Soviet power from the perspectives of factionalism and power struggles to show the discussions around our first independent variable in our thesis, and we'll talk about the several reasons why the Bolsheviks consolidated their front against counter-revolutionaries. It is worth to mention that one of the thesis's main arguments seeks to shed light on how and why the Bolsheviks and the Red Army were able to win the Russian Civil War, which should be a welcome addition to the literature.

2.7 The Evolution of Bolshevik Party: Cohesion and Consolidation

The ability of the Bolsheviks to unite the revolutionary factions in their fight against the counterrevolutionary groups is widely seen as one of the primary reasons for their success in the Russian Civil War. To suggest, however, that the Bolsheviks actually unified every revolutionary faction under their leadership would be to repeat a common

[341] P. Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking: Refugees in Russia During World War I* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013): 214.

[342] Elana S. Izmailova, "The System of Epidemic Control in the USSR: Short Essays on Its History," *Médicine et Santé*, Vol. 4 (1996): 109-118, especially on 112.

[343] N. A. Semashko, *Public Health Service in New Conditions* (Moscow: Medgiz, 1922).

error. In fact, several powerful opposing fronts would emerge from among these alternative revolutionaries, and there may be periodic confrontations between them and the Bolsheviks. Yet, the Bolsheviks' political superiority over their foes was secured by their considerably greater ability to sustain a more unified front, which needs to be better defined to comprehend the impact this phenomenon has on the eventual longevity of a political regime during these moments of crisis.

To better understand these debates, in this section we will put a closer look at the following two brief but significant themes behind the emergence of Bolsheviks as a more consolidated front against their predominantly conservative rivals:

1. Unity in the Face of a Common Enemy
2. Effective Leadership / Charismatic Leadership

The purpose of this section is to explain in further depth how the Bolshevik Party was able to maintain a more unified fight against their enemies, and how having a more cemented party unity can increase the chances of survival for a political regime under such circumstances.

2.7.1 Unity in the Face of a Common Enemy

Before starting our discussions on this concept, it might be better first to provide a detailed conceptualization of party unity within this framework. However, it would be unnecessary to repeat the conceptualization debates existing in the existing literature. Instead, it is more beneficial to give a more detailed explanation of the conceptualization of party unity within the context of Russian Civil War, with a specific attention to the Bolshevik Party.

Party Unity: What Does It Actually Mean?

It is a natural aspect of every party politics to pose an interest-based struggle, and the inner dynamics of political parties is not an exception. Nevertheless, the nature and extent of these struggles taking place in a political party can vary significantly, and it can have a substantial influence over the power consolidation among the party members. Especially during the times of crises, this level of consolidation appears to be a more determining factor in the eventual result of these conflicts.

The reasons behind the importance of preserving a party unity or cohesion are discussed in a great detail in the previous sections; however, still, to provide a reflection of these arguments, one can take a closer look at some of these that provide a specific explanation of these considerations within a conflictual context. Among these sources the influential works provided by Bakke, Cunningham, and Seymour (2012), Fearon and Laitin (2005) and Wauters, de Vet, and Poletti (2019) appear to be the most striking ones.

Perhaps the most significant aspect that Bakke, Cunningham, and Seymour (2012) contributed to these discussions was an in-depth description of the potential repercussions of fragmentation among the party members on conflicts, which we can use in our research on the Russian Civil War. They claim that insurgent groups' ability to conduct civil wars is harmed by internal strife and fragmentation, and even go so far as to suggest that this is due to factionalism and infighting, which in turn reduces coordination, military effectiveness, and popular support.[344] One might infer from their arguments that if a faction had greater party unity or cohesion, their power consolidation will be much stronger against their adversaries, and they would be more likely to emerge triumphant from such conflicts. Furthermore, the Russian Civil War seems like it would be an excellent proving ground for these assumptions.

Fearon and Laitin (2005) put forward arguments that one can further demonstrate the validity of the arguments we discussed above. They also argue that cohesive groups are more effective in fighting civil wars than those that are fragmented. However, their main contribution to these debates, and one that we should pay an even closer attention to, appears to be their emphasize that group cohesion is built through factors such as shared ethnicity, language, or religion, as well as a history of cooperation.[345] Furthermore, they imply that the presence of societal cleavages that run across the lines of armed conflict can mitigate hostilities and improve opportunities for compromise and resolution.[346] Understanding these appears to be vital in understanding possible factors and mechanisms through which such a higher consolidation or cohesion might appear among the members

[344] K. Bakke, K. Cunningham and L. Seymour, "A Plague of Initials: Fragmentation, Cohesion and Infighting in Civil Wars," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (2012): 265-283, especially 267-274.

[345] James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Internal Conflict and the Logic of Group Formation," (and exists with some minor different names in different sources), *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (2005): 331-357, especially 333-338.

[346] James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Internal Conflict and the Logic of Group Formation," *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (2005): 331-357, especially 344.

of a political party. In the case of Russian Civil War, especially, it sheds light to our understanding of such mechanism behind the diverging amount of consolidation or cohesion the fighting factions could had throughout the conflict.

Wauters, de Vet, and Poletti (2019) made a significant contribution to these discussions by focusing instead on explaining why party members vote a certain way and more on why party members are increasingly disloyal to the party's governing institutions. They suggest that parties where the ideological split is either so large or the party attempts to cover a greater spectrum of an ideological groups, or when there exists obvious unhappiness with the party's leadership, are more likely to see the rise of disloyalty among party members.[347]

Taking all of this into account, it is plausible to conclude that the degree of consolidation among the members of the various fighting factions during the Russian Civil War directly reflects the degree to which the various parties are united, and thus bears a significant bearing on whether or not it will be possible to wage war against rival factions under a more consolidated front. Hence, if we are to draw any meaningful conclusions about the conflict from this conception, we need to examine the following: (1) whether there was a political consolidation among the members of any particular group; and (2) how such consolidation or unity could be attained or missed.

2.7.2 Bolshevik Success in Maintaining a Higher Level of Party Unity

One could argue that the main story behind how Bolsheviks could sustained a relatively more consolidated political front that waged a common war effort against the counter-revolutionary forces emerged as a result of their success in maintaining a commitment to the political unity premises of Marxist-Leninist ideology, the structural features of Bolshevik Party that allowed the regime to have a much more centralized leadership which has both the support of and a strong control over the hierarchical structure of the other party institutions and the recruitment of a politically loyal army, the Red Army, which would act as the vanguard of the Bolshevik Party and ensured the loyalty of its members by preventing any potential inner-party opposition from erupting. On combining these mechanisms for a united front against the counter-revolutionaries,

[347] Benjamin de Vet, Monica Poletti and Bram Wauters, "The Party (Un)Faithful: Explaining Party Members' Defecting Voting Behavior in Different Contexts," *Party Politics*, Vol. 25, No. 5 (690-700).

the Bolshevik Party highly utilized the fears for these rivals, and therefore, could maintained a stronger unity in face of a common enemy.

From the Marxist and subsequent Leninist ideas on the capabilities of a revolutionary party in the face of counter-revolutionaries, the concept of intellectual unity arose as a central idea. It is worth noting that the Bolshevik Party had a longer track record of articulating its ideological goals and objectives than other revolutionary factions, which allowed them to begin the fight with a more unified core team, members of whom had already adopted the party indoctrination much more, resulting in a better level of party discipline. Fitzpatrick (2017) provides an intriguing explanation for how this discipline could be maintained through the ideological underpinnings of the Bolshevik Party, noting that, contrary to popular belief, the party discipline was maintained through a system of internal criticism and self-criticism, in which party members were encouraged to engage in open and frank debates of political matters.[348]

As the Bolsheviks' methods in this area were so successful, it is interesting briefly discussing why and how these systems of internal criticism and self-criticism were so effective. Although these events would feature a much more in-depth and regulated process, they may be summed up as gatherings where party members would meet regularly to discuss and criticize political topics and each other's ideas and deeds.[349] In fact, one could argue that the Bolshevik Party was able to deal with any potential internal party resistance in order to prevent any harm from being done to the Red Army's fight against the White forces as a result of these sessions.

At the end of the Russian Civil War, these processes would considerably develop in the establishment of new institutions addressing the various striking challenges the new state had to cope with, including the problem of the different ethnicities inside it. From this angle, Slezkine's (1994) ideas shed light on how these gatherings affect the nationality-related decision-making process. According to Slezkine, these two strategies were frequently utilized to silence opposition and promote party unity, especially in matters of nationalities policy.[350] In a similar vein, the bureaucratic organs of the new

[348] Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, 4th Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017): 40.

[349] Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Chapter 2," in *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Cornell University Press, 1994).

[350] Yuri Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 53, No. 2 (1994): 414-452.

Soviet state arose in the wake of the civil war, with their development heavily impacted by the revelation of these internal party mechanisms. Trotsky (1972) provided a critical interpretation of these consequences, claiming that such tactics were often used to stifle opposition and impose uniformity inside the party and would eventually contribute to the formation of bureaucracy in the Soviet state.[351]

The need for strong, unified leadership becomes even more apparent in this setting. Centralized leadership proponents contended that the party and the country needed a strong central figure to steer them through the perilous times of the Civil War.[352] Their logic was that the party's existence and the revolution's success depended on having a strong leader who could make decisions fast and effectively. An interesting acknowledgement on the Bolshevik success on this came from no other than Kerensky (1992), who attributed their strong leadership through which they could indeed make decisions rapidly without time consuming and futile debates.[353] From such a perspective, one could easily argue that the ability to respond to this pressing necessity by consolidating power at the top of the Bolshevik Party was likely a major factor in the organization's final success in fending off internal divisions and defeating its opponents. Our next section will add to these discussions by focusing on how Lenin's charismatic leadership and the cult that developed around his political insignia fueled these arguments. But before starting our discussions there, it is better to briefly explain how Bolsheviks really succeeded using all these strategies to unite the revolutionaries to a certain extent fighting against the counter-revolutionary forces under their banner.

2.7.3 Effective or Charismatic Leadership

There is no denying that Lenin and his charismatic leadership have always been an essential part of the Bolshevik Party. His ability to effectively lead the Bolsheviks and his subsequent elevation to the party's supreme leadership made it possible for the party to adopt a number of distinctive, ultimately productive policies. The capacity to inspire and

[351] Leon Trotsky, "Chapter 8: 'The Thermidor in the Party'," in *The Revolution Betrayed: What is the Soviet Union and Where is it Going?* (Pathfinder Press, 1972): 211-246.

[352] For instance, see Ronald Grigor Suny, "Chapter 5: 'Civil War and the Consolidation of Soviet Power'," in *Red Flag Unfurled: History, Historians, and the Russian Revolution* (Verso Books, 2017): 125-166.

[353] Alexander Kerensky, "Chapter 24: 'Октябрьская революция и ее последствия'," *Моя жизнь* (Издательство АСТ, 1992): 407-424.

encourage his followers was a hallmark of Lenin's leadership style, which also emphasized discipline, organization, and pragmatism. Many of these things helped hinder the Bolsheviks' efforts to present a united front to their foes throughout the civil war.

As a matter of fact, just as Pomper (1978) explains and emphasizes in further detail, Lenin's contemporary revolutionary opponents would not hesitate to call him as the leader of a fanatic, dogmatic, autocratic, ruthless and reckless political movement that he shares all these subjective in his political personality as well.[354] This tendency can be linked to the fact that, unlike many other left-wing factions, Lenin has always advocated for pursuing a more radical agenda, and he was willing to take all risks and utilize any methods necessary to attain his aims and objectives.

Lenin himself made it clear that the power in the Bolshevik Party should be centered around a core team of leaders, which would function as strong and centralized as the Soviet state they were aspiring to establish. These ideals of him are visible even in the much earlier speeches and works he could put forward. The most visible example of such tendencies of him, for instance, reflected themselves on a following speech he made even before the Great War started and the Russian Empire fallen apart:[355]

The leadership of the movement should be entrusted to the smallest possible number of the most homogeneous possible groups of professional revolutionaries with great practical experience. Participation in the movement would extend to the greatest possible number of the most diverse and heterogeneous groups of the most varied sections of the proletariat (and other classes of the people) ... We must centralize the leadership of the movement. We must also ... as far as possible decentralize responsibility to the party on the part of its individual members, of every participant in its work, and of every circle belonging to or associated with the party. This decentralization is an essential prerequisite of revolutionary centralization and an essential corrective to it.

Some authors such as Faulkner (2017) would argue that by keeping the core cells of the party centralized and closed while encouraging the highest possible level of initiative and activity on the part of the wider mass movement within which the party is embedded, Bolshevik movement rose as not only a highly consolidated movement but one with a

[354] Philip Pomper, "Nečaev, Lenin, and Stalin: The Psychology of Leadership," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (1978): 11-30, especially on 12.
[355] T. Cliff, *Lenin, Vol. I: Building the Party, 1893-1914* (London: Bookmarks, 1975): 91-92.

very strong and functional leadership cadre.[356] Moreover, as a potential contribution to such a conceptualization, one can suggest that the Bolshevik determination to keep a consolidated and centralized leadership for the party while keeping the lower levels of their ranks able to function through a decentralized but with well-established measures of inner-party discipline, they emerged as a much stronger faction that could eventually emerged triumph from the Russian Civil War.

As the Bolsheviks gradually assumed control of the government during the October Revolution, Lenin's role as leader became increasingly crucial. The deeds and political personality of Lenin became even more significant as the Civil War escalated, and the Bolsheviks sought for more popular support to reinforce their ranks and further consolidate their front against the counter-revolutionaries. While explaining the potential links this phenomenon had with the political personality Lenin possessed, Lincoln (1999) argued that the cult of personality that had grown up around Lenin was a key factor in the Bolshevik Party's ability to rally its supporters and win over many Russians.[357] It was during this time that Lenin's writings and speeches were widely distributed to inspire and encourage Bolshevik fighters, and his image and ideas were utilized to legitimize the Bolsheviks' seizure of power and their policies.

While this is true, the broader political and social background of the struggle was also significantly influenced by the cult of Lenin.[358] The Bolsheviks spread propaganda that portrayed them as the heroic protectors of the people and demonized their opponents. Lenin's teachings were portrayed as the ultimate truth, and he was portrayed as a larger-than-life character who represented the values of the Bolshevik, and later Communist, Party.[359] Concurrently, several authors including Zbarsky and Hutchinson (1998) would argue that the Bolshevik Party's influence over the Soviet state was bolstered by the cult of Lenin. The party was able to establish a monopoly on power and

[356] Neil Faulkner, "Lenin and the Bolsheviks," in *A People's History of the Russian Revolution* (Pluto Press, 2017): 66-67.

[357] W. Bruce Lincoln, *Red Victory: A History of the Russian Civil War* (Da Capo Press, 1999): 184-188.

[358] For further discussions on how Lenin and his political cult sharpened this period, and the decades came after, see Alison Rowley, "Picture Postcards as Recorders of The Changing Cult of Lenin, 1918-1930," *The NEP Era*, Vol. 4 (2010): 11-29.

[359] James von Geldern, *Bolshevik Festivals, 1917-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993): 45.

silence all opposition by portraying Lenin as an untouchable leader whose teachings were the final word.[360]

Success on both the political and military fronts can be summed up as a result of the Bolsheviks' implementation of many important strategies. The fact that the Bolsheviks were able to establish a more cohesive front than their White counterparts suggests that these debates can shed light on how competing groups or political regimes can work together more effectively in the future.

2.7.4 Emerging as a Unification Banner for the Revolution's Survival

A more unified front was ultimately achieved because to the Bolshevik Party's strong use of propaganda, the formation of local soviets, the recruitment of political commissars in the army, a successful appeal to the nationalist forces, and the timely promise of a land reform to garner more support among the peasantry. Each of them contributed to the consolidated political front the Bolshevik Party was attempting to form against the counter-revolutionaries.

The powerful execution of propaganda by the new Soviet state was dependent on the efficient use of various crucial communication and transportation tools, as covered in more detail during the preceding sections. Propaganda was a tool of the Bolsheviks, intended to demonize their opponents and instill fear and distrust among the populace. Moreover, they portrayed their opponents as agents of foreign powers or enemies of the people through posters and other kinds of media.[361] These policies would later give the state they were fighting to establish the nickname of "first real propaganda state."[362] Indeed, the successful implementation of these policies helped rally the masses behind the Bolsheviks and foster a sense of solidarity among the revolution's various factions.[363] Ultimately, the Bolsheviks' use of propaganda was crucial to their success in rallying revolutionary forces against counter-revolutionaries during the Russian Civil War.

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[360] Ilya Zbarsky and Samuel Hutchinson, *Lenin's Embalmers* (Atlantic Monthly Press, 1998): 57-58.

[361] Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Revolution: A New History* (Basic Books, 2017): 335-341.

[362] Peter Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods for Mass Mobilization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[363] Stephen Kotkin, "1991 and the Russian Revolution: Sources, Conceptual Categories, Analytical Frameworks," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 70, No. 2 (June 1998): 384-425, especially 407.

The establishment of local soviets, on the other hand, shows a strong emphasis on the establishment of a more cohesive front among the urban working-class, most of whom were probably already feeling apprehensive that, in the event of a White victory, the Tsardom may be reinstated, and they would have to experience the worst of the worst as all the advances they could make after the February Revolution might go altogether. Aware of this common fear, Bolsheviks successfully mustered the tools of their political machine to give more of a voice for these sympathetic masses to their cause by establishing local soviets.[364] A sense of ownership and investment in the revolutionary cause was fostered by these soviets, which gave workers a platform to voice their concerns and participate in decision-making.[365] As a result, Bolsheviks were successful in gaining support for the revolution from the general public and spreading their views throughout the soviets. Numerous pieces of evidence show that these community organizations played an important role in rallying support for the Bolshevik cause and creating a more unified front under their flag throughout the civil war.

Intriguing accounts show how the political makeup of Russia changed over the course of the war, with "older Bolsheviks," or those who had previously supported the Bolshevik Party, becoming a smaller and smaller minority as "new Bolsheviks," or those who decided - or had to decide - to stand with them against the threat of a massive counter-revolution, emerged. These numbers show that the percentage of "old Bolsheviks" among the local soviet's district congress executive membership dropped from 12.2% in 1919 to 9.9% in 1920 and 7.6% in 1921.[366] In a similar vein, the structure of the provincial congress executive memberships was also producing a similar, albeit slower, pattern, with the same percentages falling from 26% in 1919 to 24,7% in 1921.[367]

Perhaps it is just as necessary to briefly describe some of the most notable examples of the left-wing elements that eventually opted to help the Bolshevik Party during the Russian Civil War against the possibility of a real counter-revolution, after documenting

[364] Robert Service, *Lenin: A Biography* (Harvard University Press, 2005): 384-389.

[365] Robert Abrams, "Political Recruitment and Local Government: The Local Soviets of the RSFSR, 1918-1921," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (April 1968): 573-580, especially 574-575.

[366] NKVD, *Statisticheskii Otdel, Sovety, S''ezdy Sovetov i Ispolkomy; Materialy k Izucheniyu Sistemy Upravleniya* (1924): 138; M. Vladimirsky, *Sovety, Ispolkomy i S''ezdy Sovetov: Materialy k Izucheniyu Stroeniya i Deyatel'nosti Organov Mestnogo Upravleniya*, Vol. 1 (Moscow, 1920/21): 7, as quoted by Abrams (April 1968).

[367] M. Vladimirsky, *Sovety, Ispolkomy i S''ezdy Sovetov: Materialy k Izucheniyu Stroeniya i Deyatel'nosti Organov Mestnogo Upravleniya*, Vol. 1 (Moscow, 1920/21): 7, as quoted by Abrams (April 1968).

the gradual shift of the local populace towards backing the Bolshevik cause. Despite the fact that it is difficult to argue for a comprehensive and unified support for Bolsheviks among various factions because of the nature of civil war, it is nonetheless worth noting that they largely supported the Bolshevik Party. Initially, among these were the Left Social Revolutionaries (Left SRs), the Anarchists, the Maximalists, and the Left Communists.

It is important to note that Left SRs and SRs have become already different factions by late 1917, when the more leftist elements of the socialist revolutionaries decided to protest the mainstream party, declaring them to betraying the revolution by not actively supporting the Bolsheviks against counter-revolutionary White forces. When SRs divided into two camps, the allegiance of most intellectuals and clerical workers decided to side with more moderationist side of this rift, resulting almost all the sailors and a majority of workers and soldiers supported the party decided to move forward with the Left SRs.[368] Although it is hard to put forward a single reason behind their acting so, there are reasonable claims that believed that the Bolsheviks' policy of centralized leadership would lead to the establishment of a new form of social democracy and that they thought the true revolutionary path lay in the establishment of decentralized, grassroots soviets, which seemed to them only possible through siding with the Bolshevik Party.

Setting aside their differences, Lenin originally embraced the Left SRs as a feasible ally, likely mainly because he was aware of the large amount of support they had among the peasantry, which he regarded as a necessary necessity to obtain also for the Bolshevik Party throughout the conflict. With this goal in mind, he provided the Left SRs access to the benefits of government service by accepting them to *Sovnarkom* (the Council of People's Commissariats) and assigning them to the office of Agricultural Commissar.[369] After the Bolsheviks decided to dissolve the Constituent Assembly, these measures were required since the Bolsheviks would have been doomed to failure if they had not compromised with the Left SRs.

[368] O. H. Radkey, *The Sickle Under the Hammer: The Russian Socialist Revolutionaries in the Early Months of Soviet Rule* (New York, London: Colombia University Press, 1963): 157-158.

[369] Ettore Cinnela, "The Tragedy of the Russian Revolution Promise and Default of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries in 1918," *Cahiers du Monde Russe,* Vol. 38, No. ½ (1997): 45-82, especially 52-53.

The Left SR support for the Bolshevik Party, however, would not endure long. Despite their shared goal of creating a socialist society, the Left SRs eventually turned on their new Bolshevik allies because of the Bolsheviks' insistence on instituting a proletariat dictatorship, a political structure that they also strongly opposed. The Left SRs, however, had been opting to enter negotiations with the Bolsheviks for some time about the issue of centralized leadership and the role of the soviets in the revolutionary process, in the hopes that these problems could be resolved by talks. Talks between the two sides eventually broke down, and the Left SRs resorted for more extreme measures.[370] While Lenin was leaving a meeting in Moscow on August 30, 1918, a Left SR named Fanya Kaplan approached him and fired three shots. While hurt, Lenin managed to survive the assault. With this, the Left SRs became yet another, more formidable enemy of the Bolshevik Party, bringing an end to their uncomfortable partnership.[371] Also, one may argue that this sort of assassination attempt further radicalized the Bolshevik Party and finished their transformation to an oppressive and totalitarian dictatorship, rather than a just authoritarian one.

An even more intriguing phenomena was the Anarchists' support of the Bolshevik Party. They were at odds with one another over the role of the state, as the Anarchists were vehemently opposed to the establishment of this institution and the Bolshevik Party was eager to establish a strong and centralized state that they saw as the vanguard of proletarian dictatorship. However, it should be noted that there was no unified political group operating under the banner of Anarchist doctrine. Yet, there were specific instances where Bolsheviks and its adherents worked together for a common cause; this was especially true of those who lived by the maxim "the enemy of my enemy, so long as it is revolutionary, can be my friend."

One of the most notable examples of these specific instances centralizes around the interesting figure of Nestor Makhno, a prominent Ukrainian Anarchist, whose acts left a huge impression on these disputes over the Bolsheviks' collaboration with numerous other left-wing forces. He was a fervent believer of decentralization and the establishment of a libertarian socialist society. Initially, Makhno and the Bolsheviks had a reasonably

[370] Ettore Cinnela, "The Tragedy of the Russian Revolution Promise and Default of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries in 1918," *Cahiers du Monde Russe,* Vol. 38, No. ½ (1997): 45-82, especially 49.

[371] Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks Come to Power: The Revolution of 1917 in Petrograd* (Pluto Press, 2008): 366-379.

cooperative relationship during the Civil War. In the war against the White armies and other counterrevolutionary forces, Makhno's anarchist forces, known as the Black Army, fought side by side with the Red Army.[372] Bolshevik leaders understood the strategic value of Makhno's guerilla tactics and his ability to rally the people behind him, two of the main reasons that determined them to act together during the conflict.[373]

Nonetheless, the nature of the relationship between the Red Army and the Black Army remained problematic, since the two groups would not hesitate to fight against each other when their goals were at odds. For example, in 1919 the Bolsheviks and Makhno's forces fought each other head-on as the Red Army launched a series of offensives against the Free Territory. Yet, despite these occurrences, Makhno would still view the anti-Bolshevik forces as his primary opponent and would reject any offers of collaboration. By refusing Wrangel's offer and then publicly hanging his emissaries within the same year, he conveyed a strong message that his anarchist movement would never form an alliance with the White forces, which was indeed a good example of this tendency.[374]

The Maximalists were another radical left-wing group that joined the Bolshevik cause. They were a leftist group in early twentieth-century Russia, having broken away from the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Like anarchists, they fought against the idea of a centralized government and instead pushed for a more freewheeling, socialist version of the free market. Their support on these policies and the extremist policies they would advocate for their realization equalized them with their well-known slogan “Deepen the Revolution!”.[375] They agreed to work with the Bolsheviks because they shared a dedication to developing numerous key institutions, such as local soviets, which the Maximalists saw as a chance to realize the decentralized socialist society of their dreams.[376] And yet, similar to other left-wing groups, they would become disillusioned with the Bolsheviks' concentration on establishing a stronger and more centralized government that went beyond the line drawn by the oppressive Tsarist regime.

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[372] Paul Avrich, “Chapter 6: ‘The Anarchists and the Bolsheviks’,” in *The Russian Anarchists* (AK Press, 1984): 205-232.

[373] S. A. Smith, “Chapter 5: ‘The Civil War’,” in *The Russian Revolution: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005): 78-81.

[374] Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Pegasus Books, 2015): 393-395.

[375] Michael Farbman, *The Russian Revolution and the War* (National Council for Civil Liberties, 1917): 31.

[376] Abraham Ascher, “Chapter 6: ‘The Socialist Dilemma’,” in *The Revolution of 1905: Russia in Disarray* (Stanford University Press, 2014): 143-148.

The Maximalists saw the Bolsheviks as a new kind of dictators who were betraying the ideals of the revolution with their policies. They were concerned about the long-term implications of war-communism and were notably critical of the Bolsheviks' policy of forced requisitions, which they saw as contributing to the starvation and hardship of the peasants they sought to serve. And yet, despite all these huge disagreements, the Maximalists continued to play a prominent role in the Russian Revolution and Civil War, arguably because they saw the Bolshevik Party as the lesser enemy than the conservative forces. Following in Makhno's footsteps, they formed guerrilla units and fought alongside the Red Army against the White forces and other counter-revolutionary groups.[377]

The Left Communists appear to be one of the last remaining groups deserving of any sort of consideration at this point. Curiously, their leader Bukharin, would later be noted for his being the mastermind behind the New Economic Policy (NEP), an economic strategy plan adopting some of more conservative views under the reign of Stalin, who would eliminate him later by charging him for being "the right opposition".[378] During the Russian Civil War, this faction would become more vocal in its belief that another revolutionary war was necessary to properly defend the gains made since the October Revolution. Nonetheless, they would have significant disagreements with other Bolshevik Party officials, particularly with regards to the sort of support that the party should provide for the Chinese communists, who were independently trying to plant the first ever seeds for a forthcoming communist revolution there.[379]

To sum up this section, it is clear that the Bolsheviks were successful in preventing the splitting of their ranks largely due to their particular inner-party discipline and many measures to allow any dissent to be treated within the party by allowing these members to voice their thoughts within the framework party allows them to. Lenin's inspiring leadership gave them the impetus they needed to propose a more popular policy with their constituents. Conversely, they might form respectable partnerships with some of the most

[377] Stephen Smith, "Chapter 8: 'The Civil War'," in *Russia in Revolution: An Empire in Crisis, 1890 to 1928* (Oxford University Press, 2017): 236-237.

[378] For an intriguing analysis of these power struggles and how Stalin eliminated several well-known leaders of the Bolshevik Party by framing them either "left opposition" or "right opposition" see Michael Reiman, "The NEP Crisis and Suppressing of the Left Opposition," in *About Russia, Its Revolutions, Its Development and Its Present* (Peter Lang AG, 2016). For Bukharin, see pages 54-55.

[379] Yuri Felshtinsky, "Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, and the Left Opposition in the USSR, 1918-1928," *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (1990): 569-578, especially 570-573.

fringe left-wing groups, though they'd still have to fight more powerful groups like the Mensheviks and moderate SRs.

One critical conclusion we can make out of these debates is the fact that fragmentation among the party members or factions with similar political agendas can result in their weakening in such a time of crisis, thus can lower the survivability of a political regime substantially in the case of such conflicts. The empirical evidence suggests us that one of the most important reasons behind how Bolsheviks and their Soviet government could indeed emerged triumph from the Russian Civil War takes its roots from the ability of Bolsheviks to unite both the members of their party with measures, some of which we described above, and the radical elements of other left-wing factions to further reinforce their consolidation levels. Considering all these, one can argue that the Bolshevik example demonstrate the validity of our hypothesis, where we suggested there exists a positive correlation between the party unity or cohesion and the political survivability of a revolutionary regime during such a conflict.

Now that we have wrapped up our analysis of this section, we can go on to the next one, in which we'll examine the development of the Red Army, the politically indoctrinated armed forces of the Bolshevik Party. Here, we'll look at how ideology had a part in the establishment of these units, how new personnel were recruited, and what trends of continuity there were between the new army and its Tsarist forerunner.

2.8 The White Movement: Fragmentations and Power Struggles

Contrary to the Bolsheviks and their armed forces, the counter-revolutionary factions and the White Armies were far more fractured, presenting a challenge for them to wage a coordinated war effort against the Bolsheviks and making their insurgencies or operations throughout the conflict much more complicated and less coordinated. However, there appears to be more to notice and understand behind this phenomenon, therefore it is essential to provide a full explanation of the elements that hampered their struggle against the Bolshevik control. This being the case, it would be instructive to examine the significance of the notion of party unity in the context of anti-Bolshevik forces and factions in the Russian Civil War, so as to acquire a better understanding of the factors that could pose greater obstacles for one party to prevail in such a conflict.

To begin with, it is essential to note that the counter-revolutionary forces from very beginning had been never united under a single purpose or aim other than toppling down the Bolsheviks who seized the power through use of force, and therefore, illegitimate in their eyes. Interestingly, these anti-Bolshevik groups were not only compromised of more conservative or even reactionary elements, but there were even some other revolutionaries as well as several groups from the left-wing political arena who rebelled against Bolsheviks' new Soviet government.

Beyond that, even in the case if there could be an ideological unity among these different groups, since Bolsheviks were controlling the most of Russian heartland and the main hubs of transportation stayed under their control for the most of conflict, these relatively similar groups that might share some sort of an ideological and aim-based unity, could not coordinate their campaigns because of lacking any direct geographical connection with each other. A good example of this phenomenon is the case that there were three separate and most notable White Army formulations in the conflict that established their respective bases in different parts of the former empire, and due to the fact that they almost had no real connection between each other, and their communication tools were either unreliable or already obstacles, the level of coordination between their operations were very limited if not completely non-existent.

2.8.1 White Movement's Fragmented Structure

As previously said, what can be claimed for certain regarding the White Movement's collective organization appears to contain only two most remarkable aspects. These are their combined hatred for the Bolshevism, and their desire to remove Bolsheviks from power by applying coercive methods including waging a war against them to achieve this objective. One could argue that, apart from these two features, it is nearly impossible to make any all-encompassing judgment of these groups; and although being the greatest threat against the Soviet regime, they lacked any form of additional cohesiveness that could make them identified with any clear ideology or political objective.

Although the primary goal was the overthrow of the Bolshevik Party, it was unclear what kind of political system would replace the proletarian dictatorship established by the Bolsheviks. This was because various White Army leaders had different goals, and it was often difficult to foresee the degree to which these goals were identical. In fact, it is

essential to investigate what the most famous five White Army generals were advocating in terms of political order to better understand the degree of disunity between their agendas. In a nutshell, there were three main ideological camps that these five and other White generals belonged to: those who wanted to restore the monarchy, those who wanted a strong military dictatorship, and those who wanted to establish a liberal and democratic society.

Anton Denikin, commander of the White Forces in Southeast Russia, and Pyotr Wrangel, one of Denikin's subordinates and greatest rivals in the final stages of their struggle against Bolshevik rule in Southern Russia, were two of the most prominent among those who supported the restoration of the monarchy. Although though they shared a common goal of restoring the monarchy in the event that they were successful in ousting the Bolsheviks from power, their visions for how that monarchy should look and operate were very different.

As a matter of fact, one could argue that this discrepancy also reflects the divergent perspectives of the many generations represented among the army's operational ranks. Kornilov and his generation have been considered as "reactionary monarchists" by some researchers, like Figes (1997) since they advocated for a more consolidated monarchical restoration and were totally opposed to decentralization and autonomy for national minorities.[380] On the other hand, scholars including McMeekin (2017) make it apparent that people like Wrangel were "pragmatic monarchists" who were willing to make further compromises and who, if required, would embrace land reform and alliances with non-Russian ethnic minorities.[381] Yet, there were also those like Denikin, who might have been a monarchist a period but now turned into a more constitutional figure, who opposes the restoration of monarchy as a whole despite his subordinates.

On the other hand, some of the most influential members of the White Movement, who would prefer to establish a military dictatorship in the end, include some of the most important leaders who paved the way for the Bolshevik takeover during the October Revolution. Kornilov was one of these men, and after his fateful decision to march to Petrograd to avoid a Bolshevik takeover failed miserably, and arguably paved the way for

[380] Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution 1891-1924* (Penguin Books, 1997): 764-766.

[381] Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Revolution: A New History* (Basic Books, 2017): 380-382.

the establishment of Bolshevik power instead, he revolted this time against the Bolshevik rule to establish the military dictatorship he now regarded as even more inevitable and necessary.[382] Following his escape from the Bolshevik imprisonment in a moment of political unrest during the October Revolution, he formed the very first regular formations of the White forces by cooperating the Tsar's former chief of staff General Alexeev, and waged war until a fateful and daring attack of Bolshevik forces would cost his life in April 1918.

Admiral Alexander Kolchak, who installed himself as "Supreme Ruler" or *Verkhovnyi Pravitel* after he decided to put an end to the socialist revolutionary administration in Siberia in November 1918, is yet another leading figure of the White movement whose political ideologies are often credited as a firm believer in the principles of a military dictatorship. Although he admitted that he had always considered himself as a firm monarchist, at least while serving under Tsar, his views would change during the civil war considerably.[383] It is possible to argue that his political views were heavily influenced by the foreign intervention he desired to acquire, which would make him one of the most important actors of the counter-revolution in Russia, who would receive significant assistance from the Allied Powers. Like the Allies, he openly said that restoring monarchy in the former empire was "difficult and inappropriate."[384]

On the other hand, he was also firmly opposed to the ideals of a social democracy, from which he believed the Bolshevik danger had originally arisen. Smirnov (1933), one of the well-known officers served alongside Kolchak would describe this hatred for socialism or any sort of democracy as a common tendency of Russian officers, who he believed, equalized these concepts with anarchy and instability due to the fact that they considered these dark ideals caused their beloved Russia to come to this moment of greatest struggle.[385] Kolchak, who arguably embodied these concerns, as it could be seen in his actions as well as other important decisions he would take later as the "Supreme

[382] J. N. Westwood, *Endurance and Endeavour: Russian History, 1812-2001* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002): 93-96.

[383] While he was being questioned, Kolchak admitted that he was a monarchist, at least when he had a meeting with Tsar and his family in 1912. See, A. Z. Ovchinnikov, *The Testimony of Kolchak and Other Siberian Materials*, eds. H. H. Fisher Elena Varneck (also translator) (California: Stanford University Press, 1935): 45-46.

[384] Betty Miller Unterberger, "The Russian Revolution and Wilson's Far Eastern Policy," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (April 1957): 35-46, especially 43-44.

[385] M. I. Smirnov, "Admiral Kolchak," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 11, No. 32 (January 1933): 373-387, especially 385-386.

Ruler", demonstrate that he was increasingly committed to the idea of an emergency military dictatorship to save Russia from Bolshevik rule.

Finally, there were some others including General Mikhail Alekseev, the former chief of staff under the Tsarist regime during the World War, who would rather prefer the establishment of a more liberal regime following saving Russia from the grasp of the Bolshevik totalitarianism. Although it would be hard to call Alekseev as a firm believer of liberalism or social democracy, as he fought against these ideals in an attempt to prevent their further spread among the ranks of Russian armed forces prior to the revolution, some of his political tendencies demonstrate his rather being proxime to these ideals than most of his fellow White generals. For instance, we know for a fact that he was not completely opposed to the empowerment of religious and national minorities, seeing them instead as possible allies who may contribute to their struggle against Bolsheviks.[386]

He worked tirelessly to establish these forces with this more constitutional perspective he emphasized, and as a result, he can be seen as the mastermind behind the establishment of the Volunteer Army in Southern Russia.[387] These forces would constitute the bulk of counter-revolutionary forces in the Russian heartland and would constitute a serious threat for the Bolshevik government for years to come. They would initially be lead at first by older generals like himself and Kornilov, and then by those like Denikin and eventually Wrangel. In reality, one may argue that Alekseev made a clear and particular emphasis on such a substantially more constitutional political agenda in his inaugural declaration, which we can paraphrase as follows:[388]

The Volunteer Army's top priority is preventing an armed invasion of South and South-East Russia. It will fight to the death to protect the sovereignty of the regions that have given it refuge and are the last stronghold of Russian independence and the best chance of restoring a free and prosperous Russia. Yet, this is just one of the Volunteer Army's many objectives. Until the day comes when the master of the Russian country,

[386] M. B. Alexeev, *Iz Dveninka Generala M. V. Alekseeva* (Prague, 1927): 48-50.
[387] Richard Luckett, *The White Generals: An Account of the White Movement and the Russian Civil War* (London and New York: Routledge & Kean Paul, 1987): 98-100.
[388] A.I. Denikin, *Ocherki Russkoi Smuty* (Paris, 1922): p.198.

the Russian people, may express its will through the election of a Constituent Assembly, [it] will keep guard over civil liberties.

Likewise, he would demonstrate his determinacy in working together with especially those minority groups that he believed Russians share a lot of common features. For instance, in the summer of 1918, he would not only welcome but even supplied the Armenian delegation with their desperate need for grain to survive in post-revolutionary Caucasia.[389] Several Armenian accounts of this period would later call this gesture as "one of the most important" instances when the roots between Russian and Armenian nationalist movements were established and thrived over the legacy of such a measure taken by the General Alekseev.[390]

Considering all these, even though these leanings indicate that the general supported the development of a more constitutional political order in the likely aftermath of a civil war with a White triumph, it is also important to note that they do not prove that his political ideas necessarily corresponded with those of social democracy. Yet, his upbringing as a senior member of the armed services means that his beliefs may still be considered as the grounds of building a compromise between more moderate elements of Russian politics once again; despite the unsuccessful attempt of the Provisional Government on that front, it is possible to speculate and argue that he thought the future of Russia was going through more civil liberties and far less centralized government, two factors that dramatically and effectively distinguish him apart from his compatriots.

It is also important to note that the generational differences among the White Army officers become even more apparent in their desired form of political government following a prospective victory. Robinson (2002) would put a specific attention to this difference, claimed that the younger officers including Generals Turkul, Skoblin, Manstein, and Kharzhevskii were much more revolutionary than their older counterparts like Denikin and Alekseev, and therefore, they were advocating for a new political order

[389] Artin H. Arslanian and Robert L. Nichols, "Nationalism and the Russian Civil War: The Case of Volunteer Army-Armenian Relations, 1918-1920," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (October 1979): 559-573, especially 564-565.

[390] Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia*, Vol I: "The First Year, 1918-1919," (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971): 360-361.

to replace to old older that most of conservative and older White Army members were supporting in contrary.[391]

Therefore, to sum these discussions up, it is visible that even among the army officers of White Movement fighting in the same front against the Bolshevik forces, there was almost no sense of a political unity regarding their different visions for what should replace the Bolshevik giant after they would supposedly emerge victorious from their "crusade". However, still, it is important that for the period of civil war, these political differences played little in shakening the level of collaboration between their unified goal in toppling down the Bolshevik Party. Nevertheless, it prevented their struggle from becoming a unified political struggle. Because of this, it would not be wrong to conceptualize the White Movement as a military uprising rather than an established and well-organized political counter-revolution attempt. This argument can be further supported by the accounts being made by some of the most important contemporaries of the Russian Civil War, including the liberal politician N. N. L'vov would argue that the White Movement represents a military campaign and struggle rather than being a political one.[392] This is an interesting point, which seems important to be further evaluated in detail.

2.8.2 The White's Failure in Becoming a Political Movement

In fact, we have already mentioned some of the main reasons behind the fractural nature of White Movement and how it remained as a combination of counter-revolutionary forces, although commonly being known as conservative still with an undeniable percentage of more independent thinker members among their ranks. White label had become an overarching title for all the groups that were opposed to the October Revolution and the Bolshevik takeover of power that followed it, as seen by their united resistance to the Soviets. Yet, it appears essential to explore some of the existing arguments for the significant phenomena of why they were unable to form a well-established and organized political movement. Exploring these causes requires looking

[391] Paul Robinson, *The White Russian Army in Exile, 1920-1941* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002): 6.

[392] N. N. L'vov, *Beloe Dvizhenie* (Belgrade, 1924): 7.

beyond the argument of geopolitical distance they had between one other to investigate more structural causes to have a more striking knowledge of this phenomena.

The political economy of the movement provides one of the most plausible explanations, emphasizing the fact that the White Movement's diverse factions lacked the industrial and population bases enjoyed by their Bolshevik adversaries. It is true that throughout the war, some of the White Forces made major advances and took some of the most important metropolitan centers of the old empire, particularly those under Kolchak's control in Siberia and those under the direction of Denikin in Southern-east Russia. Yet, they were unable to maintain power long enough to create the political and economic infrastructure essential to establishing a secure populace and industrial base from which they could reinforce their war efforts against their Bolshevik adversaries.[393] Nevertheless, even in their supposedly more secure population centers, where some degree of political establishment functioning may be argued, they still faced the huge menace of partisans or people who were opposed to their rule. In Kolchak's campaign, this latter trend was more visible than in the campaigns of other important White Movements.

For instance, on November 18, Kolchak successfully captured one of the most vital metropolitan centers for his operations—Omsk—but he could only maintain control in the region for a year until he had to evacuate the city to the advancing Bolsheviks, who reclaimed it in November 1919. In a same vein, even during his most crucial campaign that placed Moscow in danger and genuinely caught Bolsheviks off guard between July and November 1919, when they took a faithful gambit to prioritize dealing with the remnants of Kolchak's soldiers, Denikin could not last long in the cities he captured, which included an advancement as far as Voronezh, Kursk and Oryol.[394] As Denikin was doomed to fail in consolidating his hold over the area, he was compelled to withdraw in disarray as soon as his initial advantage started to wane. This failure of White Army groups would result in not only the loss of vital units but also their having a big deficiency of equipment and ammunition. By time they started to not being able to refill by

[393] Viktor G. Bortnevski, "White Administration and White Terror (The Denikin Period)," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (July 1993): 354-366, especially 359-361.

[394] Peter Kenez, *Red Advance, White Defeat. Civil War in South Russia, 1919-1920* (Washington DC: New Academia Publishing, 2004): 44-45. Those who are interested in an alternative narrative on these developments can see Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Pegasus Books, 2007): 245-249.

solely relying on the foreign support they were acquiring due to their over-extended front lines.[395]

On the other hand, Bolsheviks enjoyed their relatively stronger and much better-established military-industrial complex, although with its own flaws, to rearm more divisions for the Red Army to crush their counter-revolutionary opponents.[396] Although for a brief period of the conflict, between 1918 and 1919, according to the estimation of Dobb (2012), a 60 percent of the whole railroad lines and their industrial hinterland could be controlled by the various White Armies, Bolsheviks acted fast and were successful in re-establishing their control over these zones, thus further empowering their war industry.[397] Overall, one can easily argue that their political failures to achieve their economic goals in these newly acquired territories proved themselves vital in destroying their any remaining militaristic capabilities, hence further preventing them to form a unified political front against the Bolshevik order.

On the other hand, it seems the lack of a charismatic leader within the White Movement may also be at blame; such a leader might very well unite the diverse factions fighting for the White cause into a cohesive front, as was the case with the Bolsheviks under Vladimir Lenin's charismatic leadership. There were some genuine military geniuses within the White Movement, and their most visible leaders arose from a period of intense competition and disunity that spanned the Great War and the revolutionary political climate that soon followed. But, these military officers lacked the political will and indoctrination skills necessary to conduct a more cohesive battle against their Bolshevik nemeses.

Alexander Kolchak: Closest to Become the Leader, But Still the One Furthest

Alexander Kolchak, one of the most prominent and ambitious White Movement leaders, who proclaimed himself "Supreme Leader and Commander-in-Chief of All Russian Land and Sea Forces," is a perfect example to consider. Most of the other White Movement leaders came to agree that Kolchak should shoulder this burden, therefore he

[395] Peter Kenez, *Red Advance, White Defeat. Civil War in South Russia, 1919-1920* (Washington DC: New Academia Publishing, 2004): 214.

[396] Orlando Figes, "The Red Army and Mass Mobilization During the Russian Civil War, 1918-1920," *Past & Present*, No. 129 (November 1990): 168-211, especially 190-191.

[397] Maurice Dobb, *Russian Economic Development Since the Revolution*, Vol. 5 (New York: Routledge, 2012): 89.

may have been the best bet for uniting the many White Movement groups under a single head. There is, nevertheless, sufficient evidence to demonstrate that he lacked several of the most crucial qualities a charismatic leader, particularly in this age of political turbulence, should have.

When Kolchak undertook this role of fighting against Bolsheviks in Siberia, he lacked the important knowledge regarding the region he was aspired to rule, as one could argue that was the case because of his being an Admiral, who was trying to assume the role of a general instead. Although he fought against Germans and Turks during the Great War relatively successfully with the scarce resources he had as a naval officer, now he had to fight with Bolshevik Party and their politically loyal Red Army, who were challenging his rule not in the seas but instead on the ground.

To make the matters worse for his prospective political career, on 19 August 1917 Kolchak with several officers left Petrograd for Britain and the United States as a quasi-official military observer, which reduced his ability to witness and act according to the shocking developments that paved the way for a Bolshevik takeover in October Revolution.[398] When the revolution happened and the Bolshevik Party established a firm dictatorship immediately, he was still in Japan, working with other Entente officials on the plans to keep Russia in war.[399] Therefore, one can easily argue that, from the very beginning, Kolchak lacked two of the most important skills that could empowered his operations: he was an Admiral now had to oversee the operations of an army, not a navy, and he was out of the game while Bolsheviks were establishing the path for building their new regime.

Considering all these flaws even at the initial setting, one can wonder how other leaders could – even if reluctantly – agreed on fighting under the leadership of this admiral, who was far away even during the time his country may needed him the most. In fact, this is an intriguing debate, and it can also facilitate our understanding of the factors behind his eventual downfall as with time cooperating with him for these other

[398] For a detailed analysis of his visits, especially to the United States, see Charles J. Weeks Jr and Joseph O. Baylen, "Admiral Kolchak's Mission to the United States, 10 September – 9 November 1917," *Military Affairs*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (April 1976): 63-67.

[399] John Smele, *Civil War in Siberia: The Anti-Bolshevik Government of Alexander Kolchak, 1918-1920* (Cambridge University Press, 2006): 77.

leaders would only become more of an obstacle, substantially decreasing the political powers of Admiral.

It appears, while he lacked the necessary leadership skills for leading an army on fields rather than a navy in the seas, Kolchak had a clear and very visible advantage in comparison to his companions: while Russia was experiencing all of this political turmoil, he had enough time to get in touch with some of most influential foreign leaders in his visits, and because of this vast network he was successful in establishing with them, he appeared as a potential candidate to lead the White Movement, as his leadership could bring more foreign support that they desperately needed. British especially had very good relations with Kolchak, as he was a firm believer in the necessity of the Russia's continuing involvement in the Entente cause.[400] Two years later, after his campaign had failed and he was being interrogated by the Bolsheviks, he demonstrated his loyalty to the British by simply stating that he felt honor-bound to continue fighting the war with Germany as a supporter of the Provisional Government and that, since there was no place for a Russian admiral in the British Navy, he would be willing to fight as a private for the British army.[401]

From the very beginning of his career as the Supreme Ruler, Kolchak had to deal with an immense inner backlash came from the troublemaking SRs, who were dissatisfied from the fact that their uneasy but still with the peasantry backing administration was toppled down in a British supported coup that put Kolchak in power instead. Despite the fact that the SR administration did also prove itself quite problematic, this move would not so welcome among the populace, who were not in support of a military dictatorship.[402] Moreover, this decision alienated not only hardline supporters of SRs, but even more moderate and arguably conservative Kadets living in Siberia became further illusioned with the leadership of Kolchak. Siberia was an interesting case as here it was almost impossible to draw a clear line between SRs and Kadets.[403] Indeed, Kolchak managed to

[400] R. H. Ullman, *Britain and the Russian Civil War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968): 212.

[401] Peter Fleming, *The Fate of Admiral Kolchak* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001): 32-33.

[402] N. G. O. Pereira, "White Power During the Russian Civil War in Siberia (1918-1920): Dilemmas of Kolchak's 'War Anti-Communism'," *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (March 1987): 45-62, especially 51-52.

[403] Paul Dotsenko, *The Struggle For a Democracy in Siberia 1917-1920* (Stanford: California University Press, 1983): 40-44; N. G. O. Pereira, "White Power During the Russian Civil War in Siberia (1918-1920): Dilemmas of Kolchak's 'War Anti-Communism'," *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (March 1987): 45-62, especially 50-51.

alienate both groups, and his leadership from the very beginning, therefore, lacked any meaningful popular support.

However, Kolchak was able to establish his arguably dictatorial rule with relative ease, and he brought an end to these attempts with the support of the local Cossacks and the Czechoslovak Legion, a step that would destroy any legitimacy he could had later on.[404] It is the latter group in particular that is crucial to comprehending his rise and fall; as their true loyalty lay with the Entente powers, and they would not hesitate to flip their allegiance readily, even handling the Admiral to the advancing Bolshevik forces as it was reflecting the changed interests of these powers. Disagreements between Czechoslovak and Siberian military personnel appear to have worsened as differences in long-term objectives and command structures became more apparent.[405] Nevertheless, by relying on these forces more than the populace under his jurisdiction, his actions would not only alienate the socialist revolutionaries further from the common struggle against the Bolshevik power, but even led some of their prominent members to opt for an alliance with Bolsheviks rather than with the White Movement.[406]

Although at first, Kolchak and his conservative supporters welcomed the removal of socialist revolutionary groups from their administration, this would prove to be a devastating decision that would further decrease the support they could have from the masses. As it was seen in the Constituency Elections of 1917, regardless of their inability to form a stable administration under the late prime minister of Kerensky, SRs were still very popular among the population, and even more among the peasantry, probably the most populated group in the region Kolchak was aspiring to rule. Therefore, it is even possible to speculate that, by putting Kolchak to power and allowing him to establish a military dictatorship that had the effectual support only of foreign powers, both Entente powers and the White Movement made a crucial mistake as this faithful decision would further destabilize behind their lines and made it even harder for them to raise more peasants to their cause.

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[404] Paul Dotsenko, *The Struggle for a Democracy in Siberia 1917-1920* (Stanford: California University Press, 1983): 64-66.

[405] M. P. Golovachev, "Siberian Movement and Communism," *BAR* (Colombia University): 320-321, as quoted by Dotsenko (1983).

[406] V. V. Garmiza, *Krushenie Eserovskikh Pravitel'stv* (Moscow, 1970): 65-114 and I. I. Serebrennikov, "The Siberian Autonomous Movement and Its Future," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 3 (1934): 400-415, as quoted by Dotsenko (1983).

Another important challenge Kolchak had to deal with was the level of cooperation with national and religious minorities, and the question of what would be given to these groups to having their support. Although Kolchak's family roots were definitely demonstrating he was not an ethnic Russian, arguably a Moldavian or even a Turk according to several self-accounts of him, he was a clear Russian patriot, who would praise the ideals of preserving the Great Russian ethnic superiority in the new regime he was trying to establish. That would prove itself a very tough challenge, as Treadgold (1957) would suggest, especially since Siberia had always been witnessing a competition between Great Russian chauvinism and Siberian particularism as well. Although it was possible to comment that both principals were ethnically Great Russian, the aborigines of Siberia having been tragically driven off center stage by wave after wave of migration from the European "mainland" at the end of the nineteenth century.[407] Therefore, Kolchak had to deal with not only the nationality problem in his new regime, but even the question of rift between Great Russian chauvinism and Siberian particularism.

After Kolchak deposed any remaining SR ministers from his cabinet, his now administration now became "all Russian". Moreover, one could argue that, whether it was on purpose to reflect the idea of representing the interests of whole Russia or not, this new administration was consisted almost completely of Grand Russians who belong to the heartland of former empire, and representation of Siberia was disproportionately reduced. If Kolchak could still find some sympathy among the populace after his arguably illegitimate way of seizing power, this decision of him made this task even more impossible. Peasants and other groups, who had already developed a sense of Siberian particularism over their Grand Russian identities, now further disillusioned with the political face Kolchak was portraying, and this became a key problem for the admiral in the coming months of looking for more recruits.

In fact, it is possible to suggest that Kolchak had this hardliner position against the ideals of regionalism or more autonomy as it was a very popular view among his majority of supporters. Although there were more tolerant leaders as we suggested before, the main approach among white officers regarding the question of nationalities could be summarized in one popular slogan: "the fight for one and indivisible Russia should be

[407] D. W. Treadgold, *The Great Siberian Migration* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957): 205-223.

carried to the end."[408] Kolchak was also in the same idea, and because of this, he rejected any compromises with various groups of national or religious minorities as he considered that would be a repeated mistake that Bolsheviks also did by signing the Treaty of Brest Litovsk. Maybe Lenin and Bolsheviks were indeed gaining time by giving up from the territories of their imperial predecessors, but for a man like Kolchak that was a disgusting move. He would denounce the treaty and those who signed it as traitors, and stated that "…We shall lose our political independence, our borderlands, and shall finally be reduced to a 'Muscovy', an island state…"[409] Considering this dependence of him on the ideals of a unified and strong Russia, which needs to decline any offers of regional autonomy, may make one think that he was willing to portray a stronger political stance on these matters even with some of his hungry allies, This was not the case, and these challenges would further destabilize his rule and lower the amount of his supporters.

Even though both Russia and Japan joined the war on the side of the Entente, their troubled histories would cause them troubles even while at war. And when Russia under Bolsheviks decided to pull out of the conflict, it was Japan who decided to put forward a very large force of intervention, and this could only happen after Kolchak, the Supreme Ruler who stated he will not accept any efforts on capturing the "Holy Russian Land," welcomed their decision to take such a step. And yet, Japan was not deploying its estimated 57,000 troops only to prevent the Bolsheviks from overrunning the Russian flanks.[410]

Despite their efforts in trying to portray their move as an attempt to prevent the disintegration of Russia or the advancement of Bolshevik forces, it was well known that Japanese rather were pursuing their own interests.[411] Their keen interest in the Primorsky and Kamchatka regions was well-documented; they were on the lookout for new territories in which to expand. These reasons made them the real threat in Siberia, and although even his supporters were well aware of this fact, Kolchak still decided to

[408] A. Z. Ovchinnikov, "Outlines of My Reminiscences," *HIA* (19 February 1920): 12.

[409] E. Varneck and H. H. Fischer (eds.), *The Testimony of Kolchak and Other Siberian Materials* (Stanford: California University Press, 1935): 70-71.

[410] George C. Guins, "The Siberian Intervention, 1918-1919," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (October 1969): 428-440, especially 434.

[411] George C. Guins, *Sibir Souzniki i Kolchak* (Beijing, 1921), Vol I: 46-47, as quoted by Guins (October 1969).

cooperate with them.[412] He was in a desperate need of foreign support to establish his iron will in the region. Japanese intervention focused particularly on the crucial port of Vladivostok, and they would show their resolve in holding it by leaving in only by October 1922.[413]

Despite widespread belief among Entente powers and some of his army's highest-ranking officers that he could be the man to lead their cause, Kolchak actually presented a very poor political leadership. He had bad luck from the start because he was a seaman and not a skilled general who could command his men efficiently. The fact that he was absent during the political upheaval only compounded his inability to fully grasp what was at stake and how his leadership might be improved by adopting particular policies. The violent means by which he came to power did not endear him to the people, and the fact that he favored Great Russian chauvinism over working with those who advocated for a Siberian identity only served to further alienate him from the populace. Although this was understandable given his ambition to control all of Russia rather than simply Siberia, his collaboration with the Japanese, who were regarded as foreign invaders rather than a foreign power wanting to interfere to preserve Russia, further undermined any appeal he could have had after this point. Although his military operation was far more effective, at least in the beginning, that is a topic for yet another discussion.

The Commander's Crusade: Denikin's Journey

In December 1920, as Kolchak realized defeat was imminent and the Bolshevik forces were drawing closer and closer, he declared that General Denikin of the Military Forces of South Russia, or the Volunteer Army as it was more prominently known for his men by that time, was his successor and the White general should be considered as the second Supreme Leader, *Verkhovnyy Pravitel*.[414] Nevertheless, recognizing the facts and mechanisms that contributed to Kolchak's downfall, Denikin would hesitate to use these terms, even denying not only the powers that come with such a title, but also such a leadership role.

[412] N. G. O. Pereira, "White Power During the Russian Civil War in Siberia (1918-1920): Dilemmas of Kolchak's 'War Anti-Communism'," *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (March 1987): 45-62, especially 55-56.

[413] David J. Dallin, *The Rise of Russia in Asia* (Read Books Limited, 2013): 157-158.

[414] Dmitry V. Lehovich, "On the Decline," in *White Against Red: The Life of General Anton Denikin* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974): 377.

In fact, one can argue that, in comparison to Kolchak, Denikin had a number of very important advantages that could make him a good replacement for this role of uniting the whole White Movement against the Bolshevik rule. Firstly, and most importantly, unlike Kolchak, who experienced a very striking disadvantage due to his main orientation in the military, he was a land officer. As an infantry general, he commanded various troops during the Great War, and he had the necessary skills and experience required to command an army therefore much easier in comparison to, for instance, Kolchak.

Second, he was considerably more conscious of what was at stake since, unlike Kolchak, he was in the midst of the political turmoil that saw the rise of the Bolsheviks to power. As he was so close to Kornilov, it is reasonable to assume that he had a good grasp of the events that led to the state of affairs at the time and could thus appreciate the mistakes made by his commander, which ultimately led to greater support for the Bolshevik cause. Along with the majority of his contemporaries, he pledged allegiance to Kolchak so that he could devote more time and energy to his duties as a military officer and less time and energy to becoming a political figurehead with said power to improve his commanding abilities during the civil war. He had seen Kolchak making the most significant blunders that endangered his position politically and militarily, when the responsibility found him, he was better prepared and ready to respond faster than his less successful predecessors.

What paved the way for rise of Denikin, first as the militarily and then politically, was the death of Kornilov, who played an undeniable role in the establishment of Volunteer Army in South Russia by collaborating with Alekseev. In a chaotic environment, while everyone was curiously wondering who would replace the former Commander-in-Chief, to the surprise of many, one of his closest aides, Anton Ivanovich Denikin would assume this responsibility. He would prove his courage and strategic skills as well as the abilities required for a military man to have in coordinating his units. However, when it came to another, and yet even a more important topic of handling the nation he was aspired to save from Bolshevism, things were not that much bright for the general.

His political career was complicated by the fact that, like Kornilov and Kolchak, he was still more of a soldier than a stateman and lacked the experience to lead a nation in

war, let alone a civil war.[415] When compared to the Bolsheviks, who were more like statemen than soldiers, it is clear that the White Movement lacked civilian authorities and leaders like Kolchak, Kornilov, Alekseev, and now Denikin. This suggests that the White Movement's leadership has always lacked the necessary political skills, which brought a number of important challenges for the movement's leadership and would eventually play a crucial role in determining their inevitable loss. Despite this, Denikin faced some of his first obstacles from within his own ranks, rather than from the additional obligations that came with becoming a nation's leader.

One could argue that, from the very first days of its formation, the Armed Forces of South Russia had an interestingly disproportional size of officer corps considering the amount of soldiers it had under its command. Although the size and nature of these units will constitute the discussions of the upcoming section, it is still important to highlight an important fact that rose from the diversified structure the Volunteer Army had. Luckett (1971) was among the scholars who stressed this important detail, and he argued that the fact that there were many important military figures among the ranks of White forces in South Russia, ranging from the officers of older generations like Alekseev to Kornilov, and those younger ones from Denikin to Wrangel, caused some substantial problems for the unified command of their counter-revolutionary force. The main problem was the fact that these commanders, Kornilov, Alekseev and Denikin most notably, each had their own staffs that accompanying them with their respectively considerable size that resulted in an apparent jealousy among their ranks, and therefore, seriously undermining their operational capabilities from the very beginning as a result.[416]

It is debatable if these challenges were genuinely addressed properly by Denikin in the way he opted to act. Nonetheless, he was nevertheless happy from the fact that, after Kornilov perished he still had Alekseev at his side at least for a period of transformation their army had to face following their former Commander-in-Chief's downfall. Here, it is important to note the fact that the problematic history Kornilov had hindered his ability to command the army greatly. Consequently, it appears even in the eyes of Alekseev, Denikin appeared as the most required fresh leadership the White Movement needed in

[415] Dmitry V. Lehovich, "Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of South Russia," in *White Against Red: The Life of General Anton Denikin* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974): 294.
[416] Richard Luckett, "The Campaign Through the Ice," in *The White Generals: An Account of the White Movement and the Russian Civil War* (London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul): 105-106.

South Russia, especially when one considers his heroic fame among the troops and officer corps that further assisted his seamless foundation of his leadership.

Following the perish of Kornilov in April 1918, just after six months, this time Alekseev passed away in October 1918 due to a heart failure he experienced in Rostov after a long struggle they had by moving Volunteer Army to their eventual operational base in Kuban region.[417] Even while the deaths of Kornilov and Alekseev, two extremely skilled commanders for the movement who played an unquestionably crucial role in the construction of this force in the early stages of the Russian Civil War, were a setback, the fact that both men had passed away meant that Denikin could now command his forces even more easily than before.

Denikin's popularity amongst the men and officers was not just due to his heroic deeds, which is why he was able to secure his position as head of the Volunteer Army. Instead, his greatest achievement was instituting discipline through a new chain of command that pushed for greater collaboration to present a more unified and robust front against the Bolshevik forces.[418] Denikin was able to maintain stability and order among the armed forces' top brass owing to this strategy.

To have an even more immediate impact on his troops, he sought to appeal to their patriotism and their desire to save Russia from the chaos and carnage of the civil war.[419] For instance, even in his own words, he repeatedly focused on the importance of maintaining a loyal commitment to the rich history of Russia and its culture, two concepts he highlighted for his troops to strongly attach themselves in their struggle against Bolshevism. Scholars include Figes (1998) believed that Denikin indeed utilized the historical and cultural narratives quite frequently to provide a higher degree of patriotism among his soldiers.[420] In a nutshell, one can easily argue that Denikin’s core strategy ultimately aided in bringing the Volunteer Army together and producing a stronger fighting force, both of which contributed to the army's success in scoring major military victories especially during the initial moments of Russian Civil War.

[417] Peter Kenez, *The Russian Civil War: 1918-1922* (Cambridge University Press, 1977): 59-60.
[418] David Stone, *A Military History of Russia: From Ivan the Terrible to the War in Chechnya* (Praeger, 2006): 262-267.
[419] Anton Denikin, *The White Army* (Howard Fertig, 1973): 17-24.
[420] Orlando Figes, *A People’s Tragedy: The Russian Revolution, 1891-1924* (Vintage, 1998): 786-789.

Leaving aside the organizational talents Denikin clearly possessed, one of the most pressing challenges he had to handle as quickly as possible was building a base of popular support, something his predecessor White leaders frequently lacked. Unfortunately, nothing looked good for the White general, as the peasants who made up the large majority of the population in the territories he ruled were strongly opposed to him.[421] This was apparently because some of the closest supporters Denikin had were among the representatives of the old socioeconomic system, which the peasants detested just as much as they disliked the Bolshevik authorities. Throughout Russia's history, the region of South Russia has been challenging to rule due to the wide range of social, economic, and ethnic disparities that exist there. It appears that Denikin was yet another victim of this pattern, as he was forced to center his operations there because nowhere else in the vicinity of central Russia could provide him with more favorable conditions.

In fact, the socioeconomic backgrounds of the leadership that Volunteer Army had could portrayed itself more connected with public especially when one considers the family-lines some of their most striking leaders including Denikin had. According to one interesting analysis, fathers of Alekseev and Denikin were serf-born while Kornilov was coming from a poor Cossack family.[422] Unlike the situation in other fronts where the leaders appeared with more prestigious roots, such as Kolchak with his apparently arguable connection to the Turkish and Moldavian aristocracy, the leaders of Volunteer Army were coming from the people directly. This provided them a strong counter-argument against the claims of Bolsheviks, who often portrayed the White Armies and their leaders as the remnants of aristocracy and royalty, who were fighting in the name of aristocratic and backward social order Russia had before the October Revolution.

By pointing to their own background, they could have defended themselves against the charge that their movement was merely fighting for class interests. Nevertheless, as Kenez (1980) pointed out, they preferred not to use this opportunity which could instead work well in establishing a much-needed bridge between them and the masses.[423]

[421] Vladislav I. Goldin, "N. V. Tchaikovsky and A. I. Denikin: Dialogue, Collaboration, and Controversy of the Anti-Bolshevik Movement Leaders in the Days of the Civil War in Russia: Documents from Russian and Foreign Archives," Herald of an Archivist, No. 1 (2022): 81-97.

[422] Peter Kenez, "The Ideology of White Movement," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (January 1980): 58-83, especially 60.

[423] Peter Kenez, "The Ideology of White Movement," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (January 1980): 58-83, especially 61-62.

Unfortunately for Denikin, this tendency that he apparently also shared in one's distancing himself from the masses would just portray himself far away from the interests of people and would create additional obstacles for him to establish a social base that he will have to use violence to compensate it.

Unfortunately for the public, Denikin was not that much different than other White leaders or Bolsheviks when it comes to his use of violence and terror to suppress and dissidents in his zone of control. In fact, one of general's first moves was announcing the military rule he established would be only temporary and he would rely on the rule of law as much as possible through the old institutions he decided to restore in municipal and regional levels.[424] These institutions, empowered with the military dictatorship Denikin argued to have only for a temporary time, would enact a devastating terror on the populace, and would result in their not only increasing dissatisfaction with the Volunteer Army but even the increase of recruitments for the ranks of Red Army.

One could argue that Denikin, although being aware of the most striking short-comings of Kolchak, he still repeated some of these mistakes especially while trying to build himself a recruitment base but still alienating the local populace further with his brutal tactics. Especially when he decided to rely more on the recruitment of peasants as a mean to balance the influence of local warlords, or Atamans, as well as the Cossack Hetmans, this strategy was welcomed by his Bolshevik rivals with a great pleasure. Even Lenin, who believed no matter what the vast majority of peasants would accept their dominance rather than Whites, would make the following prediction regarding the potential harm the mass conscription move Denikin opted to take:[425]

…universal mobilization will be the ruin of Denikin as it was the case with Kolchak. As long as he has a class army of volunteers who have been hating socialism from the very beginning his force can be more reliable for him. However, turning into the universal mobilization, which will require him to get a larger force much faster, will eventually make him more vulnerable as the class characteristic of his army would disappear. Peasants recruited into Denikin's army will have the same devastating impact as the

[424] N. M. Melnikov, "Pochemu Belye na Iuge Rossii ne Pobedili Krasnykh?" N. M. Melnikov Collection, Bakhmetiev Archieves (Colombia University): 24.
[425] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Edition, Vol. 47 (London, 1960): 460.

Siberian peasants had for Kolchak – they brought complete disintegration of the admiral's army.

One could argue that, due to this apparent low support among the peasants who still Denikin had to rely on forming the main backbone of his troops, Denikin opted to have a more meaningful alliance with local Atamans and Cossack Hetmans to obtain a higher degree of support from these forces to constitute a more robust political base for his campaign. This would become even a more interesting phenomenon as at the outset of Denikin's great and fateful offensive targeting Moscow would begin in May 1919, the Armed Forces of South Russia actually primarily consisted of three independent armies: the Volunteer Army, Don Cossack Army, and the Caucasian Army.[426] Moreover, considering the fact that various Cossack groups would not only dominate the Don Cossack Army but even the Caucasian Army under the leadership of General Wrangel, it is possible to suggest that the political alliance Denikin formed with the local Cossacks and their warlords was a very important element of his campaign.

Lehovich (1974) offers a compelling explanation of the historical context of the alliance between Cossacks and the White Movement, particularly in the theater of South Russia. He argues that, throughout Russian history, Cossacks were primarily allied with the Tsarist governments and would serve as one of the most important sources for recruiting more men to the Tsarist armies. To avoid being contaminated by the Bolsheviks, the non-Russian nationalities on the frontiers of the former empire were working hard to declare independence by the end of 1917. Alekseev and his future partners Kornilov and Denikin believed the Don was the only secure base of operations from which to launch their operation. People in the Don region were predominantly of Russian descent, spoke Russian, were members of the Russian Orthodox Church, and enjoyed relatively high standards of living compared to those in other border regions.[427]

All these factors alienated them further from the Bolsheviks, who were advocating the ideals of so-called "anti-Russian" and class-based internationalist arguments that were perceived by Cossack leaders as potential threats to their political interests. Indeed, first Alekseev and Kornilov, then Denikin would not hesitate to consider Cossacks as a great

[426] Dimitry V. Lehovich, "Denikin's Offensive," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April 1973): 173-186, especially 173-174.

[427] Dmitry V. Lehovich, "Birth of the White Movement," in *White Against Red: The Life of General Anton Denikin* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974): 177-180.

pool of potential soldiers for their ranks by believing they will also act alongside them in their struggle against the Bolshevik forces.[428] Nevertheless, as Denikin would later on recall (1922), that much of depending on the Cossacks would be faithful by bringing more political challenges of Kornilov and his officers, whom would eventually have to move forward in a daring attempt to strike Bolsheviks in February 1918 before their Cossack allies would turn back to their units.[429] Although Cossacks still supported the White forces quite visibly with an even growing importance as it is possible to see it in the case before the ultimate Moscow push Denikin made, it was apparent that the necessity to rely using Cossacks for their campaign made it a harder task to maintain a consolidated leadership.

Considering all these, it would not be wrong to evaluate the leadership of Denikin more effective in terms of his operational skills as a military man while he still lacked the necessary experience and means for establishing a strong political leadership that would be possible to compare him with the levels of his Bolshevik nemeses, especially in the cases of Lenin and his aide Trotsky. Unfortunately for him and arguably for the whole White camp, the civilian skills required to administrate a political movement especially during the times of such a turmoil was not an easy task, and his lacking such skills would eventually limit his leadership substantially.

Still, in comparison to other prominent leaders of the White Movement, he had a clear advantage in establishing himself as a more successful candidate to unite the movement. Nevertheless, he still lacked the ability to unify every other group that were fighting for the anti-Bolshevik cause. It was the case that he did not have that much of a negative relation with his populace, especially in comparison to Kolchak, owing to the fact that the local warlords, Atamans, and Cossacks were there to protect his rears against any meaningful resistance. This continued to remain so at least until his eventual failure following the disastrous withdraw he had to make from the gates of Moscow to the safeguard of Crimean peninsula.

[428] Anton Denikin, Chapter XIV in *Ocherki Russkoi Smuty*, Vol. II (Paris, 1922).
[429] Anton Denikin, Chapter XIV in *Ocherki Russkoi Smuty*, Vol. II (Paris, 1922): 219-221.

2.8.3 Concluding Remarks on the Party Unity in the Russian Civil War

Our discussions on the comparative status of party unity demonstrates the fact that one of the most important reasons behind the Bolshevik triumph from the Russian Civil War was their having a much more consolidated political front against their White counterparts. This phenomenon, which we conceptualized as the party unity, illustrates that Bolsheviks had a much higher degree of unity among their ranks owing to the fact that they could established more effective mechanisms through which inner criticisms could be handled carefully while the coordination with other politically close allies could be maintained. On the other hand, White forces were much less capable of maintaining such a unity due to the fact that they lacked the geopolitical unity as well as the ideological and structural consolidation they failed to establish among them.

Another crucial determinant of Bolshevik victory was their ability to have a strong charismatic leadership, centered around the cult of Lenin, who was undeniably more successful in maintaining the Bolshevik consolidation of power while the counter-revolutionary groups, with White Movement constituting the most important part of them, were looking desperately for an equivalent of him among their ranks. Kolchak was one of the most important figures among them, but he failed to unify Whites due to a number of important factors including his inability to coordinate a land warfare as an admiral as well as the methods he chose to establish his firm control. Denikin, who was in a better situation as he was a much more experienced general who was more aware of the political dynamics at hand, still lacked the social support as Kolchak did. Intentionally or not, by relying so much on troops under his command, who after a stage also started turning against him due to mass conscription of peasants that were against these strategies, he further decreased his leadership strength. Unfortunately for White Movement, there were more soldiers than real politicians or bureaucrats that undermined their movement substantially and arguably prevented him from becoming a more consolidated political movement.

Considering these, it is possible to suggest that party unity, both in structural features and around the concept of leadership cult, plays a strong role in determining the potential victor of the civil wars. Based on this premise, and as the Russian Civil War further illustrates, it is possible to argue that the degree of party unity has a direct influence over determining the survivability of regimes during times of crises including armed conflicts

such as civil wars. Now as we finally concluded our discussions on this aspect of the Russian Civil War, it seems the time is correct to move forward our next section, where we will analyze Red Army and White Army respectively on how they were established, what determined their recruitment and ideology as well as the existed continuity trends they had with their Tsarist predecessor.

2.9 Exploring Red and White Armies: Successes, and Failures

In this brief but crucial section, we will examine the various estimates of the Red and White Army' respective strengths during the Russian Civil War. When doing so, special emphasis will be placed on comprehending the continuity tendencies they shared with the former Russian Empire, as well as a specific aspect of the ideological mechanisms by which they could develop recruitment mechanisms for their ranks. There is a reasonable expectation that the presence of support among the professional armed forces will boost the likelihood of a regime's survival in civil wars by providing a formidable fighting force with which to defeat its adversaries. Given the widespread misunderstanding that the White Movement was composed mainly of competent officers, but yet lost the Russian Civil War, it is clear that this phenomenon has to be properly understood and addressed also for the context of Russian Civil War accordingly.

2.9.1 Forging a Revolutionary Force: The Birth of Red Army

Although the events leading up to the establishment of the Red Army were the subject of extensive discussion in earlier debates, it is more convenient to start with the time when the Red Army first appeared on the scene as the official army corps of the newly founded Soviet government in the Russian Civil War. The procedures put in place during this early time would prove striking in comprehending how the Soviet Union's army would function in the decades to come, and the establishment of this ferocious fighting force is crucial to understanding the larger Soviet history. Consequently, it is crucial to learn about these underlying procedures.

When considering the events leading up to the formation of the Red Army, it would seem that Trotsky was the single most influential person. In fact, after Lenin reluctantly agreed to let him form a regular army, Trotsky made it clear on multiple occasions that the Bolshevik Party would be in charge of both the establishment and continued operation

of this force.[430] Now he would be forced to answer an important issue that would lead to the creation of a crucial dilemma: whom he could genuinely rely on to command this new army? Certainly, he despised the possibility of having to rely on an unreliable professional corps, whose interests may easily differ from those of the Bolshevik Party and, by extension, the interests of the working class.[431] With this, it is possible to infer that Trotsky believed his primary goal was to form a new army under the command of professional corps while simultaneously ensuring the trustworthiness of these officers. The answer he came up with to this problem would have far-reaching implications for Soviet military structure for decades.

The remedy proposed here was to appoint political commissars, whose job it would be to verify the loyalty of each unit's commander to the Bolshevik Party and the Marxist-Leninist ideology. This would leave the effective decision-making about the frontline movements of soldiers in the hands of this officer corps, while also ensuring the loyalty of former Tsarist commanders to the Bolshevik Party. Here, it is worth to emphasize the fact that for an order to be regarded official the consent of the political commissar of that specific unit was necessary.[432] Further, Trotsky, the Commissar of War of the new Soviet government, would ensure severe punishments in the event that the commander did not carry out the decisions of the Bolshevik Party or dared to operate more independently than he should have, either by having these political commissars intervene or by directly involving.

Trotsky's energetic use of propaganda methods during his time as Commissar of War during the Russian Civil War is also noteworthy, as it served as a means by which he could criticize the ineffective military commanders and thus acted as an active watcher over the entire operations of the Red Army. His famous black train allowed him to make unannounced excursions to the frontlines, which were under great strain from the attacks of counterrevolutionary forces or any type of insurgencies, while his essays in the army publication On the Road (*V Puti*) were distributed among the soldiers of the Red Army.[433]

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[430] Leon Trotsky, *The Military Writings and Speeches of Leon Trotsky*, Vol. 1 "1918: How the Revolution Armed," (London: New Park, 1979): 47-48.

[431] Roger R. Reese, "Red Army Professionalism and the Communist Party, 1918-1941," *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (January 2002): 71-102, especially 76-77.

[432] Roger R. Reese, "Red Army Professionalism and the Communist Party, 1918-1941," *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (January 2002): 71-102, especially 77.

[433] Neil M. Heyman, "Leon Trotsky: Propagandist to the Red Army," *Studies in Comparative Communism*, Vol. 10, No. ½ (Spring/Summer 1977): 34-43, especially 35-36.

When on the move by train, both Chamberlin (1935) and Trotsky (1960), would note that, he had to make sure the printing of On the Road was done, so he would frequently have to sprint from one front line to another without stopping for breaks.[434]

Trotsky would vigorously employ such strategies also to degenerate his enemies and would not hold back from depicting the flaws of the most recognized leaders of counter-revolutionaries. By doing so, he made things harder for the White Movement's most prominent leaders, especially Kolchak and Denikin, in the political sphere. One of the most notable examples of these attacks was Trotsky's criticism of Kolchak, who, despite his rhetoric, he was claiming that actually worked against the voluntary union of Russia under a strong, centralized Soviet government. After describing the shortcomings of the admiral, Trotsky would go so far as to assert Kolchak's only actual purpose was the restoration of land to landlords and profits to capitalists.[435] It is possible to suggest that these two measures were where Trotsky deliberately focused on because the opposite policies Bolsheviks enacted on these two crucial areas allowed them to get a higher degree of public support in the country's revolutionary context.

Interestingly, Trotsky would not hesitate to put forward an anti-Semitist agenda while portraying the enemies of the revolution as the puppets of a so-called “global Jewish conspiracy”, despite the fact that he and many other high-ranking members of Bolshevik Party were also belonging to that group.[436] Although it seems at first hard to understand why he was executing such a strategy, one can still argue that this tendency of him can has its roots in the anti-religious narratives that were quite influential among the Bolshevik Party circles as well as his desire to attack his enemy with his weapon as the same allegations were put forward them from the counter-revolutionaries quite often, as it could be seen in various civil war propaganda posters coming from the White Movement.[437]

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[434] William Henry Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution: 1917-1921* (New York: Macmillan, 1935), Vol I: 38-39; Leon Trotsky, *My Life* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1960): 411-422.

[435] Neil M. Heyman, “Leon Trotsky: Propagandist to the Red Army,” *Studies in Comparative Communism*, Vol. 10, No. ½ (Spring/Summer 1977): 34-43, especially 37-38.

[436] Leon Trotsky, *Kak Vooruzhalas' Revoliutsiia* (Moscow: Vysshii Voennyi Redaktisionnyi Sovet, 1924), Vol. II, Part I: 340-342.

[437] It was common for White propaganda to attack Trotsky from his Jewish roots. They often used this background of him as further evidence that the Bolshevik takeover was a “Jewish conspiracy” that the White Movement was fighting against to save Russia from it.

The recruitment methods and strategies that Trotsky ultimately used were just as crucial as the decisions he made when shaping this new fighting force. In fact, a closer look at these recruitment methods could provide much-needed insight into the similarities shared by the Red Army and its Tsarist predecessor. While doing so our main focus will be on the officer corps of this new fighting force, in an attempt to reflect these continuity trends.

Beyond Ideology: The Pragmatic Approach of Red Army in Officer Recruitment

What we observe from the recruitment strategies Trotsky followed while establishing the backbone of its officer corps suggests that there were three apparent categories of recruited officers to the Red Army, which we can describe briefly as the following:

1) Former Military Specialists (*Voenspetsy*) – These were the officers of former Russian Empire, who had the experience and education necessary in commanding the troops against the counter-revolutionary forces.
2) Loyal but Untrained Party Members – These were members of Bolshevik Party, who might have some degree of military experience due to their obligatory service during the Great War or the activities they involved, yet they still lacked the necessary military skills, but they were employed by Trotsky as a mean to balance the amount of *voenpetsy*.
3) "Red Commanders" – These were the first line of educated military men indoctrinated with Marxist-Leninist ideology in the newly establishing Soviet military schools. As a matter of fact, most of the time their instructors were among *voenpetsy*.

The Bolshevik decision to employ former professionals may be traced back to Lenin's earlier writings, in which he made it plain that the revolution needed a professional military force to defend it from assaults. On this basis, it is possible to argue that Lenin's theory of party, which enabled the concept of competent leadership, and his realization that using these men was an undeniable means of assisting the Bolshevik regime survive the civil war were the ultimate two pillars of the Leninist perspective on utilizing these military professionals of the former empire.[438] Likewise of him, Trotsky

[438] Jacob W. Kipp, "Lenin and Clausewitz: The Militarization of Marxism, 1914-1921," *Military Affairs*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (October 1985): 184-191, especially 188.

would also justify their decision on relying on these people and what needs to be done as the following:[439]

We need a real armed force, constructed on the basis of military science. The active and systematic participation in all our work of the military specialists is therefore a matter of vital importance. The military specialists must have guaranteed to them the possibility of exerting their powers honestly and honorably in the matter of the creation of the army.

However, still the reliability of these former officers was an uneasy topic for the Bolshevik leaders. Although the conditions were forcing them to reluctantly cooperate with these men to deal with the emerging insurgencies throughout the former empire, Bolsheviks still did not want to risk their campaign to be hijacked by those officers whom they were sure still far away from interiorize the Marxist-Leninist indoctrination. With such intentions, they would also roll up their sleeves for recruitment of military officials who would not lack these crucial ideological elements.

In such a framework, they initially permitted their Bolshevik followers with a degree of experience in military tactics to join the ranks of the emerging Red Army, which was subsequently followed by the extension of Bolshevik commanders in the ranks by educating them from the start. Yet, as one might anticipate, due to the pressing need to take vital military actions, the Bolsheviks had to rely on the backing of these military specialists, *voenspetsy*, throughout the battle, rather than the prevalent and misleading assumption that the case was the contrary.

A significant question arises here regarding the total number of such military specialists who served in the Bolshevik's Red Army, and how this compares to the relevant professional officers who joined in the White Movement instead. Although it appears difficult to provide a specific number, it is still more advantageous to examine the available estimations regarding the facts on these matters in 1914 and during the Russian Civil War. The main reason behind the focusing on the data available for 1914 instead of 1917 comes from the fact that, due to political instability and existing problems among the remnants of the army in the revolutionary atmosphere, it seems finding a reliable data is quite hard.

[439] Leon Trotsky, *Sochineniia* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1925), Vol. 17, Part I: 316, as quoted by Kipp (October 1985).

It is important to highlight that the first set of these estimations, which have a clear connection to the circumstances in 1914, will be employed again, while a similar study will be conducted in the case of the White Army. However, in this first discussion, we will only focus on the estimates and probable conclusions we might draw from them regarding the continuity trends in professional officer corps support between the Red Army and its Tsarist predecessor.

Estimations Regarding the Prevalence of Tsar's Officers in the Red Army

A fascinating but frequently overlooked aspect of the Russian Civil War is the participation of former military professionals or the experienced commanders who had served in the Tsar's army in the fighting factions. Perhaps this lack of research in international literature has led to the misconception that the majority of Red Army officers were farmers or workers who were committed revolutionaries from the very beginning, whereas the White Movement was a haven for the professional soldiers who served the Russian Empire. To further illustrate the importance of securing the support of professional military for a regime to survive such conflicts—as it was in the case of the Russian Civil War for the eventual triumph of the Bolsheviks—we will delve into the details of the existing estimations based on the number of supportive data coming primarily from Russian sources, which suggest a completely opposite story here.

The Russian Empire's military forces were already experiencing shifting dynamics within their ranks when the Tsar decided to enter the war against Germany and her ally Austria. Many factors contributed to this shift, most notably the reformation attempts that surfaced in the wake of the empire's humiliating military setbacks in the Crimean War in 1856 and, even more so for a European power, at the hands of the Japanese in 1905. Yet, before delving into the explanations for the make-up of the Russian Army's officer corps, it appears more advantageous to take a closer look at the figures pertaining to the situation in pre-war 1914. Here, it might be beneficial to take a look at the broader numbers provided regarding this composition by Kavtaradze (1988):

Table 2.8 Distribution of Russian Staff Corps in January 1914[440]

Positions	Number of Officers			
	Generals	Staff Officers	Chief Officers	Total
Ministry of War	191	499	279	969
St. Petersburg (Guards, 1st, 18th, 22nd Army Corps)	145	864	4203	5212
Vilna (2nd, 4th, 20th Army Corps)	98	650	3697	4445
Warsaw (6th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 23rd Army Corps)	133	778	4794	5705
Kiev (10th, 11th, 12th, 21st Army Corps)	114	814	4853	5781
Odessa (7th, 8th Army Corps)	62	400	1727	2189
Moscow (Grander, 5th, 13th, 17th, 25th Army Corps)	100	837	4724	5661
Kazan (16th, 24th Army Corps)	67	454	2317	2838
Caucasian (1st, 2nd, 3rd Caucasian Army Corps)	83	521	2915	3519
Turkestan (1st, 2nd Turkestan Army Corps)	39	269	1172	1480
Omsk	20	109	531	660
Irkutsk (2nd, 3rd Siberian Army Corps)	47	297	1772	2116
Amursky (1st, 4th, 5th Siberian Army Corps)	69	456	2737	3262
Military Education Institutions	95	422	1602	2119
Total	**1263**	**7370**	**37323**	**45956**

It is critical to highlight the fact that the socioeconomic origins of the Russian officer corps changed dramatically from the Crimean War to the Great War. Russian, particularly Soviet, sources appear to be had been keenly interested in this shift in the socioeconomics of the Russian army. Although it is difficult to put forward a comprehensive argument for their specific interest in these changing trends, it appears reasonable to speculate that they wanted to provide legitimacy to their arguments about the Civil War, particularly the numbers and arguments they provided about the Bolshevik decision to use these military specialists among the ranks of the Red Army.

[440] A. G. Kavtaradze, *Voennie Spetsialisti Na Sluzhbe Respubliki Sovetov 1917-1920 gg* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988): 22.

It is possible to make a connection between the estimates of prominent Soviet scholars including L.M. Spirin,[441] P.A. Zaionchkovsky,[442] and A.P. Korelin,[443] regarding the changes in socioeconomic distribution of Russian Army, as their collective works would cite the "Military Statistical Yearbook of the Russian Army for 1912" (1914), where a considerable explanation of these facts were explained in further detail. According to these numbers, the hereditary nobility was a common feature of the army's higher command. Nevertheless, this tendency was not apparent in every rank in the same level. For instance, it was estimated that 87.5 percent of generals could be classified as those coming from hereditary nobility, while this figure would go 71.5 percent for the staff officers, and 50.4 percent for the chief officers respectively.[444]

What illustrated the change of socioeconomic balances for the Russian Army, on the other hand, would be the defeats Russia embraced. On the eve of Great War, due to a certain democratization of the officer corps because of changes following the defeat of empire in the Russian-Japanese war, the share of hereditary nobles by origin is already less than 50%, as indicated by the General Staff corps. Consequently, with a total of 1,135 personnel on the eve of Great War, 184 (43 percent) of 425 generals were hereditary nobles by origin, 159 (33 percent) of 472 staff officers, and 106 (44 percent) of 238 top officers, for instance, were consisted of hereditary nobles roughly 40 percent on average.[445]

It is possible to trace back the changes in the Russian ranks to the reforms enacted in earlier decades. In the late 1800s, Russian War Minister Dmitrii Miliutin believed that creating a patriotic and civic-minded army was the key to modernizing the military and unifying the nation. This idea, known as "the nation in arms," was radical for Russia at the time. Miliutin saw his work as part of a broader nation-building project within the

[441] L. M. Sipirin, "Lenin i Sozdanie Sovetskih Komandnih Kadrov," *Voen. Institut Jurnal*, No. 4 (1965): 10, as quoted by Kavtaradze (1988).

[442] P. A. Zainochkovsky, *Samoderzhavie i Russkaya Armiya na Rubezhe*, Vol. 19 & 20 (Moscow, 1973): 203, as quoted by Kavtaradze (1988).

[443] A. P. Korelin, *Dvoryanstvo v Poreformennoy Rossii, 1861-1904 gg.* (Moscow, 1979): 86, as quoted by Kavtaradze (1988).

[444] *Voyenno-Statisticheskiy Ezhegodnik Russkoy Armii Na 1912 god* (St. Petersburg, 1914): 32-33, as qyoted by Kavtaradze (1988).

[445] A. G. Kavtaradze, *Voennie Spetsialisti Na Sluzhbe Respubliki Sovetov 1917-1920 gg* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988): 24.

tsarist empire, with the Universal Service Statute of 1874 as its foundation.[446] The legislation, as it was described in further details by international scholars such as Baumann (1986) and Miller (1968) as well as Russian narratives provided by those like Zainochkovsky (1952), resulted in the emerging of bridges regarding social, political, and cultural divides between the elite and peasants and between Russians and non-Russians.[447] Such new divisions would be fundamental in further determining the post-revolutionary face of the Russian army, and arguably played a crucial role in pushing the prominent members of it to different factions.

It might be best to begin by analyzing how long it actually took for the Red Army to arise and finish establishing its core forces before delving into the specific procedures and strategies that were put into place to enlist more officers to serve in it. Here, an interesting and acceptable claim comes from, Smele (2015), who argued that nine months was the right amount of time for the Red Army to develop from conception. It began on the Volga in August and September 1918, but its roots may be traced back to November and December 1917, when the first one of the first Soviet commanders, N.V. Krylenko, began working to dismantle the old army in order to eliminate real and possible nests of counter-revolution.[448] In a short time this new force would become a pool for former officers to find themselves a good use as they were desperately, yet reluctantly, needed by the Bolshevik leadership for them to command their revolutionary masses.

The Soviet sources indicate that the first wave of military specialists came to the service of Red Army from mid-1918 to early 1919. Most notably, from July 29, when the first (partial) conscription of former generals and officers was proclaimed by decree of the Council of People's Commissars, until November 15, 1918, according to data from the Mobilization Department of Vseroglashtab, 20,488 former generals and officers were admitted into the Red Army in six military districts in the European part of the RSFSR, and by the end of 1918, that number would surpass 22,295.[449] Furthermore, throughout

[446] For a detailed explanation of this idea and its effects on the Russian officers see Gregory Vitarbo, "Nationality Policy and the Russian Imperial Officer Corps, 1905-1914," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 66, No. 4 (Winter 2007): 682-701.

[447] Robert F. Baumann, "Universal Service Reform and Russia's Imperial Dilemma," *War and Society*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (September 1986): 31-49; Forrest A. Miller, *Dmitrii Miliutin and the Reform Era in Russia* (Nashville, 1986).

[448] Jonathan D. Smele, "1918-19: The Triumphal March of Reaction," in *The "Russian" Civil Wars, 1916-1926* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015): 70.

[449] TsGVIA, f. 11, Op. 11, D. 60, 231 i 231ob, as quoted by Smele (2015).

1919, when some of the most crucial confrontations of the civil war were taking place against the White Army, this figure would rise to a total of 32,645 officers.[450]

With these data, a compiling table of the recruited military specialists for the Red Army might be presented as follows:

Table 2.9 Recruitment of Military Specialists (Voenspetsy) for Red Army Between November 1918 to June 1919

Period	Number of Military Specialists
November 15, 1918	20,488
January 1, 1919	22,995
February 15, 1919	25,629
March 15, 1919	26,907
June 15, 1919	31,487
July 15, 1919	32,645

The next period appears to be more difficult to determine; nonetheless, it is worth noting that Russian historians such as Antonov-Ovseenko (1923) would argue that, by January 1921, these military professionals comprised approximately 34 percent of the whole Red Army command staff across all sections.[451] Western scholars also shared a similar account of these participations, argued a third of Red Army's high command composed of these military specialists.[452] More crucially, it was clear that these former commanders from the Tsar's armies held the most critical positions in the Red Army, including the most important leadership positions.[453] Taking these estimations and data into account, one can easily argue that, despite the reluctant Bolshevik decision on utilizing them, the former officers would become one of the most important aspects of the Red Army.

It should be noted, however, that the loyalty of these men would always be a contentious issue, in part because, given the chance, they would not think twice about defecting to the other side or just ignoring the Bolshevik commands. One of the most crucial instances of this occurred in June 1919, when White general Yudenich besieged

[450] TsGVIA, f. 10, Op. 1, D. 449, L. 3, 4, 28, 29, as quoted by Smele (2015).

[451] B. A. Antonov-Ovseenko, *Stroigel'stva Krasnoy Armii v Revolitsii* (Moscow, 1923): 31.

[452] Some of the Western sources that make such an argument include F. Benvenuti, "The Red Army," in E. Anton, V. Cherniaev and W. Rosenberg *Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution, 1914-1921* (London: Indiana University Press, 1997): 412-413; P. Gatrell, "War After War, Conflicts, 1919-1923," in J. Horne (eds.), *A Companion to World War I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010): 567-570; Orlando Figes, "The Red Army and Mass Mobilization During the Russian Civil War 1918-1920," *Past and Present*, Vol. 129 (1990): 168-211.

[453] Politrabota, No. ½ (1921): 36-37, as quoted by Mawdsley (2015).

Petrograd. As the commander of the southern-based Ninth Army defected, the White troops were able to make significant inroads into the former imperial capital.[454] According to those involved in the plan, the main obstacles to the Whites seizing the city are their concerns about not being able to defend it from any prospective attacks by the Reds, and the question of where they would get enough food to sustain such a large metropolis.[455]

We must also remember the significance of the institutions that the Bolsheviks set up, which were largely modeled after their predecessors in the Tsarist era. The Soviet government issued a proclamation on May 8, 1918, establishing a number of new organizations, including the All-Russian Main Staff.[456] Many former military specialists found themselves in good positions here as well, and they affected the decision-making procedures of the new Soviet state in military affairs. As would have been predicted, some loud voices were raised in protest at what would become a major point of criticism against the Bolshevik Party: the empowering of former commanders of Tsarism.

Stalin was a vocal opponent of using such military specialists; he consciously substituted the name "*sapozhniki*" (burglars) instead of the more fitting "*voenspetsy*".[457] He felt this way because he had originally advocated for a socialist army that would blindly serve the Bolshevik Party's leadership without question or the need to make concessions to anyone.[458] Additionally, one could say that even at this early stage, he was seeking to weaken his greatest competitor, Trotsky, planting the seeds for the authoritarian rule he would build over the Red Army in the decades to come.

While some may claim that Stalin's criticisms of Trotsky were biased, it is undeniable that his views were shared by many in the Bolshevik Party. Many Bolsheviks felt that the Bolshevik Party and Trotsky's position had become too similar to the Tsarist regime.[459] Nonetheless, it is conceivable to say that the fundamental problem that generated such unhappiness among notable Bolsheviks was their decision to incorporate more and more

[454] Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Pegasus Books, 2015): 270-271.

[455] V. Tsetkov, Beloe delo v Rossii, [White Business in Russia] (Moscow: Posev, 2009): 316.

[456] V. G. Kulikov, ed., *Akademiia General'nogo Shtaba: Istoriia Voennoi Ordenov Lenina i Suvorova i Stepeni Akademii General'nogo Shtaba Vooruzhennykh sil SSSR imeni K. E. Vorochilov* (Moscow: Voennoe Ixdatel'stvo, 1976): 19-21, as quoted by Mawsdley (2015).

[457] I. V. Stalin, *Sochinenniia*, Vol 4 (Moscow, 1953): 118, as quoted by Mawsdley (2015).

[458] Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Pegasus Books, 2015): 242-243.

[459] 8th Party Congress witnessed some of the most heated debates on this topic. For a more detailed narrative of what was on stake, see *Vos'moi S'ezd RKP (b), Mart 1919 goda: Protokoly* (Moscow, 1919), as quoted by Mawdsley (2015).

individuals who were loyal to the previous government and regime in their decision-making processes. Therefore, it is possible to suggest that their dissatisfaction was not due to the violence or terror politics Bolsheviks were pursuing but rather it was because of with whom they were taking such steps.

On the other side of the equilibrium, one could ask the potential motivations of those officers who enlisted in Red Army. Although it is hard to come up with one and inclusive explanation of their reasons behind taking such a path, it is still worth to mention that many of these officers joined the ranks of Red Army not because they were looking for a job or simply so afraid of Bolshevik terror, but rather to save their country from foreign invasion.[460] In that case, the external enemy was Germany, and still as Bolsheviks successfully established a firm control over the state apparatus in the Russian heartland, it seemed them collaborating with them was like an unholy alliance that needs to be made to protect their county.

A great example of these motives can be found in the explanation General Parsky, an imperial officer who did not hesitate to join the ranks of Red Army. He famously stated that "… I am far from being a socialist that is Bolshevik preach. Yet, I am ready to work honorably not only with them, but with anyone, even devil and his disciplines, if that will serve saving Russia from Germany slavery…"[461] His remarks are very interesting and self-explaining of the reason behind such a substantial level of participation they made to the Red Army. Although it is hard to guess how they felt fighting against their own comrades rather than Germans during the civil war, one can still speculate that it was just a necessary evil they considered necessary to have a stronger Russia rather than one doomed with the political and social turmoil dominated it.

It is also worth to mention that there were numerous significant individuals belonged to such a categorization as military specialists, who became influential in the new Red Army and now were serving to the interests of Bolshevik Party. Important figures in the former empire's armed forces, including as Jukums Vācietis, Mikhail Tukhachevsky, and Semyon Budyonny, all joined the Bolsheviks and made significant contributions to their war effort. Although our main objective here is not discussing about their professional

[460] Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Pegasus Books, 2015): 168-169.

[461] For Russian sources where this and other similar explanations were made, see L. M. Spirin, "V. I. Lenin i Sozdanie Sovetskikh Komandnykh Kadrov," *Voennoistrociheskii Zhurnal*, No. 4 (1965): 3-16.

lives in a great extent, it seems still beneficial to take a brief look at who they were prior to revolution and what was the extent of their service to the established Red Army against counter-revolutionary forces during the Russian Civil War.

Jukums Vācietis, or Vatsetis, was among the most interesting examples of how individual officers of former empire joined the ranks of Bolshevik Red Army. Vācietis enlisted in the Imperial Russian Army in 1891, and by the time he finished infantry cadet school in 1895, he had risen to the rank of second lieutenant. He served as a battalion commander in Poland and East Prussia at the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, where he was severely wounded multiple times. Interestingly, one could argue that before the October Revolution took place, Vācietis had almost no connection to politics, and he was just a Latvian career officer who was trying to rise among ranks of the army. However, when his fast and wise decision to support Bolsheviks met with his close connections to Latvian people, Bolsheviks assigned him to command the Red Latvian Rifleman Division, as Leggett (1981) would also suggest, arguably the most loyal and resilient force Bolsheviks had in this time.[462] He and his division were interesting examples of how much reliable the minority nationalities could be for the Bolshevik forces during this time of turmoil.[463] He was especially supported by Trotsky, who praised him and his Latvian forces several times because of their warrior characters, and clearly stated that his force was the most loyal and disciplined that Red Army could have throughout the conflict.[464] As his career progressed, he rose through the ranks, finally becoming the first Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army, a position he held from September 1918 to July 1919.[465]

Mikhail Tukhachevsky, on the other hand, was even a more interesting case, especially when one considers his reputation, which earned him the nickname "Red Napoleon" attributable to his well-known and respected services in the Red Army, making him so vital for the Soviet state and paving the path for him to eventually become

[462] G. Leggett, *The Cheka: Lenin's Political Police: The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage – December 1917 to February 1922* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981): 263.

[463] Some historians would conceptualize the Red Army as "a unifying institution for nationalities". See H. Carrère d'Encausse, *The Great Challenge: Nationalities and the Bolshevik State, 1917-1930* (New York and London, 1992): 104.

[464] L. Trotsky, *The Military Writings and Speeches of Leon Trotsky*, Vol. I, "1918: How the Revolution Armed," (London, 1979): 362.

[465] Peter Whitewood, "Nationalities in a Class War," *Journal of Modern European History*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (2016): 342-358, especially 346-347.

Marshal of the Soviet Union. His military career started under the reign of Tsar, but his eventual rise would take place only after the Bolshevik takeover happened in October 1917. In fact, unlike it was the arguable case for Vācietis, he would not hesitate to position himself outside the Bolshevik indoctrination and reportedly even claiming he has never been a socialist at all.[466] Several personal accounts with him, such as the one belonging to Fervacque (1928), clearly indicate that he rather had a more racist and anti-Semitic rhetoric, that interestingly put forward the idea that socialism and Bolsheviks could only succeed because these factors and actors paved the way for them.[467] Nevertheless, in the political turmoil Russia was going through, he ultimately decided to join the Bolshevik ranks on April 4, 1918, and from that moment onward arguably became one of the most important tacticians the Red Army ever had.[468]

Semyon Budyonny, last but not least, was the person that would prove people like Stalin that there could be still many potential collaborators in the former army that could become an instrumental part of the Bolshevik cause. During the Great War, he was serving as the non-commissioned officer of the Caucasian Cavalry Division, that was serving against the Turkish forces in Eastern front of the empire. As a cavalry officer, after witnessing the atrocities the Tsarist administrators were doing to the peasants and workers in the army, he was even involved in a heated confrontation with the squadron sergeant major regarding the officers' poor treatment of the soldiers and the continual lack of food.[469] Considering this, one could predict Budyonny would become a more just figure after the October Revolution he participated gladly. However, the case was absolutely opposite. His actions would soon give him a very bad reputation, and his cruelty would be compared with the ones of Tsarist administrators during the war or those of White Army's.[470] He would also serve as the Marshal of Soviet Union, though much

[466] Neil Harvey Croll, *Mikhail Tukhachevsky in the Russian Civil War*, PhD Dissertation at Department of Central and Eastern European Studies, University of Glasgow (June 2002): 43-44.

[467] P. Fervacque, *Le Chef de L'Armee Rouge* (Paris, 1928): 24-25, as quoted by Croll (June 2002).

[468] N. N. Kuliabko, "Ia Rekomendoval Ego v Partiiu," v *Marshal Tukhachesky: Vospominaniia Druzei i Soratnikov* (Moscow, 1965): 27-28, as quoted by Croll (June 2002).

[469] Semyon Budyonny, *The Path of Valour* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972): 16-22.

[470] Budyonny is especially well known for his atrocities during Soviet-Polish war that took place during the Civil War. See Oleg Butnitskii, translated by Timothy J. Portrice, *Russian Jews Between the Reds and the Whites, 1917-1920* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012): 391-392.

longer than most of the other first Marshals of the new state and without being purged as the rest, arguably due to his close ties with Stalin.[471]

To sum up this important section, it is possible to argue that the recruitment of former military specialists to the newly forming Red Army was an unescapable yet good decision the Bolshevik leaders took, as they were aware the fact that it would be futile to trying fighting against a much more formidable band of enemies without relying on the use and support of the military personal with proper experience and education. Despite the common mistake of considering the Red Army as a force without having a professional support from the former army, which in turn, is mostly thought to contribute to the ranks of White Army instead, an undeniable part of the high command the Red Army had was consisted of these individuals. More importantly, Bolshevik Party did not escape from the decision to restore some of the important institutions that were serving under the former empire, a step that would prove itself vital in equipping the Red Army with necessary means to wage a war against various counter-revolutionary factions. Here, it is worth to mention that these changes could not happen if Lenin and Trotsky would not decide to, even if reluctantly, deciding to cooperate with former military specialists, despite the big criticism they had to endure due to this decision of theirs.

Taking all these factors and numbers into account, it is possible to suggest that the support of professional military, and especially the vast numbers they provided for the establishment and later command of the Red Army, played a crucial and undeniable role for the Bolshevik Party to have a stronger hand against their fractured rivals. Indeed, another significant aspect of the existing professional support among the former officers for Bolshevik cause was the existence of an order and discipline that was secured through the effective use of "carrot and sticks" policies of Bolshevik Party. Therefore, Bolsheviks were not only successful in getting a great support from the former military specialists, but they also succeeded in establishing the necessary mechanisms to punish those among them who could dare to betray the Bolshevik Party or act more autonomous than they should have. Considering these all, it is possible to suggest that the Bolshevik example further illustrates the necessity of securing the support of professional military corps more

[471] Stalin would show his support for Budyonny also through media. For instance, see, J. Stalin, "To Comrade S. M. Budyonny," *Pravda*, April 26, 1933. Electronically available at https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1933/04/x01.htm, Date of Access: April 1, 2023.

effectively and with more discipline for a political regime's having a higher degree of survivability.

Now, it is important to discuss about the case briefly also in White Movement, the most formidable element of anti-Bolshevik forces, to further observe the fact that, despite the numbers of former officers constituted their backbone, in comparison to the Reds, they were still lacking the necessary support of professional military in the level they might require to fulfil their goal in toppling down the Bolsheviks. While doing so, the available estimations and data on the support of professional military for the White forces will be discussed in a similar manner, also by underlying the reasons behind the White inability to recruit more professional support for their movement.

2.9.2 To Save Russia from Bolshevism: The White Army's Journey

Naturally, it is no surprise that any meaningful analysis of the role of professional military during the Russian Civil War requires an in-depth analysis of the ideological features of the movement as well as the various recruitment strategies they followed. Since the White Army's ideology has already been thoroughly discussed in the preceding sections, this section will focus on the White Army's organizational structure and recruitment strategies for bolstering its ranks in an effort to provide a good comparison between the White Army and the Bolsheviks and their Red Army in these critical aspects of a civil war faction.

It is possible to track back the origins of first White forces to those anti-Bolshevik units, mostly consisted of disillusioned officers, resisted the establishment of Bolshevik rule over the vast territories of former empire. Here, it is worth to mention that the Volunteer Army established by former staff officers, Alekseev and Kornilov, can be seen as the first well-formulated group that deserves to be called as a proper army fighting against the Bolshevik rule. However, it is still worth to emphasize that these forces remained as a small regular army mostly composed of Cossack warriors, whose real loyalties were lying on more local grounds rather than a nationwide one that a counter-revolutionary force would require.[472] Moreover, as we discussed the problems, they experienced both during this period and under the leadership of Denikin that followed

[472] Felix Schnell, *Räume des Schreckens: Gewalträume und Gruppenmilitanz in der Ukraine, 1905* (Hamburg: Hamburg Edition, 2012): 245-246.

Alekseev and Kornilov, they were still unable to form the necessary political and social structures that would allow them both securing further recruitment to their ranks and their transforming this military struggle or insurgency to a more unified and politically designated campaign.

Besides the Volunteer Army, or the Armed Forces of South Russia, the most notable structure the White Movement was able to establish was the Siberian dictatorship formed by Admiral Kolchak, who had the support of foreign powers that pursued him to wage a war against the Bolshevik forces by claiming the title of "Supreme Ruler of All Russian Armed and Sea Forces". However, due to the same – and arguably even in a higher degree of – shortcomings he had to experience, this attempt also foiled, and Bolsheviks were able to get and execute the admiral in February 1920.

Taking all of this into account, it is possible to make the case that the Bolsheviks' strategy revolved around taking on the anti-revolutionary forces one by one, rather than showing their entire power to all of these groups at once. Denikin was able to take advantage of the weakened Red Fronts after their recent campaign to overthrow Kolchak's dictatorship in Siberia, which nearly succeeded in toppling the Bolsheviks from power despite their conviction that the fight was ended with Kolchak. Similarly, the expanding battle with the Poles in their western borders delayed the conclusion of what was probably the White Movement's last attempt to have a stronghold when they chased Denikin and forced the remainder of his forces to take sanctuary in the Crimean peninsula, this time under Wrangel.[473] All of this points to the reality that the Whites' only chance of victory is if they are able to unite and coordinate their efforts across multiple regions at once, while also making strategic advances to take advantage of the predicament the Bolsheviks have put themselves in.

It is important to remember that many of the challenges the Whites faced while attempting to recruit new men were just a reflection of the faithful decisions they made that damaged their reputation. Interesting explanation of these mechanisms that played a crucial role in White Movement's defeat comes from Böhler (2015), who paid close

[473] Wrangel understood that a successful retreat could only mean saving more time for Whites to reorganize themselves and retreat in a disciplined manner. For a more detailed analysis of this period that witnessed the end of last formidable White threat to the Bolshevik regime, see Harold Williams, "General Wrangel," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 7, No. 19 (June 1928): 198-204, especially 201-203.

attention to the officer corps that constituted the backbone of these anti-Bolshevik forces, whose actions would be faithful in alienating public opinion further against them.[474] The national agenda that almost alienated all the national and religious minorities prevented them from having any meaningful collaboration with them against the Bolsheviks, and his argument that many officers participated in the White struggle represented the ancient model of Tsarist mechanisms and the ideals of a more aristocratic Russia as it was in the past despised the Russian masses.[475] According to Read (2013), who builds on these concepts, the White command's inability to stop the plundering and atrocities committed by its disorganized troops—or its willingness to give them a blank check—kept the peasants who were disillusioned with Bolshevik policies from joining their ranks.[476] It could be argued that these masses still sided with the Red Dragon over the White Dragon because the former advocated for progressive changes to the country's socioeconomic system through a new political model, while the latter advocated for something that was both out of date and, in some cases, nonexistent.

After this brief but necessary revisit to the ideological and militarily shortcoming of White movement, it is now better to look at the existing data and estimates regarding the extent of support of professional military, who were serving under the Tsar’s armies, existed for their ranks. Contrary to common mistake, what these accounts suggest is the fact that, although a substantial number of former officers, who were either so conservative like the older generations or still disillusioned with Bolshevik rule like it was the case for younger generations, served in the White Army, their support was not more apparent or stronger to their counterparts that enlisted in the Red Army. This is an intriguing concept that makes a good analysis necessary to comprehend the role of support the professional military provides for the fighting factions during such conflicts.

[474] Jochen Böhler, “Enduring Violence: The Postwar Struggles in East-Central Europe, 1917-21,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (January 2015): 58-77, especially 70-71.

[475] Orlando Figes, “The Red Army and Mass Mobilization During the Russian Civil War 1918-1920,” *Past and Present*, No. 129 (November 1990): 168-211, especially 208-209.

[476] C. Read, *War and Revolution in Russia, 1914-1922* (Basingstoke, 2013): 153-155.

2.9.3 The Extent of Support Among the Officer Corps for White Forces

Compared to the data we have for the same phenomenon in the Red Army, it is sometimes more difficult to find credible information on the participation of professional commanders in the White Army. Compared to the wealth of information they provide on the Bolshevik camp, Russian sources on this element of the Civil War are lacking. This is, of course, because history is usually written by the victors. Yet, for the sake of our analytical comparison, we can still make use of a selection of existing estimates that have gained widespread acceptance.

Although there exist some estimations that, out of an approximate of 150,000 officers at the time the Russian Empire collapsed, a number around 35,000 joined the ranks of White Army in total, it is hard to trust on such estimations due to the existing debates on this number.[477] Given the splintered structure of the White Army's components, the best we can do when examining the available estimations is to examine each one independently. Our analysis will begin with data and estimates concerning the "Armed Forces of South Russia" compiled by Alekseev, Kornilov, and Denikin, before moving on to Kolchak's Siberian force. Finally, we'll look at the statistics surrounding the Northwest Army under Yudenich, one lesser-known but crucial forces in the White Movement's war effort.

Armed Forces of South Russia

The sources indicate that in the initial preparations to form up a Volunteer Army in South Russia, between mid-December 1917 to mid-January 1918 an average of 75 to 80 volunteer officers were coming to Kuban region and joining the ranks of Armed Forces of South Russia, at the time under the leadership of Alekseev and Kornilov.[478] With the core cadre included, the total number of volunteering officers who were among the officer corps of the Russian Empire was an estimated 3,000 officers in total.[479] It is important to note that, as Kenez (2004) pointed out, most of these first officer supporters of Alekseev and Kornilov's Volunteer Army belonged to the well-known "Alekseev Organization", which at this period lacked the necessary finances and cohesion among its member to

[477] Andreii Dutov, "Кто руководил Красной армией," https://концептуал.рф/kto-rukovodil-krasnoy-armiey/, Date of Access: April 1, 2023.
[478] A. S. Lukomskii, *Vospominaniia* (Berlin, 1922): 286-287, as quoted by Read (2013).
[479] A. Suvorin, *Pokhod Kornilova* (Rostov, 1918): 1-4, as quoted by Read (2013).

secure the higher numbers of like-minded officers in joining their cause.[480] The arguably first formidable regular armed forces that aimed to topple down the Bolshevik government, therefore, was lacking the necessary means from the very beginning. Although it is expectable for any comparable movement to start with a low number of officers at the very beginning, it is worth to stress out that even the portrait of situation in the very beginning was illustrating the fact that even the most popular White leaders lacked the ability to bring a higher number of their colleagues to their cause.

One of the biggest game changer for the ranks of Volunteer Army took place following their famous Iced March that witnessed their departure from Rostov in February 1918 for establishing more secured headquarters and power base around the Kuban region. At the end of walk, which witnessed the fall of many prominent members of the movement as well as the withdraw of the support of some certain others, there was only a skeleton of the army left. There were three generals, eight lieutenant-generals, twenty-five major-generals, hundred ninety-nine colonels, fifty lieutenant-colonels, two hundred fifteen captains, two hundred fifty-one staff-captains, three hundred ninety-four lieutenants left with several other hundreds of lower-ranking officers.[481]

Before moving to other prominent army of White Movement, it is worth to mention that another important side-effect of the Iced March was its further radicalization of troops this time under Denikin's command. By June 1918, as a result of the surviving men went through a hostile environment dominated by revolutionary elements an estimated of 80 to 90 percent of the remaining troops, even other than Cossacks, were monarchists.[482] It was during this moment, Denikin had to find a way to control such an apparent monarchist sentiment among his troops. Although he did not take any significant measures that would label him with any exact political positioning at this moment of time, his emphasis on the ideals of leaving the future political regime of Russia to the decisions of a prospective Constituent Assembly was still undeniable.[483]

[480] Peter Kenez, "Chapter III: The Birth of the Volunteer Army," in *Red Attack, White Resistance: Civil War in South Russia 1918* (Washington DC: New Academia Publishing, 2004): 85.

[481] Peter Kenez, "Chapter IV: The Ice march," in *Red Attack, White Resistance: Civil War in South Russia 1918* (Washington DC: New Academia Publishing, 2004): 120.

[482] A.I. Denikin, *Ocherki Russkoi Smuty* (Paris, 1922): 131.

[483] Peter Kenez, "Chapter IV: The Ice March," in *Red Attack, White Resistance: Civil War in South Russia 1918* (Washington DC: New Academia Publishing, 2004): 176.

Although it is harder to track the exact number of officers that were serving under Denikin's army, still the personal accounts of the generals living this period give us some highly valuable hints. For instance, the personal descriptions of the status of war in Kuban, coming from Cossack General Denisov highlighted there were an approximate of 10,000 officers serving in the Armed Forces of South Russia in January 1919, with an estimated 130,000 men under their command.[484] It is worth to mention that the amount of troops Denikin had under his control was a subject of a much rapid change in comparison to the officers of his army, and considering the fact that most of his officer corps were belonging to the former ranks of Russian Empire. However, it is still possible to speculate that the number of former Tsarist officers served in the Armed Forces of South Russia did not exceed an average of 15,000 officers throughout his campaigns.

Kolchak and Siberian Menace

An interesting characteristic of the officer corps remained loyal to Kolchak and his Siberian government was their firm opposition to any peace with Germany. This anti-German sentiment arose mostly because of the strong bonds these officers had with the Russian Empire they were serving to, and when Bolsheviks decided to sign Brest-Litovsk, their feeling of being betrayed got even worse and pursued them further in joining the ranks of Kolchak's army in Siberia.[485]

Another intriguing aspect of Kolchak's loose political structure in Omsk was the presence of conservative-minded and mostly monarchist officers who want to both restore Russia's borders to those of 1914 and to remove Bolsheviks and any other revolutionaries they accused of ruining their country over the last several years from power. Kolchak included them in his upper chamber, or Senate, and by doing so, he further empowered the military officers in the expense of civilian ones that he was well aware of lacking.[486]

This feature was striking, and even in the eyes of many prominent Entente representatives working in the region to boost up a popular support for their candidate for the future of country, Kolchak's support was so limited – according to the official reports

[484] I. A. Poliakov, *Donskie Kazaki v Bor'be s Bovshevikami* (Munich, 1962): 341, as quoted by Smele (1996).

[485] Jonathan D. Smele, *Civil War in Siberia: The Anti-Bolshevik Government of Admiral Kolchak 1918-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996): 160.

[486] Richard M. Connaughton, *The Republic of The Ushakovka: Admiral Kolchak and the Allied Intervention in Siberia 1918-1920* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017): 122.

from this period, Kolchak's Omsk Government had been receiving almost no meaningful support other than from those conservative officers he brought with him to hold the offices and army under their control. It was estimated that Bolshevik supporters were 45 percent, Socialist Revolutionaries 40 percent, 10 percent with other regional factions with leaving only 5 percent of popular base remaining for a Supreme Leader portraying himself as the ultimate ruler this whole region.[487]

If the quest on finding any reliable and meaningful data on the number of professional officers who decided to participate in Armed Forces of South Russia, it is possible to argue that the case is even harder for Kolchak's army. Arguably due to most of its officers had to leave the country without being able to retrieve the official documents with them, even in a more disorganized manner than the retreat of White Army from Crime under Wrangel in the coming years, the exact numbers or reliable estimates seems lacking in terms of existing Russian sources. Nevertheless, it is still possible to make a use of the existing estimations on these numbers proposed by Western scholars as they relied mostly on the diplomatic correspondences that might also guide us on our understanding this phenomenon regarding Kolchak's army.

Among these available sources, Connaughton's (2017) estimates stand out as particularly interesting. He estimates that Kolchak had around 5,100 of these officers under his command by Spring 1919, when he was arguably at the height of his power. There was a total of 900 men on the admiral's personal military staff, 200 of whom had been with him from the start and were based out of Chantilly. The remaining 4,000 or so officials on his general staff were described by Connaughton as being highly corrupt and inefficient.[488]

On the other hand, a contemporary scholar of the period, Nachbaur (1930) would describe Kolchak as a great military genius with a terrible staff under his command. According to his estimates, there were an approximate of 6,000 officers he had under his command, most of whom were in the army also under the Tsarist regime.[489] Considering

[487] Statistics about Kolchak's social base and the ramifications it had with respect to the political influence his officer corps had, see William S. Graves, *America's Siberian Adventure, 1918-1920* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1931).

[488] Richard M. Connaughton, *The Republic of The Ushakovka: Admiral Kolchak and the Allied Intervention in Siberia 1918-1920* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017): 123-124.

[489] Albert Nachbaur, *Le Verite Sur Kolchak* (Paris: Nachbaur, 1930), as quoted in extensive by Connaughton (2017).

these numbers, it is possible to argue that the number of professional officers who joined the ranks of Kolchak's White Army in Siberia is somewhere between 5,000 to 6,000 officers. However, there seems one more force that needs to be taken into account while making a meaningful estimation on the extent of the professional officers under the command of Kolchak: the Czechoslovakian Legion.

The Czechoslovakian Legion, as we have shown, was a crucial component of the admiral's campaigns. They were one of the most well-organized and trained battalions that survived the Great War, having gained valuable experience. Taking this into account, one could say that they had sway inside the Kolchak faction, much like the Latvian Rifleman Division did during the early Bolshevik operations. Considering this, it is tempting to conclude that these two groups represented the value of well-trained, minority-dominated divisions in the command structures of the various Russian Civil War factions. Yet, Czechoslovakian troops for White Army were nowhere near as devoted as Latvians for Red Army, and as we described in greater detail before, their true loyalties were with the Entente powers, which meant they would eventually withdraw their support from Kolchak when the time was right.

Nevertheless, to understand the real numbers of officers under command of Kolchak, it is vital to include the numbers available for this specific unit, as almost all of their officers were also the officers of Russian Empire, and they were taken prisoners of war during the Great War while serving for the Russian state. Most of their members belonged to special unit called *Druzhina*, formed under the central command of Russian Empire during the war by keeping the high command were chiefly Russians while a considerable number of Czechs and Slovaks serving in the army also got substantial offices in it.[490] Therefore, it is both reasonable and necessary to include them in our estimations for the extent of Kolchak's professional army officers. For this purpose, it is beneficial to take a look at the study provided by Fic (1978), one of the most compelling works written on the structure of Czechoslovakian Legion at our disposal. Although he does not give any certain number of officers, out of our previous estimates on determining an estimated number of professional officers out of the strength of a military unit, we can derive an average number.

[490] George F. Kennan, "The Czechoslovak Legion," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (October 1957): 3-16, especially 3-4.

Fic argues that by early 1918 there were 40,000 strong men among the ranks of Czechoslovak Legion on the eve of Russian Civil War, with most of them concentrated around modern-day Ukraine and vast Siberian territories.[491] The latter region would soon become the zone on which they will wage a quasi-rebellion against the Bolshevik forces and find themselves reluctantly allied with Kolchak's forces, considering them as their allies among Entente, as they also shared the widespread anti-German and anti-Austrian sentiment among the White officers under the admiral's command. Here, it is worth to mention that the dominantly conservative and nationalist characteristic of the officers of this unit was not apparent among the soldiers in the very same level. Those who were arguing that there were a considerable number of soldiers with either being sympathetic to moderate SRs or Bolsheviks that they considered to make about 45 percent of the legion.[492] Contrary to these estimates, it is known that less than a percent of these troops (approximately 400) switched sides and fought for Bolshevik forces. Bolsheviks thought they could recruit an estimated 15,000 troops; however, Czechoslovak communists and the Bolshevik Party were unsuccessful in recruiting any meaningful number of these troops.[493]

It is possible to make an empirical guess on the number of professional officers based on this number of 40,000 soldiers in the legion. As it is often case that between 8 to 10 percent of an army unit to be consisted of officer corps, it is possible to put forward an estimate of 3,200 to 4,000 officers served in the legion. It is possible to scientifically reinforce this argument with the estimations provided by Bradley (1990), who argued that 3,004 officers in total departed from war-torn Russia in March 1920.[494]

Combining these figures, it is possible to estimate Kolchak had an approximate of 8,000 to 10,000 officers under his direct or indirect command, most of whom were the Russians with an estimate of 5,000 to 6,000, and the remaining 3,000 to 4,000 were the

[491] Victor Fic, *The Bolsheviks and the Czechoslovak Legion: The Origins of Their Armed Conflict March-May 1918* (Abhinav Publications, 1978): 3. It is worth to mention that some other sources estimate the total strength of corps 45,000 during the same period. For instance, see Stephen Michael Berk, "The Coup D'état of Admiral Kolchak: The Counterrevolution in Siberia and East Russia," PhD Thesis to Faculty of Political Science at University of Colombia (1971): 167.

[492] Fic cites J. Vavra, *Z Boju za Svobody a Socialismus: Uloha SSSR v Osvobozeneckych Bojich a Budovatel'skem Usuli Ceskeho a Slovenskeho Lidu* (Prague: Csl. Akademie, 1961): 60-64.

[493] Victor Fic, *The Bolsheviks and the Czechoslovak Legion: The Origins of Their Armed Conflict March-May 1918* (Abhinav Publications, 1978): 103-104.

[494] John Bradley, *The Czechoslovak Legion in Russia 1914-1920* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1990): 155-156.

officers of Czechoslovak Legion. Although it is impossible to put forward an exact estimate on the combined strength of the professional officers served under Denikin's and Kolchak's campaigns, as there were some cases of participating in both groups as the civil war progressed, it is still probable to estimate their combined strength did not exceed 25,000 officers that suits into our perspective. However, as most of Czechoslovakians left Russia by March 1920 and they were dominantly away from the fronts of conflict in South Russia, it seems preferable to have a lower expectation.

Before making the last remarks on this aspect of White Movement, it is worth to mention the remaining one faction that deserves to be included in these calculations. With that purpose, it is beneficial to take a brief look at the estimated number of such officers in the ranks of Yudenich's Northwest Army.

Kolchak and Siberian Menace

The Northwest Army, which operated from June 1919 to January 1920, under the command of Nikolai Yudenich, is often credited to have 17,500 men in July 1919, which later rose to 18,500 in October 1919 and left around 15,000 by November 1919.[495] Yet, there are also some alternative calculations that believe the strength of Yudenich's forces would exceed 20,000 throughout his campaigns.[496] Although it is equally hard to make an estimation of professional officers who were among his ranks, it seems logical to accept the claims that 10 percent of this number, approximately 1,500 of them were the officers that once served under the Russian Empire.[497] However, since only 37 of these officers were generals, it is apparent that the Northwest Army had more of a lower-rank staff rather than one enjoyed the participation from the higher ranks.[498]

Now adding these estimated 1,500 to our previous calculations, it is possible to argue that the approximate number of former officers of Russian Empire who joined the ranks of most notable three White armies is somewhere between, but lower than, 27,000. This

[495] Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Pegasus Books, 2015): 504-510.

[496] Luke M. Cornelius, "The Failure to Take Red Peter: Yudenich, The Nortwest Army, and The Petrograd Offensives of 1919," Master's Thesis Submitted to Graduate Faculty of the University of Georgia (Athens, 1988): 126-127.

[497] N. A. Kornatovskii, *Bor'ba za Kransniy Petrograd* (Moscow: AST, 2004): 224. It is important to note that, according to U.S. Military Intelligence, prior to Yudenich's Petrograd Campaign, he was commanding 839 line officers and 12,184 troops in total. See United States Military Intelligence Reports: Soviet Union 1919-1941 (Friedrich, MD: University Publications of America, Inc, 1984), Frame 74 (Reel I): 1.

[498] Richard Luckett, *The White Generals* (London: Longman Group, 1971): 302-303.

combines 15,000 served under Denikin's Armed Forces of South Russia, 10,000 served under Kolchak in Siberia, and 1,500 under Yudenich's Northwest Army. With an acceptable margin of error about 10 percent under this figure, it is possible to argue that an approximate of 25,000 members of the professional officers served in the White Movement. Those findings can be summarized as the following table:

Table 2.10 Recruitment of Professional Officers for White Army

Faction / Group	Number of Estimated Officers
Armed Forces of South Russia	15,000
Kolchak's Army / Omsk Government	8,000 – 10,000
Northwest Army	1,500
Total	**24,500 – 26,500**

When this number is compared to the data on participation of former Tsarist officers in the Red Army, it is conceivable to claim that, contrary to popular assumption, the White forces had considerably lesser participation from professional military, and the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin and Trotsky, mobilized more of these military experts to command their army. Even though ideological considerations did not appear to play a part in recruiting additional officers to the Red Army, it is certain that the Bolsheviks and those military specialists forged a loose alliance based on shared enemies.

Before concluding the analysis of the Russian Civil War, it is essential to examine how both factions engaged in social mobilization campaigns. This examination will enhance our comprehension of the significance of social mobilization in discussions about the regime's ability to withstand crises. Considering this, the subsequent and concluding section of this chapter will offer a thorough yet brief comparative analysis of the importance of social mobilization for the belligerent factions of the conflict, the Bolsheviks, and their rival Whites.

2.10 Social Mobilization During the Russian Civil War

Social mobilization is a potent process that involves the rallying of communities to address societal challenges or promote change, which entails mobilizing the collective energy of the population towards a shared goal that is particularly crucial during periods of major social turmoil, which includes the civil wars. Therefore, it is an undeniable fact that social mobilization was a significant factor in shaping the trajectory and outcomes of

the Russian Civil War. Both the Red and White armies employed social mobilization strategies to consolidate their forces, gain support, acquire resources, establish control, and even seek international support. By having such a brief yet in-depth analysis of social mobilization during the Russian Civil War, it will be much easier to navigate deeper into its significance in a complex socio-political context, shedding light on how the mobilization of various social groups and resources ultimately changed the course of the conflict, having significant implications on the idea of regime survivability as a result.

This concept encompasses crucial processes, including the establishment and strengthening of armed forces and the enhancement of ideological mobilization. These concepts did not only affect the various strategies employed by the both belligerents of the conflict, but even the greater game of international politics that brought serious implications regarding the ideology-driven politics that would dominate the public sphere in the coming decades. Given the inclusion of such significant details, it is more advantageous to discuss them in greater depth within the context of the Russian Civil War.

2.10.1 The Bolshevik Success in Utilizing Social Mobilization

As a natural result of the fact that the Russian Civil War primarily revolved around the conflict between distinct social classes, which was evident in the composition of the Red and White armies, the recruitment and structuring of these armies were primarily influenced by social mobilization, with soldiers being enlisted based on their ideological alignment and social class. Nevertheless, the Red Army would prove itself more successful in recruiting more supporters from the agricultural base of the Russian society, and this fact would play a crucial role in increasing the Bolsheviks' ability to emerge triumph from the conflict. On these grounds, it is important to provide an analytical comparison on how such ideological differences paved the way for mechanisms required to formulate and consolidate the mass armies fought during the conflict.

As previously mentioned, the Red Army emerged from the remnants of the Tsarist Army. Many individuals, either willingly or under coercion, joined the Bolshevik Red Guard, which later evolved into the formidable Red Army. While it may be true that the majority of such officers in the armed forces joined the Bolshevik faction either under duress or by finding justifications for their decision, the situation regarding the

mobilization of people to become the soldiers of this army was another phenomenon. First and foremost, it is essential to underline the fact that the soldiers Red Army had recruited were predominantly coming from the rural and agricultural elements of the Russian society. The Bolsheviks appear to be successful in this process arguably since they were successful in their simultaneously consolidation of power under the umbrella of a much more centralized administration they were establishing.

With such concerns, one of the key strategies utilized by the Bolsheviks was the full-scale use of propaganda operations, as this was a critical component of their broader strategy to appeal to more supporters to their ranks. Undoubtedly, it was through this strategically implementation of propaganda they constituted the backbone of their endeavor to recruit soldiers and enhance their ranks. In their role as self-proclaimed advocates for the working class and agricultural laborers, they strategically constructed a narrative that effectively resonated with the broader population.[499] They presented themselves as the forefront of opposition against the established political and social order and external imperial powers, utilizing powerful revolutionary language to inspire and mobilize individuals who could potentially join their cause.

The dissemination of these ideas occurred through a range of channels, encompassing speeches, leaflets, and newspaper articles, which served as platforms for the promotion of communist ideals and the pledge of a society devoid of social classes. These measures served to emphasize the Bolsheviks' objective of fostering a revolutionary consciousness among the general population and aligning them with their ideological agenda. Moreover, the political leaders made a commitment to provide both land and sustenance, which struck a chord with the extensive agrarian community and urban laborers, who had become disenchanted with the consequences of warfare and financial difficulties. The potential benefits of land redistribution presented a compelling incentive for individuals to align themselves with, and in numerous instances, actively support the Bolshevik movement.

During the peak of its strength in December 1920, the Red Army would reach a total of more than five million personnel, encompassing both frontline combatants and support

[499] Adam B. Ulam, *The Bolsheviks: The Intellectual and Political History of the Triumph of Communism in Russia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998): 88-91.

units.[500] Among these sixty-seven percent of them were classified as "peasants," 12 percent as "workers," and 20 percent as "others."[501] These statistics validate the notion that the overwhelming majority of the Red Army consisted of peasant soldiers. Consequently, the Bolshevik strategy placed significant emphasis on employing appropriate and effective tactics to appeal to this demographic. Moreover, by putting an emphasis on the indoctrination of these troops in align with the Bolshevik ideological premises ensured their fighting with not only fear but with the ideological motivations that the Bolsheviks were aiming to centralize their new army around.[502] This strategic approach ultimately played a crucial role in the Bolsheviks' long-term triumph.

On the other hand, it appears that their rivals neglected to acknowledge the necessity of implementing strategies to secure the backing and allegiance of the peasant majority, who constituted a significant portion of the available manpower. Nevertheless, as elucidated in our prior conversations, the endeavors undertaken by the White Armies to coerce individuals into aligning with their cause in opposition to the Bolsheviks largely proved unsuccessful, as it failed to ensure the continuing loyalty of these forcefully conscripted masses. Consequently, this lack of success impeded their ability to establish and maintain a burgeoning and steadfast military force under their authority. This deficiency became increasingly evident through their uncontrolled and mostly irregular retreats necessitated by the triumphs of the Red Army in counteroffensives against the overextended White forces.

2.10.2 The White Failure in Utilizing Social Mobilization

The efficacy of the White Army's propaganda campaign was generally inferior to that employed by the Bolsheviks. The communications frequently exhibited the absence of a distinct and cohesive ideology capable of galvanizing the heterogeneous and disjointed factions within the groups disillusioned with the Bolsheviks. As we have discussed in greater details, a significant number of White leaders were affiliated with the

[500] Report delivered by Trotskii to 9th Congress of Soviets, in Pravda, 28 December 1921, as cited by Francesco Benvenuti (eds.), *The Bolsheviks and the Red Army, 1918-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988): 213-214.

[501] Francesco Benvenuti (eds.), *The Bolsheviks and the Red Army, 1918-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988): 214.

[502] Leon Trotsky, *My Life* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970): 394-410. Trotsky explains this is among the most important successes of them that allowed Bolsheviks to win the civil war.

former Tsarist regime and encountered difficulties in formulating a persuasive vision for Russia's future that could effectively contend with the Bolsheviks' enticing pledges of land, sustenance, and tranquility.

The Whites espoused a vision of a unified and indivisible Russia, a stance that resonated with nationalist sentiments.[503] However, this approach proved less effective in garnering support from ethnic minorities and regional factions who sought increased autonomy. Moreover, the pledges made by the White Army frequently appeared insincere or ambiguous to the rural and urban working class, who retained vivid memories of the previous regime's social injustices and approached the prospect of reverting to such circumstances with caution.

The White Army also enforced compulsory conscription, which encountered significant opposition and often triggered local uprisings, particularly in regions where the Whites were perceived as foreign aggressors. However, making the matters further complicated for them, such disciplinary measures employed frequently exhibited brutality and severity, thereby exacerbating the estrangement of prospective recruits. In contrast to the political commissars present in the Red Army, the White Army lacked a comparable institutional mechanism aimed at fostering ideological allegiance among its soldiers. Without ensuring such institutional changes among their ranks to ensure a more loyal army of conscripted peasants, it was almost certain that White Armies were certain to doom.[504] Consequently, there was a notable absence of ideological dedication and adherence to principles, leading to a recurring problem of desertion.

Actually, things could have gone much different than they did for the White Movement. The Constituency Elections of 1917 revealed that despite the challenges faced in establishing a stable administration under the leadership of the late Prime Minister Kerensky, the Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) maintained significant popularity among the general population, particularly the peasantry. This demographic, being the largest in the regions where the majority of White Army formations were stationed, exhibited a strong affinity towards the SRs. Hence, it is plausible to hypothesize that the White Movement, by replacing the dictatorial figure of Kolchak with a more moderate leader,

[503] A. Z. Ovchinnikov, “Outlines of My Reminiscences,” *HIA* (19 February 1920): 12; E. Varneck and H. H. Fischer (eds.), *The Testimony of Kolchak and Other Siberian Materials* (Stanford: California University Press, 1935): 70-71.

[504] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Edition, Vol. 47 (London, 1960): 460.

could have strategically advanced their cause. This judicious decision would likely have resulted in increased support from the peasantry and potentially induced substantial defections from the Red Army. Consequently, the Red Army would have encountered greater difficulties in recruiting peasants to their ranks.

Considering these, it seems possible to argue that the shortcomings of the White Army in terms of social mobilization during the Russian Civil War can primarily be ascribed to their deficiency in establishing a persuasive and cohesive ideological stance, their implementation of severe and frequently counterproductive disciplinary actions, their internal fragmentation, and their affiliation with the discredited former regime and external forces. If they could have better understood what was at stake, they could have pursued a better strategy that could pave the way of victory for them.

On these grounds, it is important to underline that social mobilization strategies highlights the significant importance of such tactics in shaping the ability of regimes to withstand civil conflicts. An effective social mobilization strategy necessitates several crucial elements, including a clearly articulated ideological position that effectively connects with the desired target demographics, the capacity to motivate or enforce engagement, and the skillful handling of both internal and external perceptions. Taking these into account, one can argue that the Russian Civil War serves as a compelling example that showcases these dynamics, effectively exemplifying the implementation of these elements in a practical setting and their concrete effects on the regime's ability in prevailing in such conflicts.

2.11 Final Remarks on the Russian Civil War: The Bolshevik Triumph

From what we have learned about the Russian Civil War, we may conclude that party cohesion, the support of the professional military, and popular support were all crucial factors in the survival of the Bolshevik government. When compared to their White counterparts, the Bolsheviks were far more effective in presenting a consolidated and united front, bolstered by a higher level of support from the professional officer corps, and able to have a higher degree of public support, allowing them to beat their counter-revolutionary opponents. Here it is vital to emphasize the connection between these variables for a higher level of regime survivability as it is more important to understand the connection between them rather than only focusing on identifying such concepts.

From our analyses on these concepts, it is possible to argue that the party or faction cohesion appears to be the most important and determining among them as it underlies the conditions for a faction to be able to establish a stronger political base, an important aspect of a regime's structural skills in formulating a formidable faction necessary for its survival during such conflicts. As we have observed, without the Bolshevik Party's strength in establishing itself as a more well-defined and stronger political front, mostly attributable to the charismatic leadership centralized around Lenin, it would be perhaps impossible for them to survive the civil war. On the other hand, the White Movement lacked this ability and this weakness of them portrayed their moves more as a military insurgency rather than an established political campaign with clear and well-coordinated movement.

It is visible from the ability of Bolsheviks in recruiting a higher number of former military officers rather than their counter-revolutionary rivals that a party's cohesion plays an important aspect of having such a higher degree of support from these professional officers. Through establishing the necessary mechanisms with a stronger and more consolidated political movement, the Bolshevik leadership could pursue officers of former empire to join their ranks rather than the motivations one would expect them to have. The Russian case illustrates that securing a higher number of professional officers allows a regime to have a higher level of survivability during such conflicts. This important connection is expected to be seen in the context of Spanish Civil War as our discussions will continue focusing on this phenomenon.

Moreover, it is visible that through the support of professional military based on a stronger political cohesion, a faction is more likely to take the advantage of securing a higher amount of popular support, even if a great part of populace might not enjoy the actions of the faction in power. Likewise, to the situation regarding the connection there was between the support of professional officers and the party cohesion, such dynamics concerning the popular mobilization can be observed better from the Spanish Civil War.

Last but not least, it is important to emphasize on the fact that this conflict showcased contrasting approaches to social mobilization employed by the Red and White Armies, leading to consequential consequences that greatly influenced the prospects of regime survivability. The Red Army of the Bolsheviks demonstrated a highly effective approach that integrated the utilization of propaganda alongside concrete pledges of land and

sustenance, a comprehensive and cohesive ideological framework, and enforcement mechanisms encompassing compulsory conscription and coercive tactics like including the Red Terror. The adept utilization of these instruments enabled the Bolsheviks to proficiently enlist and maintain a substantial armed contingent, thereby facilitating the endurance and consolidation of their developing government.

It is possible to suggest that the White Army's strategy proved to be comparatively less effective due to the absence of a cohesive ideology, ineffective utilization of propaganda, and an excessive dependence on punitive measures that inadvertently stimulated opposition rather than fostering obedience. The limitations mentioned, in conjunction with the internal factions within the White Army and its affiliation with external intervention, compromised its capacity to garner backing and sustain a formidable military, ultimately leading to its downfall and the lack of success in the White Movement. The combination of such short-comings appear to be effective in preventing the unification of this anti-Bolshevik camp, and substantially hindering the effectiveness of their efforts against the Bolsheviks. Now, after finalizing our analysis regarding the Russian Civil War, it is preferable to proceed with our research of these crucial facets of regime survivability from the case of the Spanish Civil War to arrive at even more comprehensive and significant findings through an empirical comparison.

Chapter 3:
THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

If one would be asked what had preceded the horrific and global catastrophe that was on the horizon, the most likely answer would be the Spanish Civil War. Because to its wide sociopolitical dynamics, this conflict had severe effects not only on Spanish society and politics, but also served as a forerunner to the Second World War. To be honest, most probably, none of the belligerents in the Spanish Civil War could have imagined that the conflict would evolve beyond a localized clash of political interests into a testing and preparing ground for the looming worldwide war of ideologies. Having said that, our primary focus in studying the many components of the Spanish Civil War will not be the consequences of this conflict on global events. Rather, by presenting an analytical framework with aspects comparable to those used in past debates on the Russian Civil War, the major effort will be on the identification and measurement of some of the most notable features of this page of political turmoil in humanity's recent history on regime survivability during such conflicts.

This chapter will also primarily focus on the influence of party or faction unity as well as the acquisition of the support from professional army's officer corps, while the level of popular mobilization will also serve as a further supplement for the prospective analyses.

3.1 The Political and Social Factors Leading to Civil War

The Spanish Civil War was a conflict that happened not so suddenly like in the arguable case of Russian Civil War. Instead, the way paving to the conflict were already in a process of being prepared throughout the long decades that witnessed the political turmoil and instability in Spanish politics. Spain, the center of a colonial empire that exploited and ruled a vast majority of new world from late 15th century to the early 19th century, had already became an obstacle and backward nation that was lacking the necessary socioeconomic development that most of European nations have already been embracing. Each colony that gained independence or was conquered by a rival nation was a further blow to the already suffering Spanish economy, which was highly reliant on the mostly agricultural supplies and labor these colonies provided to the empire. Moreover,

as Anderson (1991) famously argued, while Spain was losing these colonies the roots of some of the first modern nationalist societies were forging to fill their absence.[505] Spain, once the ruler of these remote lands by victimizing their technologically backward natives now became the one getting victimized from their own actions. Expectably, these changing dynamics had a great influence over the Spaniards, who have always had deep sociocultural problems among themselves because of their complex history. It is possible to suggest that they were well aware that meaningful changes were needed; however, the clashing interests of various socioeconomic groups fighting for more influence in political life demonstrated that such a change would not happen overnight or peacefully. Considering the fact that this long and painful process would ultimately shape the dynamics of prospective civil war in Spain, it seems both necessary and helpful to take a closer look at some of these most important political and social factors the former empire had to endure.

3.1.1 The Political Factors

Although the empire was already in a decline since the loss of its former colonies in the Southern America, with Argentina and Uruguay were among the first ones that declared their independence from the Spanish crown in May 1810 and May 1811 respectively, it is possible to suggest that the most crucial blow that made every Spaniard came to a realization of the decline of their state was the loss of Cuba in December 1898. By that point, the colonial people already got so alienated with the Spanish rule, and in the case of Cuban nationalists the case would come to a level of anything other than the Spanish control of their island – even if it would mean another European nation or the United States in that context would acquire the island instead – would be preferred.[506] One thing was sure – the Spaniard identity would go through a major transformation through this alienation with their already decayed empire's colonial people.

While discussing the emergence of this new Spaniard identity – one that evolved with respect to the increasing nationalist tendencies in their former colonial lands – it is

[505] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1999): 13.

[506] Carlos Loveira, *Generales y Doctores* (Havana: Sociedad Editorial Cubana Contemporanea, 1920): 184. For a deeper understanding of the anti-Spanish sentiments in late empire's colonial holdouts see Rafael E. Tarragó, "The Road to Santiago: Cuban Separatism and United States Americanism and How They Converged in 1898," *Iberoamericana*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (September 2001): 61-89.

vital to mention the struggle Spanish society had to endure throughout the long and devastating Peninsular War between 1807 and 1814, when the ambitious French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte decided to invade the country from north and aimed to establish a puppet regime there by installing his brother Joseph Bonaparte. Although, from a certain point of view, the war could be characterized as a dynastical conflict, in the eyes of Spaniards, it was their independence that was on stake.

This perspective arguably goes along well with the theoretical debates coming from prominent scholars such as Smith (1991) considering the emergence of the national identity. Smith created a theory of national identity that stressed the significance of cultural and historical influences in establishing a nation's identity, which according to Smith, is a formed and reconstructed over time through the experiences, memories, and symbols that determine a people's sense of belonging and commitment to a particular place.[507] Given the Peninsular War's significance in the views of the Spanish people, one could argue that it was vital not only in the creation of Spanish identity but also in the civil war that would eventually erupt in interwar Europe.

A further significant political aspect of the Peninsular War was the depiction of the demise of monarchical rule in Spain. Especially when the incumbent king, Fernando VII, acted hesitantly and was unable to resist Napoleon's aggressive moves, the monarchial regime lost all remaining credibility in the eyes of the public, whose hatred for this ineffective regime would grow over time due to the incompetence of the following rulers. It is possible to further reinforce this argument by taking a closer look at the contributions of Gates (2001) and Esdaile (2003), both of whom argued that the war was a Pyrus victory for the Spanish crown. According to Gates, the war undermined the Spanish monarchy's power, cleared the way for the emergence of liberalism and constitutionalism in Spain, and aided the country's eventual transition to a constitutional monarchy in the 19th century.[508] Similarly, Esdaile contends that the conflict damaged the Spanish monarchy's power, disrupted old social institutions, and paved the ground for the emergence of a new generation of liberal, nationalist, and regionalist movements in Spain.[509]

[507] A. D. Smith, *National Identity* (University of Nevada Press, 1991).
[508] David Gates, *The Spanish Ulcer: A History of the Peninsular War* (Da Capo Press, 2001).
[509] Charles J. Esdaile, *The Peninsular War: A New History* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2003).

Although it was clear that the monarchy needed to modernize or the country would have to choose a different course, Spain's decision had not yet been made. Nonetheless, it would be King Alfonso XIII's ineffective and very corrupt reign between 1901 and 1931 that would play the most crucial role in laying the groundwork for Spain's first republican and genuinely democratic experience. Just as one might argue for the character of Nicholas II's leadership in Russia, one can claim that Alfonso XIII was unfit to deal with the struggles and problems that developed in domestic and global affairs during this pivotal period in human history. Given that these were the shortcomings of his administration that would further clarify the existing schisms in Spanish society, it seems necessary to take a brief look at some of the developments that occurred during his reign that would have a significant impact on Spanish politics in the decades to come.

Alfonso XIII's Reign Amidst Political Upheaval and Economic Strife

Although it is possible to argue that the kingdom institutions have always been appealing to potential candidates to rule Spain, it is possible to predict that Alfonso was not particularly interested in becoming the next king of Spain, which at the time he had no idea he would become the last one, at least for a while. It is worth noting that he was faced with ruling a country that had already experienced a brief but influential republican experience when, in September 1873, the First Spanish Republic was established and then deposed through a military coup only a year after, had some significant influence on the Spanish politics and society. Now, although gone long ago, people had an alternative form of government that they could establish on the expense of Spanish monarchs, and for the unfortunate of Alfonso XIII, he had to rule a country facing with a considerable level of dissatisfaction from the monarchial practices and was looking for a radical change that was seen on the horizon already.

The reign of Alfonso XIII was characterized by political upheaval and economic hardship, both of which had a considerable impact on Spanish history. His reign began during a period of significant social and economic change in Spain. The country was industrializing, and a growing working class was seeking higher salaries and improved working conditions. Socioeconomic issues were particularly difficult for the country's leaders, who were desperately seeking new sources of cash by launching a relatively vague but ultimately futile colonial drive in Africa. When Spain believed it could easily establish a protectorate in the neighboring Moroccan Kingdom, as other colonial

European powers such as Britain and France had done, it was met with stiff resistance and found itself in a devastating war known as the "Rif War," which would witness the final blows to Spanish colonialism in these concluding years of monarchial rule from 1921 to 1924. But before delving into the specifics of that war, it is important to consider the environment into which Alfonso XIII was ushered into power in May 1886.

It is worth noting that republican sentiments among the Spanish intelligentsia may be found much earlier than Alfonso XIII's reign. In fact, even during the 1840s, when Europe was confronted with a new wave of revolutions across the continent, based on the post-Napoleonic political upheaval, many influential thinkers were considering establishing a more democratic and constitutional regime rather than a return to absolute monarchy, which preceded the invasion of the country in the early 19th century. Specifically, the Cortes de Cádiz and the Spanish Constitution of 1812 it drafted opened new arguments for the future of Spanish politics, with more and more individuals publicly rejecting any return of absolute monarchy even after independence was gained against the French invaders. Therefore, it might be beneficial to take a closer look at these two significant products of early 19th century Spanish politics to have a better understanding of the dilemmas Alfonso XIII found himself had to deal with.

The Impact of Cortes of Cádiz and The Spanish Constitution of 1812

Although similar parliamentary gatherings had occurred in previous centuries, what distinguished the experience at Cádiz from these previous meetings was the fact that this parliament functioned as a single and unified body rather than dividing into different bodies as those in the past could have done based on estate differences.[510] In a political setting marked by the Napoleonic invasion of Spain, the members of this institution claimed the validity of representing the actual interests of the Spanish people, whose rulers had failed to protect them from the threat of foreign invasion. Curiously, this administrative body claimed the validity of representing not just the interests of Spaniards, but also the interests of their erstwhile colonial holdings, which have already begun to achieve independence from Madrid's instable central power over them.[511]

[510] O. Rodriguez and Jaime E., *The Independence of Spanish America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998): 82.

[511] Jaime Alvar Ezquerra, *Diccionario de Historia de España* (Akal, 2001): 208-211.

It is noteworthy that this new institutional organization was intent on advancing a more liberal environment for Spanish politics, one in which democratic rights could be safeguarded better and a new Spanish identity could thrive without relying on the hurdles imposed upon it by a corrupt king. With this outlook, the Cortes drafted the Spanish Constitution of 1812, which many historians, notably Lockhart and Schwartz (1983), consider to be a watershed moment for liberalism and democracy in the development of Spain and Spanish America as they argued it was this document that established a constitutional monarchy and did away with several institutions that gave special advantage to certain groups.[512] Interestingly this document shared some common grounds with the aims of other prominent constitutional movements that already have or would arise in Britain and France, it had several unique features that reflected the reality of long and struggling history a country like Spain has.[513] These being said, as one of the earliest modern documents that emphasized a liberal and constitutional basis for government, with its relatively inclusive citizenship definitions and the extent of liberties it provided to the people of a decaying empire, it would not be inaccurate to consider this document an important step in both the Spanish democracy and the international democracy.[514]

Several of the new decisions that were made by the Cortes in Cádiz were met with resistance from conservative elites and the Catholic Church, two of the most powerful figures in Spanish politics, who were understandably unhappy with the rapid speed of the transition to democracy. In order to secure their support against these liberal ideals, Fernando VII did not hesitate to break his commitment to rule Spain on the basis of the constitutional framework created by Cortes by preparing a decree in March 1814, where he declared all acts and decisions of this Cortes as null and abolished the Constitution of 1812 by returning to a firm, but inefficient administration based on the principles of absolute monarchy.[515] The liberal elites and others dissatisfied with the decaying monarchal authority in Spain strongly reacted to his choice, and these groups became

[512] James Lockhart and Stuart Schwartz, *Early Latin America* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983): 412-416.

[513] Brendon Westler, "Between Tradition and Revolution: The Curious Case of Francisco Martínez Marina, the Cádiz Constitution, and Spanish Liberalism," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 76, No. 3 (July 2015): 393-416, especially 395-396.

[514] Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism in Spain 1923-1977* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999): 6-7.

[515] *Decretos del Rey Don Fernando VII*, 18 vols (Madrid, 1818–1834), i. 1, as quoted by Payne (1999).

more extreme over time in their goal of overthrowing the monarchy.[516] This trend continued unabated throughout the coming decades and would come to an unrecoverable level during the tenure of Alfonso XIII.

This brief but significant period in Spanish history planted the seeds for the eventual establishment of a republican system that would do away with the necessity for a corrupt and ineffectual monarch. As a matter of fact, one could argue that the conservative and clergy alliance supporting alliance behind the figure of a king was decisive in opposing any types of constitutionalism, which in turn further exacerbated tensions and triggered the opponents of this ancient regime to put forward even more radicalized agendas, including those advocating for a republican regime. After Fernando VII's return, the country was in continual upheaval for decades to come. From this moment onward, therefore, there had been an inconclusive period of constant turmoil, where these two opposite groups have gathered their power to establish the political ideals they were advocating for. These two groups would stay influential up until the start of Spanish Civil War, and they would play the most crucial roles throughout this highly problematic period. Considering this, it might be beneficial to briefly discuss what were their aims and objectives, and who were constituting their supporters respectively.

Liberals and Progressives

Liberals and progressives, especially those residing in major urban centers like Barcelona and Madrid, were now demanding even more political rights and aiming to further restrict the powers of a monarch, if not completely getting rid of this institution by replacing it with a more democratic and republican one. Their goals, however, were not limited to only replacing the old administration with something new; rather, they had a far more progressive vision for the new Spain they sought to create.

It is possible to argue that those who were opposing the king were describing the institution of monarchy as 'ungrateful and perjured' while the ideals of a revolution were, in their eyes 'the most glorious and the most legitimate'. When it comes to the point to further elaborate this intriguing perspective, the contemporary sources do a great job in portraying the face of Spanish revolutionaries. For instance, Vilarrasa and Gatell (1875)

[516] Marion S. Miller, "A 'Liberal International'? Prospectives on Comparative Approaches to the Revolutions in Spain, Italy, and Greece in the 1820s," *Mediterranean Studies*, Vol. 2 (1990): 61-67, especially 66.

offer a great contemporary description of the extent of republican and democrat ideals, which were constituting the backbone of the groups opposing the conservative and clergy supported monarchy in Spain. These ideals they were embracing included but not limited to sovereignty of the Spanish nation, universal suffrage and free elections for offices, individual freedoms and security, freedom of press without deposit, religious freedom, and the principle of being trialed only based on the common law.[517] Even though a large part of these ideas can be traced back to the principles of the French Revolution, the fight that liberal and progressive forces in Spain were and will be putting up will be very different from that of their counterparts elsewhere because they had to take on much more powerful and well-entrenched institutions.

Conservatives and Clergy

One may argue that the political coalition between conservative organizations and the clergy has consistently been extremely influential in Spain. The Church was seen by the conservative forces as a crucial ally because of its moral authority and significant social influence because they supported the maintenance of the monarchy, the social hierarchy, and the centrality of Catholicism in Spanish culture. They frequently fought against liberal efforts to secularize the state and defended Church privileges. A long-lasting alliance between these two powerful groups was being formed to preserve the liberal reforms that would result in the establishment of a Republican regime once more in Spanish politics in 1931, and many of the early institutional roots and causes of the Spanish Civil War started to take shape as a result of this close association.

It is important to highlight the social and political influence of the Catholic Church in order to fully understand the significance and power of this vital sociopolitical alliance. From a social standpoint, one could argue that the Catholic Church held a central position in Spanish society. This was due to the significant involvement of clergy members in the provision of essential social services, such as education and healthcare, particularly in rural regions. The moral teachings and doctrines of the Church exerted a significant influence on Spanish social norms, shaping the behavior of the population and preserving cultural and traditional practices. The Church played a dual role in society, offering spiritual guidance and actively participating in the administration of social services. This

[517] Eduardo Maria Vilarrasa and Jose I. Gatell, *Historia de la Revolucion de Setiembre*, Two Volumes (Barcelona, 1875): Vol. 1: 392.

involvement made the Church a central pillar of community life. Priests and nuns frequently fulfilled roles as educators in schools, caregivers in hospitals, and enforcers of moral standards within their respective communities. The moral teachings and doctrines of the Church had a significant impact on various aspects of daily life and social customs. These influences extended from the beginning of life to its end, and even encompassed the organization of the calendar, as religious feasts and celebrations played a role in marking the passage of time throughout the year. The ecclesiastical influence in Spain resulted in a strong commitment to Catholic traditions and customs, especially in rural regions.

Indeed, it is important to note that the influence of the Church was not uniform across the country. A clear distinction existed between rural and urban regions, where the influence of the Church was less prominent in urban areas undergoing industrialization. The emergence of an urban proletariat, along with the dissemination of liberal ideas and rising literacy rates, prompted a critical examination of the Church's doctrines and its societal significance. The Church's dominance in social affairs was challenged by progressive, republican, and socialist movements, which were influenced by the broader European Enlightenment and workers' movements. The emerging social tensions in Spain revealed the contrast between the traditional, agrarian, and Catholic rural areas and the modernizing, industrial, and secular urban regions. The schism played a role in the significant social and political changes in Spain during the early 20th century, ultimately resulting in the Spanish Civil War.

The political influence of the Spanish Catholic Church is also noteworthy. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Spain experienced several political changes, such as the brief existence of the First Republic, the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy, and the establishment of the Second Republic. Throughout these transitions, the Catholic Church maintained a prominent position in the discussions due to its significant sociopolitical influence. This power often triggered massive efforts that were made by liberals, republicans, and socialists throughout these times of transition to reduce the Church's sway and implement secular reforms. The most notable and important of these reforms were those that were implemented following the restoration of the Republican regime in 1931. These efforts involved enacting laws to nationalize Church properties,

expel religious orders, and secularize education.[518] The implementation of these measures resulted in strong opposition from the Church and its conservative allies, leading to increased societal division and political polarization. The tensions mentioned ultimately contributed significantly to the onset of the Spanish Civil War.[519] The Church, in particular, aligned itself firmly with Franco's Nationalist faction, as this faction would pledge to uphold Catholic values and reinstate traditional hierarchies.[520] The political stance of the Church during this period had significant and lasting effects on the course of Spanish history.

After concluding the discussion on socio-political polarization and the formation of two significant political factions, namely the liberal-socialist alliance advocating for reforms and the conservative-Catholic Church coalition seeking to maintain power, it is appropriate to shift focus towards the rise of the Nationalist faction and the various shortcomings observed during the Second Republic. These shortcomings ultimately contributed to the strengthening of the potential rebellion.

3.2 The Nationalist Faction: Exploring the Background

The emergence of a nationalist faction, like that of a republican movement, was an undeniable effect of Spain's long and inconclusive years of unprecedented political volatility and instability. The political polarization was skyrocketing, and this was making any chances for the different social groups to reach a meaningful compromise becoming harder to achieve. With civil war on the horizon, conservative and reactionary parties have been organizing to fight the republican government, which they regard as illegitimate. Moreover, the fact that the Catholic Church was furious with the new social and economic policies being put forward by the republican governments in an effort to reduce their strength was making these individuals even more alienated with the new regime. Indeed, these people started to become further radicalized in perceiving of pursuing a campaign against the new regime as a modern crusade. Given the relevance of ideological grounds in comprehending the creation and functioning of both sides on the

[518] Frances Lannon, *Privilege, Persecution, and Prophecy: The Catholic Church in Spain, 1875-1975* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002): 102-103, 133-139.

[519] William J. Callahan, *The Catholic Church in Spain, 1875-1998* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2000): 290-294.

[520] Hilari Raguer (eds.), *Gunpowder and Incense: The Catholic Church and the Spanish Civil War* (London & New York: Routledge, 2007): 16-19.

verge of civil war, it is necessary to examine the role of ideology and the degree it has over these groups separately. To that end, it is more instructive to examine the nationalist faction's philosophy and the significance of ideology in the formation of their earliest movements at more length.

3.2.1 The Role of Ideology in the Nationalist Faction

Although many different factions came together to form the nationalist movement, we can narrow down on the three that proved to be the most influential: the Carlists, the Falangists, and the Francoists. Before delving into the specifics of their ideologies and the role of ideology in shaping their political goals, it is worth noting that during the civil war it was not uncommon for the lines separating these groups to blur and for them to begin to embrace the ideas of each other. Looking back on the new regime they established after eventually emerging triumph from the civil war, one could say that they found a compromise that could satisfy most of the members of these three major groupings on these grounds. That said, the ideological distinctions and features of these groups still require special attention, and it appears both essential and beneficial to investigate these features of them individually.

Carlists

The Carlists have been, without a shadow of a doubt, the most extremist organization that has ever advocated monarchical beliefs. Named after Carlos Mara Isidro, the brother of King Ferdinand VII and a claimant to the Spanish throne, the Carlists were a conservative political organization in Spain that emerged in the nineteenth century. Isidro's modern-day followers, the Carlists, believe in restoring the absolute monarchy and protecting Spain's traditional values and institutions, just as he did in his day when he fought against the more democratic ideals put forward by the Cortez at Cadiz.

As with their desire to maintain the absolute monarchy, they saw their cause as strongly connected with the teachings of the Catholic Church. The Carlists' strong trust in the Catholic Church gave them a sense of mission to protect the faith. They also had a strong stance against liberalism, which they considered as a danger to Spain's established norms and institutions. Considering these, it will be logical to agree with the theses of Blinkhorn (2008), who believed that the Carlists held the ideological vision that saw the

foundations of the Spanish state in the collaborating triumvirate of Catholic faith, in the monarchy, and in centuries of tradition.[521]

In fact, it is possible to argue that the ideological seeds of Carlist movement have always remained active since the days of Napoleonic invasion of Spain, and they were influential in decades to come without relatively changing that much or adopting the new conditions the world was going through. That being said, it is important to briefly describing some of the most important chapters in their struggle to restore a functioning and strong absolute monarchy in Spain.

It is important to note that the Carlists were always opposed to the Alfonsine branch of the House of Bourbon because they perceived them as too weak to rule Spain, a fact that even they were not arguing against after the Napoleonic Invasion and the following years of losing many of the previous colonial holdings throughout the globe. Instead, what they were hoping and aiming to be the establishment of a new branch of the House of Bourbon, which they aspired to be the decision that would provide the medicine the suffering Spanish Empire needed to survive during these trying circumstances.[522]

It is worth to mention that there have been four different wars waged under the name of Carlism. Nevertheless, it would be a false claim to consider them as merely dynastical conflicts that aspired to establish one of the rival pretenders for the Spanish throne. Contrary, just as Adams (1950) would put forward, all these conflicts, from the first one that happened between 1833-40 to the last one that would take place in 1873 for a much shorter period, were rather power struggles between the liberal and conservative factions for acquiring more power for their movements.[523] Nevertheless, it is a fact that the Carlist sentiments on finding a reliable and charismatic alternative to the existing and corrupted monarchy without going through a dramatic and radical regime change is still worth to make an emphasis on. Although it is hard to make a specific estimate, one can argue that the Carlist movement had many supporters, therefore, they constituted an important group that seemed necessary to gain their support for both more conservative and progressive factions. Considering these, it will be justifiable to claim that the Carlists, for the greater

[521] M. Blinkhorn, *Carlism and Crisis in Spain, 1931-1939* (Cambridge University Press, 2008): 175-180.

[522] Robert E. Wilson, "The Claim of Carlos Hugo de Bourbon-Parma to the Spanish Throne," *Background*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (November 1964): 187-193, especially 187-188.

[523] Nicholson B. Adams, *The Heritage of Spain* (New York, 1950): 221.

extent, remained as a faction and movement that was either used by other groups for their own advantage or rather remained as a banner for their pursuing their more secret agendas.

It is hardly surprising that when the civil war broke out in Summer 1936, the Carlists sided with Franco and the nationalists instead of the Republicans. If one is interested in comprehending the ideological tenets of the nationalist front, particularly from the Carlist point of view, then there are three key reasons that need to be elaborated upon. These three different reasons, ranging from the relatively ideological proximity to the other nationalist factions as well as their shared hatred for the principles over which the incumbent republican government with the Popular Front in power constituted the reasons behind the Carlist decision to openly cooperate with the nationalists and joining their war waging against the government.

The primary, and therefore the first, reason for the Carlists' decision to join forces with Franco's nationalists was their shared hatred of the Republican government, which had become a left-wing dictatorship in the eyes of monarchists and conservatives alike after the 1936 elections and needed to be overthrown in order to save Spain. Indeed, the Carlists and Franco were both staunch opponents of the Second Spanish Republic's leftist supporters. Carlists and other nationalist organizations backing Franco's campaign held the view that the Republican administration posed a danger to traditional Spanish values including religion, monarchy, and social order. This shared animus served as the bedrock of their partnership throughout the Spanish Civil War as they fought together against the republican troops. As a result, particularly in the early months of the struggle, some of the regions where the nationalists were able to establish somewhat more solidified authority were in north-west Spain, which had always been the historical heart of the Carlist movement. Especially there, the Carlist paramilitary forces, as known as *Requetés*, would play the most crucial role in solidifying the nationalist control and repressing any loyal groups to the republican government.[524]

On the other side, there is another explanation that can show the most significant benefit of having Carlist support during a struggle like the Spanish Civil War, and it can explain why the other nationalist forces opted to collaborate with Carlists eventually. The

[524] Helen Graham, "Against the State," in *The Spanish Republic at War 1936-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 117.

Carlists, with their long history of fighting in conflicts and relatively cautious political movement, had a relatively strong paramilitary force known as *Requetés*, and having their support could significantly shift the balance of power in favor of their potential allies.[525] By joining forces with the nationalists, the Carlists not only bolstered the strength of the campaign against the republicans, but also improved their own odds of ultimate success by providing significant assistance to the side they believed had the best shot at emerging victorious from the conflict.[526]

The third and final reason through which it is possible to understand the Carlist mindset in forming an alliance with Nationalists lies in this belief of them in their eventually emerging victorious from the civil war. The Carlists had already been firm opponents of the democrats as well as progressives, and they were looking forward to establishing a strong and consolidated monarchy, this time with much more effective mechanisms and a strong state apparatus to further reinforce the strengths of this institution. Despite the fact that nobody could be trusted at the time, the Carlists felt that Franco, as the powerful statesman, might restore the monarchy and power of the Catholic Church if he prevailed.[527] Moreover, it is worth to mention that Franco have always opted for a totalitarian monarch like the mostly unpopular Isabella II rather than a weak Alfonso XIII, whose hands had to be tied constantly with the constitutional restrictions and other mechanisms of checks and balances that comes along with a constitutional monarchy.[528] Therefore, one could say that the Carlists allied with Franco by believing that they had a common vision for the future in the hopes of securing a position of power and function in a future administration in which they wanted to promote the restoration of a strong monarchy.

Therefore, it is possible to argue that the Carlists, who had long-lasted hopes for restoring monarchy under a stronger line of House of Bourbon, found the Nationalist side much more appealing to them due to their common emphasis on tradition and religion as well as their shared hatred for the practices of left-wing dominated republican

[525] M. Blinkhorn, *Carlism and Crisis in Spain, 1931-1939* (Cambridge University Press, 2008): 224-225.

[526] Mark Lawrence, *The Spanish Civil Wars: A Comparative History of the First Carlist War and the Conflict of the 1930s* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017): 153.

[527] Hilari Raguer, *Gunpowder and Incense: The Catholic Church and the Spanish Civil War* (London, 2007): 92-102.

[528] Mark Lawrence, *The Spanish Civil Wars: A Comparative History of the First Carlist War and the Conflict of the 1930s* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017): 121.

governments. Just as they have been on the same sides of the conflicts since early 19th century, the Carlists believed their best shot for the post-Civil War Spain was fighting side to side with nationalist troops. Nationalists, on the other hand, who were in a desperate need of more manpower for filling their ranks, saw this alliance had a great potential and therefore decided to wage a war against the government, which they both viewed as illegitimate.

Falangists

Many aspects of Spanish Falangism can be traced back to different nationalist and fascist ideologies that started forming in various European countries, so its emergence and growth can be summarized as an inevitable consequence of both national and international contemporary ideological developments. More succinctly, the Falangist ideology can be understood as a house constructed on four columns, each of which stands for a distinct but interconnected philosophy: nationalism, statism, traditionalism, and anti-Communism. Since each of these four main perspectives contributes significantly to our overall understanding of Falangist ideology and its true emergence in Spain, it is more beneficial to systematically analyze the connections they have with each other, especially with respect to the Spanish context, separately.

As Payne (1964) argued, the nationalist sentiment constitutes an undeniable aspect of the Falangist ideology, which explains the nationalist discourse many of the Spanish officers were following during the Spanish Civil War, even before any clear political program was put forward regarding what will be done after toppling down the regime in Madrid.[529] Furthermore, it is feasible to argue that the very name we are using to characterize the anti-government faction during the Spanish Civil War already depicts quite a bit. Many military leaders and civilians who revolted against the People's Front government in Madrid did so because they believed the government was actively working to destroy the Spanish national identity by being anti-Spanish and in favor of minority groups.[530] As opposed to them, Falangists sought to build a centralized and unified Spanish country by repressing regional identities and autonomy, particularly those in Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia. Falangists aimed to unite all Spaniards under

[529] Stanley G. Payne, "Spanish Nationalism in the Twentieth Century," *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (July 1964): 403-422, especially 415-416.

[530] Joaquín Arrarás (ed.), *Historia de la Cruzada* (Madrid, 1940), Vol. I: 485-497, as quoted by Payne (July 1964).

a unified national identity to strengthen national allegiance.[531] By taking a hard line against regionalism and minority nationalist movements, they were able to alienate these groups and spur them to rush fighting for the government in Madrid.

One of the most significant goals of the Falangist movement was to create a new national culture and history that would unite "all Spaniards" under a common identity and put an end to any notion of secession. Instead of focusing solely on the Iberian part of the country's history and culture, the Falangists instead put an emphasis on the "excellence of Spain's imperial past," which caused them to disregard the loss of Spain's past colonial holdings as a national tragedy that resulted in the terrible conditions the country had to endure in their eyes. To make the matters worse, nationalist never hesitated to clearly announcing their imperial ambitions, and they went as far as pointing a prospective imperial expansion of their “New Spain” as one of the core policies they determined to adopt in the immediate aftermath of the civil war they by this moment emerged victorious from.[532] One can argue that, due to this imperialistic perspective they were praising, many of the former colonies which were now independent nations disregarded the nationalist movement, and some such as Mexico, supported the republicans more directly with even greater means.

Statism was another important aspect of their ideological outlook. It is important to recall some of the most striking statist, or fascist, movements of Europe were emerging in this period, and naturally these movements had a considerable influence over the Falangists, who were arguably constituting the most notable aspect of the nationalist faction. These revelations were used by their opponents greatly, and after a while the terms of “fascists” and “rebels” almost became identical during the Spanish Civil War. However, this perspective is not commonly shared by scholars as there were those who were considering them just as another branch of fascist movements in Europe whereas a considerable number of others still preferred to conceptualize them from a more unique perspective.

Among the scholars who perceived Falangists as fascists emerges Payne (1999) and Preston (1995) as two of the most prominent ones, who considered Falangists as a fascist

[531] Onesimo Redondo, *Caudillo de Castilla* (Valladolid, 1937): 140-141.
[532] Bailey W. Diffie, “The Ideology of Hispanidad,” *The Hispanic Review*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (August 1943): 457-482, especially 470-472.

movement due to their undeniable proximity to other fascists in Europe.[533] On the other hand, scholars like Blamires (2006) and Blinkhorn (1990) appear to prefer another perspective, which contends the argument that Falangists were rather an authoritarian and conservative movement, which had several key differences with these fascist movements existed in Italy and Germany.[534] Taking these two alternative approaches into account, one can argue that, although it would be misleading to conceptualize the ideology of Spanish Falangists as a direct copy of the other nationalist and fascist movements emerged in Hitler's Germany or Mussolini's Italy, it is a fact that these two movements indeed had a great influence over the policies Falangists adopted as well as the methods they were using to reach their goals. Considering this, it might be beneficial to take a closer look at some of the most apparent influences these two movements had over Falangists' ideological perspectives as well as how Falangists still emerged not as a direct copy of them but rather preserved a level of uniqueness.

It is better to start with the most notable spheres, where Falangist ideology seems to have a stance almost identical to the fascist movements in Italy and Germany. One of these most crucial similarities that is apparent in Falangist ideology as well as these two prominent fascist movements is their shared emphasis on an empowered state apparatus, which has a strong and centralized government idealized to be ruled by a strong and charismatic leader figure. Similarly, as a method of imposing the will of such a strong state over citizenry, Falangists also believed in a totalitarian authority that would allow them to establish a firm control over Spanish population and suppress any potential dissidence to their rule.[535] As an extension of this totalitarian perspective, Falangists and these fascist movements both agreed on the necessity of having an empowered and ideologically indoctrinated military that would serve as an important institution to protecting their respective national interests as well as to advancing their expansionist ambitious.

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[533] Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism in Spain, 1923-1977* (Madison: Wisconsin University Press, 1999): 77-102; Paul Preston, *The Politics of Revenge: Fascism and the Military in Twentieth-Century Spain* (London: Routledge, 1995).

[534] Cyprian P. Blamires (ed.), *World Fascism: A Historical Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, 2006): 218-220; Martin Blinkhorn, *Fascists and Conservatives: The Radical Right and the Establishment in Twentieth Century Europe* (London: Routledge, 1990): 9-10.

[535] Bailey W. Diffie, "The Ideology of Hispanidad," *The Hispanic Review*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (August 1943): 457-482, especially 459.

Now, it is worth to mention the biggest similarities between Italian Fascism and Spanish Falangism, which mostly centralize around the issues of economic policies and empowerment of religious identities. While putting forward an analysis of the potential reasons behind the divergence of Italian and Spanish examples on these two pivotal points by differing from what was happening in Germany, some researchers including Thornhill (2015) pointed out that it was a common pattern in societies such as Mussolini's Italy and Rivera's Spain, where privatistic socio-economic institutions had a considerable amount of power even before 1914, to observe an authoritarian perspective developing around these ideals.[536] It is possible to argue that, because of this historical similarities both movements had within their respective contexts, the Italian and Spanish perspectives on these significant matters developed in a similar pattern.

As Ridruejo (1964) pointed out controlling the economy was a vital objective for the Falangist ideologues, who saw this step as a natural extension of their broader struggle in "authenticating the regime" through the totalitarian measures they were adopting in their attempt of restoring the "glorious Spanish state" from its ashes.[537] Priorelli (2020) believes that this policy was mostly adopted from the Italian fascism embodied with the actions of Mussolini, whose perspective on the necessity of pursuing a corporatist project remained to constitute the main reference point for the Falangist perspective on state of economics.[538] Indeed, it is worth to mention that many of these arguments Mussolini had on the matters of economics remained to shape the post-war Spanish economic policies even after the eventual disappearance of fascist ideology from European stage of politics.

On the other hand, it is possible to differentiate the Spanish and Italian positions on the importance of religion as a sociopolitical institution from the dominant perspective in Hitler's Germany. Even in the conservative Spanish media, who were serving as a tool of Falangist propaganda to its greater extend, the German approach on religion was criticized while the Italian perspective was praised and being pointed out as a role model

[536] Chris Thornhill, "The Crisis of Corporatism and the Rise of International Law," in Eva Hartmann and Poul F. Kjaer (eds.), *The Evolution of Intermediary Institutions in Europe: From Corporatism to Governance* (Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015): 225.

[537] Dionisio Ridruejo, *Escrito en España* (Buenos Aires: Losada, 1964): 55, as quoted by Priorelli (2020).

[538] Giorgia Priorelli, *Italian Fascism and Spanish Falangism in Comparison: Constructing the Nation* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2020): 244-245. Priorelli's work provides an excellent summary of various similarities and differences the Italian Fascists and Spanish Falangists had in their ideological perspectives.

for the future of Spain. For instance, Giménez Caballer, a prominent Falangist journalist, was contending that "The difference between the two Fascisms is that Germany has a pagan fascism, while that of (and alike Spanish) Italy is Christian."[539] It was without any doubts that the Catholic Church was an important institution in both countries with its undeniable influence over the emergence and evolution of these two ideologies. This perspective would be further utilized by employing the conceptualization of Mussolini, who argued the fascist movement was based on a religious framework, in the works of several prominent Spanish Falangists, such as Pemartin (1940), who would go as far as claiming their movement will be "the religion of religion".[540]

It is still worth to mention the other side of this equation to better understand the connections between German Fascists, or Nazis, and Spanish Falangists. To begin with, in addition to the ultra-nationalist tendencies both ideologies share, one of the most striking similarities they had with each other lied on their mutual hatred for the Jewish community. Anti-Semitism remained a core feature of Spanish Falangists, who regarded this community as an eternal enemy of the Spanish society, with heavily referring to the historical background of late 15th century, when the recently unified Spain then decided to get rid of any remaining Jews on their soil, forcing them either to convert to Catholic Christianity or leave the country. Although this lack of existence within the Spanish society constituted a major setback for any anti-Semitist ideology to grow stronger in comparison to the levels of other European nations of the time, many prominent Falangists continued to advocate for a complete removal of any "Jewish influence" from the Spanish society.[541] There were even some senior ones such as the filmmaker and scenarist Adelardo Fernández, who did not hesitate to go as far as stating, "Spaniards! Let's recite every night this prayer: My God! Rescue Spain! Give us a man like Hitler!".[542]

The world view of the German fascists and their Spanish counterparts is another important area where there is room for debate. Although it may be argued that all of these

[539] Giménez Caballer, "Genio de España," *La Nuevo Catolicidad* (1933): 110-111, as quoted by Priorelli (2020).

[540] José Pemartin, *Que es "Lo Nuevo"* (Madrid, 1940), 3rd Edition: 50, as quoted by Priorelli (2020).

[541] Xosé M. Núñez Seixas, "Spanish Views of Nazi Germany, 1933-45," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (October 2019): 858-879, especially on 866-867.

[542] A. Fernández Arias, *Hitler. El Salvador de Alemania* (Madrid 1935): 60–71 and 79, as quoted by Seixas (October 2019).

ideological perspectives took the spread of socialist history and ideology across Europe into account, it is clear that the most serious agendas formed in response to this threat originated in Germany and Spain. Most notably, Germany appears to have been partially successful in propagating its intellectual campaign against Bolshevism as one aimed at protecting Western civilization from a "communist plague," one that Spanish nationalists had to struggle against during the Spanish Civil War.[543] These essential similarities between two ideologies would depicted by a Cuban-Spanish Catholic writer Carmen Velacoracho, who indeed argued that Hitler was the defender of Christian civilization against an anti-Christ, masonic and Jewish dominated threat rised from the east.[544] Taking into account these crucial factors, one may propose that the ideological proximity of fascists in Germany and their falangist counterparts in Spain was further converged by sharing a shared ideological enemy endowed with the socialist characteristics.

Following an examination of the critical and notable similarities that Spanish Falangists shared with fascist ideologies rooted in Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany, it is worth briefly mentioning some of the most striking unique features of Falangism that distinguished it from these other prominent far-right political indoctrinations that dominated European politics during this period of political turmoil. On this basis, it becomes necessary to examine the essence of nationalism as it was expressed in Falangist ideology, as well as the extent to which religious institutions were valued in the development of a state-sponsored identity. Finally, it is important to highlight the far-reaching imperialist policies that Falangist doctrine enshrined. While it is true that many famous far-right ideologies share some of these core beliefs, Spanish Falangists maintained a distinct perspective on these important issues that set them apart.

The subject of nationalism appears to be one of the most crucial in this endeavour to comprehend how far the Spanish Falangists went in characterizing their approach. To begin with, it is critical to highlight that Spanish nationalism has never relied on biological racist indoctrination in the process of establishing a shared Spanish identity that would

[543] M. Peñalba Sotorrio, "German Propaganda in Francoist Spain: Diplomatic Information Bulletins as a Primary Tool of Nazi Propaganda," *Bulletin for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (2013): 47-63.

[544] For a great assessment of his arguments please see C. Velacoracho, *Un Caudillo* (Madrid, 1940), as quoted by Sotorrio (2013). This view was quite popular especially during the initial stages of Germany's war against Western allies and Soviet Union, when the German war machine was making significant gains and advances and was considered to be about to win the war.

deny any rights to minority populations. As a result, it is vital to demonstrate that while Falangism is characterized by a strong feeling of Spanish nationalism, it does not place the same emphasis on racial purity or supremacy as German Nazism.[545] Nazi ideology was based on Aryan racial superiority and the extermination or enslavement of other ethnic groups, whereas Falangism was more focused on providing a higher degree of a national unity under a common identity that would base on Spanish patriotism and Catholicism.[546] On these perspectives, it could be possible to claim a higher degree of similarity between this approach and the one proposed by Italian narratives.[547] Yet, it also differed from the Italian fascists who advocated for unification with Italians who remained outside of the Italian borders at the time, as Spain's case was more about constructing a unifying national identity that would integrate existing minority groups with a rich sociopolitical history under an umbrella Spaniard identity.

As previously stated, the perspectives of emphasizing the importance of the Catholic Church as an institution that considered to serve as a tool to construct a common Spaniard identity through was another significant point that allowed the Spanish Falangists to be distinguished from Italian and German fascists. To be more specific, it is a fact that both Spanish and Italian thinkers put a lot of emphasis on the importance of the Catholic Church as an institution that would serve the ideological goals of their respective regimes.[548] In this way, they were very different from the German case, which could be seen as a more pagan idealization.[549] However, it is conceivable to claim that, as Adamson (2014) claims, the Italian fascists were still arguing for a society with a far higher degree of secularism to exist to further give the Italian state with autonomy from Vatican City.[550] Spanish Falangists, on the other hand, made it clear that the future of Spanish society was on the same path as the Catholic Church, and that the new and ideal state should always prioritize the position of the Catholic Church and the importance of religion in order to

[545] F. García Márquez, "La Raza: Fundamento de la Comunidad," *JONS*, Vol. 11 (August 1934), as quoted by Sotorrio (2013).

[546] Xosé M. Núñez Seixas, "Spanish Views of Nazi Germany, 1933-45," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (October 2019): 858-879, especially on 870-871.

[547] Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism in Spain 1923-1977* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999): 155-156.

[548] Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism in Spain 1923-1977* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999): 89-91.

[549] For an interesting work that explains such a paganic character of German ideology of then see P. Sagarra, Capellanes en la División Azul – Los Ultimos Cruzados (Madrid: Actas, S.L., 2012): 180–90.

[550] Walter L. Adamson, "Fascism and Political Religion in Italy: A Reassessment," *Contemporary European History*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (February 2014): 43-73.

move forward with this new common Spanish identity they were working to establish.[551] Considering these, it is possible to suggest that, for Falangists, the strong and authoritarian state they were aiming to establish had to serve the creation of a new national identity premised on this inclusive yet dominant identification, which would focus on the Catholic Church yet avoiding any minority conceptualizations or the premise of racist theories deriving from more biological explanations.

One final but crucial area where the Spanish Falangists differed drastically from their contemporaries was in the promotion of an imperialistic agenda. While it was true that the Spanish Falange wanted to restore the "glory to Spain," as was further described above, prompting many of the former colonial holdings that were now independent states to support the republicans in response, it was also evident that an imperial war was not among the priorities of these Spanish nationalists. For key Falange backers like Maspons (1942), this goal was more of a utopian ideal—a bridging mission that would arise in the future but would be a necessary step to secure the "natural rights of Spain" based on Spain's historical ties to Latin America.[552] This was differentiating them significantly from Italian fascists and German Nazis, whose primary objective has always been on the other hand, an imperial expansion that would almost come before of any other aims.

It is now time to make the case for the Francoists, who can be defined as the group that believed in the necessity of putting General Francisco Franco at the head of their struggle in the future against the republican government, after having described the ideological background of the Spanish Falangists, whose contribution to the upcoming civil war on the side of the nationalist faction will constitute an essential perspective to uncover. However, before discussing them, it is important to remember that Franco's supporters did not differ ideologically from the Carlists or the Falangists; rather, they would emerge more in number as the process towards the civil war would escalate, and eventually they would become those who would identify Franco as the necessary successor of the perished by then leaders of the nationalist faction, who would be in

[551] There seem many interesting books that aim to explore this comparison. However, I would like to share one that I found quite compelling and inclusive in explaining the debates existing, and it distinguish from other works from the fact that it was first written in Spanish and then was translated to English. See Joaquin Azpiazu, *The Corporate State* (St. Louis, 1951), quoted by Payne's (1999) work, which does a great job in summarizing some of these works as well as the study of Azpiazu. See Payne (1999): 130-133.

[552] L. Sanchez Maspons, "Europa en España," *La Joven Europa*, Vol. 3 (1942): 4-7.

desperate need of a strong leader at that point. Considering these, it is better to discuss the points that made Franco a good candidate for such a position, rather than repeating the same narrative about how Francoists emerged in terms of their ideological background. Understanding such a process will not only facilitate our understanding of the broader mechanisms through which the nationalist faction was functioning, and the importance of party or faction unity behind their relative successes, but it will also allow us to make the introduction for the role of professional military in the prospective triumph of nationalist forces.

3.2.2 How Franco Emerged as the Leader of Nationalists?

It can be difficult to determine what exactly catapulted a particular person to the forefront of such complex political movements. One might not immediately think of Franco as the head of an anti-republican faction, as is typically the case; yet, several factors already suggested the potential Franco had as a leader, and these can be used to better understand this complex process of his rise. Franco's rapid rise among the dissatisfied officers who would soon wage war against the illegitimate government appears to have been secured by a number of striking processes, chief among them his military experience, political pragmatism and adaptability, and his ability to get support from these two prominent ideological factions, the Carlists and the Falangists.

Franco's Early Military Career

One could speculate that most influential figures in the early twentieth century either graduated or went through the path of a professional military education, implying the importance of military specialists in the political arena during this period in comparison to the level of influence their civilian counterparts had. It is worth noting, however, that this trend appears to be the case mostly in countries that have historically lagged behind more industrialized European nations, where civilian authorities have already achieved the upper hand in crucial decision-making processes. Considering these factors, it is not surprising that a military leader like Franco was able to establish himself as a powerful figure in Spanish politics. Furthermore, knowing that it was his military achievements that eventually ensured his rise in politics, it is crucial to grasp some of the major milestones in his military career that can be utilized to further elaborate the decades to come under his leadership.

One might wonder how an officer like Franco, who graduated from Toledo Infantry Academy in 1910 as not one of the brightest, could be promoted so quickly in a country like Spain, which remained neutral in some of the most critical international conflicts, including the Great War, which dominated the first years of his military career. While it is true that Spain stayed out of these wars, it still had some room for ambitious military professionals like Franco to promote rapidly. Spain was still trying to maintain a respected position in the European politics, from which it had been excluded for centuries due to the political turmoil it could not save itself from. Especially in Africa, Spain was determinant in keeping at least several colonial holdings that could symbolize the Spanish colonialism was still alive. In such a context, special consideration should be given to the Rif Conflict in Morocco, which played a critical role in the rise of several well-known prospective leaders of the nationalist faction of the civil war on the horizon, including but not limited to Franco.

When King Alfonso XIII of Spain ascended to the throne in 1886, Spain still had colonies in the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific, thus the country could be regarded a world power.[553] However, during the Spanish-American War, Spain lost Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines in 1898, and surrendered the Mariana and Caroline Islands to Germany the following year, reducing the once-mighty Spanish Empire to a few footholds on the Moroccan coast and Spanish Guinea.[554] The Spanish monarchy was well aware of the difficulty they faced at the hands of more advanced Western countries, and so they set out to find new areas to expand into as compensation for their losses. As such, Morocco looked like a good bet because the colonial holdings Spain already had there given it a solid foothold in the region, and after the Berlin Conference, Spain was given permission to make a move in this region rich in natural materials in an effort to satisfy and accept the demands of other European colonial powers like Britain, Germany, and France.[555] Here, Spanish mostly acted together with these nations and their collaboration with France was most noteworthy, especially after the Franco-Spanish

[553] James Perry, *Arrogant Armies* (Edison: Castle Books, 2005): 270-275.

[554] Spencer C. Tucker (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars: A Political, Social, and Military History* (Santa Barbara: ABC Clio, 2009): 24-25.

[555] Geoffrey Jensen, *Franco: Soldier, Commander, Dictator* (Washington DC: Potomac Books, 2005): 13-15.

Agreement on Morocco they made in 1904 paved the way for a return to the Spanish colonial ambitious in the region.[556]

As a result, Spain launched a number of campaigns, some of which were successful in expanding Spanish dominance over the region. Nonetheless, the Rif War, which emerged in 1921, in the wake of the Great War as an important conflict that had a crucial role in the European affairs of the period, would last for five years, and it soon became a conflict that Spain and their French allies made a faithful decision of underestimating their rivals. Therefore, Morocco would become a battleground that would cost these European colonial powers a lot of resources and people, yet it also presented a fantastic opportunity for the ambitious officers including Franco to advance much faster in ranks through participating in this conflict.

It is important to underlie the fact that when Franco joined his fellow countrymen in the conflict taking place in Morocco, Spain already was in humiliation of defeats it endured against this backward and underdeveloped African nation. In the 1921 Disaster of Annual Spanish forces faced with the greatest single defeat of a European army by an African force, where over 8,000 Spanish troops are considered to be lost and thousand others became captives.[557] Over the course of a lengthy period, the Moroccan struggle would prove to be both an opportunity for promotion for the surviving and a graveyard for many Spanish soldiers; casualty estimates place the number of Spanish deaths in the conflict at around 16,000, and an additional 1,000 officers killed in action.[558] Moreover, the Moroccan theater also served as a further step of the increasing influence of military staff in the Spanish politics. Considering the increasing role of these individuals over the decision-making processes similarly to the officers in Imperial Japan during the interwar period, one can make the claim that the conflict in Morocco further politicized the Spanish officer corps and indirectly allowed them to play a more apparent role in the Spanish politics in the decades to come.[559]

[556] Spencer C. Tucker (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars: A Political, Social, and Military History* (Santa Barbara: ABC Clio, 2009): 86-87.

[557] Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, *Franco and the Spanish Civil War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004): 9.

[558] Geoffrey Jensen, *Franco: Soldier, Commander, Dictator* (Washington DC: Potomac Books, 2005): 14.

[559] "Spain in Morocco," *Advocate of Peace through Justice*, Vol. 87, No. 3 (March 1925): 147-149.

He would serve here for more than a decade, and throughout a fourteen years long service in this battleground of Spanish colonialism, from 1912 until the end of conflict in 1926, he would professionalize in hybrid warfare tactics targeting civilians, a quality that would serve him in the implementation of similar tactics this time against his own countrymen throughout the Spanish Civil War.[560] As Preston (1994) emphasized, Franco's brutal strategies, combined with the hardliner perspective he was raised upon during his days at Toledo Academy, would dominate the military planning he would participate in during this impending civil war, and would play a crucial role in paving the way for him to rise as one of the most potential leaders of the nationalist faction during that conflict.[561]

Franco and many of his closest companions were able to quickly rise through the ranks and gain the expertise necessary to become more capable officers thanks to their participation in the deadly combat in Morocco. Although there were other excellent examples of such lightning-fast advancement, Franco stood out as an exceptionally bright commander and quickly ascended through the ranks even in a faster pace. Franco, then 33 years old, was promoted to the rank of brigadier general in 1926 after leading his soldiers to victory in numerous decisive battles during the Rif War's concluding stages. An incredible feat that demonstrated his skills as a soldier, this made him the youngest general in the Spanish Army at the time.[562]

Furthermore, Franco's close connections to some of the most influential other lower-ranking officers of the time allowed him to establish a sense of trust and expanded network, giving him a core cadre with which to work closely for decades. He would later talk about how important Morocco was to his career and to the change of the Spanish army as a whole. He said that Morocco is the best training ground, if not the only one, for the Spanish army, where good values and qualities are tested, and that this officer corps on combat duty in Africa, with its high morale and self-esteem, must become the heart and soul of the Spanish army on the mainland.[563] Indeed the Army of Africa, or Ejército

[560] Paul Preston, "General Franco as Military Leader," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 4 (1994): 21-41, especially 24.

[561] Paul Preston, "General Franco as Military Leader," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 4 (1994): 21-41, especially 23.

[562] Stanley G. Payne and Jesus Palacios, *Franco: A Personal and Political Biography*, 4th Edition (University of Wisconsin Press, 2014): 49-50.

[563] Francisco Franco, *Papeles de la Guerra de Marruecos: Diario de Una Bandera* (Madrid, 1986): 85-86.

de África, would become one of the most important assets of the Spanish armed forces as the main bulk of the most experienced officers and servicemen would be deployed here. These troops would become one of the first forces available to the nationalist cause, and Franco's undeniable connections with them had a considerable influence over the early balances of power of the prospective conflict. Considering these, it is possible to attribute the emergence of him as an exceptionally skilled commander whose future seemed very bright at the time was not a surprise, and indeed the Moroccan experience proved itself very significant in transforming the Spanish army to one of a more politically indoctrinated and proactive armed force that will have an increasing influence over the political arena in the decades to come.

Franco's appointment as the Director of the General Military Academy in Zaragoza in 1928 was another pivotal moment in his military career since it put him in a position to cultivate the relationships he would need for future leadership. His tenure as director coincided with a time of great political upheaval in Spain, including the dramatic events surrounding the monarchy's overthrow and the subsequent establishment of the Second Republic in 1931. It is arguable that the new republican government's decision to shut down the academy in June 1931, in the belief that the necessary military reforms had been enacted in the creation of a more politically loyal structure for the education of prospective officer corps, stoked already simmering anti-republican sentiment among the predominantly conservative high-ranking officers.[564] Jackson (1985) provided a good explanation of this trend, claiming that since the Academy was the only institution in Spain where soldiers of different backgrounds studied together, the closure of the Academy was seen as an attack on the fundamental essence of the Spanish army by these conservative and anti-republican officers.[565]

It came as no surprise that Franco was among those most negatively impacted by these decisions, given that the leading institution he was tasked with administering had been abolished; it is also plausible that by this point he was already opposed to this republican regime. Nonetheless, he did not openly rebel and continued to serve in the Spanish army under the new government though one can speculate he got involved with

[564] Paul Preston, *Franco: Caudillo de España* (Barcelona: G. Mondadori, 1993): 108-109.

[565] Gabriel Jackson, *La República Española y la Guerra Civil (1931-1939)* (Ediciones Orbis, 1985): 50-54.

the early plots of toppling down this new regime and replacing it by restoring monarchy even in the initial aftermath of these significant developments taking place.[566] However, there is one last stage of his military career that requires to be discussed briefly before moving to the other leading factors paved Franco's eventual rise as the most potential leader for the nationalist faction and it is more involved with the years leading to the Spanish Civil War.

It is important to emphasize on the fact that the brief but crucial lifespan of the Second Spanish Republic witnessed the change of power between these two main ideological centers time to time. Unfortunately for this new regime, the republic could never enjoy a sense of political stability as the brief five years it could have prior to the start of the Spanish Civil War, many important events took place with Franco mostly played a very central role in them. Most importantly, it was never the case that a certain faction or group of political parties could establish a full control over the political arena or could form any well-functioning and inclusive administration that could serve as a compromise to avoid the upcoming political violence.

Elections of October 1933 and the Insurgency in Asturias

The conservative forces returned to power two years after the new rule was created, although this time through more democratic means of conducting elections. During the elections held in October 1933, a coalition with more conservative and right-leaning leanings rose to power, prompting severe reactions from more radicalized left-wing parties across the country.[567] Even though most of the more conservative officers were hesitant to work for a republican regime that they considered highly illegitimate even in these times, they were more in favor of working closely with this more conservative government. As a result, Franco was among the officers who rushed to save the right-wing government led by CEDA (a predominantly conservative and nationalist party) from the emerging insurgencies coming from such left-wing factions. Franco and the newborn Spanish Republic would reach an inflection point with the outbreak of the Insurgency in Asturias in October 1935, little than a year after the new government was founded in response to CEDA ministers finally gaining posts in the government in October 1934.

[566] Paul Preston, "General Franco as Military Leader," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 4 (1994): 21-41, especially 25-26.

[567] Hilari Raguer, *Gunpowder and Incense: The Catholic Church and the Spanish Civil War* (Routledge, 2007): 30-34.

Furthermore, the conservative army officers were convinced by the failed attempts to establish an independent Catalan state in the midst of these political upheavals that the republican rule was extremely vulnerable and threatened the fragmentation of Spain if appropriate measures were not taken.[568]

The Al-Hoceima landings, which were his most significant contribution to this war effort and led to his promotion to brigadier general, the youngest in the entire armed forces, could be argued to have been Franco's introduction to the other notable members of the Spanish army while he served in Morocco. Here, he had a chance to get acquainted with and being noticed by such people, who would regard Franco as an intelligent young officer loyal to the Spanish nation with a promising feature. During these campaigns, he gained the attention of some of the most powerful military figures in late monarchy Spain, including the future dictator Miguel Primo de Rivera, whose regime would arguably mark the coming end of centuries-long monarchy in Spain, and influential officer General José Sanjurjo, whose notoriety would help him become the first interim leader of the nationalist faction during the Spanish Civil War until his untimely death in a plane crash. Later, authors like Quiroga (2007) would argue that these notable Spanish generals provided significant influence for Franco, and it would be reasonable to say that Francoism arose alongside the political goals of these figures.[569] It must be stressed, however, that Franco ultimately followed his own road to greater authority and achievement in consolidating his power base than had been achieved by any of his predecessors. Therefore, Franco's participation in the suppression of insurgency in Asturias gains considerable significance, as it can be used as a divergence point to explain his eventual success in establishing a more stable political realm around his charismatic leadership, which would not only rely on the support of military but also on his getting more acceptance from the conservative minded civilian politicians.

Yet, it is possible to suggest that only after taking decisive action from October 4–19, 1934, to put down the insurgency in the Asturias mines, his political charm began to emerge within the conservative circles of Spanish politics. One could argue that this ambitious military officer's genuine first steps into the hard theater of Spanish politics

[568] For the political turmoil occurred during this period see Jordi Finentres and Manel Lopez, *Entre la Revolucio i L'estelada* (Barcelona: Sapiens, 2014).

[569] Alejandro Quiroga, *Making Spaniards: Primo de Rivera and the Nationalization of the Masses, 1923-30* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007): 143-145.

were his participation in the ruthless pacification of the region. Considering the intriguing arguments that regard the insurgency in Asturias as the prelude to the Spanish Civil War and even as the first battle of it,[570] it becomes even more important to better understand the role Franco undertook during this crisis and the repercussions of his actions on the subsequent years of the further escalation of political polarization and violence terrorizing Spanish politics.

It is important to note that many of the harsh tactics used by Franco and his men were not unanimously embraced by the Spanish army, which had also started to include more liberal figures, particularly those who had to remain on the country's mainland during the conflict in Morocco and could thus maintain some degree of moderation in their actions.[571] Nonetheless, his efforts were mainly appreciated by more traditional generals and officers, many of whom had fought alongside him in Morocco. In an intriguing turn, he became increasingly politicized, earning the moniker "the Butcher of Asturias" from the more radical left and "Savior of the Republic" from the more conservative right, who were still not in an open rebellion to the republican regime.[572]

One of the greatest achievements Franco acquired through his participation in the suppression of this insurgency, although he remained mostly in Madrid and commanded the operations in remote, was his appointment in March 1935 to the post of Commander-in-Chief of Army of Africa, arguably the second most important position in the whole Spanish army after the position of General Staff.[573] Franco was getting more and more popular not only among the soldiers but also among the right-wing conservatives and the clergy, whose support would be vital in Franco's ability to become *Caudillo*, a Latin originated concept that reflects the charismatic leadership cult he could portray, which included both military and political power, two skills that allowed Franco to eventually become the leader of the nationalist faction in the conflict on horizon.

[570] It seems the left-leaned historians and political scientists put a greater emphasis on the memory of Asturias. A good example of the narratives explaining such a perspective is visible in Brian D. Bunk, "Your Comrades Will Not Forget: Revolutionary Memory and the Breakdown of the Second Spanish Republic, 1934-36" *History and Memory*, Vol. 14 (2002): 65-92.

[571] Francisco Aguado Sánchez, *La Revolución de Octubre de 1934* (Madrid, 1972): 193-196 and partly in 257-258.

[572] José E. Álvarez, "The Spanish Foreign Legion During the Asturian Uprising of October 1934," *War in History*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (April 2011): 200-224, especially 222.

[573] John Scurr, *The Spanish Foreign Legion* (London: Osprey, 1985): 19.

Last but not least, it is important to note that Franco's rise to prominence militarily was largely due to two factors: first, his appointment as Chief of General Staff of the entire army and second, his command of the Army of Africa, the most experienced force available to the nationalist faction in their potential struggle to topple the republican government in Madrid. From May 1935 until the Popular Front won the fateful elections of 1936, Franco served in both the first position and the longer-term second role as the Chief of General Staff. Even though the Azaña government, formed after the left-wing coalition of Popular Front emerged victorious from the elections, out of legitimate concerns, decided to remove him from these offices and instead assign him to command the troops in the Spanish Canary Islands, Franco already had enough experience and popularity at this point to portray himself as one of the most likely candidates to lead the nationalist forces in the coming conflict. Although these debates explain well the reasons behind Franco's success in portraying himself as a capable officer who could supervise the operations of such a great scale, there still appears a further debate needs to be addressed to better understand his eventually becoming the movement's not only militarily but also political and ideological leader.

Although other candidates, such as Sanjurjo, emerged at the outset as the real designated leader for this uprising, Franco would eventually emerge as the ultimate political and military leader of these operations by September 1936, after a brief period of indecision and fractured structure of the nationalist faction.[574] As previously mentioned, Franco's success in this game of power politics can be attributed to his well-known abilities in political pragmatism and adaptability, as well as his ability to win over the Carlists and the Falangists, who together formed the backbone of the nationalists' political base. To understand why the nationalist front was able to outlook a more consolidated and unified front with a higher level of party cohesion, under the undoubted leadership charisma of Francisco Franco, which arguably played the most important role in determining their higher chances of success against the republican rivals who lack cohesion, it is helpful to look at how he managed to do these things while also making the rest of the other ambitious generals among the nationalist faction.

The failed rebellion of 1932, in which General Sanjurjo tried to quickly overthrow the government formed under this new republican regime even though at the time it was

[574] Thomas Hugh, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: HarperCollins, 1977): 258.

not a rebellion to toppling down the regime completely, provides a valid comparative case for understanding the events of 1936 in Spain. It is difficult to determine how many officers were on board with Sanjurjo's early insurgency, but some estimates suggest that as few as 5 percent of the army corps of 1932 did not take part in the plot or support it, despite still being hostile to the new regime.[575] Many people still looked to Sanjurjo as the most likely commander of any future military uprising or coup attempt, despite the fact that it had failed owing to political divisiveness and violence not on par with the turmoil-dominated political arena of 1935/36. Given these considerations, it is arguable that Sanjurjo's untimely death has increased the likelihood of failure of this coup attempt, as many international observers have hastily concluded that the renegade generals are in a much-fragmented structure after this loss of the movement's leader.[576] With careful play of his cards, Franco would eventually emerge as a good candidate in whose charisma both the military and political concerns of the opponents of the Popular Front government in Madrid were successful in establishing a much stronger and consolidated front.

Before discussing the political upheavals Franco went through to become the nationalist faction's undisputed leader, it is important to touch on the numerous political assassinations that occurred before and during the early stages of the civil war. These assassinations were instrumental in eliminating many prominent figures who could have obtained a strong position in the upcoming conflict. Indeed, a number of crucial political assassinations had already taken place in the political arena anticipating the military rebellion in June 1936, eliminating some of the most plausible other contenders coming mostly from the military circles. Many attempts were made to destroy the most notable persons from both the leftist and rightist camps, so it is worth to argue that this was not a partisan phenomenon. Although it is hard to predict the exact number of deaths occurred due to this wave of political violence in Spain, scholars such as del Rey (2016) suggested that a minimum of 2,500 people – most of them were the influential intellectuals, politicians, civil servants and military officers – perished with each casualty triggered both sides to further radicalized and making a compromise much less likely by pushing these groups to pursue more vengeance driven actions against each other.[577] For instance,

[575] Stanley G. Payne, *Politics and Military in Modern Spain* (Stanford University Press, 1967).

[576] Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, *Franco and the Spanish Civil War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004): 134.

[577] Fernando del Rey, "The Spanish Second Republic and Political Violence," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (April 2016): 430-435, especially 434.

the assassinations of Castillo and Sotelo are instructive considering they portrayed how such assassinations could be carried out in retaliation for others.

Lieutenant José Castillo served in the Spanish Assault Guards (*Guardias de Asalto*), a special police unit formed under the Second Spanish Republic, who was also a well-known socialist. Castillo was shot dead on July 12, 1936, by right-wing shooters believed to be associated with the Falange Española, the banner party of the supporters of Falangist ideology now more determinant in their struggle against the leftist government they not only approached hastily but even in a more radicalized stance.[578] His assassination was a critical juncture point, as it set off a chain reaction that ultimately led to a rise in political violence in Spain. Leftist groups after this incident became radicalized as well and started committing several reprisal attempts with Calvo Sotelo's case would soon become the most fateful.[579] On July 13, 1936, a group of left-leaning Assault Guards kidnapped José Calvo Sotelo, a major player in the Spanish monarchist movement and a significant figure on the political right, in retribution for Castillo's murder. His assassination infuriated Spain's conservative groups and sparked the military insurrection that would shortly lead to the Spanish Civil War.[580] Indeed, these killings played a significant role in radicalizing both sides, and they would continue to occur in a debatable manner to designate the potential leaders of both sides.

Another important assassination or elimination that got rid of an influential leader for the nationalist side came in November 1936, in the first months of the conflict, when José Antonio, one of the most influential leaders of Falangists was executed following a short kangaroo trial took place in Alicante prison despite the opposition coming even from Spanish anarchists, who considered Antonio as a patriot not rebelling against his own country but only looking for a solution to help its survival.[581] Although by that time Franco already secured his position as the ultimate leader of the nationalist faction, figures such as Antonio could indeed pose a threat brutal regime, yet as the conflict preceded more of such compromising figures would perish and the civil war would become a total war for the both sides with one's victory meant the destruction of the other. Franco would

[578] Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (Harper & Raw, 1977): 205-207.

[579] Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War, the Soviet Union, and Communism* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2004): 105-106.

[580] Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, *Franco and the Spanish Civil War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004): 22.

[581] Harry Browne, *Spain's Civil War*, 2nd Edition (London and New York: Routledge, 1996): 110.

also benefit indirectly from this phenomenon, as the deaths of key figures in the groups supporting the military insurgency would clear the way for him and make it easier for him to emerge even stronger by consolidating more and more men around his leadership. Now that this little but vital contribution has been made, it seems more reasonable to address the political moves taken by Franco and a brief explanation of the acts of some other leaders during this period.

Franco Arrives to Morocco and the Initial Status of Military Uprising

In fact, it is commonly considered that Franco was hesitant to join an open rebellion against the republic he labored hesitantly for years to safeguard from the threat of an even more radicalized soviet-type revolution. But he knew that the steps taken by the Azaña government, and the growing influence the radical leftist forces beginning to have over these decisions, rendered it difficult for officers like himself to cooperate with the republican authority anymore.[582] Although it is hard to determine the exact moment when he decided to actively participate in the plot he was for a long time well aware of, it is possible to accept the claims that the murder of Calvo Setolo was the last straw.[583] Now, in the days leading up to the conflict, he had to find a pretext to get to the Spanish holdings in Africa, where the bulk forces of the potential rebellion were located and the officers there were already looking for a famous general like Franco to lead them against the Popular Front government that they considered illegitimate to rule Spain.[584]

He would eventually succeed in getting himself to the Moroccan outpost, where the control was already seized by the anti-government officers welcomed Franco with a great respect and enthusiasm as his talents and successes especially during the devastating Moroccan conflict were already well-known and recognized. Interestingly, two British pilots would fly him from the Canary Islands to Spanish Morocco on July 19, 1936, in a small aircraft known as "Dragon Rapide".[585] He arrived this center of the unrest just two days after the rebellion started and partially succeeded in occupying almost all colonial

[582] This was a common thought among the many prominent generals and high-ranked officers in the Spanish army. For a good reference that discusses these perspectives see Jan E. Evans, *Miguel de Unamuno's Quest for Faith: A Kierkegaardian Understanding of Unamuno's Struggle to Believe* (WIPF, 2013): 122-126.

[583] Frances Lannon, *The Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Botley: Osprey Publishing, 2002): 26.

[584] Harry Browne, *Spain's Civil War*, 2nd Edition (London and New York: Routledge, 1996): 67-68.

[585] Graham D. Macklin, "Major Hugh Pollard, MI6, and the Spanish Civil War," *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (March 2006): 277-280, especially 277-278.

and remote holdings and some of the mainland targets, especially those located in the northwest Spain, a region recognized for having a more conservative character.

Upon his arrival, Franco found himself tasked with the necessary reorganization of forces under his command, as these units consisted of both the more professional army units like Army of Africa and Spanish Foreign Legion mostly consisted of Moroccan Regulars as well as pro-nationalist militia joined the ranks of the rebels from more Spanish dominated cities such as Ceuta and Melilla.[586] It is possible to argue that the interesting composition of these regions, where a considerable amount of officers had settled down with their families, interestingly were mostly constituted with officer sons of officer fathers and their daughters. As Graham (2005) suggested, the Moroccan colony by the end of 19th century had already transformed into a mostly closed society with more conservative and reactionary groups embodied with these officer groups constituted a substantial part of the colonists there.[587] Considering all these, it is not a surprise that Franco and the Nationalists could succeed even faster here than in their mainland targets.

However, to better understanding how Franco succeeded in establishing a consolidated power base in Morocco in these early stages of the conflict, when they were arguably in their most difficult times with their structure was nothing but fragmented with a victory was far away from seen on the horizon. Therefore, before planning how to set foot in Spanish mainland, Franco was well aware that he also had to join the trust and support of the local Moroccans, whose support was vital in an attempt to secure the nationalist faction's rear as these groups could easily switch their loyalties in exchange of better offers from the republican government.

There is evidence to show that Franco secured the local Moroccans by employing a carrot and stick approach that he learned to implement well during his time in Morocco. His staff is well-versed in Moroccan culture and customs, and they are well-equipped to accommodate the country's tribal affiliations and regional interests rather than the greater national ambitions of tribes to which they belong. Franco took advantage of this fact that Spanish Morocco was home to a diverse array of tribal, ethnic, and religious communities,

[586] Frances Lannon, *The Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Botley: Osprey Publishing, 2002): 27-28.
[587] Helen Graham, *The Spanish Civil War: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press): 8-9.

many of which had deep-seated animosities toward one another.[588] Moreover, he did not hesitate to grant a larger level of autonomy and political rights to the Moroccan leaders and their communities, all the while making sure Spain will not control the region by exploiting regional rivalries among these diverse groups. Simultaneously, he was successful in rallying support for the Nationalist cause by promising them greater autonomy and better treatment.[589]

While doing so, the Nationalists were also successful in building a bridge between their crusade against the "unholy" Republican regime that they succeeded in portraying to the local Moroccans as an enemy of Islam as well.[590] These measures, combined with the intriguing model of respect and fear for Franco due to his earlier career there, ensured a greater level of support for the Nationalist cause and secured their rear from any major attacks while Franco and his troops would eventually take the necessary steps, with a bit of luck, to move towards the mainland Spain where the real challenge was waiting. These strategies proved themselves effective in establishing a foothold for his forces in the area.

Taking these into account, one can speculate that if the Republican government could really succeed in portraying the new regime as one more friendly for the customs and needs of these local population, Franco and the Nationalists would most probably would not be able to have such a secured base for their further operations, hence, seriously threatening their success. Unfortunately for them, throughout the civil war, one of the main propagandas of the Republicans was portraying the Nationalist forces as "Moors", and they even did not hesitate to emphasize on this aspect in some of their most famous songs.[591]

Nevertheless, despite their limited success in Morocco, the military situation of the uprising was looking good for the conspirators generally. Although the military coup

[588] Abel Albet-Mas, "Three Gods, Two Shores, One Space: Religious Justifications for Tolerance and Confrontation between Spain and Colonial Morocco during the Franco Era," *Geopolitics*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (2006): 580-600.

[589] See Tomas García Figueras, Marruecos: La Acción de España en la Norte de África (Madrid: Ediciones Fe, 1944): 290-293, as quoted by Albet-Mas (2006).

[590] Ali Al Tuma, "Moros y Cristianos: Religious Aspects of the Participation of Moroccan Soldiers in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939)," in Bekim Agai, Umar Ryad and Mehdi Sajid (eds.) *Muslims in Interwar Europe: A Transcultural Historical Perspective* (Brill Academic Publishing, 2015): 151-177, especially 151-155.

[591] One of the most well-known Republican slogans, "No Pasaran!" actually has a song in the same name, lyrics of which states directly "The Moors that Franco brought want to enter Madrid – but they will fail!".

attempt occurred almost simultaneously in forty-four of the fifty-five divisions, the Nationalists were unable to secure any significant gains that would have provided them with a base of operations on the Spanish mainland, and the coup was initially unsuccessful in achieving their nationwide objectives. A total of approximately 54,000 troops, including elite units from Morocco, were under rebel control after the initial confrontations, although it was clear that the insurgents only managed to take over about half of the forces on the peninsula.[592] It is also worth noting that, at least initially, the majority of the rebel officers belonged to junior or middle ranks, making it clear that this was not a top-down operation supported by the entire Spanish military.[593]

Franco was one of three of the eleven top regional commanders who took part in the plot.[594] Only six of the twenty-four major generals on active duty and one of the seven top commanders of the Civil Guard also took part, but that number steadily went up as one went down the ranks.[595] This may have surprised the republican government, which was expecting the insurgency to come from higher-ranking officers. These results suggest that, contrary to popular belief, the Spanish Civil War was not an insurgency led by high-ranking officers, at least not at first. However, as will be shown, the conversion of high-ranking military officers to the Nationalist cause was a key factor in the eventual victory of the Nationalist side.

On the other hand, the initial Nationalist successes in the mainland Spain seems rather mostly an expected revelation that went along with the sociopolitical characteristics of the regions they initiated the coup attempt. For instance, they failed drastically to capture any major urban centers that would give them an early upper hand in the conflict such as Barcelona, Madrid or Bilbao, yet they were much more successful in regions including Navarre and Aragon.

[592] Stanley G. Payne and Jesús Palacios, *Franco: A Personal and Political Biography* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2014): 127-129.

[593] Stanley G. Payne and Jesús Palacios, *Franco: A Personal and Political Biography* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2014): 128.

[594] F. Puell de la Villa, "Julio de 1936: ¿Un Ejercito Dividido?" in J. Martínez Reverte (ed.), *Los Militares Españoles en la Segunda Republica* (Madrid, 2012): 77-98.

[595] Stanley G. Payne and Jesús Palacios, *Franco: A Personal and Political Biography* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2014): 128.

Franco Becomes the Generalissimo: Filling the Power Vacuum

At a time when the military uprising, which was not yet a fully formed political movement, was in limbo, Franco was caught in the middle of an internal power struggle that dominated the early stages of the civil war after General José Sanjurjo, the designated leader of the nationalist faction, perished in a suspicious plane crash. Losing Sanjurjo was a major blow to the conspirators, even though he played a negligible role in the plot's planning. This was because of the regard in which he was held by his fellow military officers and the widespread recognition he had through his international ties.[596] Even in his absence, though, there would be several other, not less politically ambitious figures, who would put up a fight or at least consider becoming the new face of the military uprising.

What was the first substantial attempt to fill that power gap was the establishment of a National Defense Council (Junta de Defensa Nacional) on July 23, primarily by General Mola, who is rightfully regarded as the strategical mindset behind the military coup as being one of the most capable strategists of the motivation.[597] It is possible to evaluate this attempt as forming a unified voice among the other key leaders of the Nationalists, with the voice of military was still the most dominant. This was because the case that many of its members were the highest-ranking military officers defected to the insurgency. This institution would be designated to serve as the ultimate decision-making for them. Nevertheless, the ideological fragmentations were still visible, and this fact alone would be crucial in the emergence of different interests, and the necessity of having a unified command under a charismatic leader for the Nationalist faction would become more of a necessity day by day.

Before moving on how Franco emerged as the ultimate leader of this movement, that might be better to take a closer look at some of the most popular members of this junta. The following is a list of the members of National Defense Council and their ideological perspectives, as understanding this first political body of the Nationalist faction can further facilitate understanding of the ideological structure of the movement. Although at

[596] Stanley G. Payne and Jesús Palacios, *Franco: A Personal and Political Biography* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2014): 129.

[597] Antony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Penguin Books, 2006): 324-325.

the beginning there were only 7 members constituting this body, five others including Franco would join them until September 1936, when the council ceased to exist.

1. Divisional General Miguel Cabanellas Ferrer
2. Divisional General Andrés Saliquet Zumeta
3. Brigadier General Miguel Ponte y Manso de Zúñiga
4. Brigadier General Emilio Mola Vidal
5. Brigadier General Fidel Dávila Arrondo
6. General Staff Colonel Federico Montaner Canet
7. General Staff Colonel Fernando Moreno Calderón

Five other members, with their official dates of the participating junta, were:

8. Navy Admiral Francisco Moreno Fernández – 30 July 1936
9. Divisional General Francisco Franco Bahamonde – 4 August 1936
10. Divisional General German Gil y Yuste – 18 August 1936
11. Divisional General Gonzalo Queipo de Llano y Sierra – 19 September 1936
12. Brigadier General Luis Olgaz Yoldi – 19 September 1936

There appear several very interesting implications that this list offers. First and most noticeable, except for Admiral Moreno, the remaining eleven members of the junta was consisted of land-officers, which symbolizes the dramatic turn of the once's Spanish sea empire to a more of a land country by the time the insurgency started. This should come with no surprise as the republican sentiments and tolerance for left-wing politics was more of phenomenon for the army branches of navy and air, where the Nationalist forces lacked a substantial support with the vast majority of these branches would opt to side with Republicans throughout the conflict.[598] This was what would force the Nationalists to rather rely on the foreign help they will get from Hitler's Germany, Mussolini's Italy, and to a lesser extent Salazar's Portugal.

Here, it is important to highlight the fact that the Nationalist movement did not compose of only ethnic Spanish individuals. Although it is a well-known fact that the vast majority of Basque and Catalan officers sided with the Republican side as the Popular Front government was promising more rights for these minority groups contrary to the

[598] Harry Browne, *Spain's Civil War*, 2nd Edition (London and New York: Routledge, 1996): 116-117.

Nationalist vision of "Spain Indivisible", there were a considerable number of officers with distinct ethnic backgrounds served for the insurgents. Especially there were a substantial number of such officers among the ranks of Nationalists coming from the Spanish protectorate in Morocco, with Lieutenant Colonel Mohammed be Mizzian emerges as the most noteworthy of such figures.

The leadership question dominated the discussions between these members of the junta as some of them were quite ambitious in acquiring the leadership of the insurgency. Initially, arguably considering his seniority and experience, General Cabanellas was elected as the head of junta.[599] As a matter of fact, the emergence of General Miguel Cabanellas as the head of this junta is such an interesting phenomenon, considering his well-known ties to the freemasonic movement as well as his being a prudent republican in the initial days of 1931.[600] There were many officers like among the ranks of Spanish army, whom were more or less advocates of the liberal and democrat ideals the republic was promoting yet with time got disillusioned with its ineffectiveness to administer the Spanish nation without dividing it further rather than unifying people. Nevertheless, putting an openly freemasonic figure as the head of the aspired administration was something quite unexpected of Nationalist movement as they would continuously blame the Republican movement and its leaders as the "servants of masons" within a similar anti-Semitic and anti-intelligentsia perspective like those being followed in Germany and Italy simultaneously.

What was even more interesting from the very beginning was the location the junta decided to establish itself in. Although the majority of nationalist troops, at least those with the highest military experience and value, were in Spanish Africa under Franco's command, the junta decided to choose Northern Spain as its center of operations, with Burgos as the main headquarters.[601] At first, it naturally raises the questions why such a decision is being made rather than utilizing the more consolidated and secured Nationalist control in the Spanish Africa as a center of operations. It is possible to put forward two explanations of this fateful decision.

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[599] Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, *Franco and the Spanish Civil War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004): 22.

[600] Stanley G. Payne and Jesús Palacios, *Franco: A Personal and Political Biography* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2014): 130.

[601] O. W. Riegel, "Press, Radio, and the Spanish Civil War," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (January 1937): 131-136, especially 133.

First and seemingly the most appealing one is their aspiration to rule whole Spain, which required them to have a reliable stronghold on the mainland, where turned out to be the Northern regions that provided both socially and militarily the greatest support to the Nationalist cause.[602] Although the initial operations failed to capture any of the main power centers in mainland Spain, by August 1936, the Nationalist were in control of most of the Northern cities including Zaragoza, Burgos, Leon, Pamplona, and La Coruna. Moreover, the Nationalist forces led by General Queipo were able to take Seville, one of the south's most vital population centers, against all odds.[603] When these factors are considered, it becomes clear that this viewpoint is well-grounded, as any ambitious campaign to conquer Spain would have had to construct a unified body of authority in the mainland, rather than one so far as the Chinese Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek would have to do in Taipei.

On the other hand, another and one of a more speculating, perspective suggests that the other top generals of the insurgency, including Mola and Cabanellas, were in fact, trying to prevent overpowering Franco in the absence of Sanjurjo.[604] It is highly likely that they did not want this last-minute participant of their insurgency to take the controls completely. Indeed, by looking at the relatively late involvement of Franco both with the coup attempt and the subsequent junta, it is highly possible that there was a discontent on his reliability among the other high-ranked members of the Nationalist front, who at this stage, simply preferred to establish a loose coalition of generals rather than over-powering one such as Franco that they still did not have the enough trust on.

It is important to note that this suspicious stance against Franco was not that much popular among the soldiers joined the Nationalist movement. Especially among the middle and junior ranked officers Franco was a very popular figurehead, and the common soldiers viewed him as a war hero, whose service in Morocco and later in the brutal suppression of Asturias already made him a very liked commanding officer. Some of these troops and their commanders, with such brutal ones like Juan Yagüe and his African

[602] Stanley G. Payne and Jesús Palacios, *Franco: A Personal and Political Biography* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2014): 125.

[603] Harry Browne, *Spain's Civil War*, 2nd Edition (London and New York: Routledge, 1996): 113; Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, *Franco and the Spanish Civil War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004): 35.

[604] Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution and Revenge* (Harper Perennial, 2006): 164-166; Antony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War 1936-1939* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2006): 325.

troops, would carry out some of the most daring massacres during the civil war, which they did without almost any shown of hesitation with, which later earned them the fame of becoming the legendary faces of the Francoist White terror.[605] In fact, when it comes to this duality of views regarding Franco between the higher-ranking officers and their subordinates, one can easily claim Franco was more or less Denikin in Spain. Just as Denikin, he had more support from his lower officers rather than more ambitious high-ranking ones who viewed him as a rival in the broader chess of power politics.

It is important to note that during the early months of the civil war, before a centralized authority had been established among the insurgents, Franco's vision for Spain's future underwent a dramatic shift. After all, "saving the Republic" and "restoring law and order" were rallying cries at the outset of the rebellion. Although the majority of Nationalist commanders appeared to agree with these terms and pledged to uphold all "valid" social legislation of the Republic, there were notable exceptions like General Mola, whose original political program pledged full respect for the Catholic Church notwithstanding calling for maintaining the separation of church and state.[606] Franco's earliest statements show that he was attempting to portray his insurrection against the Azaña government, rather than the Republican regime as a whole, in an attempt to obtain legitimacy for his activities. In August 1936, for instance, he declared his goals to be things like "Ensuring Spain's remaining a republic, with its flag and regime will be respected and protected while the leftist crime will be punished and replaced with order swiftly."[607] Nonetheless, it would not be long before he and the rest of the Nationalist officers radically altered these premises, fighting to overthrow the regime and install a more authoritarian and centralized one that would eventually seek to restore monarchical elements.

Just as it ensured Franco’s emerging as an even more required figure for the early successes of the insurgency, the initial failures of some of other most probable military officers who could appear as a future leader for the Nationalist movement also made it much easier for him to raise to become the ultimate leader of the insurgents. General

[605] Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-Century Spain* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012): 90.

[606] Stanley G. Payne and Jesús Palacios, *Franco: A Personal and Political Biography* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2014): 134-135.

[607] New York Times (London), 11 August 1936.

Fanjul's failure in first seizing the full control of Madrid, and then his subsequent failure in securing himself until the Nationalist reinforcements would come to save him and his troops trapped in famous Montana Barracks eliminated him from the equation as early as 19 July.[608] After being imprisoned by the Republican government, he had a brief trial prior to his execution. If he could really capture Madrid or at least succeed in holding the strategic Montana Barracks long enough, he might have emerged as a more important war hero in the eyes of other insurgents and conservatives. By failing in this, he lost not only the opportunity to end the war much swifter but also an opportunity to become the future leader of the new Spain.

Similarly, another bright candidate for such a position, General Manuel Goded also failed in capturing one of the most important urban centers of Spain, Barcelona. He shared a similar fate with Fanjul and was executed at the hands of the Republican government. The capture of this city could secure a fast victory for the insurgents as it would ensure the ultimate Nationalist victory in the coming years after being captured.[609] Unfortunate for him though, the Republican sentiments in Barcelona were probably stronger than any other regions as this highly strategic city was central holdout of some of the most radicalized elements of the left-wing groups. Adding these significant names to Sanjurjo's perish, the path to leadership was now more than ever possible for Franco.[610] Nonetheless, he needed to gain an advantage over his other rivals, particularly General Mola and Cabanellas. Understanding how Franco accomplished this in such a short amount of time requires a closer examination of the most glaring qualities and shortcomings of his two most notable adversaries, as well as a quick consideration of the picture of future they had in mind for Spain.

[608] Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, *Franco and the Spanish Civil War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004): 35-36.

[609] Barcelona was the center of Cataluña, the industrial and arguably intelligentsia capital of Spain. At the initial stages of Spanish Civil War, the Republican zone was mostly consisted of central region around Madrid, Basque county and Cataluña. In 1938, following a successful campaign Franco would be able to divide the Republican zone into two and successfully capturing the remaining area in north under the government's control. This would allow the Nationalists to eventually emerge triumph from the conflict, destroying any remaining hopes of democrats and socialists in saving the Republic.

[610] Stanley G. Payne, *The Franco Regime, 1936-1975* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin, 1987): 100-101.

El Director: General Mola

General Mola was without any doubts one of the most likely candidates to taking the leadership of the Nationalist insurgency that he planned very carefully from the very beginning. As a descent of a colonial family, he had an "imperial trauma" that was shaped with the swift loss of Spanish colonial holdings in the Americas, with the loss of his home region Cuba played a crucial role in sharpening his radical views on the necessity of having a strong Spanish state to prevent any such things from happening in the remnants of once's strong empire.

His background and connections within military intelligence allowed him to secure a number of crucial alliances with the most prominent conservative ideologs, whose support was crucial to the success of a military rebellion, unlike Sanjurjo's failed attempt in 1932. To make up for the vagueness of the previous plots, and in the hopes of winning over radical right-wing groups like the Falangists and Carlists without alienating more moderate elements of Spanish society that had become alienated by the radicalism that dominated the left-wing politics of the Popular Front government, he understood the importance of having a clearly stated political objective. To prevent internal strife, Mola's proposed uprising would be led solely by the military and would not seek to restore the monarchy. Instead, it would aim to establish a conservative and authoritarian Republic in which the military would have a veto over policies while remaining outside the domain of civilian politicians and in which the independence of the working class would be limited.[611]

When it comes to the identification of most striking strengths and weaknesses Mola had that could play a role in his prospectively becoming the ultimate leader of the Nationalist camp, it is possible to see his organizational skills clearly provided him a crucial advantage over Cabanellas and even Franco, while his lack of charisma and militarily shortcomings made it less likely for him to lead a broad coalition of conservative elements against the government. Looking at some of the aspects of these important features will illustrate the case why eventually Mola found himself in a situation of going with one of these other two most likely candidates for this post.

[611] Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, *Franco and the Spanish Civil War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004): 26-27.

It is undeniable that Mola's organizational skills played a very important role in the emergence of the insurgency. Although it was a well-known fact that many military officers as well as different members of the conservative circles of Spanish politics, embodied greatly in the Falangist and Carlist movements respectively, there was a great need of a man of his skills who could put forward a cohesive plan through which such a plot could succeed. On this part, his attempts on establishing an effective coordination and communication across different members of the prospective insurgency was crucial in the formation of the Nationalist front.

After making the necessary deals with various influential ideologues of the conservative bloc, Mola promptly made coordinating the military operations, originally envisioned as a swift action to remove the Azaña government without letting the conflict escalate to civil war, his top priority. Although he and the Nationalist insurgency as an initially failed to accomplish this latter goal, his critical plans kept the insurgency together despite their limited successes, which ultimately prevented them from seizing power. By separating the country into military zones, appointing a commander in each zone, and coordinating their actions, it is conceivable to conclude that Mola achieved such a high level of coordination among the various military figures.[612] He was able to prevent the swift failure of their insurgency thanks to his ability to organize and manage the various commanders, and his prompt response to the death of Sanjurjo by establishing a junta in response to this unexpected development also demonstrates his ability to bring together various elements of the military.

Mola was well aware of the importance of propaganda tools, which has recently started to involve more of radio communications to both demoralize the rivals and moralize the supporters.[613] Moreover, Mola maintained regular communication with military officers, keeping them informed and ensuring they were aligned with the overall strategy. This communication was crucial for the success of the uprising and demonstrated Mola's skills in organizing a complex network of individuals with a common goal. Nevertheless, he would make some critical mistakes while utilizing the new abilities brought by these new technologies.

[612] Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War* (Cambridge University Press, 2012): 66-67.

[613] O. W. Riegel, "Press, Radio, and the Spanish Civil War," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (January 1937): 131-136, especially 134.

One may argue that Mola's mistimed call for anti-government militias to rise up in Madrid to support the Nationalist army aiming to conquer the city was his greatest failure in terms of leveraging communication in these early days of the fight. When he claimed that four columns of troops were waiting outside Madrid and that another column of individuals with Nationalist sympathies hiding inside the city would join these troops as soon as they entered the capital, Republicans took this "fifth column" threat, which would be a contribution of the Spanish Civil War and Mola to literature, seriously and acted swiftly.[614] Although there exists several different views on this revelation and the role of Mola in this outcome, it is almost out of doubt that *el Director* made a big mistake in almost giving a blank check to the left-wing groups to targeting any potential enemies of Republic.[615] Especially the working-class elements, consolidated power in the streets of city relatively fast, would respond the calls of Republican government on reporting these possible "inner enemies" in a different way. They actively participated in the leftist reprisal seriously, and mostly "dealt with problem on their own", rather than involving the civilian authorities with the process.[616] Some accounts claim that 2,000 civilians and soldiers, deemed unreliable by Madrid and executed swiftly in an attempt to prevent a coordinated strike against the government, lost their lives due to a single, ill-timed act on the part of Mola.[617]

Mola was a competent military tactician, but he lacked the personal charisma that would have united the various groups supporting the insurgency—from the Carlists and Falangists to more moderate right-wing individuals—and led to a successful political campaign to overthrow the Republican government in Madrid. Mola's inability to consolidate power and establish himself as the undisputed leader of the Nationalist forces was hindered by the fact that he lacked the charisma that is often more effective in rallying diverse groups, motivating them to follow a common cause, and overcoming internal divisions. Even the participation of Carlist *Requetés* happened only because – now perished – Sanjurjo used his personal contacts to make Mola able to achieve an agreement

[614] New York Times, 17 October 1936, page 2.
[615] Dwight L. Bolinger, "Fifth Column Marches On," *American Speech*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (February 1944): 47-49.
[616] Julius Ruiz, *The 'Red Terror' and the Spanish Civil War: Revolutionary Violence in Madrid* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015): 45.
[617] Helen Graham, *The Spanish Republic at War, 1936-1939* (Cambridge University Press, 2002): 189-191.

with their leader Manuel Fal Conde.[618] From this vantage point, he was at a significant disadvantage compared to Franco, who was widely regarded as a war hero and already famous among the various elements supporting the insurgency due to his participation in the brutal suppression of the Asturias protests, making him a crusader king in the eyes of Carlist and a good candidate to the Falangists who were looking for a strong and authoritarian figurehead to rule. Unfortunately for Mola, although being an outstanding strategist, he was severely lacking in these crucial areas that could have made him the candidate everyone was seeking for.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, Mola's initial lack of international support demanded the Nationalists finding a more capable leader that would be able to secure new ideological partners to provide the essential backing. Although respected by their fellow Fascist partners, what Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy were looking for was a strong and authoritarian figure with enough support from these various elements within the Nationalist camp to make their investment feasible. Preston (1994) would stress the fact that practically all the other contenders, including Mola, lacked this necessary foreign backing, stating that this was a key asset that would prove itself a critical criterion for Franco's eventually becoming the leader of the Nationalist front.[619]

To sum up, while Mola's strategic genius in the early stages of preparation for the upcoming military insurgency must be acknowledged, so too must his serious shortcoming as a charismatic leader who could unify diverse social and political elements against the fragmented Republican government in Madrid and his inability to gain the enough support from ordinary Spaniards. Moreover, he was still quite young, being just 48 years old when the rebellion began, whereas Cabanellas was 64, and he was comparatively inexperienced compared to Franco, although being senior to him in age. Before his death in another plane crash in June 1937, he was forced to acknowledge Franco's ascendance to the position of Nationalist front leader and to continue to serve under him for a time.[620] Nonetheless, Franco still gave him a great deal of respect because, according to Payne (2012), he was the only one who could challenge Franco's

[618] Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution and Revenge* (Harper Perennial, 2006): 121-122.

[619] Paul Preston, "General Franco as Military Leader," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 4 (1994): 21-41, especially 26-28.

[620] Frances Lannon, *The Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Botley: Osprey Publishing, 2002): 45.

authority.[621] Some have speculated that Franco was responsible for his death, but there is little proof to back up such claims.[622] Finally, before delving into the events of July–September 1936 that cemented Franco's position as the Nationalist front's undisputed leader, we should first address the same concerns with respect to Cabanellas.

The "Freemason" General: Miguel Cabanellas

Miguel Cabanellas was a fascinating figure in the Nationalist leadership due to his senior status and complicated political history. Furthermore, given his brief presidency of the Burgos-based National Defense Junta, he was one of the most obvious candidates to become the insurgency's long-term head. However, he would eventually lose the power games and would serve under Franco's command until his eventual passing away in May 1938.

One of Cabanellas's greatest strengths was the reputation he earned throughout his long term of duty in the Spanish army, as well as the many contacts he made during that time. Most of the higher-ranking officers had either fought alongside him or risen through the ranks under his direction, so they had a great deal of respect for him. However, this was most certainly not the case when it came to the political sphere, given his broad lack of popular appeal and the minimal ideological commitments he had for the Nationalist cause, particularly considering his well-known affiliations to the freemasons. His late age and deteriorating health made it even less probable that he would become the movement's final leader, as it was doubtful that he would be able to maintain leadership throughout a fight that would definitely demand great levels of physical and mental stamina. Worse yet, like Mola, he was more of a soldier than a politician, but his political character was even more nuanced than that of the great strategist of the Nationalist forces.

Cabanellas was a cavalry officer who participated in the Rif Wars of 1921-1926, where he played a crucial role in the establishment of African Regulars consisting primarily of Moroccans at the service of Spanish army. His military service opened him the way to acquire more power, yet, due to his liberal ideas and support for the establishment of a Spanish Republic, he was mostly disregarded by conservatives and reactionaries who wanted rather a reformation within the existing monarchial system.

[621] Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War* (Cambridge University Press, 2012): 190-191.

[622] For a detailed explanation of such claims and why they lack any credibility, see Gabriel Jackson, *The Spanish Republic and the Civil War*, *1931-39* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press).

Nevertheless, like many of his compatriots, he also slowly began disillusioned with the new regime, especially as the left-wing elements started to dominate the decisions of such governments and it became harder to ensure the stability and social peace of the country.

However, due to his early actions and loyalty to the republican regime, embodied with his siding with the government against Sanjurjo's fooled coup attempt in 1932, he was able to fool the Popular Front government, who displaced most of the prospective leaders of coup including Franco and Mola, but kept him in charge of the 5th Division located in Zaragoza, a strategically important city that connects northern regions of Spain with Cataluña.[623] His declaration to the Zaragoza proletariat was indeed quite persuasive as he openly declared "Have no suspicion, have no fear, I have promised in the past, and still do on my honor that the military is bound to the Fatherland and the Republic, and that all the legitimate rights you have won will be maintained and even improved".[624] However, as the political atmosphere became further uncertain, government decided to ensure the loyalty of Cabanellas, and with that intention sent a close friend of him, General Núñez de Prado, who was shot by him instead.[625] It is possible to suggest that this sudden change of sides ensured the downfall of republic in Aragon, where the trade unionists loyal to the government were not handled any significant weapons by the civilian authorities, causing their getting massacred at the hands of marching Nationalist forces. Considering these, it is possible to speculate that his decision to side with Nationalist was a major blow for the government, as due to his seniority and military experience, he was a figure that the government would need – and most probably miscalculated to have – against a military uprising.

His contribution to the uprising undoubtedly helped propel the Nationalist movement forward. However, his convoluted political background and well-known ties to the freemasons meant he was never going to be a consensus candidate among Nationalists.

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[623] Jesús Narciso Núñez Calvo, "La Comandancia de la Guardia Civil de Cádiz en la Guerra Civil de España (1936-1939)," UNED Departamento de Historia Contemporánea Facultad de Geografía e Historia, PhD Thesis (2015): 213.

[624] Emilio Colas Leguía and Antonio Pérez Ramírez, *La Gesta Heroica de España – El Movimiento Patriótico en Aragón* (Zaragoza: Editorial Heraldo de Aragón, 1936): 18-19, as quoted by Calvo (2015).

[625] Antony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War 1936-1939* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2006): 245. Although Beevor claims it was Cabanellas who ordered the execution of Núñez, an alternative explanation of the events happening by Casanova (2010) suggest that it was rather the swift response of another Nationalist general, Álvarez Arenas, who ordered the murder of Núñez. See Julián Casanova, *The Spanish Republic and Civil War*, trs. Martin Douch, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010): 155-156.

He was more of a unifying figure for the officers, who were able to form a more cohesive team quickly and effectively in the face of the emerging insurrection thanks to his leadership. Their professionalism would be crucial to their early victories over the Republicans, who have more convoluted relationships among themselves.[626] This lends credence to the argument that he was merely a caretaker leader until a more permanent replacement could be chosen. This would be Franco, and Cabanellas would be his main rival. He would make a prognostic statement that turned out to be accurate: if Franco was given the leadership of the movement, he would not be willing to step aside even after the war and would rule Spain for as long as he could.[627] Indeed, Franco would not allow any opposition to his central rule to form even after the war, and he was able to rule relatively stable until his death in November 1975.

3.3 The Party Cohesion within the Nationalist Faction

One of the greatest strengths of the insurging military officers during the Spanish Civil War was their success in achieving a more consolidated structure against their Republican counterparts. Many prominent scholars including Thomas (1977), Preston (2006), Payne (2011), and Beevor (2006) would take a note of this clear advantage the rebels had over the more fragmented government forces and would argue through this clear advantage their faction would eventually emerge triumphant from the devastating civil war.[628] Although it is possible to suggest these authors considered this factor sometimes in a different degree of importance among each other, still there was a visible consensus among them that it was one of the most essential reasons behind how the Spanish Civil War concluded.

While exploring how this outcome occurred, two important factors emerge in understanding this phenomenon. These appear to be the political compromise achieved between different ideological factions constituted the Nationalist faction, most notable Carlists and Falangists, and Franco's charismatic leadership that made it possible for the

[626] E. R. Hooton, *Spain in Arms: A Military History of the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Philadelphia: Casemate Publishers, 2019): 101.

[627] Luis Fernando Crespo Montes, "España, 1 de Octubre de 1936," *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, No. 102 (October/December 1998): 231-258, especially 258.

[628] Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (Harper & Raw, 1977); Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution and Revenge* (Harper Perennial, 2006); Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War, the Soviet Union, and Communism* (Yale University Press, 2011); Antony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Penguin Books, 2006).

insurgents – both soldiers and civilians who participated and supported the movement – to recruit more supporters as well as have a unified political vision for the future much clearer in comparison to the Republican government. Considering these, an in-depth analysis for these two factors emerges a necessity to better understand the path through which this unity was achieved.

3.3.1 Understanding the Political Compromise

Although there were several different ideological groups that supported the Nationalist movement and the military insurgency either directly or indirectly, among them the most notable ones with the highest popular appeal and support were the Carlists, CEDA, and Falangists. Some of the most striking features of them were discussed in more detail in the previous sections; however, here a specific attention will be made on the factors that contributed their reaching a functioning compromise among each other that allowed them to constitute a consolidated political structure that played a crucial role in the Nationalist faction's ability to achieve the unity that allowed them to emerge victorious from the civil war. It is preferable to provide a brief description of such dynamics before addressing each of these features in greater detail.

As the Spanish Civil War progressed, it became clear that despite the divergent political goals of the various groups involved, they were able to work together in order to defeat the common enemy—the Republican government and the leftist elements supporting it—instead of engaging in destructive competition with one another. This emphasis on the portrayal of Republican regime with the leftist groups supporting it as the main enemies of the Spanish society would prove to be an essential point through which they could cooperate easier. Moreover, considering how similar their views of a post-Civil War Spain were, it is tempting to speculate that this was indeed a real possibility. Though they would have significant differences in opinion on what is best for Spain's future, they would all agree on the need for a unified government under a strong figurehead, in this case Franco, to restore order and discipline to the Spanish political life, which they once again blamed the leftist groups for destroying. On the other hand, the many groups on the Spanish left would not be able to come to the same agreement, what with the vast differences between the political aims of Anarchists, Communists, and

Democrats. To the government's dismay, the Nationalists would be in a better position to maintain such a unified front in terms of their political goals.

Since the Republican regime was seen as the common enemy, it is reasonable to assume that the more pragmatic and incrementalistic nature of the ideological groups backing the Nationalist faction made it easier for them to focus on bringing down the government rather than pursuing other goals. The failures of previous governments, especially those that emerged with leftist groups at their centers, radicalized various conservative and right-wing groups to gather around this pragmatic approach on eliminating the Republican regime as soon as possible, leading to a consolidation of anti-Republican groups over the years. Taking these into account, it is reasonable to conclude that the various Nationalist factions prioritized winning the war and defeating the Republicans over their ideological disagreements, exemplifying a pragmatist attitude. It was because of this realization that the Nationalists realized that a fractured front would be less effective against their common enemy and that they needed to work together if they wanted to win. They saw the value in working together and putting aside their differences, so they were amenable to compromise.

Similarly, the harsher and more effective tactics used to suppress internal dissent appear to be an important aspect of explaining this phenomenon. As the backbone of the Nationalist movement was no matter what units of the Spanish army decided to rebel against the Republican government, terror tactics used against their opponents not only targeted Republicans or leftists alike, but also civilians supporting their cause. The Nationalist leadership did not hesitate to take immediate action if any of these factions threatened their faction's political unity, and they took a hard position against any internal dissent or disagreement, repressing any possible challenges to the Nationalist cause's unity. This created a situation in which groups were forced to collaborate and compromise rather than risk weakening the overall war effort.

3.3.2 The Shared Goals: Unity Against the Republican Government

Looking at the common ground these political groups shared on the need to restore a stronger social order based on traditional values that would be enhanced with the Catholic Church in the creation of a new Spaniard identity that would eliminate any further segregation is one way to better understand how their ideological goals diverged when it

came to their shared hatred of the Republican regime. With this in mind, examining how Carlists, Falangists, and more moderate conservatives embodied around CEDA's political center viewed the phenomenon of creating an identity that would empower the traditional values significantly is crucial to understanding how a consensus could be achieved among them.

For instance, Falangist perspective believed it was the degeneration of constant flow of economically less advantaged workers arrived in newly emerging industrial centers in Spain, such as Barcelona and to a certain extent, Madrid, that played an essential role in allowing the "socialist plague" to devastate the Spanish society by alienating it further to the traditional values that once was the backbone of the Spanish identity.[629] Because of this degeneration, the Falangists were keen on the reintroduction of traditional values to these "corrupted" industrial towns, one that they put the blame on the ineffective politics of the Republican regime in allowing to happen in the first place. They would go as far as perceiving the major cities that would not side with the insurgent troops as the centers of anti-clericalism, anti-militarism and other "sinful" elements that should be eradicated from the future Spain completely.[630]

From this point of view, the actions of those once-"honest peasants" and now-workers amounted to nothing more than a "modern betrayal" that not only worsened their mental circumstances but also posed a serious threat to the future of formal education, thus the coming generations.[631] It is easy to infer that Falangists, like Carlists and other conservative right-wing factions as we will show, saw the republic's brief five-year run as exacerbating the socioeconomic catastrophe. Realizing this, one can speculate that they became even more radicalized in their actions because they were convinced that the window of opportunity was small, and that immediate action was required to save Spain. The elections held demonstrated that their largest social base was in the relatively less industrialized traditional towns and regions of Spain, but they would not be able to waste the time or resources to sit back and watch while this "social plague" ravaged these areas as well.

[629] J. L. Arrese, *La Revolución Social del Nacional-Sindicalismo* (Madrid: Ediciones del Movimiento, 1959): 167-168.

[630] Olivia Muoz-Rojas, "Falangist Visions of a Neo-Imperial Madrid," *Journal of War & Culture Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (2009): 335-352, especially 336.

[631] G. Ureña, *Arquitectura y Urbanística civil y militar en el Periodo de la Autarquía (1936–1945): Análisis, cronología y textos* (Madrid: Istmo, 1979): 268-269.

The most influential Falangists held even more extreme views on how to address the underlying economic and social issues. For instance, Jose Primo de Rivera, the well-known ideolog of the Falangist movement and son of the dictator Miguel Primo de Rivera, would offer an explanation for how this occurrence arose in the first place. He would propose an explanation that placed emphasis on purported connections between this "modern betrayal" and unfinished business from after the Reconquista, when former Moors and non-Christians were not expelled completely from unified Spain and instead went into hiding, slowly corrupting the Spanish population from within.[632] There is little to distinguish this argument from the anti-Semitic ones advanced in Nazi publications, such as the idea that "Germany was corrupted from inside" by these "alien social elements."

Falangists were not the only ones worried about Spain's future; Carlist ideologs were constantly raising similar concerns, though they blamed the Spanish people for abandoning the monarchy that could have prevented these social problems from corrupting the country. As a result of the long Carlists wars that erupted and devastated the Spanish political system over several decades, this group of people became even more radical in their commitment to actively fighting to restore such a traditional feature to the Spanish society. There was no denying the power of these factions in the north of Spain, particularly in the regions of Navarre and Aragon, where the belief in the necessity of a strong monarchy to save Spain ran deep through generations of the population. However, it is worth to mention that sometimes the nature of such a struggle would evolve and become more of a Basque national campaign for further political rights for this ethnic minority group; while those with a more religious perspective would still persist in pursuing a struggle aiming to transform the Spanish political realm as a whole.[633] As a result, when the Spanish Civil War broke out, members of families who shared these ideals—sometimes for three generations—rushed to aid the insurgent troops.[634] They

[632] M. Primo de Rivera (ed.), *Papales Póstumos de José Antonio* (Barcelona: Plaza & Janes Editores, 1996): 160-162. Not his book, but a book about his works, right?

[633] M. K. Flynn (ed.), *Ideology, Mobilization, and the Nation: The Rise of Irish, Basque and Carlist Nationalist Movements in Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000): 97-98.

[634] Martin Blinkhorn, *Carlism and Crisis in Spain 1931-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 258-260.

hoped that this would be the first step in ridding Spain of the Republican plague, which no one should have allowed to emerge.

It is important to note that, taking all these long bitter historical background of their ideological formation into account, the Carlists were the ones perceived the Spanish Civil War as a glorious crusade against the "anti-Christ" Republic, against whom they simply believed in conducting a modern crusade, once again to save the Spanish people from heretics – albeit from one modern expression of it this time.[635] This religious fanaticism, which pursued scholars alike Blinkhorn (2008) to simply conceptualize the Spanish Civil War as the Fourth and final Carlist War, also made them the one faction in the Nationalist front that provided the bridge necessary for the consolidation through the inclusive hands of Catholic Church towards the Spanish conservatives. Through this arguable cement, the Spanish opposition against the Republican regime could enjoy a relatively peaceful coexistence among each other, which was an interesting outcome considering their hatred towards being in such a status with any other faction or group that they would simply consider either so liberal or so constructive to the Spanish identity.

Some scholars, like Payne (1962), would go as far as to explain the nature of this relationship between them and Falangists in particular as one that represents a great deal of benevolence, as contrary to initial predictions, the Carlists were getting along relatively well with their brothers-at-arms.[636] A number of notable Carlists made it easy to demonstrate the value of friendship and cooperation amongst different communities through their own words. For instance, Carlist leaders Fal Conde and Zamanillo spent a lot of time meeting with prominent Falangist ideologs to ensure there was open cooperation between the Carlist movement and other branches that made up the public face of the Nationalist movement.[637] Time would show, however, that their alliance would remain tenuous, with neither side willing to make major concessions or sacrifices in pursuit of their respective long-term political goals, and that their cooperation would be limited to the continuation of their common war against Republicans. While the Republicans had put off forming a unified power through such a compromise for the

[635] Martin Blinkhorn, *Carlism and Crisis in Spain 1931-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 261.
[636] Stanley G. Payne, *Falange: A History of Spanish Fascism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962): 121-122.
[637] Martin Blinkhorn, *Carlism and Crisis in Spain 1931-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 266.

duration of the conflict, they had begun to occasionally clash with each other rather than fight with the approaching nationalist troops, so for the time being, they were working in a much better shape regarding their cooperation.

When it comes to the opponents of the Republican government who supported more legalist groups, or political parties, prior to the start of the Spanish Civil War, CEDA, or the Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Rights' (Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas), emerges as one of the most influential and largest groups when the conflict began. At the heart of the party's platform was the defense of traditional values, and the party saw itself as a defensive organization that sought to defend Christian civilization's ideals from the corrupt and "crazy leftists" who dominated the political scene at the time.[638] It has always been obvious that the leaders of this political group never intended for the republican regime to last for very long. José Mara Gil-Robles y Quiones, their leader, would instead argue that ""Democracy is not an objective but a means to achieve the conquest of the new state."[639] In due time, either parliament will capitulate to them, or they would do away with it altogether. Given these facts, it is not surprising that CEDA followers were among the first to hurry to help the insurgent troops rebel against the Popular Front administration. From this vantage point, the outbreak of civil war was obviously seen as the signal they had been waiting for to finally topple the Republican regime.

Especially in Northern Spain, where the Carlists and Falangists also enjoyed a relatively large support base, CEDA received a great deal of backing. Under their wing, conservative groupings were able to win 46.48 percent of the vote (in national level) in the pivotal elections of February 1936 that cleared the ground for the social support seemed necessary for the impending military intervention.[640] To what extent and when the party abandoned its legalist politics for its current open endorsement of political violence and rising threats against the Republican administration is unclear. Still, the fact that CEDA did not make the significant electoral gains necessary for it to form government between 1933 and 1936 may help explain why its right-wing supporters would turn away from it and instead rally around the aggressively conservative and

[638] Mary Vincent, *Catholicism in the Second Spanish Republic* (Clarendon Press, 1996): 202.
[639] Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution and Revenge* (Harper Perennial, 2006): 64.
[640] Stanley G. Payne, *The Franco Regime, 1936-1975* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2011): 45-46.

monarchial leader José Calvo Sotelo.[641] Now as the final dynamite was exploited in his assassination by the leftist elements in the security forces, returning to power through political and more legalist means seemed impossible, CEDA wasted no time turning to more violent means in overthrowing the Popular Front government led by the archenemy of Spanish conservatives, Manuel Azaña.

It is worth to mention that the relative success of CEDA in recruiting more members from the clergy groups as well as the more religious aspects of the Spanish society. Especially in the regions with significant Catholic strongholds, CEDA was able to draw much of its strength from the network of Catholic groups that were still extremely influential because to Gil Robles's leadership. This was especially true of the CNCA (National Catholic-Agrarian Confederation). The fact that it was so successful at its inception, by 1932, boasting over 700,000 members, was a reflection of the failure of conservative Republicans to incorporate Spanish Catholics into the fabric of the Republic.[642] Considering this, one can easily argue that the CEDA constituted the social politics necessary for the success of military insurgency in recruiting more members from such organizations with close ties to the Catholic Church. In addition to the more ideological groups such as Carlists and Falangists, CEDA provided an opportunity for them to recruit more individuals from the central conservatives, who radicalized against the Republic and democratic institutions throughout the years dominated with political turmoil preceding the eventual coup attempt took place in 1936.

Taking all of this into account, it is clear that these organizations shared a deep-seated animosity toward the Republican institutions they viewed as agents of social corruption in Spain and sought to bring about their overthrow. Whether one favors a monarchist ideal, as the Carlists did, or an authoritarian future for Spain, as the Falangists did, they can all agree that the current set of democratic institutions must go. Furthermore, even more moderate conservative groups who preferred to be within the legalist branch grew disillusioned with the Republican governments' inability to effectively address political inefficiencies and fragmentation, at least in the individual supporter level. It became more likely and acceptable for them to go through a more radical path when they realized the

[641] Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution and Revenge* (Harper Perennial, 2006): 87-90.

[642] Martin Blikhorn, *Democracy and Civil War in Spain, 1931-1939* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988): 10.

political violence had begun targeting their benevolent leaders and was keeping them from the more democratic path towards seizing power. Arguably, as a respond to their call, the bloody intervention executed by the ambitious military officers who had planned the plot became a reality and the Spanish Civil War eventually started with such a polarized setting.

Power-Sharing and Arrangements and Division of Responsibilities

Another important aspect of the Nationalist supporters' relatively stronger position in maintaining a more effective faction unity is how they shared power among themselves and assigned different responsibilities to different groups, resulting in a more effective political strategy necessary for their long-term success against the Republican government and its supporters. What needs special focus here is figuring out how these Nationalist groups established structures of shared authority and responsibility-taking to keep the inner-peace and work together efficiently. This was a crucial part of their political settlement because it ensured that all parties involved in the war effort could have a voice in decisions that affected them without feeling excluded.

The political arena of the movement was dependent on the power-sharing agreements these parties achieved among themselves and the division of tasks they shared accordingly, while the Spanish military handled the operational goals and military campaigns. However, in the early stages of the conflict, before the frontlines settled largely and the advances could only be made through long planning, some of these groups, especially the ones with a more apparent militancy, like it was the case for Carlists, also provided a considerable support in military operations of the insurgents. One could also argue that these organizations also played a prominent role in organizing the militia forces that unleashed the White Terror behind Nationalist lines, systematically wiping out and suppressing any potential opposition and any remaining loyalists to the Republican government. Knowing how these events transpired in terms of the power-sharing agreements such groupings achieved with each other is crucial in light of the necessity of such actions in sustaining a more consolidated and steady efficiency for the Nationalist faction.

Since nearly all these groups saw the Catholic Church as an institution that should be reestablished with a more proactive stance in overseeing these power relations in post-Civil War Spain, one could argue that the Church played the most crucial role in

maintaining such power arrangements. Obviously, the Catholic Church itself was deeply entangled in the political chess game taking place behind the scenes, so this was not a pattern that was developed by those groups alone. In fact, the involvement of Catholic Church in the conflict, therefore, was arguably one of the most important products of the long-lasting instability in the Spanish politics, which have always put the institutions of Vatican at the center of the debates.

The Catholic Church's longstanding antipathy toward the socialist principles embodied by the Republican regime lent itself naturally to the conservative movement, which saw in the Catholic Church a guarantor of the traditional values it sought to revive in Spain along with its former glory.[643] As a result, conservatives in Spain quickly began to see their fight as analogous to the Crusades of the Middle Ages. As Ealham and Richards (2005) argued, it was theology that provided a theoretical foundation for symbols that bolstered the conservative Catholic critique of "atheistic," "carnivalesque," liberalism and that blended with the Nationalist narrative of the war as "crusade," envisioning the years of the Republic as another misery that needs to be concluded as soon as possible.[644] Some, like Estelrich (1937), claimed that around 16,750 priests and 80 percent of the whole clergy were perished from Spain in these immediate months as a result of the mass murders and coordinated attacks committed by the Republican authorities against the main cement of Spanish society, the Church.[645] Narratives based on such estimates would be used as the basis for arguments by nationalist propaganda to provide legitimacy for harsh reprisals.

Within such a framework, the representatives of Catholic Church would serve actively in the Nationalist faction, and their services were never limited to the morality support for the fighting troops.[646] Especially as a result of the Republican and leftist attacks on the clergy, they became even further radicalized, and did not hesitate in actively mobilizing, mostly rural, population to take their arms and join their Christian brothers against the “atheist leftists,” and rebel against the Republican authorities behind the

[643] Michael Alpert, *A New International History of the Spanish Civil* War, 2nd Edition (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004): 126.

[644] Chris Ealham and Michael Richards (eds.), *The Splintering of Spain: Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005): 197-198.

[645] J. Estelrich, *La Persecución Religiese en Espagne* (Paris: Les Petits, 1937): 75-76, as quoted by Ealham and Richards (eds.) (2005).

[646] Chris Ealham and Michael Richards (eds.), *The Splintering of Spain: Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005): 98-99.

frontlines in the government-controlled zones.[647] But more importantly, and for the purposes for this section, it is possible to suggest that they acted as the envoys and compromisers between these strongest groups supporting the Nationalist faction. Before starting in depth on how these groups made such compromises on how to divide their resources and manpower in further reinforcing the sociopolitical front of their support towards the Nationalist forces clashing with the pro-government forces, acknowledging this perspective appears vital. On such a juncture point, these various pro-Nationalist groups could find a further common ground and were able to make the necessary deals among them to further consolidate their campaign against the Republicans.

Managing the Nationalist area was one of the most obvious instances where a compromise of this sort could be put into practice. Some of the regions where insurgent troops took power relatively easily were known for their support of conservative groups and the prevalence of firm believers in right-wing ideologies like Carlism and Fascism, as mentioned above. To better understand how it was the case, and what effects it had over the division of administrative responsibilities among such groups, it is better to go through an analyzed review of the status concerning the sociopolitical basis of the Nationalist zones of control in the initial months of the conflict.

By November 1936, it appeared like the front lines had solidified, and any additional advances would need a well-planned and organized campaign. Taking this into account, it might be used as a time when the social support for the contending groups is at its peak. Further, Franco had already convinced the majority of the other Nationalist leaders to accept his position as the Caudillo of the Nationalist faction, so by that time, there was essentially no internal strife among the insurgents and power was being consolidated at the top. With these factors in mind, it is conceivable to propose an analysis based on the state of affairs at this specific moment of the conflict, which could help us better understand how the administrative burden is shared among different groups.

From the very beginning of the rebellion, it was clear that the majority of Northern Spain, traditionally considered the bastion of Spanish conservatism, came under Nationalist control. Throughout Spain's history, the regions of Navarre, Alava, and Biscay have been recognized as bastions of Carlist loyalty. The strong presence of the Carlist

[647] Juan J. Linz, "Church and State in Spain from the Civil War to the Return of Democracy," *Daedelus*, Vol. 120, No. 3 (Summer 1991): 159-178, especially 160-163.

supporters in these areas was an undeniable revival for the insurgents, as they would provide both the necessary civilian support to establish an early base of the operations in Burgos for the Nationalist troops and the manpower required to fill the ranks of insurgent armies that would become a necessity day by day. Using Navarre as a case study to further understand how these developments happened for instance, appears to provide a good opportunity to better comprehend such mechanisms.

Focusing on the strength of Carlist movement in Navarre region constituted the backbone of the explanations regarding how the insurgent troops were that much able to establish their firm control on the region in a relatively speed in comparison to other regions. Lawrence (2017) would go as far as conceptualizing this region as "the most Spaniardized region" on the blink of the Civil War, thus a successful case how the civilian – military cooperation was effective in the Nationalist success in establishing a firm control in the region.[648] Indeed, the role of civilian cooperation with the rebellious troops was quite exceptional in comparison to the many other regions during the initial moments of the Spanish Civil War.[649] Here, almost without any real opposition, the insurgent troops led by General Mola seized the control of the region and utilized the Carlist elements in the maintaining social order as paramilitary forces rather than being having to rely on their already scare manpower on campaigns elsewhere.

It was also conceivable to argue for the existence of such a dynamic in other sections of Spain that came under the firm control of Nationalist soldiers rather quickly, albeit at a much weaker strength compared to the situation in and around Navarre. In this process, the civilian authorities that decided to collaborate with the insurgents constitutes an interesting phenomenon that facilitates our understanding of how such matters were undertaken behind the consolidated frontlines of the conflict.

The Falangist support was crucial for the Nationalists, especially in terms of strong internal and international networks. They would support General Mola's earlier preparations for the plot in considerable ways by providing him the potential other military officers that can participate in the insurgency, yet they remained mostly cautious of these plans by not taking them serious enough and hesitated to provide a direct support

[648] Mark Lawrence, *The Spanish Civil Wars: A Comparative History of the First Carlist War and the Conflict of the 1930s* (London & New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017): 53-54.

[649] Mari José Ruiz Vilas and Juan Carlos Berrio Zaratiegui, *Navarra 1936: de la Esperanza al Terror* (Altaffaylla, 2003).

for the coup attempt.[650] Nevertheless, after the plan was initiated a considerable number of the Falangist civilians openly collaborated with the Nationalist troops trying to establish a consolidated control over these zones they were able to capture in a relative ease. Among these was Manuel Hedilla, who succeeded José Antonio Primo de Rivera as leader of the Falange Española after Rivera's death in November 1936, collaborated closely with Nationalist forces and was responsible for the administration of the Falangist movement in these zones, who would also become an early rival for Franco in the post-Civil War Spain due to his relative strength backed with the political power the Falangists had.

Similarly, José Luis Arrese, the Movement's Secretary-General, played a crucial role in coordinating with Nationalist military authorities by providing them with the powerful propaganda methods they were familiar in using throughout the politically instable years that brought Spain to the brink of this Civil War. Although he, like Hedilla, occasionally found himself against Franco and was put considerably away from the power, the social policies he developed along with the national syndicalism for which he is often rightly credited would provide a considerable support in the southern Spanish regions and cities, such as Malaga, where the Republican sentiments were stronger, but the Nationalist social programs would prove them effective in recruiting further support for the anti-Republican cause.[651]

It must be emphasized that the Falangists were, without a shadow of a doubt, the most active political group contributing to the war effort of the Nationalist faction. While the leadership of this far-right ideology provided the necessary tools regarding the major propaganda campaigns in the initial stages of the conflict targeting the Republican government, their flexible and proactive stance in the political realm made it possible for them to recruit a considerable number of potential civilians supporting the Nationalist cause in any means possible. Since the moderate right had never built up a mystique strong enough to keep a civil war going, many former voters of parties like CEDA were eager to join the ranks of more radical right-wing groups, which were providing them with an indoctrination suitable for maintaining a civil war against the demonized left-

[650] Stanley G. Payne, *The Collapse of the Spanish Republic, 1933-1936: Origins of the Civil War* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2006): 313-314.

[651] Philip Rees, *Biographical Dictionary of the Extreme Right Since 1890* (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990): 13-14.

wing groups that had rushed to support the Republican government.[652] In such a climate, both the Carlists and the Falangists appeared to be viable options for satisfying such a demand. However, the Carlists' rigid commitment to restoring the monarchy made them an unattractive choice for the middle-class conservatives and reactionaries who found the umbrella Falangism was providing to be more appealing.[653]

Many of these middle-class conservatives joined the ranks of most essential Falangists supporters, and their exponent numbers were mostly utilized by the insurgent generals as a mean of filling the necessary civilian cadres to serve them in their zones of control. An Aragonese newspaper would report that, by late July 1936, more than two thousand Falange militiamen gathered to volunteer in providing support for the insurgent army columns in the first twenty-four hours followed the occupation of Zaragoza.[654] Yet, they would provide arguably the most direct support for the Nationalist forces in their arguable strongholds in Valladolid and Seville. They rushed for the establishment of militias in these regions and actively pursued a political violence targeting the dissidents against the Nationalist rule in these regions, with they faced with a considerable resistance especially in Seville as the Republican sentiments there were still strong, and the seizure of city only happened against all odds arguably due to military tactics implemented by General Queipo. Similarly, they would also have a considerable activity in Pamplona and Oviedo, where pro-Falangist newspapers pursued a propaganda campaign targeting lower classes in an attempt to win their support for the Nationalists on the basis of a return to the traditionally glorified social policies embodied with their leadership such as it was the case for José Luis Arrese.[655]

Considering these, one can easily argue that the main responsibility of Carlist forces were forming the most needed armed columns necessary at the beginning of the conflict, rushing to aid the struggling Spanish army in pursuing further operations against the Republican zone. On the other hand, the propaganda and civilian authorities aspect of the Nationalist front was mostly taken care by the Falangists, whose ideological premises

[652] Stanley G. Payne, *Falange: A History of Spanish Fascism*, 2nd Edition (California: Stanford University Press, 1962): 120-122.

[653] As quoted by Payne (1962): 21, Sandro Volta, *Spagna a Ferro e Fuoco* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1937): 57-58.

[654] See *El Heraldo de Aragón*, 25 July 1936.

[655] Stanley G. Payne, *Falange: A History of Spanish Fascism*, 2nd Edition (California: Stanford University Press, 1962): 125-126.

attracted a considerable number of the relatively more moderate right-wing individuals to their ranks. Moreover, as the Republic targeted the clergy directly from the beginning of the conflict, without any surprises the Spanish Catholic Church further acted as a negotiator for the effective cooperation between these groups was still the case, and they acted as a social glue that was necessary for the Nationalist movement against the government forces.

Still, it is worth to mention that the Spanish army, or the insurgent Nationalist generals in other words, were the ultimate authority in dealing and addressing any disputes emerging regarding this distribution of arbitrary power and responsibilities. No matter what, the army still acted like a checking mechanism for the cooperation and power-share between these groups, ensuring no one empowered the most in the disadvantage of the central army command. It was on this basis that the *Caudillo*, as well as Generalissimo, Francisco Franco could successfully establish a central command around his charismatic leadership cult. On this perspective, it is important to explore the importance of Franco as the leader of Nationalist faction in making this group not only a politically and militarily ambitious one on the expense of Republican government, but as a determinantal aspect of the eventual Nationalist triumph from the conflict by exploring the similarities his leadership cult had with the situation in the Russian Civil War, embodied in the influence of Leninist cult in making the Bolsheviks the ultimate winner of that conflict.

3.3.3 The Importance of Franco's Charismatic Leadership

Any meaningful analysis of the Spanish Civil War makes a specific case being made on the importance of Franco's leadership skills vital. Ultimately, it was him who would indeed as a symbol of the Nationalist cause against the "illegitimate left government", in the eyes of his supporters both in Spanish military and society. Moreover, understanding how he put forward a relatively important leadership appears to be an important phenomenon that requires to be further understood. While exploring his unique form of leadership, one can compare how he acted as the ultimate leader of such a movement with the case it was regarding the Bolsheviks during the Russian Civil War, as we explored, it was one of the most crucial explanations behind how Lenin and his supporters prevailed against the counter-revolutionary White Armies and other anti-Bolshevik forces.

Unlike it was the case for the Bolshevik leadership during the Russian Civil War as embodied in the political personality of Lenin, Franco was a figure with an even arguably lower political indoctrination existed. Therefore, before starting, it is important to make the case that Franco's leadership strategy differed considerably a lot from the case it was for Lenin. How this was the case, nevertheless, appears very important in any meaningful exploration of his leadership traits.

Unfortunately, there appears no straightforward analysis available in the existing literature regarding a direct comparison of the leadership treats of faction leaders like Franco and Lenin, and how such similarities as well as the differences among them really had an impact over such conflict. Nevertheless, it is possible to argue that, in comparison to the position Lenin had within the framework of Russian Civil War, Franco appears to be a figure that one can compare with more of the organizational members of the Bolshevik high-command, for instance Stalin. It was because he was not only the person in charge of coordinating the Nationalist military operations nationwide, but also the person tasked himself with the establishment for a consolidated political basis for the movement, ensuring no strong candidates may appear and oppose his central command while also making sure he effectively addresses the expectations and interests of the troops and conservatives united under his command. Taking these all into account, understanding how Franco indeed built a charismatic leadership appears even further important in discovering the relevancy of this aspect of the Spanish Civil War in determining the prospective conclusion of it.

As was mentioned above in further detail, political scientists and historians have always found it challenging to construct compelling arguments regarding Franco's political views prior to the Spanish Civil War. While it is common knowledge that he never reconciled with the Republican regime following the proclamation of the Second Spanish Republic in 1931, he was nonetheless one of the regime's more loyal generals, especially when contrasted with more ambitious leaders like Sanjurjo or Mola, who were adamantly opposed to the very idea of a democratic state for Spain. Adding to this is the fact that Franco was first hesitant to join the rebellion and gave off the impression that the core plotters could never develop trust in him because it was not yet certain that he

would back the insurgency until the end.[656] Nonetheless, Franco still comes across as an ambitious figure who climbed the ranks to become the undisputed leader of the movement by both playing his cards strategically and benefiting from the angel of fortune on his side, which resulted in the capture or deaths of other potential leaders at the hands of government forces or in suspicious crashes, most often plane crashes.

This analysis will use three tenets of Franco's charismatic leadership to shed light on how the Nationalists were able to present a more united front against their opponents on the Spanish left. To that end, this section will first discuss the impact of propaganda on Franco's charismatic image before turning to the military aspects of his charismatic leadership. Specifically, this section will examine how Franco cultivated a charismatic leadership trait through the pursuit of successful military operations, thereby gaining the support of the disillusioned armed forces of the Republic and the loyalty of his supporters among the Nationalists. Here, Franco's actions during the Siege of Toledo will be crucial to understanding these trends. Following these introductions, we will examine how Franco used various symbols to portray himself as the strong leader the Spanish Nationalists had been waiting for. Rather than jumping right into offering an explanation and analysis of each of these crucial facets of the phenomenon, it is prudent to lay out the meat of the potential arguments first.

First and probably foremost aspect of any meaningful explanations focusing on exploring the importance of this leadership is Franco's use of propaganda in shaping such a strong and charismatic leadership for the Nationalist movement, which helped the Nationalist faction gain a stronger and more consolidated position than the Spanish Republicans. Here, it is possible to argue that different tools of media – such as newspapers, radio, posters, and movies – all played a role in Franco's successful effort to create a narrative that portrayed himself as the Generalissimo, who is the strong and decisive leader Spain needed to recover from its descent into anarchy and regain its former glory.[657] This was a carefully crafted image meant to win over a wide range of audiences, from the armed forces and church to conservative landowners and the working

[656] Franco's reluctancy is elaborated by his brother-in-law Ramón Serrano Suñer in his memoirs. See Ramón Serrano Suñer, *Memorias* (Barcelona, 1977): 55-60. Similarly, Payne (2006) was also among the scholars pointed out such debates. See Stanley G. Payne, *The Collapse of the Spanish Republic, 1933-1936: Origins of the Civil War* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006): 234-240.

[657] Stanley G. Payne and Jesus Palacios, *Franco: A Personal and Political Biography*, 4th Edition (University of Wisconsin Press, 2014): 137-139.

class. As a result, many Spaniards, even those who opposed him and rather supported the government in the initial months of the conflict began to view him as a mythical person, and his charisma and authority were greatly strengthened.

Franco's military brilliance is the second piece of the puzzle when trying to understand his charismatic leadership, as many of his military decisions not only increased his reputation as a military leader but also endeared him to the conservative Spanish population, making him a more popular figure than the civilian leaders on the Republican side who lacked his military credibility. Especially when comparing the Spanish Civil War to the Russian Civil War, when Lenin, as the ultimate leader of the Bolsheviks, hardly faced any disputes over his military judgments, one can question the relevance of his military skills. Nonetheless, what drew Franco's military talent into such arguments was his ability to establish a charm via his victories on the battlefield. He may not have been as much of a political ideologue as Lenin, but neither was Lenin as much of a military genius. Franco's ability to lead the Nationalist forces to a string of victories during the Spanish Civil War was illustrative of his military skill, and his reputation as a decisive and effective leader was bolstered by these successes on the battlefield as well as by his strategic planning and organizational skills. Therefore, Franco's supporters and adherents saw him as a savior figure who could save Spain from the edge of disaster and restore order, stability, and national pride because of his skills as a capable military person with the relevant and necessary political skills accompanied.

One could argue that it was on this foundation that Franco was able to establish a heroic reputation among the Spanish people; even his critics would have to admit that he was an effective symbolist who was able to rally more support for his growing authority during the Spanish Civil War. Effectively portraying Franco as the personification of the nation's past greatness and the key to its future success was accomplished by linking him to potent symbols of Spanish tradition, history, and culture. Additionally, Franco's regime capitalized on religious symbolism by portraying Franco as a faithful Catholic and defender of the faith. His charismatic appeal was bolstered by his religious ties, which helped him win over the more devout members of Spanish society and provide a stable foundation for his rule.[658] Franco's dictatorship developed a heroic picture of him through these symbolic associations and carefully staged public demonstrations, which they used

[658] Antonio Cazorla Sánchez, *Franco* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014): 97-98.

to represent his charismatic leadership and inspire loyalty and devotion among the Spanish people.

Now, as we have finalized our brief introduction to these important concepts, it is better to move for an in-depth analysis of each of these factors in portraying the fact that Franco had an undeniable charismatic leadership, which played a crucial role in mobilizing a more consolidated support for *Caudillo*. Just like it was the case for Bolsheviks during the Russian Civil War, what appears is the great connection between the inner-faction consolidation was further reinforced by having such a charismatic leadership figure around whom one of the belligerent factions of the conflict in Spain could unify and wage a more consolidated war-effort that would prove itself crucial in emerging triumphant in their attempt in toppling down the Republican government in Madrid.

The Role of Propaganda in Shaping Franco's Charismatic Image

It should come as no surprise that one of the most important fronts of the Spanish Civil War, like its Russian predecessor, was fought over the propaganda tools. Radio was not a recent phenomenon any longer, and various media tools would prove themselves very useful for the coordinated war effort. However, they also do well in portraying the strength of some of the most prominent leaders of the conflict, a debate that Franco was definitely not an exception of. Considering this, one should pay a closer attention to the extent of propaganda's influence over portraying Franco as a decent military and statesman, a figure that who would save the Spanish people from "corrupt" Republicans and leftists and bring back the former glorious days under the banner of traditionalism.

While discussing the Nationalist attempts on portraying Francisco Franco, by that moment their undeniable and no longer contested leader, as this savior figure that Spain has been searching for decades, a special attention should be made to the activities of one of his compatriots, General José Millán Astray, whose fame as the commander of Spanish Legion would not only make him a fearsome figure against his opponents in the field but also as Franco's de-facto adviser in the propaganda warfare.[659] His brave and daring actions against the Republicans would pale in comparison to the assistance he would

[659] Stanley G. Payne and Jesus Palacios, *Franco: A Personal and Political Biography*, 4th Edition (University of Wisconsin Press, 2014): 137.

provide to the Nationalist movement. In the early months of the conflict, he emerged as the Director of Radio, Press, and Propaganda, where he pursued an unorthodox control that resembled the army discipline, he always placed a great emphasize on, and this helped keep the Nationalist propaganda machine running smoothly.

The press office, it is reported, was run by him like a military barracks, with journalists filing in at the sound of his whistle and receiving the same severe harangues he had delivered to his Legion troops. It was not only the Spanish journalists who had to endure such a complicated situation. What we know from the historical accounts is Astray's actively encouraging his subordinates on using any threats or – if necessary – violence against the foreign journalists, sometimes as far as using the fast execution card he was given to.[660] This severe discipline and the seeming emphasis on "keeping the journalists in lie" to the demands of this new government would ultimately prove to be a crucial legacy of Astray and would remain an essential part of the Franco rule long after the war had ended. One may make the case that Franco committed countless crimes in this sense, such as ordering mass executions and assassinations and suppressing regional cultures and languages while also maintaining a stranglehold on the press and cultural media for his own propagandist purposes.[661]

Naturally, the Nationalist propaganda campaign did not stop with the manipulation and control of national and international media outlets that would present a threat to the regime. Similarly, and perhaps even more importantly, the Nationalists brazenly utilized the extensive network of conservative oriented or even sometimes well-recognized right-wing media outlooks as a method of reaching out to their audiences and demonstrating to them "the greatness of *Caudillo*." Among these media outlets, some would continue their already well-recognized Nationalist publications including Arriba, the arguably official newspaper that was portraying the views of Spanish Falangists. On the other hand, there would appear relatively more moderate newspapers especially within the zones of Republican control. By analyzing their significance in Nationalist attempts to represent the greatness and leadership charisma they believed Franco possessed, we may gain

[660] Paul Preston, *The Politics of Revenge: Fascism and the Military in Twentieth-Century Spain* (London: Routledge, 1995): 270.

[661] Darby Hennessey, "Oprimido, Censurado, Controlado: Authoritarian Censorship of the Media in Spain under Franco's Dictatorship," Thesis Work Submitted to the University of Mississippi (May 2017): 5.

crucial insight into the significance of printed media in broader Nationalist propaganda efforts.

Another important branch of the Nationalist media that focused on Franco's leadership and the "amazing merits" he has in offering the role of being the savior of Spain from such a "red menace" was the constant radio broadcasting targeting both the interior of the regions under their control as well as the government-controlled regions throughout the conflict. Although radio was still in its infancy, stations broadcasting from the Nationalist stronghold in the south—especially from Seville—sought to win over more listeners for the Nationalist cause.[662] With the Spanish Civil War being "the first great political event that radio played an essential role in,"[663] it was clear that this new form of communication would be used by both sides. However, the Nationalists were undoubtedly ahead of the curve when it came to implementing this strategy, perhaps as a result of their close ties with the Germans and the Italians, both of which were already making greater use of radio in their respective propaganda operations.[664] A similar role was played by Salazar's Portugal, which not only acted as a hub for international help to enter the Nationalist zone but also provided its own unique aid for the Nationalist troops, such as the supply of a sizable amount of radio broadcasting equipment.[665] Although the Soviet Union also supplied the government forces substantially throughout the course of the conflict, it is not surprising that the technological aid offered by these countries, who were already in a much superior position in comparison to the situation in Soviet Union, to the Nationalist forces gave them an advantage over their Republican enemies.

Most of the Nationalist radio campaign, on the other hand, was organized in the Northern zones under their authority. Although it is a fact that the Nationalists easily secured the control of a vast majority of the available radio stations at the outbreak of conflict, the most apparent cases of how this new medium really utilized as a propaganda tool in portraying the leadership merits of Franco came from the newly emerging ones established under their supervision. The most prominent of these stations through which

[662] O. W. Riegel, "Press, Radio, and the Spanish Civil War," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (January 1937): 131-136, especially 133.

[663] J. B. Whitton and J. H. Herz, "Radio in International Politics," in J. B. Whitton and H. Childs (eds.), *Propaganda by Short Wave* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1942): 24.

[664] O. W. Riegel, "Press, Radio, and the Spanish Civil War," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (January 1937): 131-136, especially 133-135.

[665] Adam Hoschschild, *Spain in Our Hearts: Americans in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016) :88.

the Nationalists were broadcasting regularly was Radio Nacional de España (RNE), which began broadcasting on January 19, 1937, with the heavy involvement of Astray as the mastermind behind this project, from its headquarters in Salamanca.[666] As the first ever transmitter of the station came from Telefunken as a gift from the Third Reich, the significance of German aid in the Nationalist propaganda through radio transmission is especially clear in the case of RNE.[667] It is hardly surprising that the populace living under Franco's soldiers was the primary listener, given that the broadcast's range was restricted mostly to areas under Nationalist control. The broadcast's primary objective was, consequently, to mobilize people behind General Franco and the Nationalist cause. As one of the primary vehicles of Nationalist propaganda, RNE's impact has endured long after the conflict's end, and the channel continues to this day as Spain's national, state-owned public service radio broadcaster.

Considering these, there is no denying the pivotal role that different radio channels, including Radio Nacional de España, played in spreading information about Franco's popularity. His speeches and statements were broadcast to the Spanish people, often with musical accompaniment or other sound effects added for emphasis. Moreover, especially when it came to case of RNE, we observe they also utilized catchphrases and slogans like "Franco, el Caudillo de España!" (Franco, the leader of Spain!) to emphasize Franco's powerful personality.[668] With the conflict began to turn more in the insurgents' favor, the Nationalist media gained even more influence, and Franco made frequent public appearances to denounce the "triecious Reds" and outline his vision for the future of war-torn Spain, especially though then empowered RNE. In all these attempts, Millan-Astray was a crucial figure as he had a big impact by overseeing the broader propaganda campaign.[669]

[666] Luis E. Togores, "Radio Nacional de España, la radio de los Nacionales," *El Debate*, 23 November 2022. https://www.eldebate.com/historia/20221123/radio-nacional-espana-radio-nacionales_74510.html

[667] For a more detailed analysis of RNE see A. P. Quintero, *Historia de Propaganda* (Lisbon: Planeta, 1993). For the German, Italian and Portuguese role in this process see pages 358-366.

[668] Alan Davies, "The First Radio War: Broadcasting in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (1999): 473-513, especially 486-487.

[669] R. Geoffrey Jensen, "Jose Millan-Astray and the Nationalist 'Crusade' in Spain," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (July 1992): 425-447, especially 426-427.

3.3.4 The Military Genius: Franco's Path to Charismatic Leadership

Franco's military genius was a second crucial component of his charismatic leadership image, both among his Nationalist allies and his current arch adversaries. Franco knew that showing his military prowess on the battlefield was the quickest and easiest way for an ambitious leader like him to gain greater support from the public, just as he could quickly advance in rank while serving in Morocco. Regardless, he was more of a soldier than a politician, and he was prepared to prove to the Spanish people that he is the leader they need in this time of turmoil and that only he could function as the supreme strategist of the Nationalist war effort against the Republican government in Madrid.

Based on our earlier analyses regarding the Russian Civil War, one can easily argue that one of the main pillars of a successful leadership during times of such crisis is being able to establish a consolidated and centralized authority over different groups existing within a belligerent faction. When we look at how Franco achieved establishing such a consolidated leadership through a strong central authority, his organizational talents during the Nationalist military operations appear to be fundamental in explaining his apparent success in this. Considering this, the earlier decisions he took as the military leader of the Nationalist faction appear to be fundamental in broader understanding of the charismatic leadership phenomenon he was able to establish at ease.

Spain is well known for its unique terrain, and the frontlines, especially during the early stages of the civil war were struggling for both sides. Like in any other similar case where there appears a question of how to manage the scarce resources during such conflicts, Franco also found himself with a question of where he would focus his war effort at a specific moment. Such choices would prove themselves vital for both his leadership and the broader war effort of the Nationalists against Republicans, as a misuse of the soldiers or war material could expose their weaknesses against their adversaries and jeopardize the Nationalist war effort as a whole. That would also put Franco’s leadership into a risk as his secret opponents both among the military and civilian circles of the Nationalist faction could use such misfortunes against his leadership. Nevertheless, as we will observe in a closer attention, Franco proved himself much more successful in accomplying his military aims, which allowed him to establish such a consolidated and centralized authority around the myth of being the Generalissimo of Nationalists. On the

other hand, as we will further observe it in our further discussions, the Republican government and Manuel Azaña as its most apparent leader at the moment, as the President of the Republic, would fail in achieving a similar success, and that would prevent the Republican faction from having a comparably strong and consolidated front against the Nationalist insurgents.

Without a shadow of a doubt, Franco's most fateful military decision during the first months of the conflict was made in regard to The Siege of the Alcázar in the summer of 1936, well before he ascended to the ultimate commander of the Nationalist movement. After the initial attempts to capture the capital city of Madrid were thwarted by left-wing groups, conservative and right-wing groups consolidated around Toledo, a city less than 70 kilometers from Madrid, and supported the forces under Colonel José Moscardó Ituarte. It was a strategically very important location due to its proximity to the capital and hosting an Infantry Academy as well as a rich agricultural center vital to the supplies necessary for both sides.[670] The Republicans laid siege to the Alcázar fortress where the Nationalists had taken refuge and started their air raids as well as artillery shelling the fortress under the rebel control. If a counteraction would not be taken as soon as possible, it was certain that a bitter fate was waiting the Nationalist sympathizers in Alcázar.[671] These developments prompted an immediate discussion among the Nationalists' most notable military officers on what to do with respect to this crisis.

Most of the Nationalist leadership were in favor of focusing with other regions as their relatively optimistic expectations on capturing a bigger zone of initial control appeared to be foiled by the forces loyal to the government. After all, Madrid appeared to be a lost cause, and they were still working hard to establish a consolidated control over their initial gains. Moreover, considering the relatively small size of the garrison under Colonel Moscardó's command, a prospective operation aimed to relieve them also seemed unviable as there were more important task at the hands of Nationalist command. However, there were an alternative view on what to do regarding Alcázar. Several leaders were more sympathetic to the situation in fortress and thought saving them from the leftist onslaught could provide a most-needed moral boost for the Nationalist forces. The

[670] Major Geoffrey McNeill-Moss, *The Epic of the Alcazar: A History of the Siege of Toledo Alcazar, 1936* (London: Rich & Cowan, 1937): 38.
[671] Peter Kemp, *Mine Were of Trouble* (Mystery Grove Publishing, 1957): 67.

decision to free the Alcázar received the most vocal backing from Francisco Franco. He saw this could be a huge propaganda win that would boost Nationalist morale and win them foreign allies. Franco's gamble in diverting his forces to relieve the Alcázar came off handsomely, both in terms of the Alcázar's immediate safety and Franco's subsequent rise to prominence as the Nationalists' de facto commander.

It is a fact that Franco's decision to save Alcázar was a fruitful one, especially in terms of the propaganda value of such a move. Beevor (2006) rightfully acknowledges that relieve of the fortress had become the most successful source of Nationalist propaganda, which depicted Franco like a savior.[672] These depictions went as far as portraying him like a crusader who came to the rescue of his fellow Christian brothers and sisters against the "evil red" forces surrounded them.[673] Nonetheless, like any other decisions, this move also came with a price. By setting Alcázar free, the Nationalists lost the momentum they had in the initial days and weeks of the conflict, and their advance towards Madrid would have to take place in a much slower and less comfortable way as the government could fortify the capital by utilizing the time they gained during this dilemma. Putting it into simpler words, while giving up from a relatively easier and faster victory possibility, Franco secured further backing among its potential supporters and foreign partners. It is hardly surprising, consequently, that Franco's military endeavors and the subsequent success in implementing these plans earned a further backing for his leadership, an ambitious aspect behind his well-known charismatic leadership cult.

The Battle of Teruel was one of the greatest and most crucial battles of the Spanish Civil War, taking place in and around the city of Teruel in eastern Spain from December 1937 to February 1938. This was another front where Franco displayed his military skills at a maximum level of efficiency. Although it was not a particularly valuable city in terms of population or industry, because to its strategic location, both sides saw maintaining control of the city as a top priority. As a result of being occupied by Nationalists despite being remote from the line of advance and surrounded by enemy Republican forces, the city took on symbolic significance akin to that of the Alcázar stronghold.[674] Here again

[672] Antony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Penguin Books, 2006): 397-398.

[673] Paul Preston, *The Politics of Revenge: Fascism and the Military in Twentieth-Century Spain* (London: Routledge, 1995): 163-164.

[674] Paul Preston, *The Politics of Revenge: Fascism and the Military in Twentieth-Century Spain* (London: Routledge, 1995): 344.

Franco would act against his companions and decided to take a bolder move rather than an orthodox strategy that most of other military officers were advocating for. Similar to his strategy back during Alcázar, Franco eased his focus from Madrid and rather consolidated his troops by making the control of city their top priority.[675]

Franco's decision to launch a counter-offensive in the dead of winter despite harsh weather conditions was a high-risk strategy that paid off in the end because of his apparent military competence. His image as a competent military leader increased thanks to his skill in resource management and deployment, as well as his willingness to make risky strategic choices. Nationalists were set back after falling behind Republican forces in Teruel, and Franco was under pressure to rapidly recover the city. His ability to lead effectively under stress was on display in the way he successfully countered the enemy's onslaught. Retaking Teruel was a huge propaganda win for the Nationalists, just like it was the case for the earlier Siege of Alcázar. It was a morale booster for Franco's army and helped cement his position as the Nationalists' unquestioned commander. When these facts are considered, it is easy to see how Franco's actions during the Battle of Teruel contributed to his rise to power within the Nationalist movement. With the power of symbolism that came from his military victories, he was able to eliminate any potential threats to his rule and concentrate power in his hands.[676]

In the wake of his military victories, Franco was able to gain an even more widespread support from the population. In a ceremony attended by prominent military and civilian authorities involved in the Nationalist movement, as well as international supporters of the insurgency like Germany and Italy in October 1936, he was declared the ultimate leader of the Nationalist movement and given the title of "Caudillo."[677] The ambitious military initiatives made by Franco, which were widely criticized at the time for being irrational in terms of military tactics, gave new life to a label that had originally been given without any such meaning. Instead, Franco triumphed over the symbolism of such moves and, by playing his cards carefully throughout the conflict, efficiently led his troops against the Republican government, portraying a very

[675] Harry Browne, *Spain's Civil War*, 2nd Edition (London and New York: Routledge, 1996): 206-207.

[676] E. R. Hooton, *Spain in Arms: A Military History of the Spanish Civil War 1936-1939* (Philadelphia and Oxford: Casemate, 2019): 51-52.

[677] Julián Casanova, *A Short History of The Spanish Civil War* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2013): 105.

successful leadership cult that his personal charisma made it possible for Nationalists to appear as an even more consolidated political movement with an efficient and strong central command embodied in Franco's authority.

Franco's Use of Symbolism in the Construction of Charismatic Leadership

Upon analyzing Franco's methods of portraying his charismatic leadership, it becomes evident that the utilization of symbolism, specifically through an ambitious identity construction that emphasizes national and religious pride, is the most impactful dynamic. It can be argued that the utilization of symbolism by Francisco Franco to depict charismatic leadership played a pivotal role in the effectiveness of Nationalist leadership. Through the employment of diverse symbolism, *Caudillo* sought to establish the legitimacy of his regime, foster unity among heterogeneous groups, and construct a mythical persona as the savior of Spain. Based on these premises, it seems imperative to include a conclusive examination of historical, and personal symbolism based on the religious splintering of then Spanish society in our comprehensive investigation of the effective cohesion among the factions comprising the Nationalist movement in the Spanish Civil War.

Religious symbolism was one of the primary pillars on which Franco established a charismatic leadership, especially considering the widespread accusations that the Republican government was anti-religious and was heavily influenced and controlled by leftist groups that are against the clergy in a society like Spain with a well-known religious sensitivity. Although there might be several reasons behind such a tendency, arguably the most apparent one was an expectable reaction against the extensive anti-clerical Red terror emerged in Spring 1936 with many churches were burned in the left-controlled zones prior to the Spanish Civil War.[678] These actions continued throughout the Civil War and soon became a defining feature of Nationalist campaign against the anti-religious leftist groups. Interestingly, even more moderate or secular members of the clergy were not excluded from the terror activities targeting the religious institutions behind the frontlines in the Republican zone of control. Payne (2012) argues that an approximate 10 percent of the whole clergy and 20 percent of male members of this estate were murdered

[678] Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012): 112.

in the Republican zones throughout the conflict.[679] The following table illustrates the extent of political violence against the clergy in the zones of Republican control.

Table 3.1 Catholic Clergy Murdered in the Republican Zone (1936-1939)[680]

Group	Number
Secular Priests	4,022
Regular Clergy	2,376
Nuns	282
Seminarians	95
Bishops	12
Apostolic Administrator	1
Total	6,778

Indeed, Spain has a rich Catholic past, and Franco cleverly set himself up as a champion of Catholicism against the anti-religious communist organizations that were then in power. Based on this basis, the Nationalist front was portrayed as a unified front against communism, which was frequently connected to atheism because it was personified by the Republican administration. Franco exhibited no reluctance in publicly attending mass, promoted religious education, and maintained a solid connection with the Catholic Church's authority.[681] Close connections with Mussolini's Italy is the most glaring illustration of how close ties to the Catholic Church legitimized dictatorships at home and abroad.

It is also important to note that the depiction of Franco as a defender of Catholic Spain against the "anti-Christ Red" was a prominent aspect of the early stages of the conflict.[682] The military uprising's religious justifications gained significant support among the populace of the Northern regions under Nationalist control, where religious sentiments had long been a crucial and defining characteristic. Here, one can easily argue that mistreatment of clergy at the hands of left-wing militias and socialist groups gave the coal necessary to keep the Nationalist propaganda machine functioning.[683] When the rebels publicly announced that they would no longer try to restore the Spanish Republic but instead pursued a more ambitious agenda of restoring the traditional monarchy

[679] Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012): 113.
[680] Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012): 113.
[681] Juan J. Linz, "Church and State in Spain from the Civil War to the Return of Democracy," *Daedalus*, Vol. 120, No. 3 (Summer 1991): 159-178, especially 161-163.
[682] Chris Ealham and Michael Richards, *The Splintering of Spain: Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005): 164-166.
[683] Chris Ealham and Michael Richards, *The Splintering of Spain: Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005): 87.

institution filled to a large extent with the religious sentiments, their movement arguably completed its transformation towards a more religious one, and the impact and influence of the religious symbolism in defining Franco's leadership as the forerunner of this movement became more important.

It is worth to mention that there were still a considerable number of devout Catholics, who rather decided to stay loyal to the Republican government. Although it is impossible to put forward an exact figure, by looking at some of the most striking examples of such a tendency, it is possible to make an argument that there was still a considerable aspect of the religious Spaniards, who, despite all the Nationalist propaganda in portraying their struggle under Franco's leadership as a modern crusade, were loyal to the elected government of Spain. General Rojo, the well-respected planner and strategist of the Republican military operations throughout the conflict, who was just a major in the Spanish Army in February 1936, was a capable and well-educated military officer who continued supporting the Azaña government.[684] He is an interesting figure, whose involvement with the conflict definitely deserves a more extensive analysis, but for the point of our arguments at this section, it should be sufficient to use his case as well as others like him to prove that the Catholic sentiments did not trigger a complete campaign against the Republican government.

Not only in Spain, but also in other parts of Europe, this religious symbolism gained significant popularity. The topic of foreign volunteers in the Spanish Civil War is often associated with the Republicans and their significant international brigades, who were mobilized to support the Popular Front government in power. However, it is important to note that there was also a notable presence of volunteers from various countries who supported the Nationalist cause. In certain instances, these engagements were solely indicative of the source nation's interests, as exemplified by the Condor Legion from Nazi Germany and Italian volunteers coming from Mussolini's Italy. Nevertheless, there were also volunteers who were expeditiously dispatched to combat for the Nationalists, motivated by the belief that they were undertaking a crusade against the communist regime in control of Spain during that period. While it is true that Franco's regime in Spain exhibited a general reluctance to embrace foreign individuals, especially those who

[684] E. R. Hooton, *Spain in Arms: A Military History of the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Philadelphia: Casemate Publishers, 2019): 51.

lacked any discernible skills beyond serving as infantry in Franco's campaign, it is nonetheless an incontestable feature of their religious campaign that the struggle against leftist Republicans was viewed as a modern crusade.[685]

Finally, it appears crucial to acknowledge that Franco did not manufacture a religious symbolism that was not readily apparent in the sharply divided Spanish sociopolitical life even before the military rebellion. Indeed, amid the years of political unrest that predominated and the impending civil war on the horizon, religious symbolism seemed to be a crucial component for the way of thinking of vast majority of conservatives. During Spain's brief experience with contemporary election propaganda during the Second Republic from 1931 to 1936, artists, arts managers, and propagandists drew inspiration from a variety of national mythology, historical incidents, religious iconography, and art history.[686] It was that setting he found himself responsible in putting forward a cohesive administration, and naturally the fastest and most efficient way of achieving this was pursuing a propaganda that would illustrate his struggle as one comparable to the saints in the holly manuscripts of Christianity.

The long history of religious conflict in Spain—from the Reconquista, which dominated political discourse in the late medieval ages, to the missionary endeavors they undertook in the New World they discovered in the centuries that followed—seems to endow the country with a responsibility to defend the fate of Christianity. Now, in the backdrop of the Spanish Civil War, this battle against the Republican rule appeared to conservatives as one they needed to win by overpowering their corrupted left-wing reasoning brothers and sisters. The postcard series *Forjadores de Imperio* ("Forgers of Empire"), released in 1939 although there were several promotions of it as soon as 1938, would demonstrate this way of thinking quite efficiently.[687] Especially the concept of

[685] Judith Keene, *Fighting for Franco: International Volunteers in Nationalist Spain during the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Hambledon Continuum, 2001): 2-3.

[686] Miriam Basilio, "Genealogies for a New State: Painting and Propaganda in Franco's Spain, 1936-1940," *Discourse*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Fall 2002): 67-94, especially 67-68.

[687] The most significant way of promoting Franco as the leader of this "crusade" was describing the leadership cadre of the Nationalists as "…They are outstanding figures of the New Spain who collaborated with our Leader in the Second Reconquest of the Fatherland…" See Miriam Basilio, "Genealogies for a New State: Painting and Propaganda in Franco's Spain, 1936-1940," *Discourse*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Fall 2002): 67-94, especially 77-78.

"Second Reconquista", this time one that is aiming to defeat the Spanish Republicans, was at the center of these propaganda methods.[688]

Therefore, this Christian interpretation of the civil war was not originated by Franco. Rather, he was just a driven and astute leader who knew how to use his position to his advantage to increase his appeal to those who supported him. A similar way of building a leadership charisma was even implemented by CEDA leader Gil Robes in the conceptualization of his struggle as one that resembles a second Reconquista against the communist and anti-religious left wing during the times of politics.[689] Although it is hard to determine the level of success of these earlier attempts, it is important to recognize that Franco utilized these arguments at their most efficient way, by combining them with his own personal charisma embodied with his military genius and popularity that made him more than a common politician. These factors make it plausible to conclude that his efforts to develop charismatic leadership were driven by religious symbolism that was already apparent and dominating the Spanish political life much before the insurgency started in the first place. Nevertheless, it would be Franco, who achieved the greatest success in implementing them.

3.3.5 Final Remarks on the Nationalist Success in Party Unity

Our analysis illustrates the relative strength of Nationalists in portraying a much more consolidated front against their Republican rivals, especially due to their apparent success in maintaining a higher level of unity among different sociopolitical groups supporting them through similar ideological premises based on the complexity of Spanish political history. Making the matters better for them, Franco appeared as a great figure that could not only lead the Nationalist war effort as a prominent general, but also as an evident political genius, who had the necessary skills to maintain the unity among his followers by extensive use of new propaganda techniques partly with the assistance of his foreign supporters in other Fascist contemporaries in Europe including Germany and Italy.

Franco was remarkably successful in portraying a robust leadership in such a conflict by constantly making references to the religious and nationalist narratives that usually

[688] Miriam Basilio, "Genealogies for a New State: Painting and Propaganda in Franco's Spain, 1936-1940," *Discourse*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Fall 2002): 67-94, especially 73-74.

[689] Paul Preston, *The Coming of the Spanish Civil War: Reform, Reaction and Revolution in the Second Spanish Republic 1931-1936* (London and Basingstoke: The MacMillan Press, 1978): 173-174.

find a solid ground in the Spanish political history. His leadership resembles great similarities with the case in Lenin and Russian Spanish Civil War, especially on the grounds that both leaders had the uncontested control of their factions, and during their leadership fragmentations based on different ideological concerns never found any real opportunity to grow at the first place. Moreover, both leaders extensively utilized different leaders capable of pursuing a coordinated campaign against their rivals. One of the most apparent examples of this comes from the fact that, despite at the beginning Franco faced with severe opposition from other high-ranking figures among the plotters including Mola and Cabanellas, in the continuation of conflict he knew how to utilize diverse strengths of his earlier opponents. Although most of these figures would perish with suspecting ends, they would contribute to the war effort of Nationalists against Republicans with their solid believe in their political goals embraced by no other than Franco. This example has a lot in share with some of the most apparent inner-party opposition against Lenin, as these prominent figures would also accept the undoubtful leadership of Lenin with time and continued to serve next to him due to their firm belief in the justification of their movement.

Nevertheless, it is visible that there were several critical differences between Franco and the Nationalist with Lenin and the Bolsheviks. The most apparent of such differences comes from the ideological determination of both camps, as Nationalists were more of an alliance of different conservative ideologies with a common cause of toppling down the left-dominated Spanish Republic that proved itself incapable in solving the issues of national separatism and the protection of religious institutions. Although there were more ambitious ideological elements among the Nationalists, including Falangists and Carlists, they could never achieve a domination over the other groups, and mostly served as a civilian support for the military commanders including Franco as their undeniable leader throughout the conflict. On the other hand, when we look at the case of Bolsheviks, it is possible to argue that the level of ideological determination was in a much higher level as Bolsheviks did not hesitate to go through a more hardliner stance by even denouncing their common leftist groups and pursued a campaign not only against the reactionaries or conservatives but even against other left-wing groups including SRs or Mensheviks. Considering this, one can make the claim that the Nationalist faction was more of a consolidated movement of similar yet diverse ideological groups on the political spectrum

with a common goal of getting rid of a specific political enemy whereas the Bolsheviks were much of a hardliner organization that had a firm and undoubtful stance in prevailing through such an ideological struggle if necessary.

On these grounds, it is important to highlight that Franco was a leader capable of both military and political skills that were required for a bloody conflict like the Spanish Civil War. Through his mastermind use of propaganda reinforced with his successes in the battlefield, he prevailed as the undoubtful leader of the Nationalist campaign. Although it is hard to measure the exact strength of his leadership, one can argue that he definitely had a charismatic leadership skill that further reinforced the chances for the Nationalist in prevailing from the civil war. Considering these all, it is possible to argue that the Nationalist factions had a higher level of party unity that made it easy and possible for them to eventually appear triumph from the Spanish Civil War. Nevertheless, it appears necessary and most needed to take a look at the situation concerning the Republican front to better comprehend the effect of party unity in determining which faction would emerge victorious from such conflicts. Understanding the distinct effect of this important variable will allow us to further explain the mechanisms and factors behind the regime survivability in such conflicts.

3.4 Party Cohesion within the Republican Faction

It is possible to suggest that the low cohesion among the different groups that united against the military insurgency aiming to toppling down the Republican government was one of the most critical reasons behind determining the Republican faction's inevitable doom. Unlike it was the case for Nationalists, the groups supporting the Republicans were more diverse and included many different organizations, sometimes from the nationwide politics or those with a more apparent focus on their regional interests, all of which had very distinct ideological concerns and aims. Considering this, it seems important to start our discussions regarding the level of party cohesion within the Republican faction by providing an overview of the sociopolitical composition it had.

3.4.1 Composition and Fragmentation of the Republican Faction

Looking at the social and political make-up of Republicans, we may identify three broad groupings that merit more in-depth examination. One of the most prominent is the

political parties, which range from the far left, represented by the Communist Party of Spain (PCE), and the Workers' Party of Marxist Unification (POUM), to the center-left, represented by the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and Republican Left (IR), and the central ones, represented by the Republican Union (UR). Second, trade unions, as one of the most active and consequential sectors of society and economy, merit special consideration. The General Union of Workers (UGT) and the National Confederation of Labor (CNT) were two of the most visible of these organizations that provided overt support for the Republican government. It would not be unfair to equate the latter's political influence to that of the most stable left-wing political parties in Spanish politics, given how crucial its backing was to the survival of the Republican government. Lastly, regional nationalists such as Basque and Catalan groups rushed for the preservation of the Republic against the Nationalist crusade because they felt legitimately endangered by the "one and indivisible Spain" assumption the insurgent generals were advocating for. The Republicans would try to present a cohesive front against the Nationalists based on this diverse and difficult foundation. Considering this, it is essential to have a deeper familiarity with each of these key constituencies as a starting point for any effective study.

Political Parties

It should come as no surprise that those political parties, upon which the loose yet successful electoral alliance of Popular Front were among the first supporters coming from the political realm as the insurgency that was unleashed by the Nationalist generals were targeting their administration as a whole and aiming to swiftly toppling down their regime at all costs. Although their political unity proved to be efficient for their undermining the rival conservatives in the fateful 1936 Elections, such a high level of disunity would also create considerable problems for their government now facing against a bloody civil strife.

Before diving into the details of such political parties and their possible motivations behind taking such a decision to form this loose alliance, it might be beneficial to briefly taking the conditions of international arena into account. To begin with, it is important to underlie that the decision to form such an electoral alliance was not a political strategy aligned with the national dynamics of Spanish politics. Rather, what we observe is an extension of the broader international strategy of forming such Popular Fronts among the prominent left-wing and central-left parties in an attempt to gain further power in

European politics because of the decisions taken at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in July/August 1935.[690] While firstly enacted as an answer to the previous failures of communist movements in Europe after deciding to go through a more hardliner stance and trying to seizing power by violent methods, this strategy was aiming to going through more democratic ways.[691] Indeed, the decision to going through an alternative way first appeared to be a fruitful one, with both in France and Spain, political parties coming from the left-wing seized the power through democratic methods. Yet, it is still vital to underlie that the implementation of this broad strategy for the Spanish elections mostly reinforced by its earlier successes in French politics, where an alliance between different socialist, communist and moderate democrat parties proved itself fruitful in terms of acquiring the power.[692]

It is important to highlight the influence of Manuel Azaña, who would become the leader of Republican faction during the Civil War, in the formation of this broad alliance between socialists and moderate democrats. The background of such a coalition appears to have deep roots even to the immediate years following the restoration of a republican regime in Spain, as Azaña made an insightful speech back in September 1932 stating that "…The presence of the socialists in the government has been one of the most important services they can provide for the new regime as it was an unavoidable necessity…"[693] Taking this perspective into account, it should come as no surprise that from the very early days of the new republican regime established in Spain, the dynamics of a coalition between such socialist and moderate democrat parties had always constituted an essential aspect and preluded the ultimate coalition that would emerge victorious from the fateful elections took place in 1936.

Following a series of heated debates, the final agreement on the formation of an electoral campaign under the banner of "Popular Front" materialized on 15 January 1936, with the Republican Left (IR), Republican Union (UR), the Communist Party of Spain

[690] Paul Preston, "The Creation of Popular Front in Spain," in Helen Graham and Paul Preston (eds.), *The Popular Front in Europe* (London: MacMillan Press, 1987): 84.

[691] Jonathan Haslam, "The Comintern and the Origins of the Popular Front, 1934-1935," *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (September 1979): 673-691, especially 673-674.

[692] Lewis H. Mates, *The Spanish Civil War and the British Left: Political Activism and the Popular Front* (London & New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007): 1.

[693] Manuel Azaña, *Obras Completas* (Mexico City, 1966), Vol II: 434, as referred by Paul Preston, "The Creation of Popular Front in Spain," in Helen Graham and Paul Preston (eds.), *The Popular Front in Europe* (London: MacMillan Press, 1987).

(PCE), the Workers' Party of Marxist Unification (POUM), and the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) signed a pact stating their purposes.[694] Looking at the premises on which these parties unified, one can argue that the broader aim of the Popular Front was pursuing a more moderate yet left-leaning economic policy that would emphasis on the provision of economic aid for the agricultural sector while simultaneously promoting collective forms of industrial production.[695] Moreover, by promising the return of legislation that were protecting the regional autonomy for regions such as Basque Country and Cataluña, the coalition also gained the support of regional nationalist parties such as Republican Left of Catalunya (ER), Basque Nationalists (PNV), as well as Galicianist Party (PG).

At this stage, Spain was at its peak of political polarization, and it would not be wrong to describe the status as the inevitability of the escalating tensions between the Spanish left and right. Nevertheless, when the elections finally took place on 16 February 1936, Popular Front and the parties within it gained a majority in the Spanish Parliament of Cortez, by having 285 of 473 seats in total, despite getting less than 50 percent of the electoral turnout.[696] To better understand the respective strength and popular support each of these political parties that constituted the Popular Front, it appears helpful to look at the electoral results below:

[694] Matthew Kerry, "A Fragile Radicalism: The Popular Front – Spring of 1936," in *Unite, Proletarian Brothers! Radicalism and Revolution in the Spanish Second Republic* (London: University of London Press, 2020): 182-183.

[695] Stanley G. Payne, *Spain's First Democracy: the Second Republic, 1931-1936* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993): 265-266.

[696] Matthew Kerry, "A Fragile Radicalism: The Popular Front – Spring of 1936," in *Unite, Proletarian Brothers! Radicalism and Revolution in the Spanish Second Republic* (London: University of London Press, 2020): 184. It is important to note that the initial number of seats Popular Front gained was 265, and there were 12 others supporting the coalition, making the number 277 approximately. These figures would increase with the additional twenty seats were acquired in the following the rerun of the elections in the regions reported to witness severe irregularities.

Table 3.2 Distribution of Votes for the Parties in February 1936 Elections[697]

Political Parties or Alliances	Total Number of Votes	Percentage of Electorate
The Popular Front (PSOE, IR, UR, ERC, PCE, ACR, USC, PG, PRDF…)	4,654,116	47,18
The Centrist Parties Supporting/Leaning to the Popular Front (CNR, PRC, PRP, PURA…)	400,901	4,06
Basque Nationalists	125,714	1,27
Approximate Electoral Support for the Parties Either in or Supporting the Popular Front	**5,180,731**	**52,51**
Coalition of Right Parties (CEDA, BN, Lliga, P. Agrario E., CTC, PRLD…)	1,866,981	18,93
The Centrist Parties Supporting/Leaning to Right Parties (P. Centro, PR Rad., PRLD…)	2,636,524	26,73
Approximate Electoral Support for the Parties Either in or Supporting the Coalition of Right Parties	**4,503,505**	**45,65**
Others	180,547	1,83
Total	9,864,783	100

On the other hand, the electoral support that was given to the other parties, including the conservative and those more of reactionary, was as following:

Table 3.3 Distribution of Seats for the Parties in February 1936 Elections[698]

The Popular Front	Seats	Right-Wing Parties	Seats	Center Parties	Seats
Spanish Socialist Workers' Party	88	CEDA	101	Centrists	21
Republican Left	79	Traditionalists	15	L. Catalan	12
Republican Union	34	Revisionists	13	R. Radicals	9
Republican Left of Catalunya	22	Agrarians	11	Progressives	6
Communist Party of Spain	14	Rightist Independents	10	Basque Nationalists	5
Other Parties in Popular Front	25	Other Parties and Groups	6	Liberal Democrats	1
Total	262		156		54

There are several conclusions we can draw from results of this elections concerning the inner structure of Popular Front. Firstly, public was still more in support of major and

[697] Stanley G. Payne, *The Collapse of the Spanish Republic 1933-1936: Origins of the Civil War* (New Haven & London, 2006): 176.

[698] Stanley G. Payne, *The Collapse of the Spanish Republic 1933-1936: Origins of the Civil War* (New Haven & London, 2006): 177.

more moderate socialist or democrat parties as the number of seats PSOE, IR, and UR were 201, marking an approximate of 76,72 of the total parliaments elected through the alliance. It means, although Spain was in a very polarized situation by February 1936 with increasing marginalization and radicalization of both sides, the political power was still at the hands of parties at more neutral grounds. That being said, the second most powerful group within the Popular Front were the parties of regional nationalists as ER and PG achieved 35 of the representatives (13,36 percent of seats). That left 26 seats for the remaining Communist and Marxists parties, which made about 9,92 percent of the total seats of the Popular Front coalition. By looking at these results, one could argue the real power was still at the hands of more moderate parties with the radical communists and Marxists were the minority. Nevertheless, that would be a wrong presumption.

Although the moderate socialists and democrats of the Popular Front had the majority of coalition's representatives, their total number of 201 was still far away from constituting a parliamentary majority as that required at least 237 seats out of total 473. As a result of this, they had to continue working closely with the other more minor parties and radicals within their ranks, whose demands and ideological concerns were much more influential than their number of seats in the Spanish Cortez. Moreover, their declaration also forced them to continue collaborating with the regional nationalists, who had a substantial number of seats in the parliament that made their support vital for the political stability of any Popular Front government. As a result of these factors, the parties of the Popular Front were compelled to work together while becoming increasingly radicalized by the ambitious demands and aims of more minor parties within their ranks, who not only radicalized such mainstream socialist and democrat parties within the Popular Front but also alienated the conservatives and other right-wing groups by giving them reason to believe that radical socialists and national separatists now controlled Spain.

The distribution of ministry seats after the Popular Front alliance's electoral victory in February 1936 is another key piece of information we may use to assess the balance of power among the political groups that supported the coalition. It must be stressed that the duration of Popular Front governments was never sustainable because of rising political tensions and high levels of instability. Nonetheless, looking at the final government constituted on 13 July 1936, shortly before the start of the Spanish Civil War, under Prime Minister Santiago Casares Quiroga, a member of the Republican Left (IR), may provide

us with some extremely illuminating information. To illustrate this point, the following table details the political parties represented, as well as the ethnicity and position in administration of each minister in this specific Popular Front government.

Table 3.4 The Distribution of Ministerial Seats in the Last Popular Front Government Before the Start of Spanish Civil War

Position in Government	Name	Political Party	Ethnicity
President	Manuel Azaña	Republican Left	Spanish
Prime Minister	Santiago Casares Quiroga	Republican Left	Galician (F), Spanish (M)[699]
Minister of State (Foreign Affairs)	José Giral	Republican Left	Spanish (F), Cuban (M)[700]
Minister of Justice	Ángel Galarza Gago	Republican Union	Spanish
Minister of War	Santiago Casares Quiroga	*	*
Minister of Navy	José Giral	*	*
Minister of Interior	Santiago Casares Quiroga	*	*
Minister of Finance	Juan Orozco Peira	Republican Union	Spanish
Minister of Labor and Social Welfare	Francisco Largo Caballero	Socialist Workers' Party	Spanish
Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts	Jesús Hernández Tomás	Communist Party	Spanish
Minister of Communications and Merchant Navy	Indalecio Prieto	Socialist Workers' Party	Spanish
Minister of Agriculture	Mariano Ruiz-Funes	Republican Left	Spanish
Minister of Public Works	Pedro José Zabala	Basque Nationalist Party	Basque

The dynamics of coalition most probably appears best in such a table of distribution of ministerial seats. Although there were 13 different ministries in addition to the Presidency of the Spanish Republic, due to complex structure of Spanish political structure and the escalating tensions the seats of Prime Minister, Minister of War, and Minister of Interior – three key and powerful positions – were held by Santiago Casares Quiroga, a Galician Spanish. It is important to refer to the accounts that claim his

[699] James Kirkup, *The Guardian*, "Obituary: Maria Casares, Free Spirit of the French Stage," 26 November 1996: 16.

[700] Julián Chaves Palacios, "El Republicano José Giral en Salamanca durante la Restauración," *Investigaciones Históricas*, Vol. 32 (2012): 195-216, especially on 197-198.

indecisiveness and lack of leadership skills can be credited behind the better preparing of the insurgents and the lack of ability of the Republican leadership in preventing the military intervention on the horizon. Even when the conflict erupted and the news of different military garrisons not obeying the commands of Madrid with an open rebellion, Quiroga was still fearful of a communist revolution and did not permit the distribution of arms to the loyalist civilians, which further facilitated the initial advancements of Nationalist forces.[701]

Aware of the coming disaster, Azaña removed the indecisive Quiroga from power and appointed Diego Martínez Barrio on the evening of 18 July 1936, a name from Republican Union, whose stance was mostly regarded as the most moderate element within the Popular Front. This was an attempt of finding a compromise with conservatives and other right-wing elements that were about to completely support the insurgency, yet a failed one as it was so little and so late.[702] With time passed and frontlines rather solidified, it became apparent that the peaceful path was long gone, and a war cabinet had to be formed. With such intentions, Azaña then turned to José Giral, who was in charge of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of War in the previous administration, to form a left-leaning government that would yet also have the participation from more moderate groups like Republican Union more visibly. Giral formed his administration quickly and assumed the position of Prime Minister on 20 July of now war-torn Spain facing against a potent force. The following list illustrates the share of ministerial positions with respect to the political party or ideology of the ministers as well as their known ethnicity.

[701] Julián Casanova, *The Spanish Republic and Civil War*, trs. Martin Douch, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010): 57.

[702] Burnett Bolloten, *The Spanish Civil War: Revolution and Counterrevolution* (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991): 38.

Table 3.5 The Distribution of Ministerial Seats in Giral's War-Time Cabinet[703]

Position in Government	Name	Political Party / Alignment	Ethnicity
President	Manuel Azaña	Republican Left	Spanish
Prime Minister	José Giral	Republican Left	Spanish/Cuban
Minister of State (Foreign Affairs)	Augusto Barcia	Republican Left	Spanish
Minister of Justice	Manual Blasco Garzón	Republican Union	Spanish/Catalan
Minister of War	General Luis Castelló	Liberal Republican	Spanish
Minister of Interior	General Sebastián Pozas	Liberal Republican	Spanish
Minister of Finance	Enrique Ramos y Ramos	Republican Left	Spanish
Minister of Labor and Social Welfare	Juan Lluhí y Vallescá	Republican Left of Catalunya	Catalan
Minister of Education	Francisco Barnes	Republican Left	Spanish
Minister of Communications and Merchant Navy	Bernardo Giner de los Ríos	Republican Union	Spanish
Minister of Agriculture	Mariano Ruiz Funes	Republican Left	Spanish
Minister of Public Works	Antonio Velao	Republican Left	Spanish
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	Plácido Álvarez Buylla	Republican Union	Spanish

Evidently, the new administration indeed prioritized defeating the insurgents as the face of cabined went through a critical transformation that made it more of a war cabinet. After all, now the Ministry of War, which now encompassed also the responsibilities of former Ministry of Navy, was no other than General Luis Castelló, who was one of the key military officers that was also tasked with the suppression of Asturias Revolt back in 1934. Moreover, the Ministry of Interior was held by another military officer, General Sebastián Pozas, as the State of Emergency was declared with the necessary measures to ensure a swift control over the remaining zones under the control of loyal forces to government.

It is possible to extend the list of many different governments established in the Republican zone, as the instability and inner-fighting would purge many remaining loyal officers and civil servants from the Republic. Although at the start of the conflict the

[703] Burnett Bolloten, *The Spanish Civil War: Revolution and Counterrevolution* (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991): 46-47.

Republican side stood more firm and likely in establishing a stable and effective government that could lead the country against the military revolt, the following three years would witness the establishment and fall of many different administrations as well as the Prime Ministers. From the start of conflict on 17 July 1936 until the end of it on 1 April 1939, the seat of Prime Minister changed hands between five different politicians, as well as the final leadership of General Miaja, whose names and political alignment were as the following:

Table 3.6 The Prime Ministers of Republicans and Their Identities

Name	Term	Political Identity	Ethnicity
Santiago Casares Quiroga	May-July 1936	Republican Left	Galician (F), Spanish (M)
Diego Martínez Barrio	July 1936[704]	Republican Union	Spanish
José Giral	July – September 1936	Republican Left	Spanish/Cuban
Francisco Largo Caballero	September 1936 – May 1937	Spanish Socialist Workers' Party	Spanish
Juan Negrín	May 1937 – March 1939	Spanish Socialist Workers' Party	Spanish
General José Miaja	March 1939 – April 1939	Liberal Leaning[705]	Spanish

It is apparent that throughout the conflict, the Republican and more centrist stance of the Prime Ministers of the Republican faction shifted towards now even further radicalized Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE). Although PSOE could still be seen more centrist than even more radical parties within the Popular Front, such as the Communist Party of Spain (PCE) or the Workers' Party of Marxist Unification (POUM), they also went a process of further radicalization during the years preceded the civil war. Here, Largo Caballero's role was important as he adopted revolutionary rhetoric, calling for violent revolution and a transitional dictatorship of the proletariat, after the general election in November 1933, which was a win for the center-right forces in an atmosphere

[704] Only for a few hours as a desperate attempt to prevent the conflict from escalating into an all-out civil war.

[705] Payne (1967) believes General Miaja was a liberal army officer, although as Bolleten (1991) underlined that it is also known he did not hesitate to join to right-wing Spanish Military Union. See Stanley G. Payne, *Politics and the Military in Modern Spain* (Stanford University Press, 1967): 303-304 and Burnett Bolloten, *The Spanish Civil War: Revolution and Counterrevolution* (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991): 290-292.

characterized by the escalating polarization and increasing unemployment.[706] These prove the further radicalization of Republicans and becoming more and more leftist than centrist throughout the conflict.

Even if one would not take the changes in their cabinets into account, it is completely visible that the political stability of Republicans was much lower in comparison to their Nationalist rivals as General Franco effectively established himself as the Head of State and Government (known as "*El Caudillo*"). Considering this, even looking at this data proves us the fact that the Republicans had a much lower party unity, evident in their lower political stability and more fractured distribution of power within the cabinets they had established during the civil war. That being said, one should still pay a close attention to the other two prominent actors within the Republican faction, namely trade unions and regional nationalists, to better comprehend how the fragmentation of Republicans further jeopardized their struggle of political survival against the forces loyal to *El Caudillo*.

Trade Unions

Unlike the political parties, which focused rather on the complex dynamics of Spanish politics, one could argue that various trade unions found the largest support among the Spanish workers and peasants, especially in the urban centers that constituted the biggest supporters of the Republican regime against the looming military uprising. While the most powerful of these organizations acted autonomously with a significant emphasis on civilian political activism, they nevertheless maintained strong ties to political parties. The General Union of Workers (UGT) and the National Confederation of Labor (CNT) were the two largest and most influential ones during the Second Spanish Republic and the Civil War. These were the products of decades long reformation enacted both during the decades preluding to the establishment of the Second Republic and those passed during its short but impactful lifespan.[707]

It is important to underlie the fact that these institutions did not merely influence events through strikes and demonstrations, but also by actively taking part in the armed conflict by supporting the Republican government against the Nationalists. Considering

[706] Paul Preston, *The Coming of the Spanish Civil War: Reform, Reaction and Revolution in the Second Spanish Republic 1931-1936* (London and Basingstoke: The MacMillan Press, 1978): 88-90.
[707] Stanley G. Payne, *The Collapse of the Second Spanish Republic, 1933-1936: Origins of the Civil War* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2006): 13.

this it appears necessary to better understand how they were functioning and acting with respect to each other, and what their debatable contribution meant to the Republican regime's struggle to survive.

Since UGT's doctrine centers on social democracy and progressive reforms within the context of the new republican administration in Spain, the organization can be seen as a representative trade union representing the working class among the more centrist segments of the country. Established in 1888, it has grown to become one of the largest organizations of its kind, boasting participants from numerous fields, including business, service, government, and academia. This success was partially due to the initial reforms enacted following the restoration of Republican rule in Spain, as between 1931 and 1932 the socialist Minister of Labor Francisco Largo Caballero introduced various new legislation aimed in further promotion of such labor unions by legitimizing syndical activities.[708]

It is clear that UGT and PCOE had a strong relationship. Especially with the empowered Popular Front seized power, the number of UGT-affiliated left-leaning bureaucrats and state servants reached a dramatic point, as this trend was further symbolized in the political career of Francisco Largo Caballero, who would hold several important posts including Prime Minister during his war-time tenure.[709] The Republican era witnessed another important change in the structural features of UGT, which was more concerning of its class-based divisions. As of June 1932, the UGT had increased from 277,011 in December 1930 to 958,451 in December 1931. The Federación Nacional de Trabajadores de la Tierra (FNTT), which grew from 36,639 members in June 1930 to 392,953 members in June 1932, was largely responsible for this expansion. As a result, the proportion of land workers in the UGT increased from 13 percent to 37 percent.[710]

Given these, it should not come as a surprise to say that trade union influence was extending beyond the realm of social life and directly influencing the political life due to their strong organic linkages to the political parties in existence. In some instances, trade unions like CNT prioritized embodying a particular ideology, such as the strong presence

[708] Michael Seidman, *Republic of Egos: A Social History of the Spanish Civil War* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002): 19.

[709] Paul Preston, *The Coming of the Spanish Civil War: Reform, Reaction and Revolution in the Second Republic* (New York: Routledge, 1978): 91.

[710] Paul Preston, *The Coming of the Spanish Civil War: Reform, Reaction and Revolution in the Second Republic* (New York: Routledge, 1978): 78.

of anarchist principles within their ranks. During the Second Spanish Republic, membership in the latter trade union skyrocketed, providing compelling evidence that the Republican experience did, in fact, empower such trade groups and deploy them with greater influence.

The outbreak of the Civil War marked a turning point in the militancy of these groups. In the face of a counter-revolution backed by influential members of the clergy and military, the state found itself in a precarious situation. The remaining members of these groups were deemed unreliable, leaving a need for a citizenry with a strong ideological foundation to support the government during this tumultuous time. In this context, trade unions were considered the most suitable candidates for supporting the Republican regime. The swift and consolidated support provided by such certain groups helped suppress attempts to join the military coup against the government in July 1936. This prevented the fall of major urban centers, such as Madrid and Barcelona, to the insurgents. However, it became clear that the levels of radicalization also varied greatly in terms of how prepared these various trade unions were for the requirements of such a conflict.

It became clear that the political objective of UGT was more in line with the electoral politics, paving the way for their eventual victory as an organization now more prominent in civilian roles. The CNT had more radical principles and its supporters advocated for a radical agenda prior to the conflict in mid-1936. The fact that these trade unions' socioeconomic foundations varied greatly seems to be something that should be emphasized. For instance, available information from before the civil war suggests that UGT was comprised of highly skilled craftsmen like those working in the construction business, and that it was significantly stronger in the metropolitan centers, including the capital city of Madrid.[711] Certain groups exhibited greater resistance towards participating in collective actions, such as coordinated protests. On the other hand, CNT gained more traction with the unskilled workers who lived on the outskirts of cities and were therefore more likely to be called out for strikes and other forms of organized protest. Given the circumstances, it can be inferred that during times of war, the second group, who were

[711] Paul Preston, *The Coming of the Spanish Civil War: Reform, Reaction and Revolution in the Second Republic* (New York: Routledge, 1978): 268.

ideologically determined and economically disadvantaged, responded more quickly and were better prepared for the expectations of such a war.

The involvement of militant unionists in supporting the Republican government provided initial relief during the conflict. However, their loyalty to ideological goals rather than the civilian authorities in Madrid made it difficult to maintain discipline and control over these forces as the conflict progressed. The Republican front, in contrast to the Nationalist front, was exceedingly weak and disjointed, especially as the government's military resources were being drained by the escalating internal conflict. Soon, the internal strife would approach a breaking point, and it would be possible to claim that a second civil war was underway, further complicating efforts to unify the Republican front. The May Days of 1937 in Catalonia, particularly in Barcelona, were a significant example of the internal conflict during the Spanish Civil War.

The May Days of 1937 witnessed a period of violent street fighting in Barcelona among various factions of the anti-Franco coalition. The conflict lasted from May 3rd to May 8th. The CNT anarchists, POUM anti-Stalinist communists, and other left-wing radical groups were aligned on one side.[712] The Spanish central government was supported by the Soviet Union and aligned with the Communists and Socialists. The conflict arose when the government aimed to centralize authority and establish a conventional army and attempted to seize control of the Telephone Exchange building, which was being held by the CNT.[713] The occurrence resulted in extensive conflict throughout Barcelona, characterized by the construction of barricades and the involvement of multiple factions in street skirmishes.

The events of the May Days demonstrated the significant schisms present within the Republican faction. The Communist Party, backed by the Soviet Union, aimed to consolidate the war efforts and exclude extremist factions like the anarchists and the POUM, as they gained more power. The anarchists and the POUM opposed the perceived imposition of authoritarian control over Catalonia and fought for a social revolution.[714]

[712] Michael Seidman, "Work and Revolution: Workers' Control in Barcelona in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-38," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (July 1982): 409-433, especially 415-419.

[713] Hugh Thomas, *Historia de la Guerra Civil Española* (Barcelona: CL, 1976): 700-706.

[714] George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* (Penguin Classics, 1938): 1-7, but the whole book is a great source for having a better understanding of the May Days as well as the overall turbulent and struggle for power between different factions reluctantly supporting the government.

The street fighting persisted for multiple days, leading to numerous casualties and dealt a significant blow to the solidarity of the anti-Franco groups. The May Days were not the only source of tension on the Republican side throughout the Spanish Civil War. During the conflict, there were frequent conflicts and disagreements among the various factions. The absence of a cohesive strategy and unity within the Republican party, as it was the case apparent with the trade unions and their inner struggling for more ideological dominance, is believed to have played a role in their ultimate defeat during the Civil War.

Regional Nationalists

The regional nationalists, particularly in Catalonia and Basque country, were among the intriguing supporters of the Republicans. Rallying against the Nationalists, they were supporting the Popular Front to preserve their national autonomy that was granted to them in the highest degree during the Republican reforms of early 1930s. It was also clear to them that the Nationalists' goal of creating "the indivisible Spain for the Spanish nation" meant that a Nationalist win might erode all this national autonomy. Recognizing this threat, such minority groups were among the first to rush to the Republican side of the conflict; however, their allegiances were not based on ideological commitments like those of the national trade unions or the desire to maintain the Republican government like those who did not join the insurgents initially. It can be argued that their loyalties stemmed from their local interests, which were embodied in the Republican reforms that had empowered them in the past decade. The President of the Spanish Republic, Manuel Azaña was well aware of this problem in trusting such groups, and he did not hesitate to openly announce his hesitations to going on a complete alliance with Catalanist leaders, depicting their true loyalties were lying neither on Spain or the Republic, but rather on their autonomy or “semi-independence”.[715] As a result, it was difficult to foresee what they would do in the event of a Republican victory, as there were even more radical groups within them advocating for a full secession from the Spanish rule, and they believed that this state of war was providing them with a good context for such a move.

A deeper examination of the ethno-national composition of the Spanish Republic at the outbreak of the conflict in 1936 can provide insight into the role and motivations of such groups. The Spanish Constitution of 1931 played a crucial role in recognizing

[715] Manuel Azaña, *Memorias Políticas y de Guerra*, Vol. 4 (Madrid, 1981): 103-104, 257-263.

national minorities and defining their rights. It established not only the necessary institutions for a Republican regime to thrive better this time, but also introduced the concept of territorial division into provinces. The Constitution also allowed for the unification of regions with common cultural characteristics to obtain territorial autonomy through an Autonomy Statute (*Estatuto de Autonomía*).[716]

Even though the topic of minorities in Spanish politics had been discussed at length before this point, this was one of the first tangible attempts to create a more diverse sociopolitical texture for Spain's future. Almost all of Spain's regions were able to ask for autonomy under this revolutionary guise. During the pre-Civil War period, Catalonia (1932), the Basque Country (1936), and Galicia (although the Galician Statute of Autonomy was not implemented due to the war) exercised their right to self-government. Aragon, Andalusia, and Valencia were also in negotiations with the government prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. Considering this, a brief explanation of the Catalan and Basque cases within this framework may be helpful, as it can throw light on the issue of national minorities during the Spanish Civil War.

Prior to discussing the situation in the Catalan and Basque regions, it is pertinent to highlight their significant similarities and differences. The Basque and Catalan nationalist movements were distinct from the rest of Spain due to their simultaneous development in two ethnically distinct Spanish communities. These communities were characterized by their high level of industrial development relative to the rest of Spain and had experienced significant immigration from the poorest regions of Spain.[717] The emergence of nationalist perspective in Spain prior to 1936 was further influenced by distinct regional identities and a prevalence of different mother-tongues, which had economic and social implications.

Although the preceding Carlist Wars were devastating to many parts of the Spanish realm, they left behind undoubtedly the biggest troubles in Basque land. Some of the most prominent Carlist organizations operating in the Basque Country argued for siding with the Nationalists, possibly because of the insurgents' emphasis on religious concerns. This

[716] Chris Ealham and Michael Richards (eds.) *The Splintering of Spain: Cultural History and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005): 94-96.

[717] Juan Diez Medrano, "Patterns of Development and Nationalism: Basque and Catalan Nationalism Before the Spanish Civil War," *Theory and Society*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (August 1994): 541-569, especially 541-542.

complicated political background may have made Basque citizens initially more hesitant to take a side. Nonetheless, there were groups such as PNV that prioritized the defense of their region's autonomous status, as enacted by various Republican reforms over the recent decade, and who ultimately elected to support the Republicans for the remainder of the conflict.

While the rest of Spain tends to highlight the region's ethnic and cultural contrasts with the rest of the country, in Catalonia there appears to be a greater emphasis on the ethnic rights and autonomy based on the distinctive Catalan identity. Catalan nationalism exhibited greater unity and consolidated support for the Republican cause, as the populace aimed to prevent the potential revocation of their regional autonomy by a right-wing dictatorship. On these grounds, it seems plausible to claim that the Basque region had a much less unified stance regarding their actions during the Spanish Civil War, with those with more religious concerns choosing to support the Nationalists while the other groups prioritizing their autonomy would eventually support the government forces.

Several influential political parties in Catalonia advocated for the regional interests of the Catalan national minority during the conflict. However, while some of these parties, like the powerful Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), were more interested in long-term Catalan national autonomy from Madrid's dictate, others, like the Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya (PSUC), were pushing for a more concentrated war effort, and their main priority was still in the maintaining a level of unity among the nationwide socialist forces. Several existing works on their influence and power both prior and during the conflict call for a justified need of looking at the available data concerning their electoral strengths, as it further explains how the power dynamics were prior to the start of Civil War. Nevertheless, it is important to underline the fact that these power equations changed significantly throughout the conflict due to the fact that when the guns started to talk, the more radical and combat ready groups would eventually acquire more strength on the expense of their rivals.

The Catalan region adhered to the February 1936 election trends, resulting in the Popular Front alliance's triumph over conservative and right-wing parties. However, the Popular Front's victory in Catalonia was particularly significant, as they won in all electoral districts within the region. Out of the 54 deputies representing Catalonia in parliament, 41 were elected from the Popular Front and 13 from the conservative

alliance. Specifically, the ERC had 21 representatives, the ACR had five, the Partit Republicà had three, the PNRE had two, the Rabassaires had two, the USC had four, and the PCP, PCC, PSOE, and POUM each had one representative.[718]

Catalan nationalists, especially the ERC, strove to strike a compromise between their support for the Republic and their desires for Catalonia to have more autonomy or independence. However, as the war progressed, the central Republican government increasingly sought to centralize control, which was resisted by Catalan nationalists and anarchists. Indeed, the notorious May Days of 1937 were just one good example of how such aspirations and conflicting aims resulted in the further disintegration of Republican faction, with skirmishes among such different groups occurring more frequently in Catalonia, further complicating matters for the Republican leadership. As Seidman (2002) underlined, when the new leadership, following these clashes, decided to curb the Catalan autonomy, it was already a measure taken so late with so little success seemed possible.[719]

On the other hand, as it is previously stated, the situation within the Basque country was a much more of a controversial topic. Unlike the apparent Catalan consolidation on supporting the Republican side, the Basque politicians and society was driven apart due to the long historical and cultural rifts erupted since the infamous Carlist Wars devastated the region. Although Carlists still had a major ground in these remote north regions of Spain, it was also apparent that Basque nationalism was prevailing at the expense of a Carlist-focused unification with the rebels in Navarre, also further embodied with their strong opposition to the religious rhetoric which they simply regarded as further tools of a repressive Spanish state. Payne (1971) would remarkably consider the Spanish Civil War also as a civil war erupted between different Basque groups as those who identified themselves with more Basque-nationalist stance would stand with Republic while others simply joined the ranks of insurgents by following the religious origins of their campaign.[720]

Increasing social polarization in the region, which has a propensity toward socialism, may also have contributed to the rise of support for the Republican movement among

[718] Pelai Pagès i Blanch, *War and Revolution in Catalonia, 1936-1939*, translated by Patrick L. Gallagher (Leiden and Boston: BRILL, 2013): 16.

[719] Michael Seidman, *Republic of Egos: A Social History of the Spanish Civil War* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002): 101-103.

[720] Stanley Payne, "Catalan and Basque Nationalism," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1971): 47.

Basques. Between 1918 and 1923, there was a significant amount of revolutionary activity, primarily in the rural south, while the socialist leadership chose to remain indifferent towards it. Making the matters further complicated, the post-war depression resulted in inflation and increased unemployment, which led to a shift in the more-moderate socialist opinion back then towards a revolutionary orientation, especially in Asturias, in-align with the interwar Europe following the infamous Bolshevik Revolution.[721] During the Asturias Uprising of 1934, the Basque region was perceived as being more socialist than other regions. This certain uniqueness of the region, considering its long-lasted historical rifts with the remaining Spain on sociopolitical terms, definitely calls for further research.

The Spanish Civil War of 1936 caused a division in the Basque Country, where the Republic retained loyalty in major industrial cities such as Bilbao, while Nationalist control prevailed in rural areas. The Republican party gained support from industrial zones due to the marginalization of the working class and a growing left-wing sentiment. Additionally, they received significant support from Basque nationalists. The PNV, the strongest of the existing Basque national parties, after deliberation, opted to endorse the Republic and established the Basque Government with José Antonio Aguirre serving as its leader. Under his leadership, the Basque Government tried to carve out a degree of autonomy, but the realities of the war would make this impossible. Eventually with the Nationalist forces under Franco prioritized the neutralization of the Republican strongholds in the region, Basques found themselves exposed to the bloodshed of the conflict.[722]

3.4.2 Final Remarks on the Republican Failure in Party Unity

It should come as no surprise that, despite all the initial expectations, the Republican faction had failed to maintain a high level of unity among its supporters, which ultimately facilitated the Nationalist uprising under the iron-fist of their undeniable leader Francisco Franco. One could argue that this result was very predictable because party cohesion or faction cohesion had always been a contentious issue for the Republican leadership,

[721] Paul Preston, *The Coming of Spanish Civil War: Reform, Reaction and Revolution in the Second Republic* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994): 12.

[722] James Matthews (eds.) *Spain at War: Society, Culture and Mobilization, 1936-1944* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021): 7.

which had to contend not only with insurgent generals and the crises to which they were exposed during a full-scale civil war, but also with one another as various political parties, ideological groups, trade unions, and from time to time minority groups that all unified under the Republican banner. Unfortunately for them, though, this unification would mostly remain as a consensus that one could base on only wordily promises, as a real unification was far beyond realizable among these groups with many different and mostly competing goals and interests.

The ideological variety among the Republican ranks was a major factor that contributed to the failure to retain faction unity. The Republicans were an umbrella body that included various socialist, communist, anarchist, and liberal groups. While all of these groups opposed the Nationalists, internal strife and fights for control were commonplace due to ideological differences. In elections, such as the ones held in 1936, this method was effective in defeating the less unified conservative factions, but when civil war broke out in the country, it was clear that such distinctions were no longer sustainable to work together. Ideological divisions, coupled with individual ambitions and divergent agendas, led to a fractured front that was unable to present a unified front against the Nationalist forces.

Moreover, the lack of effective leadership and a clear command structure exacerbated the factionalism within the Republican camp. As our previous analyses showed, many different Republican governments were established, but they lacked the unity that was necessary for maintaining a more consolidated and outreaching control. The absence of a strong central authority meant that decision-making processes were protracted and often subject to individual or group interests. This led to frequent infighting and a sense of disarray among the Republican ranks, undermining their ability to coordinate military strategies and effectively respond to the Nationalist advances. Making the matters even worse for the Republican front, as it was the case with May 1937, these infightings would eventually reach to a level that would devastate their common war effort and destroy any possibility for fighting side-to-side from that moment onwards.

The absence of a cohesive leadership further weakened the Republican cause, as different factions pursued their own objectives rather than working towards a common goal. The Republicans needed a charismatic leader like Franco, who was able to keep the party together despite internal strife and external threats by using propaganda to bring

together groups with widely divergent ideologies. As the struggle progressed, Manuel Azaña remained the de facto head of the Republican state, but he lacked Caudillo's political clout and ability to unite the various factions. Indeed, one can better understand how the Republican leader failed to reach to the level of his counter-part from a brief explanation of the most apparent differences among these two leaders of the conflict.

Manuel Azaña, despite being an influential figure within the Republican camp during the Spanish Civil War, did not possess a comparable leadership charisma to Franco. Azaña's intellectual and reserved demeanor, although respected among certain circles, did not exude the commanding presence and populist appeal that Franco exhibited.[723] Unlike Franco, Azaña lacked the ability to connect with the masses on an emotional level, relying more on his intellect and political acumen. As Enrique Castro Delgado would underline, although he was the embodiment of the Republican ideals as his actions and thoughts were resembling 'the soul and brain of the new regime', Azaña was still lacking the abilities and knowledge necessary for leading a nation at such a stage of historical tuning point.[724] Indeed, this would be more apparent if one simply considers Azaña's leadership style, which was marked by a tendency towards intellectual debates and democratic processes, while admirable in theory, often hindered swift decision-making and cohesive action. These factors contributed to Azaña's inability to rally the Republican factions effectively and project a charismatic image that could match Franco's magnetic and authoritative persona.

To conclude, it is clear that the Republican front lacked both the political consolidation and the existence of a charismatic leader who could make matters easier for the Republicans in maintaining a more unified front during the Spanish Civil War, which put their chances in a much less-advantaged situation and further hindered their operational capabilities for the remainder of the conflict. Their lack of party unity was evident in their constant bickering amongst themselves; indeed, it could be said that this contributed more to the destruction of their cause than did the Nationalist generals themselves. After making this final, but essential, point about their inability to do so, it seems more reasonable to examine the situation on the front lines, with a greater focus on

[723] Paul Preston, *The Coming of Spanish Civil War: Reform, Reaction and Revolution in the Second Republic* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994): 48-49.

[724] Robert G. Colodny, "Notes on the Origins of the Frente Popular of Spain," *Science and Society*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Summer 1967): 257-274, especially 259-260.

the varying degrees of support among the professional Spanish military throughout the conflict, to gain a better understanding of the impact this crucial factor had on deciding the winners and losers as well as the overall importance it had over the regime survivability during such conflicts.

3.5 The State of Spanish Army Prior to the Spanish Civil War

It is preferable to begin our discussion by pointing out the structural state of this key institution prior to the start of military hostilities in June 1936, rather than delving headfirst into the political divides that formed among the ranks of the Spanish army during the struggle. A number of political, social, and economic variables had an impact on the strength or weakness of the Spanish Army during these long but impactful decades. Although the Spanish military institution had undergone major change around the turn of the century, it still faced obstacles that would have an effect on its effectiveness in the war.

As Spanish did not easily accept the fact that they were no longer an imperial power, one could argue that the same was true of their recognition of the fact that they no longer possessed a fully functional and formidable military. While the Spanish may have had some inkling of their military weakness after the loss of Cuba to American forces, it is arguable that they did not fully grasp the severity of their situation until they suffered heavy casualties at the hands of Moroccan fighters who lacked both coordination and operational capabilities. Surprisingly, Spain, formerly a dominant European colonial power, was having trouble in coercing these loosely organized factions to acknowledge its authority. After finally accepting the gravity of the situation, Spain made some significant but ultimately unsuccessful attempts at modernization, hampered by the country's ongoing economic difficulties and its now further financial capacity.

The Spanish Army lacked modern weaponry, equipment, and training due to such a lack of financing. There were a lot of battalions that were outgunned since they were using antiquated rifles, machine guns, and artillery. Although the artillery did have some more up-to-date pieces, the majority of its equipment was somewhat dated and inconsistent. Military technology was often outdated, although artillery and engineering

commanders had some of the one excellent training available.[725] The army was unable to become motorized or mechanized anyway due to a lack of resources.[726] All these put the state of Spanish Army to a topic of concern for the Spanish politicians, who was well aware of this backwards situation of their armed forces, as it was not possible to consider them a formidable force that one could compare with any other European power at the time.

Moreover, the Spanish army, in general, did not support the progressive views that were popular in Europe in the decades between the two world wars. It was apparent that officer corps had the most visible inability to effectively engage with the now even more formidable and more experienced armies of other nations by their lack of modern technology and by any genuine attempts to bring new means of conducting war. They were unprepared to meet the challenges given by the more dynamic and flexible fighting techniques adopted by the other European armies due to its tenacious concentration on traditional, inflexible, and linear warfare. Their ability to respond to shifting combat conditions and seize strategic openings was hindered by their reliance on antiquated tactics. Some of the more contemporary sources would go as far as conceptualizing this backward status of both the Spanish Army and its officers as one comparable to the dark times of Feudal Ages.[727]

Another important disadvantage of the Spanish Army was the aged yet mostly unexperienced officer corps it had in comparison to other contemporary European armies. Although it remains a hard task to identify the exact number of officers and their distribution on age and years of service, the accounts given by Alpert (2007) appear to be the most intriguing as his figures deal with the status of Spanish Army in 1932, just a year following to the establishment of a Second Republic in Spain. It was quite doubtful that any of the 12,968 active-duty officers were committed to the idea of retiring early so that younger, more creative officers may advance. Of the 217 colonels in the infantry, cavalry,

[725] Michael Alpert, *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 2.

[726] This would change with time with more armored vehicles would become available for the use of Spanish army. However, it appears that the mechanization of Spanish army mostly remained as an import-based and limited attempt. See Steven J. Zaloga, *Spanish Civil War Tanks: The Proving Ground for Blitzkrieg* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2010): 14.

[727] Lawrence A. Fernsworth, "Back of the Spanish Rebellion," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (October 1936): 87-101, especially 93-94.

artillery, and engineers in the Army in 1936, only 26 were younger than 55, while there were also very few majors or even generals under the age of 40.[728]

During the Moroccan conflicts, a considerable number of fresh second lieutenants had been commissioned annually due to Spain's inadequate reserve officer class, resulting in severe promotion bottlenecks.[729] One could argue that this was only made feasible by the opportunities that emerged during the earlier Moroccan campaigns, when an increasing number of junior officers finally found a way out of the army's rigged advancement structure. Skilled officers, especially prospective insurgency leaders, could only advance in rank during times of these intense fighting, as Spain's decision in remaining neutral during the Great War left only the Moroccan conflict as a viable opportunity of such for these ambitious union officers.

After the political climate of the country shifted in 1931 and a Republican rule was declared once more, it would be naïve to assume that nothing major would happen within the ranks of armed forces. During this half decade, the military and its command structure underwent significant reforms intended to modernize the armed services and guarantee the continued allegiance of its personnel. Considering this, it becomes clear that it is crucial to grasp the big picture of these Republican reforms executed over the armed forces in order to comprehend the condition of the army before the eventual rebellion.

3.5.1 The Republican Reforms

One of the key tasks of the officials of the newly born Republican regime was to ensure the evolution of its armed forces, while also ensuring their continuing loyalty. This was a critical mission for them and considering the politically over-active position of the most of armed forces by that time, it should come with no surprise that the level of trust for the army was a record low as many of its old guard were simply regarded as politically unreliable. With a purpose of integrating the Republican indoctrination with the Spanish armed forces, new authorities prioritized finding a solution to this loyalty problem and acted swiftly in enacting some important legislation in response.

[728] Michael Alpert, *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 3-4.

[729] Michael Alpert, *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 4.

One of such important legislations was "Law for the Defense of the Republic" (Ley de Defensa de la República), which was among the first legislations the new regime enacted in October 1931. This was a law consisted of a total of five articles, each of which described the sense of threat that the new regime had from the potentially bitter supporters of the old regime.[730] Indeed this was a law designed to punish violence in political, social, and religious strife, and news casting aggression on the Republic. Jackson (1965) rightly emphasized that this was the new regime's response to the continual confrontations it was having with Carlists and clericals in the north, and by anarchists in the east and south, when the constitution was still incomplete.[731] There were several examples of police and judges who were biased against the Republicans being complicit with the rioters even when they were jailed. Most of these non-collaborators with the new regime were members of the military forces, therefore it stands to reason that the enactment of this law was also an attempt to pacify and further integrate them with the Republican regime. Considering this, it appears the law aimed in the neutralization of any potential woes that could ruin the country politically. Though initially successful, the law and subsequent efforts to eliminate political violence and polarization in Spain's political climate would prove to be futile, at best delaying the inevitable for a mere five years.

Another significant reform was the repeal of Law of Military Jurisdiction (*Ley de Jurisdicciones*), which was practically protecting the military and the officers among its ranks from any critics targeting them. Any verbal or written insult to the integrity of the nation, the flag, or the military would be dealt with according to the local legislation that has been placed under military authority. Freedom of expression, in particular, was severely curtailed by a number of the articles.[732] In contrast to countries where people are subject to ordinary jurisdiction, this law significantly broadened the scope of military authority over the populace. Manuel Azaña, arguably the mastermind behind this decision, emphasized this hypocrisy of having a Republic while also keeping these elements of the ancient regime intact against any criticism.[733] Although it was not a new

[730] Manuel Ballbe, *Orden Publico y Militarismo en la España Constitucional, 1812-1983* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1983): 326-328.

[731] Gabriel Jackson, *The Second Spanish Republic and the Civil War, 1931-1939* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965): 52.

[732] José García Rodríguez, *Conspiración para la Rebelión Militar del 18 de Julio de 1936* (Madrid: Sílex, 2013): 106.

[733] José García Rodríguez, *Conspiración para la Rebelión Militar del 18 de Julio de 1936* (Madrid: Sílex, 2013): 107.

legislation introduced by the Republic, the decision of withdrawing such an influential law from public sphere was definitely a step taken to reduce the influence and curb the power of military that was rightfully regarded as unreliable by the new regime.

In this new era of Republicanism, perhaps no other than Manuel Azaña's himself involved with the reformation of armed forces. He was well-aware of the fact that most of military equipment were out of the necessities of this new age while the same could be also said regarding the situation of its officer corps. Indeed, he identified such problems even prior to the establishment of Second Spanish Republic. Some might argue that his beliefs were validated when he was asked to write a paper on war and the navy for the Reform Party assembly in November 1918. In it, he highlighted many of the same concerns that would later inform his reform strategy. His main concern was to keep the army out of political disputes, so he worked to limit military jurisdiction to the bare minimum required to enforce things like order within the ranks, stop the already excessive growth of the number of officers, uphold legal protections for service members, and shorten mandatory military service.[734]

One can argue that finding good candidates for top military positions was among the hardest challenges Azaña and his colleagues faced with. Although it was a certainty that the hostility towards the new regime was more apparent among the older officers, a good number of junior officers were also sharing this dislike that dominated the army corps. Arguably in an attempt to ensure at least the reluctant loyalty of these junior officers, a more skills-based promotion model was introduced and those officers who had shown their military skills were allowed to raise across the ranks much faster regardless of their stance regarding the new regime, as long as they were acting at least neutral rather than being openly against it.[735] It is possible to speculate that the Republican bet was trusting the reluctance support of these younger generation officers through their bitterness with the ineffectiveness of the previous regimes that they now regarded as unstainable.[736]

[734] "Ponencia de Guerra y Marina Leída por Manuel Azaña en la Asamblea del Partido Reformista," *En Sol*, 1 de Diciembre de 1918. Available in Manuel Azaña, *Obras Completas*, Vol. I: 1897-1920 (Madrid: Ministerio de la Presidencia / General Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales, 2007): 391.

[735] Manuel Azaña, *Diarios Completos: Monarquía, Republica, Guerra Civil* (Madrid: Titivillus, 2000): 47.

[736] For a more detailed discussion on this and the extent of the Azaña Reforms see Michael Alpert, *La Reforma Militar de Azaña* (Madrid, 1982). Likewise, for a discussion more briefly, yet in English, see Michal Albert *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Although this was a very legitimate expectation, with the ineffectiveness the Republican governments will soon portray, the very same strategy would lead these younger officers also becoming disillusioned with the Republic.[737] Making the matters worse, the Spanish high-command and many of the prestigious officers would already disillusioned with the Republican regime as Azaña relied mostly on his close-political connections in the army to pursue such reforms rather than collaborating with more popular and influential figures.[738]

3.5.2 The Spanish Army in 1936

One must also evaluate the state of the Spanish Army before the outbreak of full-scale civil war to gain a deeper understanding of the available statistics and facts. Here, the numbers of officers in the Spanish Army in July 1936, days before the outbreak of open hostilities, will be of primary interest for our study. This will provide a foundation for the subsequent arguments where the exact number of such officers supporting either camp will be addressed at length, and it will help us comprehend the professional army corps available for both sides to recruit. Luckily, the data available regarding these statistics is both more reliable and certain in comparison the case concerning the Imperial Russian Army at the eve of Great War in 1914.

Some of the most highlighted international sources claim that the number of active-service officers of the Spanish Army by the time Civil War erupted in July 1936 was about 15,400.[739] On the other hand, there also exists some Spanish sources arguing that this number was rather as high as 18,000.[740] However, one of the most reliable data appears to come from the records of Ministry of War of the Spanish Republic as these figures concerning the size and division of its armed forced were published annually as

[737] Unlike the popular view, it appears the younger officers were those that committed to the conspiracies against the Republican government the most. See Raymond Carr (eds.), *The Republic and the Civil War in Spain* (London: Macmillan, 1971): 13-14.

[738] Gabriel Jackson, *The Spanish Republic and the Civil War 1931-1939* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965): 171.

[739] James Matthews, "'The Vanguard of Sacrifice'? Political Commissars in the Republican Popular Army During the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939," *War in History*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (January 2014): 82-101, especially 83-84.

[740] Francisco Alía Miranda, *Julio de 1936: Conspiración y Alzamiento contra la Segunda Republica* (Madrid: Titivillus, 2011): 171.

"Military Yearbooks of Spain (*Anuario militar de España*) accordingly.[741] Through a careful examination and classification, the following list appears to be the most reliable source of numbers of officers and the distribution of their ranks accordingly:

Table 3.7 The Distribution of Ranks in Spanish Army (30 April 1936)[742]

Army Corps	Generals	Officers	Non-Commissioned Officers	Total
General Staff	81	-	-	81
Staff Service	-	279	-	279
Infantry	-	3,719	3,793	7,512
Cavalry	-	622	384	1,006
Artillery	-	1,673	1,718	3,391
Legal	-	843	783	1,626
Engineer	-	69	-	69
Administration	-	551	169	720
Health (Medic.)	-	568	123	691
Health (Pharm.)	-	108	-	108
Any Army Corps	-	177	18	195
Total	81	8,609	6,988	**15,678**

These figures verify the accounts given by most of the international scholars. However, it does not have to contradict the alternative data provided by some Spanish researchers as their figures mostly include those officers who reported to return the duty by the time the Civil War erupted. These being said, still it appears more logical to utilize these 15,678 figures we have gathered from the official records of the Republic by 30 April 1936. Based on these figures, now it appears more logical to pursue our specific research on the different levels of participation among the professional military for the belligerent factions.

3.5.3 When the Civil War Broke Out: Initial Picture

It is widely assumed that the majority of professional army officers serving in July 1936 participated in the uprising, given its military coup nature. Nevertheless, the recent studies indicate that the initial uprising was a minority movement, with most active officers refraining from denouncing the Republican regime or joining the mutinous

[741] Because of the Civil War erupted, the last data available is for 30 April 1936. Nevertheless, considering the general trend of promotions and retirements, these figures available appear to be the most reliable numbers.

[742] See *Anuario Militar de España - Año 1936* (Madrid: Imprenta y Talleras de Ministerio de La Guerra, 1936): 130.

leaders of the coup. The Spanish military uprising that occurred from July 17-20, 1936, is, therefore, mostly regarded as a vibrant coup carried out by a relatively small group of resolute military conspirators.[743] According to Payne's (1971) estimates, the rebellion was led by a group of approximately 1000 officers, some of whom were not on active duty.[744] Regarding the participation of the active-officers, the contemporary Spanish calculations suggested only 3 of every 100 these, which makes about 500, openly joined the plot initially.[745] Considering these, it is plausible to suggest that the initial supporters of the insurgency consisted both those who were in active service as well as those who either retired almost equally.

What is certain, in fact, is that the dedication and tenacity of this relatively small but tenacious group stiffened reticent colleagues, ousted reticent senior commanders, and in a rare instance, ignited the mutiny of entire garrisons. Prior to examining the rapid evolution of the situation, it is helpful to review the divisions and their commanders stationed in different regions of the Republic and identify those who initially participated in the uprising. This will allow us to better comprehend the initial support existed for the military revolt, and which factors might contributed to the increasing support among the officers to participate the Civil War on the side of Nationalists eventually.

The majority of the 8 military region commanders declined to participate in the rebellion as well as those out of 24 division generals. Several individuals, namely Salcedo in La Coruña, Batet in Burgos, Villa-Abrille in Seville, Molero in Valladolid, and Gómez Morato, who held the position of High Commissioner in Spanish Morocco, were taken into custody by the insurgents.[746] On the other hand, Miguel Cabanellas, Goded, and Franco participated in the insurrection in Zaragoza, the Balearics, and the Canaries, respectively. Pedro La Cerda, José Riquelme, Cristóbal Peña Abuín, Juan García Gómez-Caminero, and Carlos Masquelet were divisional generals who remained loyal to the Republican regime. These individuals in question were approximately 65 years old and

[743] Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (Harmondsworth: Indiana University Press, 1977): 32-33.

[744] Stanley Payne, "The Army, the Republic and the Outbreak of the Civil War," in Raymond Carr (eds.), *The Republic and the Civil War in Spain* (London: Macmillan, 1971): 79-112, especially 98.

[745] Francisco Alía Miranda, *Julio de 1936: Conspiración y Alzamiento contra la Segunda Republica* (Madrid: Titivillus, 2011): 171.

[746] Michal Albert *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 86.

had limited involvement in the war beyond the initial few weeks.[747] Considering this one can argue that, despite all the expectations, most of the high-command, or those who had the real power in terms of military were either hesitant to openly participate in the insurgency or took arms against it directly, even though this latter option resulted mostly in them perish respectively.

The table below illustrates the fateful decisions of the generals of Spanish Army, who were still in active service by July 1936 when the insurgency attempt was unleashed. It is often assumed that a general supported the insurrection if he resided or was stationed in the region where the revolt was successful and there is no information on his detention. Generals in the Republican zone whose loyalty was questioned were placed in Q (i.e., they were denied positions) while their cases were being investigated.

Table 3.8 The Decisions of the Generals of Spanish Army[748]

Rank	Total Number in Active-Service	Joined the Insurgency (N)	Remained Loyal (R)	Murdered / Died	Dismissed/ Arrested
Lieutenant-Generals	3	-	-	-	3
Generals of Division	24	7	10	2	5
Generals of Brigade	57	15	14	12	16
Others	14	2	2	1	9
Total	98	24	26	15	33

After making these essential points and illustrating the data available regarding the initial proposition of the professional officers who immediately opted to participate in the military uprising, it appears beneficial to proceed with the dynamics and mechanisms through which the professional military would find itself more exposed to the crisis and eventually had to make a decision to support a side of the conflict. Unfortunately for the Republic, the inner tensions among the factions remained loyal to the government cooperated in a much smaller scale, and their hostility towards those remaining military officers would make it harder for professional army corps to continue supporting the Popular Front. On the other hand, through immense propaganda in

[747] Michal Albert *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 87.

[748] According to Albert's (2007) research. See Michal Albert *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 319-321.

portrayal of himself as the savior of Spain from such a turmoil, Franco would emerge much more successful in comparison to his rivals in recruiting more of these officers for his insurgent army.

3.6 The Nationalist Success of Having the Support of Officer Corps

Although it was a certain fact that things did not seem so bright for the insurgents at the start of the conflict, one thing that was certain was their appearing much more consolidated among themselves in comparison to the politically divided Republicans. Especially following Franco's establishing himself as the ultimate and undoubtful leader of the Nationalist campaign, his faction seemed now more reliable than ever, and Caudillo would also take an advantage of his charismatic appeal to the officers of Spanish army, most of whom – regardless of their political orientation and feelings concerning the uprising – was sympathetic to him because of his earlier successes in Morocco and the suppression of Asturias incident. Making matters worse for the Republicans, Franco was very experienced with the tactics and strategies required for a conflict like this as both the battlefields of Morocco and the subsequent irregular fighting erupted prepared him for this position.[749] Now, utilizing the hostility towards to government, both due to the unsuccessful Azaña Reforms as well as the increased political polarization and violence erupted the country, he would experience little difficulty in convincing his fellow officers to join his crusade.

On these grounds, Franco and his Nationalist forces utilized three key points in their campaign to recruit more officers for their faction. These were emphasizing the ideological alignments among the officer corps in their attempt on providing a historical justification for their uprising, making sure the professionalism and discipline prevailed to attract the attention of dissatisfied officers who were still supporting the Republicans, and executing violent purges to ensure the loyalty of those who were fighting for them while also threatening those who did not join them to face with serious repressions in case of their emerging victorious. While the first two factors undeniably facilitated the Nationalist recruitment campaign substantially, it is possible to argue that the last factor contributed the most as at this point the vast majority of Spanish Army were still acting

[749] Paul Preston, "General Franco as Military Leader," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 4 (1994): 21-41, especially 25.

more with opportunist and pragmatist motivations rather than the ideological considerations. Still, to provide a better understanding of each of these factors, it is better to take a brief look at them respectively.

Ideological Alignments and Providing a Historical Justification

The ideological alignment during the Spanish Civil War significantly influenced the loyalties of officers who enlisted with General Franco and the Nationalist faction. The Nationalists positioned themselves as guardians of conservative and traditional values, aiming to safeguard the established social structure and counter what they viewed as leftist ideologies that they believed disrupted the peace and unity of Spain. Based on these premises, they often portrayed their campaign as one comparable to *Reconquista* of medieval times, claiming what they were up to was establishing the order back to the Spanish lands and protecting the Church and traditional values.

It is important to highlight that Franco's overall strategy was focusing on long-term gains rather than taking steps to bring a victory in much shorter instance. As Preston (1994) claimed, the general's ambitious were not limited to achieving a victory at the fields, but rather he emphasized in securing long-term political gains.[750] Arguably, that might contribute his consolidation of power at a much more successful pace, and his eventually establishing himself as the lifetime dictator of Spain. Undeniably, this also contributed to his eventual success in recruiting more support among the professional military for the Nationalist side, as he would take the necessary political and military steps throughout the conflict to ensure the continuing of acquiring more of these men for his forces.

With a focus on long-term benefits, the Nationalists strategically positioned themselves as guardians of conservative principles by associating their cause with anti-communism, Catholicism, Spanish nationalism, and authoritarianism. As it gave a vision of restoring order, protecting old institutions, and battling what they viewed as the extreme and chaotic elements connected with the Republican side, this ideological framework appealed to officers who were politically conservative or had right-wing leanings. By stressing the significance of these ideals, the Nationalists were able to recruit

[750] Paul Preston, "General Franco as Military Leader," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 4 (1994): 21-41, especially 23.

more officers who shared their ideological ideas and desired a return to a more conventional and disciplined Spain.[751] The failure of the Republic to prevent radical elements from dominating the public sphere is noteworthy, as it decreased the likelihood of cooperation from remaining officers who held more moderate conservative views. Instead, individuals were faced with the choice of aligning themselves with the Nationalists or opting to leave the service through desertion.

The opposition to communism played a significant role in further motivating officers to align themselves with the Nationalists. Fearing that the Republican government's ties to left-wing elements would eventually lead Spain toward socialism and communist policies, many officers saw communism as a threat to the existing social and economic order. The Nationalists exploited these fears by positioning themselves as the resolute protectors against communism and its perceived threats. The Nationalists gained support from officers who were committed to preserving the current social structure, protecting private property, and upholding the influence of the Catholic Church, by emphasizing the risks associated with communist ideology.[752] Reconciliating with the traditional values while also portraying their enemy as the one trying to destroy such values through establishing a communist rule in Spain, the Nationalist characterized their campaign as one attempting to prevent this by wholeness their cause.[753] Indeed, the Nationalist cause benefited greatly from this anti-communist stance, as it successfully attracted a large number of officers during the Spanish Civil War, especially with the Republic's becoming more and more of a communist puppet of the Soviet Union through the conflict.

These ideological attempts to provide a moral ground for the uprising ultimately had a substantial impact on the motivations of various officers. Although throughout the conflict, both sides would experience a critical desertion problem, the Republic had to bear the greatest costs as years pass with no visible success in the horizon, loyalist forces would have to recruit even older men to their ranks, further jeopardizing the discipline

[751] Frances Lannon, "The Church's Crusade against the Republic," in Paul Preston (eds.), *Revolution and War in Spain, 1931-1939* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002): 35-58, especially 48 between 54.

[752] Michael Alpert, *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): especially 164-165. Alpert explains how Nationalist troops, both the leg infantry and the officer corps became disillusioned with the Republicans while also expressing the importance of Nationalist propaganda aiming to recruit them through such religious and nationalistic grounds.

[753] Elizabeth Munson, "Franco's 'Family' and the Legitimation of Authority," *Mediterranean Studies*, Vol. 6 (1996): 137-148, especially 144-145.

among the Republican army.[754] Considering the fact that Spain had a long history embracing the traditional values and army had always had close ties with the religious institutions, it should come as a no surprise that the Nationalist propaganda was well-coordinated and planned, although it seems hard to make an exact prediction on the numbers of officers it pushed to switch sides during the conflict.

Emphasizing Professionalism and Ensuring Discipline

Another important aspect of the Nationalist propaganda campaign was their focus on portraying their forces as one that embraces the professionalism and the military discipline among its ranks. Although at the beginning, it was a fact that Nationalists lacked both the manpower and critical industrial base to muster a great army, their early control on some of the most professional units, including the Army of Africa, made it possible for them to maintain a higher degree of professionalism among its officers. As these were the troops that had the most experience in comparison to those being recruited in the mainland with no warfare experience, their participation for the Nationalist cause provided the insurgents an effective narrative that the rebels utilized substantially. Making the matters worse for the Republicans, with the increasing demands of mobs for government's distributing them arms to fight against the insurgency, the chaos among the army ranks became an even worse problem for the authorities.

The Nationalists presented themselves as the force capable of restoring stability and enforcing military discipline, in contrast to what some officers perceived as disarray and indiscipline within the Republican ranks. They highlighted the importance of a professional and well-trained military, emphasizing the need for strict adherence to military codes of conduct and chain of command. This portrayal resonated with officers who believed in the importance of military discipline and sought an environment that valued order and efficiency. Considering this, it is possible to attribute this emphasize on the sustainment of military discipline and professionalism on the Nationalist success in recruiting more members from the army corps for their campaign.

Like the first factor, the shortcomings of the Republicans bolstered the Nationalist propaganda because it was common knowledge that the Republicans had lost any

[754] James Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors: Republican Popular Army and Nationalist Army Conscripts in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): 180.

advantage they may have had in military professionalism they may have enjoyed at the very beginning of the conflict. The government and left factions supporting it were hesitant to trust the remaining officer corps during the aid to the Republic, as they perceived them as untrustworthy and potentially prone to defecting to the rebels under particular circumstances.[755] These fears proved accurate when individuals such as Colonel Antonio Aranda, who initially expressed support for the Republic, quickly took control of the city of Oviedo for the Nationalist forces following a group of armed miners had left to assist in the defense of Madrid. In the Republican zone, where mistrust of the old army's dwindling remnants was already widespread, Aranda's deception only strengthened that sentiment.[756]

Although such a reaction to the ongoing military uprising where the true loyalties of army corps was far beyond predictable, given that many of the insurgents were former staff officers who had previously pledged loyalty to Republican ideals, as the conflict continued, the remaining officers in the army who did not support the insurgency faced increasing challenges in collaborating with an entity that lacked the trust of both the government and the people. This resulted in the empowerment of militias, or as Casanova (2010) conceptualized "the people in arms," to spring up all over the place, and a large portion of what could have been the republican army was disorganized from the start and could not unite to impose any sort of a well-established military order or discipline among its ranks.[757]

Making the matters worse for the Republicans, such a reluctant reliance on militia units and irregular forces arguably introduced further challenges in terms of sustaining the discipline and coordination among their ranks. The militias often operated independently, influenced by their political affiliations, and lacking a centralized command. They would not hesitate to disobey commands and prioritize their local and politicized interests rather than pursuing the necessities of an overall military strategy. There were even cases when the disillusioned Republican troops or militia turned back to

[755] Charles J. Esdaile, *The Spanish Civil War: a Military History* (New York: Routledge, 2019): 101-102.

[756] Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, *Franco and the Spanish Civil War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004): 35.

[757] Julián Casanova, *The Spanish Republic and Civil War*, trs. Martin Douch, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010): 157.

their officers, and shot them to death, which proved the government's inability in pushing the forces under its command to obey any sort of discipline.[758]

On the other hand, the Nationalists were much harsher in adopting the necessities of sustaining the discipline among their ranks, and through a much stronger central command embodied with the insurgency's core cadre that let them have a much more professional force under their leadership. They revived not only the concept of the warrior-monk as a masculine ideal, but also emphasized traits such as conservatism, military discipline, and compliance to hierarchy as core features of their forces.[759] Moreover, the argument of acting in order to maintain the order had always been the core feature of any Nationalist propaganda, and this arguably further facilitated their ability to gain the support of more professional officers through the way as Republic indeed gave them a solid ground of legitimacy concerning this disorder among the ranks without any doubts.[760] Considering this, one should acknowledge the fact that, while there were instances of disciplined and effective units within the Republican forces, overall, the combination of political fragmentation, limited training, and decentralized command structures resulted in a lower level of military professionalism compared to the Nationalists.

Purges to Ensure Loyalty

While it is important to make an emphasize on the tactics and strategies followed by the Nationalist leadership to recruit more officers for their cause, it is equally essential to focus on the methods they employed to prevent any major desertions among their ranks. To this end, the Nationalists conducted purges within their own ranks to guarantee allegiance and keep order during the struggle. Even though these purges would not be as widespread as the ones in Republican territory, they would have a greater impact because they would be supervised much more centrally and carried out swiftly.

These purges targeted officers and individuals suspected of disloyalty or sympathies towards the Republican cause. Such actions did not only play a significant role in shaping

[758] Michael Seidman, *Republic of Egos: A Social History of the Spanish Civil War* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002): 113-115.

[759] James Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors: Republican Popular Army and Nationalist Army Conscripts in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): 92-93.

[760] Herbert R. Southworth, *Conspiracy and the Spanish Civil War: The Brainwashing of Francisco Franco* (London & New York: Routledge: 2002): 102-103.

the Nationalist faction, but also in consolidating power within their ranks and providing a solid example for those who were not so keen to join the ranks of Franco's forces what might they face against in the case of a prospective Nationalist victory. These were conducted to eliminate potential dissent and any perceived threats to Franco's leadership. Nationalist leaders were concerned about maintaining unity and ideological purity within their forces. They sought to root out officers who were suspected of sympathizing with the Republicans or holding alternative political views that deviated from the Nationalist agenda.

These were typically carried out by paramilitary groups called "Repression Brigades," whose primary duty it was to track down and execute anyone who had Republican sympathies or were viewed unfavorably by the insurgents. These purges became increasingly routine as the conflict went on, in part because intimidation and repression were seen as essential tools of political authority in the Nationalist zone.[761] Especially those civilian officials and military officers claimed to have cooperated with the Republicans or hesitated to facilitate the execution of insurgency were targeted significantly. Following the Nationalist capture of former Republican-held territories including Badajoz and Malaga, many of these professionals were executed through such bloody purges.[762]

The staff officers who did not participate in the rebellion where it began were included among those who were originally targeted by the Nationalist forces. Those who opposed the rebellion in Morocco were swiftly jailed, and some of them were even executed. These included several senior Legion and Moroccan Regulares officers, a handful of Staff officers, and even Franco's cousin, who oversaw the air force in the Protectorate's Spanish region.[763] Similar to General Romerales, High Commissioner of the zone, General Gómez Morato, Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces in Morocco, was detained and later executed by court-martial.[764] In such zones where the Nationalists were successful to establish a strong foothold there may have been several hundred

[761] George R. Esenwein, *The Spanish Civil War: A Modern Tragedy* (New York & London: Routledge, 2005): 64-65.

[762] Paul Preston, "General Franco as Military Leader," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 4 (1994): 21-41, especially 35.

[763] Michael Alpert, *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 88-89.

[764] C. Navajas Zubeldia, *Leales y Rebeldes: la Tragedia de los Militares Republicanos* (Madrid: Síntesis, 2011): 164-167.

arrests, which appears hard to give an exact number of. However, it is similarly crucial to note that some of these officers, particularly those who declared allegiance to the Nationalist cause and participated in the insurgent forces, can be deemed to have been released later.

This latter strategy found itself a good use when it eventually got combined with the external efforts pursued by the Nationalists, who still were able to give a second chance for the officer corps, as long as they could be regarded revivable. Although some military personnel displayed apathy, others exhibited active hostility towards their respective causes. The efficiency of ensuring the service of men was predominantly demonstrated by the Nationalist Army, despite the shared challenge faced by both sides. One can make the claim that it is noteworthy that the Republic prioritized persuading their officers to remain loyal, whereas the Nationalists implemented a system where effectively serving in the armed forces was often the most favorable choice for individuals, even if they had previously held left-wing beliefs.[765]

3.6.2 The Professional Military's Support for the Nationalist Faction

There is some debate about the precise number of officers who served in the Nationalist forces. However, certain estimates offer a reliable foundation for assessing the influence of these military professionals on the Nationalists' eventual victory. Here, it is essential to separate the numbers of junior officers enlisted in the midst of the battle from the data of the professional officers before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. Given the circumstances, it is advisable to prioritize the available data pertaining to individuals who were actively enlisted in the Spanish Army before the outbreak of the conflict.

Although it is hard to go through a yearly estimate for the participation of officers for the Nationalist camp, it is noteworthy that, almost in all accounts, various scholars agree on the idea that the Nationalist support among the officer corps skyrocketed and by the end of the conflict, it was apparent that most of these professional officers eventually supported the Nationalist cause. According to such estimates, out of 15,000 approximate

[765] James Matthews, *Reluctant Warriors: Republican Popular Army and Nationalist Army Conscripts in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): 142.

strength of officer corps that were actively serving in the army by April 1936, almost 8,000 found themselves participating the insurgency against the Republic.[766]

De Hoces (1971), whose calculations seem to be the most promising on the precise figures of the division of the Spanish Army throughout the conflict, provides some of the most illuminating information about this involvement of various army corps for the Nationalist cause. His calculations can also be used as support for our research because he only considers people who were actively serving in the army before the start of the conflict. The table below show how many of these officers were able to join the Nationalist side participated in various army corps and their ranks. While there were significant participations from the more organized regular army units including the peninsular divisions and the infamous Army of Africa, there was also a substantial participation of such officers to the Nationalist cause from the less-organized troops, such as Civil Guards and Carabineers.

Table 3.9 The Officers in Regular Units Participated to the Nationalists[767]

Peninsular Army (Including Balearics and Canaries)	4,660 out of 9,000 (51.78%)
Army of Africa	Almost all out of 2,300 (About 100%)
Civil Guards	700 out of 1,500 (46.67%)
Carabineers	290 out of 700 (41.43%)
Total	Approximately 7,950 out of 13,500 (58.9%)

Although at first his might be regarded as a lower level of participation as it might also imply the remaining half of the officer corps would remain loyal to the Republic, it is important to emphasize the fact that many among 15,000 active-list officers who were unlucky enough to find themselves on the opposite zones of control were charged swiftly and there were a considerable amount of them being executed at the hands of both Nationalist and Republican authorities, thus, significantly reduced the pool of officers left available for the factions to recruit from.

[766] Julián Casanova, *The Spanish Republic and Civil War*, trs. Martin Douch, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010): 157-158, where Casanova makes the calculation equal to a half of such officers the exact figure is calculated by others. See E. R. Hooton, *Spain in Arms: A Military History of the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Philadelphia: Casemate Publishers, 2019): 48.

[767] Ricardo de la Cierva y de Hoces, "The Nationalist Army in the Spanish Civil War," in Reymond Carr (eds.), *The Republic and the Civil War in Spain* (London: Macmillan, 1971): 188-212, especially in 188-189.

According to these numbers, a sizable fraction of the professional army corps that was still serving the Spanish Republic in July 1936 was on board with the Nationalist uprising. It is crucial to emphasize that the backing of a significant portion of the Spanish officer corps played a decisive role in the ultimate victory of the Nationalists during the Spanish Civil War. This could be the case given that the Nationalists had a significant edge over the Republican troops due to their superior military expertise, organization, and resources. Things become even more difficult for the Republican authorities when the officer corps' cohesion and solidarity, combined with their capacity to garner international support, reinforced the Nationalist cause. Now that the significance of this finding has been emphasized, it is instructive to examine the role of the Republican Army, sometimes known as the Popular Army (Reds after their enemies) in this context.

3.7 The Republican Failure in Having the Support of Officer Corps

Maintaining political and social order and hierarchy during a civil war is challenging for any government. This challenge extends to ensuring discipline within the military ranks. These were the conditions that the Republican authorities found themselves exposed to as they were aware the fact that they had to ensure the support of the remaining officers, who indeed remarkably did not participate the initial uprising despite the expectations of many high-ranking figures among the Nationalist cause. Nevertheless, it was definitely not an easy task to find a good framework through which these officers could be utilized for the Republican cause.

First and utmost, the Republic had already been facing a dilemma of trust as it encountered hostility from many officers who had served in its army prior to the uprising that began in July 1936. The Popular Movement displayed hesitancy regarding the loyalty of the remaining officers, given that the key figures of the Nationalist movement were previously generals and officers who had pledged allegiance to the Republic. In a tumultuous environment, the Republican authorities faced additional challenges as trade unions and civilians withdrew their support from the armed forces. They not only began to question the loyalty of the remaining officers but also sometimes went as far as labeling them as "traitors to the people". It is advisable to delve further into these points and seek broader explanations for the Republican faction's failure to recruit and secure

the support of professional officers in motivating them to rush for the rescue of the regime.

Political Divisions and the Lack of a Historical Narrative

Many of the shortcomings of the Republican government could be traced back to Nationalist propaganda, which sometimes accurately and sometimes inaccurately portrayed the government as a fractured body under the control of communists who were not looking out for the best interests of the Spanish people or the army. It was a proven truth that the Republican faction lacked party unity or cohesion due to the preexisting political divides that made it impossible to maintain a well-functioning order among its ranks, as it was previously highlighted. It became more challenging to gain control over the officer corps, who might have already had doubts or ideological disagreements with the Republican cause, because the Republican camp was composed of a combination of several left-wing factions, including anarchists, socialists, and communists.

Given this, it seems plausible to imagine that the political and ideological divisions that existed at the time played a significant part in the Republican regime's further alienation of the officer corps, who were unable to locate a similar historical narrative to support fighting for the Republic as it was the case among the insurgent Nationalist forces. Finding any such ties that could raise their morale and willingness to fight against the rebels was very difficult because, aside from those who fought with similar ideological concerns and backed various communist movements active in the Republican side, it was also exceedingly difficult to recruit any other meaningful participation from the military specialists of the Spanish army.

This disparity was particularly evident as the Republicans lacked a comparable military tradition and a sense of pride in Spain's military history, unlike the Nationalists. The officer corps, being deeply rooted in military traditions and values, might have been less inclined to back a faction that did not possess a historical narrative that aligned with their professional identity and sense of pride. The Republicans faced additional challenges in formulating a cohesive narrative due to the complexity of the issues at hand. Furthermore, their faction was characterized by a revolutionary atmosphere, as it embraced radical social and political transformations. The appeal of this approach was limited to specific factions within the Republican coalition. However, it caused discomfort among conservative-minded officers who were dedicated to maintaining the

current social order. The officer corps faced difficulties in aligning themselves with the Republican cause due to the revolutionary atmosphere.

As the conflict continued, the Republican zone experienced increasing anarchy and chaos, which aligned with the revolutionary atmosphere. In response, some officers who had previously supported the Republic switched sides, while others intentionally undermined the Republican war effort from within. Due to concerns among Republicans that this phenomenon could potentially lead to the Republic's internal collapse, a witch hunt was launched against military personnel deemed untrustworthy. These professionals were systematically targeted consequently. This situation led to additional challenges in civilian-military relations within the chaotic environment, causing more officers to become disillusioned with the Republican authorities they were serving.

Anti-Militarist Propaganda

At first glance, it may seem illogical to alienate the professional military in a conflict. However, the Republic was unable to counter the growing anti-militarist sentiments among civilians. These individuals considered the officer corps as very unreliable and lacked trust in them. As a result, they avoided cooperating with the military in almost every instance. However, it would be incorrect to assume that the rise in anti-militarist sentiments and the accompanying propaganda were unique to this particular period. The army corps has historically been viewed as unreliable by leftist groups due to its historical association with the Catholic Church and monarchy in governing traditional Spain. Arguably, the military coup nature of the start of the conflict made the matters only worse and made it complicated for the Republican authorities to counter anti-militarism which eventually further annoyed the officers from remaining loyal to a government and people that had no trust left in them.

Once the initial clashes ceased and it became apparent that the conflict would not be resolved quickly, there was a contentious debate regarding whether to provide weapons to civilian groups. These groups lacked professional training but were highly motivated to suppress the insurgency. It can be argued that Republican authorities, particularly those who maintained a more rational viewpoint, recognized the impracticality of maintaining cooperation between paramilitary units and the regular army. However, amidst the chaotic environment, those who were the most vocal in their support for the paramilitary groups prevailed in the debate, leading the Republic to increasingly rely on them. After

the transfer of armed power to numerous irregular revolutionary militias in what would later be referred to as the Republican zone, the authority held by the Republican government started to diminish. The revolutionary groups subsequently demanded the disbandment of the remaining regular army due to their lack of trust in these military units.[768] Given the circumstances, it is not surprising that an increasing number of officers sought to defect from the Republican ranks. They either sought refuge in Nationalist zones or were promptly executed by vengeful revolutionary mobs.

As a result, the Republic was forced by anti-militarist propaganda to disband what was left of the Spanish army, and a new force that was strong in propaganda but poor in professionalism appeared to fill the gaps. This Popular Army, which was created after careful consideration of the remaining officers' sociopolitical identities and ideological allegiances, empowered leftist ideological groups, further complicating the survival of any significant order and hierarchy that might have survived in the Republic's armed forces. In fact, when the Republic disbanded the remaining army units and gave their weapons to party and union militias, these armed workers failed to make any notable gains or conquest Nationalist territory in set-piece battles against a much more formidable foe emerged with their experienced military formations.[769] Simultaneously, it also brought a brand-new challenge for the remaining officers, some of whom interestingly were still loyal to the Republic by this point even without any clear ideological allegiance, to impose a command structure above these new forces as the revolutionary militia would often prioritize the goals and interests of the revolutionary groups they felt themselves attached to.

The Dissolution of a Unified Central Command

Lacking a cohesive and consistent command structure made it difficult for the Republic to efficiently coordinate military actions and the logical use and distribution of their scarce resources. The Republican troops, as previously mentioned, by this point were made up of a variety of militias, each of which had its own command structure and frequently operated autonomously. Because they prioritized their own interests over acting as a solid group that would be better equipped to bring victory to them, it was fairly

[768] Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War, the Soviet Union, and Communism* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2004): 109-111.

[769] Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, *Franco and the Spanish Civil War* (London & New York: Routledge, 2001): 39.

possible to view them as being untrustworthy to one another as a collective. Establishing a unified chain of command and effective strategic coordination was challenging due to this dispersed organization. Decision-making became dispersed in the absence of a clear central authority, resulting in contradictory tactics and inefficiency on the battlefield.

In many ways, revolution and government-led political mobilization were irreconcilable, as the authorities found it very difficult to uphold the necessary political order that would require a greater central command to control the available troops. The Republican administration believed that it needed to consolidate power within itself, away from municipal councils, regional governments, and labor unions, while also raising industrial and agricultural productivity in order to prosecute the struggle more successfully.[770] Given this, one can contend that the absence of any significant central authority was solely due to the backdrop of such a wider decentralization. Here, it appears beneficial to make a reference to the Russian Civil War, when a similarly unfortunate decision was made by the Petrograd Soviet and Kerensky's Provisional Government as they coexisted and competed for more power. At the time in 1917, between two revolutions, this infighting made it even more difficult for them to exert a more unified force against the expanding Bolsheviks. Even if there were no exact institutions that could be identified in the same way, the Spanish Republic was now dealing with a comparable issue. However, it seems plausible to suggest that these politicized paramilitaries and the surviving professional officers engaged in a comparable struggle for greater power.

It is noteworthy that certain officers who remained loyal to the Republican cause advocated for the maintenance of a command structure that would facilitate strategic coordination, rather than granting complete authority to irregular groups. Among those who demonstrated loyalty to the Republic during the insurrection of July 18, 1936, were General Vicente Rojo, Chief of Staff of the Republican Army, and Antonio Escobar, the Guardia Civil commander in Barcelona. These high-ranking officers chose not to participate in the uprising and instead remained committed to serving the Republic. Furthermore, they made efforts to maintain professionalism within the forces under their command. While their attempts appear to be foiled with the reluctance of the leftist groups

[770] Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, *Franco and the Spanish Civil War* (London & New York: Routledge, 2001): 108-109.

in operating within the functional framework officers like them offered, it is worth to mention what they though needed to be done for the suppression of the insurgency.

The several volumes written by General Rojo, in which he presented a full overview of the issue of this duality of authority between the central command and those paramilitary groups that frequently operate independently, appear to be a great source from which such considerations can be traced back. He correctly emphasized the fact that there was a glaring lack of confidence in the remaining officer corps among virtually every single government official and the politicized crowds, and that this not only threatened the continuation of a functional military-civilian relationship to exist but also to the dissolution of any central command as it made it nearly impossible for officers like him to impose orders to these loose ideological units.[771]

General Rojo was a highly rare officer who had no ideological commitment to the Republican cause and was well-known for being a devout Catholic who nonetheless stayed loyal to the government.[772] It is grieving that the Republic avoided hearing his comments and worries. If suggestions and worries from officers like him had any real influence on how the Republican faction operated, it would not only undermine Nationalist propaganda that portrayed the Republic and those who supported it as radical leftists, but it would also encourage other Nationalist officers to question the morality of their own conduct.

To conclude, it is apparent that the loyal officers such as Rojo faced a challenging situation as they frequently found themselves in opposition to paramilitary groups and the radical factions within the Republican government. While the Nationalists under General Francisco Franco's leadership profited from a coherent and well-functioning command, the Republic's leadership was indeed much more of a disorganized and ineffective structure. Franco demonstrated the ability to exercise command over his forces, establish well-defined chains of command, and enhance the efficiency of military operations. The Nationalists' utilization of a centralized command structure conferred them with a strategic advantage, ultimately leading to their triumph in the conflict. Taking this into account, it is not unreasonable to conclude that this is one of the factors that led to the

[771] Vicente Rojo, *¡Alerta los Pueblos!* (Madrid, 1938): 64-66.
[772] Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, *Franco and the Spanish Civil War* (London & New York: Routledge, 2001): 133-134.

downfall of the Republicans. The diminishing trust in remaining officers, coupled with the empowerment of radical elements, led to increased disillusionment among officers towards the Republic. This resulted in a decline in professionalism and discipline within the Republican ranks, disrupted the necessities of a centralized command structure, and eventually posing challenges for those who remained loyal to the Republic.

3.7.2 The Professional Military's Support for the Republican Faction

Although it was a fact that initially most of the officers remained loyal to the government, or did not participate in the plot against it, with time this trend changed significantly as it was exposed through our earlier remarks considering the escalation of the support of professional army officers for the Nationalist camp as the conflict progressed. Unfortunate for the Republic, the number of loyal officers for their cause decreased significantly as it became more apparent that the Nationalist forces, despite the initial reservations, succeeded in establishing a much more unified structure both in terms of their political structure and military forces. On the other hand, as the Republic continued to demonstrate more weakness, the officers remained loyal to it started to further sway away.

Determining an exact number of officer support for the Republic during various stages of the conflict is challenging. However, it is advantageous to examine the statements made by prominent Republican leaders, particularly after they sought refuge abroad. These individuals would likely provide more accurate accounts of the level of support the Republic received in comparison to the insurgent forces. It is noteworthy that many assert that only a small number of professional officers who joined the Republican cause were genuinely convinced of its justice.[773] Furthermore, it is argued that the majority of these officers happened to be present in areas of Spain, such as Madrid, Barcelona, and Valencia, where the military uprising against the Republicans was unsuccessful. Based on these observations, the majority of officers who remained loyal to the government did so out of a lack of viable alternatives.[774] To protect their own safety during such a crisis, they either had to work with the Republic or find a way out of the

[773] Michael Alpert, *The Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 85.

[774] Michael Alpert (eds.), *A New International History of the Spanish Civil War*, Second Edition (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004): 173-174.

Republican zone, which included most of the most populous centers of Spain at the time. Naturally, it was a logical choice for them to initially side with the Republic in the immediate aftermath when the Republic retained to control more than 60% of the country, including some of these most populated towns such as Madrid, Valencia, and Barcelona, as well as the country's industrial base concentrated in the regions such as Catalonia and Basque country, and the natural resource rich regions such as Asturias.[775]

The Republican Foreign Minister, Julio Alvarez del Vayo, expressed a pessimistic view regarding the limited number of officers who remained loyal to the Republic until its end. He claimed that the majority of professional officers had sided with the rebels, leaving only 500 out of 15,000 officers in service to the Republic. It was emphasized that a significant portion of the 500 individuals were Republicans by conviction, while the remaining individuals either remained loyal to the Government due to fear or engaged in acts of sabotage within the army ranks.[776] The collapse of the Republic, in his perspective, resulted from a combination of factors including their limited numbers, lack of enthusiasm, and instances of betrayal. The collapse of the Republican regime is believed to have had a significant impact on this phenomenon. However, more precise calculations in subsequent decades, when the fog of conflict had dissipated, revealed that the actual figures were considerably higher.

After the decline and ultimate collapse of the Francoist regime in Spain during the 1970s, there was an increase in scholarly publications focusing on this particular aspect of the conflict. Larrazábal (1971), for example, conducted a study on the loyalty of active-list officers in the Spanish Army. According to his findings, out of the 15,000 officers, 3,500 remained loyal to the government. Additionally, 1,500 officers who had recently retired responded to the call to return to service and joined the Republican ranks.[777] His findings appear to confirm more recent accounts these figures concerning the participation among the officer corps, as these often suggest initially about 2,000 active-list officers remained loyal to the government with their numbers increased to the levels

[775] Pavel Osinsky and Jari Eloranta, "Why Did the Communists Win or Lose? A Comparative Analysis of the Revolutionary Wars in Russia, Finland, Spain, and China," *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (June 2014): 318-341, especially 332.

[776] Julio Alvarez del Vayo, *Freedom's Battle* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971): 122-123.

[777] Colonel R. Salas Larrazábal, 'The Role and Growth of the Republican Popular Army', in Raymond Carr (eds.), *The Republic and the Civil War in Spain* (London: Macmillan, 1971).

of Larrazábal's calculations.[778] Taking these into account, it seems that a greater number of these individuals than the initial assumptions eventually joined and remained in the service within the Republican forces, even though it is still true that they constituted a minority of the officers. The remaining officers would primarily join the Nationalist ranks (8,000, as it was previously described), or they would choose to abstain from the fighting by refusing to provide their services to any belligerents.

3.8 Analysis Regarding the Professional Military Support

Based on the data available regarding the participation of the professional army corps to the belligerent factions of the Spanish Civil War, it is apparent that the Republicans had the upper hand in the early stages of the conflict while there was a consolidation of power among the Nationalist leaders was yet to take place. However, with the conflict progressed and the Nationalist proved themselves able to gather around the charismatic leadership of General Franco, who successfully portrayed an efficient leadership for the insurgent forces. By utilizing strong propaganda strategies, he proved himself able to attract more officer participation for his forces in the continuing skirmishes, however, the real blow to the Republican army came from the short-comings of the Republican faction itself.

Republican leadership lacked the ability to control the massive anger targeting the remaining officer corps and, on their expense, various paramilitary groups with more ideological and regional loyalties empowered while simultaneously disrupting any meaningful level of military discipline and professionalism left within the Republican ranks. While it is possible to consider this move as a necessary measure taken on the part of regime to preserve itself after facing against a massive coup attempt came from the military, in the long-turn one could argue that it further complicated the Republican war effort and jeopardized the continuation of an effective central command structure that could make a better strategy. Indeed, the strategical failures experienced due to such an anti-militarism that dominated not only the civilian groups but even the government by this point, resulted in the dissolution of any professionalism left in the forces loyal to the government, and only very minor victories could be achieved with the foreign aid

[778] Alejandro de Queseda, *The Spanish Civil War, 1936-39 (2): Republican Forces* (Osprey, 2015): 11.

acquired from the Soviet Union, whose officers have started to appear even stronger than their Spanish counterparts in several noteworthy instances.

The following table, which can be used as additional evidence to better understand the significance of having the support of professional military corps in such conflicts for regimes to have a better chance of survival, appears to illustrate the participation of professional military for the belligerents of the Spanish Civil War based on estimates provided by various authors as well as our own calculations. It is worth to mention that, although the statistics concerning the Spanish Civil War are easy to locate, the complexity of civil war tends to provide some obstacles in confirming the available numbers, and as a result it is often the case that some authors come up with alternative findings. Nevertheless, since such alternative estimations still does not change the game significantly as the proportion mostly remains same, the following table should be sufficient in concluding our analysis regarding the position of the professional military corps for in the conflict.

Table 3.10 The Professional Military (Active Service) Participation to the Conflict

Group	Numbers
Joined the Insurgency (Nationalists)	8,000 – 8,500
Remained Loyal to the Republic (Republicans)	3,000 – 3,500
Others / Remained Neutral	3,000 – 4,000

These figures confirm our expectation to observe a lower chance for the regime to survive during such a conflict if the professional military actively opposes the government. As the Spanish Civil War illustrates, the majority of the professional army corps who were in the active service by the time the conflict erupted, joined the ranks of the Nationalist forces (53-57 percent), while only a minority of them remained loyal to the Republic (20-26 percent) until the cease of armed hostilities. Based on these findings, it is possible to make the following statements regarding the analytical value of this essential aspect of the Spanish Civil War.

The officers, who ultimately supported the insurgent forces, were crucial in planning, carrying out military campaigns, and upholding order among the ranks, giving the Nationalists a tactical edge. In contrast, while initially being in control of the government and receiving supplies from abroad, the Republican side faced with internal conflicts, a lack of a united command, and an acute shortage of senior military officers. This unequal

distribution of officer support ultimately aided the Nationalists in their victory in 1939, which was a turning point in Spanish history that would influence the country's political and social climate for many years to come.

This conclusion also emphasizes how crucial military support and unity are in influencing how civil conflicts turn out. The Spanish and Russian Civil Wars serve as powerful instances of how this argument clarifies a crucial factor in the victory of factions during civil wars. The Nationalists demonstrated greater military cohesion throughout the Spanish Civil War and received a sizable amount of officer support, both of which were crucial to their eventual victory. Russian Civil War (1917–1922) displays a similar pattern. Under the direction of individuals like Leon Trotsky, the Red Army, which served as the Bolsheviks' military force, was able to increase military cohesion and centralize command. The destruction of the Tsarist officer corps resulted in the Red Army's early dispersion and lack of experienced officers, but it gradually came together as a well-organized force. In addition, much like the Republicans in Spain, its main rivals, the Whites, suffered from substantial fragmentation and a lack of a unifying cause. Both times, the party that had better military planning, a coherent command structure, and a common goal won out, demonstrating the crucial importance of these elements in determining how civil wars turn out.

Before concluding the analysis of the Spanish Civil War, it is important to examine how both factions engaged in social mobilization campaigns. This examination will enhance our comprehension of the significance of social mobilization in discussions about the regime's ability to withstand crises. In light of this, the subsequent and concluding section of this chapter will offer a thorough yet brief comparative analysis of the importance of social mobilization for the belligerent factions of the conflict, the Nationalists and Republicans.

3.9 Social Mobilization During the Spanish Civil War

It is possible to conceptualize the importance of the social mobilization as a result of the merge of our previous two independent variables, the party or faction cohesion and the support of the professional military. As these two previous factors significantly contributed to the setting of the power balances for the belligerents of the conflict by empowering and consolidating the Nationalist forces against the much less cohesive and fragmented Republicans, the social mobilization was another significant factor through which the Nationalist forces were able to put forward a much more efficient campaign. Considering this, understanding the role and importance of this essential phenomenon appears to be vital in our discussions concerning the regime survivability within the context of Spanish Civil War.

The role of social mobilization can be summarized by three key perspectives, which served as the foundation for the various roles it played during the conflict. Among these were the mobilization of resources and manpower, as it played a crucial role in the conflict, as both sides sought to quickly gather support for armed engagement. This was achieved through the utilization of formal military structures as well as the establishment of militia groups. The mobilization for the war effort extended beyond military personnel to include civilians who contributed through various means such as manufacturing, food production, and medical assistance. Given the intensely political nature of the Spanish Civil War, social mobilization also served to fortify political allegiances as a following perspective of political mobilization. Both sides utilized the war as a means to garner backing for their respective political ideologies, thereby exerting a substantial influence on the trajectory of the conflict. Finally, the international community's attention to the conflict, which resulted in international brigades being formed to fight on the Republican side, exemplified the international perspective of this important phenomenon and was very significant. These volunteer-based brigades played an important part in the war effort and in gaining worldwide support for the Republic from countries all over the world. Now that they have been identified, it is vital to carefully examine each of them to have a better understanding of the important responsibilities that social mobilization sought to fill.

3.9.1 Mobilization of Resources and Manpower

The mobilization of assets and personnel for the rival belligerents' war efforts was one of the most significant features of this function that social mobilization played. It is frequently considered that the Nationalists were better able to successfully coordinate this crucial component of their war effort than their Republican colleagues, notwithstanding their initial failures. They were able to streamline the war effort with a more centralized command structure and major foreign assistance from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.[779] Despite having an initial numerical and material advantage, the Republicans' mobilization efforts were less effective due to internal political fragmentations they were experiencing. This would play a crucial role in determining the long-term downfall of the Republican regime as their counterpart Nationalists were conducting a much more centralized and cohesive strategy that would allow them to take the upper hand eventually.

On the other hand, there is a case to be made for the significance of the more decentralized strategy taken by the Republicans. The decentralized approach led to the empowerment of industrial workers and trade organizations, enabling the Republicans to promote propaganda emphasizing the people's increased power. Although it may have been inefficient, the war effort fostered broad public participation and a shared sense of collective mission, especially during its initial phases. The factories were seized by workers, land was collectivized by peasants, and militias were established by local populations.[780] This exemplified a significant form of grassroots social mobilization. The Republicans sought to engage industrial workers and miners in their war efforts. These individuals recognized that a Nationalist victory would likely result in the loss of the gains and benefits they had obtained during the Republican era. They understood that an authoritarian leader like Franco would establish a more centralized and consolidated state, diminishing their previous achievements.

[779] Frances Lannon, *The Spanish Civil War* (Botley: Osprey Publishing, 2002): 68-69. Lannon puts an emphasize on the uncontested significance of the military regarding the mobilization debates concerning the Nationalist faction, underlies the fact that Franco played his cards carefully and ensured the movement's being a primarily militaristic one.

[780] Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War, the Soviet Union, and Communism* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2004): 129-130. Payne gives fascinating statistics concerning the seizure of various industrial assets by different worker groups, and how the Republic utilized these groups in their war effort respectively

3.9.2 Political Mobilization

One could argue that ideological differences significantly contributed to the strengthening of political mobilizations on both sides. Both sides of the conflict utilized compelling ideological narratives to mobilize support and propel their military campaigns. Considering this, it appears important to better understand the lines through which such a division appeared, and what it means within the overall framework of social mobilization during the Spanish Civil War.

The Republicans formed a coalition that included various leftist ideologies, such as socialists, communists, and anarchists. The ideologies of the individuals in question revolved around concepts such as class struggle, equality, social progress, and a strong inclination towards radical social transformation. The ideas garnered significant backing from the urban working class, intellectuals, and progressives. The Republican coalition's ideological diversity resulted in internal divisions and conflicts that frequently hindered their coordination and unity. The internal conflicts among various leftist factions, specifically communists and anarchists, had a substantial detrimental impact on the Republican front, leading to its weakened state.

On the other hand, the Nationalists encompassed a range of far-right ideologies such as Spanish nationalism, traditionalism, and Carlism. These ideologies were primarily united by their opposition to perceived threats posed by Communism and anarchism. The promise of restoring order, stability, and traditional values appealed to various conservative groups within society, such as the military, the Catholic Church, monarchists, and the rural population. Although they did not initially gather as broad or extensive support as the Republicans, they exhibited greater unity and organizational efficiency. The coalition consisted of military factions, far-right political groups, conservative Catholics, and monarchists. Despite being less ideologically diverse, it operated under a more centralized command structure. This unity, coupled with substantial material support from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, contributed significantly to their ultimate victory. Given this, it is possible to argue that ideology did play a critical role in mobilizing various societal groups, shaping war strategies and tactics, and even influencing international actors who became involved in the conflict.

3.9.3 International Mobilization

The international mobilization in response to the ideological grounds of the conflict also calls for a specific introduction. The Republican faction witnessed the establishment of the International Brigades, which comprised volunteers from different nations who were motivated to combat the emergence of fascism. On the other hand, the Nationalists were provided significant military assistance by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. These two countries had a vested interest in supporting a right-wing triumph in Spain. Political maneuverings, diplomatic pressures, and the contentious Non-Intervention Agreement compounded this already complex civil war. Considering this, one can argue that it is beneficial to briefly outline the significant factors that influenced the concept of international mobilization during the Spanish Civil War.

The international mobilization efforts during the Spanish Civil War significantly impacted the conduct and outcome of the conflict. Particularly, on the Republican side, the formation and deployment of the International Brigades were emblematic of this global participation. Comprised of foreign volunteers who converged on Spain, these Brigades played a critical role in the Republicans' war efforts. The Brigades were assembled under the auspices of the Comintern, which coordinated communist parties globally. This ensured a strong presence of communist ideology among the volunteers, reflective of the wider geopolitical struggle between leftist and rightist ideologies that were simmering globally during the interwar period.

Nevertheless, is important to note that the International Brigades were not solely comprised of individuals affiliated with the communist ideology. The collective consisted of a diverse group of individuals with left-leaning ideologies, such as socialists, anarchists, and anti-fascists hailing from different countries. The phenomenon of anti-fascism exhibited a greater prevalence among individuals originating from the New World and England, whereas communism holds a more profound influence among Europeans, particularly those who have been exiled from Germany. On the other hand, the concept of "anti-fascism" encompassed individuals who actively advocated for the preservation of democracy and opposed the emergence of oppressive regimes during that

period, as they self-identified and described themselves.[781] Their shared objective was to combat the emergence and growth of fascism. The ideological diversity observed in this context is indicative of the wide-ranging international appeal of the Republican cause, which aligns with the multifaceted ideological foundation of the Republican coalition.

During the height of their power, the International Brigades exhibited a significant presence with a maximum of 35,000 enlisted volunteers, serving as a testament to the extensive global mobilization that occurred during the war. Among these, French (9,000) and German (5,000) and American (2,800) volunteers were constituting the majority, while it is often argued volunteers from more than fifty nations enrolled these units throughout the conflict.[782] These individuals embodied a significant aspect of the global reaction to the Spanish Civil War, serving as a symbol of the worldwide dedication to democratic principles and resistance against the expansion of fascism. This occurred despite the intricate complexities arising from the Non-Intervention Agreement, which was endorsed by over 20 nations.

The manifestation of internationalism rooted in ideology is also evident in the foreign aid and involvement that significantly bolstered the Nationalist war effort. The volunteer forces that rushed to the aid of the Nationalists did not come through an international organization, even though it was merely a policy tool of the Soviet Union. Instead, they came primarily from Italy and Germany, two European countries that have recently become the bastion of fascism on the European continent and are eager to export their authoritarian ideology to Spain. Naturally, this was not their only motivation, as they were seeking to test the new military tactics and weapons they have developed recently, mostly in secret, to better prepare themselves for the major international conflict that was on the horizon.

However, among the individuals who would volunteer, fighting against Bolshevism was a prominent motivation as the Nationalist propaganda was very efficient in portraying the Republicans as the slaves of Soviet Bolshevism, and according to this point of view, it would not be wrong to consider joining the fight against them as a modern crusade. For instance, there was at least a reasonable White Russian engagement in creating and

[781] Michael Jackson, *Fallen Sparrows: The International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1994): 85.

[782] Alexander Clifford, *The People's Army in the Spanish Civil War: A Military History of the Republic and International Brigades, 1936-1939* (Yorkshire: Pen & Swords Books, 2020): 76-77.

bolstering this kind of narrative. With the backing of their exile communities in France and Belgium, they hoped to reassemble the exiled White armies in Nationalist Spain to defeat the so-called "Godless" of Bolshevism on the Iberian Peninsula and then return to Mother Russia to refight the Russian Civil War and win it this time. Such hopes, however, would soon be shattered when numerous ex-Tsarist commanders were mortified to see that the Nationalist command gave little consideration to the White Russian perspective on war and much less to Russian military tradition and experience.[783]

Therefore, international social mobilization played an essential role in debates concerning regime survivability. The International Brigades' formation, foreign fighters volunteering to fight for the Republican cause, and the substantial military aid received by the Nationalists from Germany and Italy were all elements of this international mobilization. The ability of each side to draw international support not only influenced the conflict's military outcomes but also shaped international perceptions of each regime's legitimacy and viability. Considering this, one can wonder the real impact of social mobilization within the course of Spanish Civil War.

The ideological components of the Spanish Civil War gave the struggle a fury and intensity that went above and beyond simple political disagreement that could have concluded much faster otherwise. There was significant mass mobilization on both sides of the conflict since it was fought over opposing views of society and politics. The perception that this ideological conflict was existential in nature made both sides more resilient and determined to fight through difficulties. This allowed conflict resolution to eventually become frequently made much more difficult by such widespread ideological commitment and can lead to protracted conflicts because compromise or capitulation means firmly accepting held views and values of the other side.

This ideological mobilization was essential to the Spanish Republic in making the government last longer than it otherwise might have. The Republic represented a wide range of progressive beliefs, including anarchist, socialism, and communism. The Republicans were able to appeal to numerous societal segments for support thanks to such a wide ideological foundation. The prospect of social transformation and egalitarian ideals prompted unprecedented levels of mobilization among workers, peasants,

[783] Judith Keene, *Fighting for Franco: International Volunteers in Nationalist Spain during the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Hambledon Continuum, 2001): 197.

intellectuals, and even women. Additionally important was assistance from abroad. The Comintern formed the International Brigades, which drew tens of thousands of international volunteers devoted to halting the growth of fascism. The Republic received the vital personnel and material resources it needed from this broad, fervent backing, both domestically and internationally, to endure the Nationalist assault for almost three years. Arguably, this was one of the main reasons behind the Republican success in preventing the Nationalists a fast victory.

On the other side, the Nationalists started out with a smaller number of followers. Nevertheless, the gradual consolidation of their position can be attributed to the ideological coherence they exhibited and the appeal of their conservative and nationalist message. The Nationalists put forth a platform that emphasized stability, order, and the safeguarding of traditional Spanish values. This message found significant support among conservative factions within Spanish society, such as the military, the Catholic Church, and the land-owning elite. Furthermore, their opposition to communism attracted significant backing from the international community. The authoritarian governments of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, which shared ideological alignment with the Nationalists, offered substantial military assistance.

Indeed, Nationalists were better able to leverage the assistance they received from abroad. This encompassed not only armaments and provisions, but also terrestrial and aerial forces, which exerted a pivotal influence in numerous significant engagements. For instance, the German contingent deployed in Spain exhibited a numerical superiority over the Soviet forces by a factor of five, while the Italian combatants significantly surpassed the quantity of foreign volunteers enlisted in the International Brigades. Although it was a fact that a total of 35,000 to 40,000 individuals from various countries volunteered to support the Republican forces; 70,000 Moroccans, 78,000 Italians, and 15,000 Germans actively participated in the conflict on the side of Franco.[784] Most of these troops were comprised of highly skilled individuals who significantly enhanced the Nationalist forces' prospects of achieving victory. Considering these, it appears logical to claim that the Nationalists were able to overcome their initial disadvantages and achieve victory in the

[784] Michael Seidman, *The Victorious Counterrevolution: The Nationalist Effort in the Spanish Civil War* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2011): 231-232.

war due to the substantial internal and external support they received.[785] Therefore, the utilization of ideology played a crucial role in influencing both the duration and the ultimate result of the conflict.

Given that appealing to such ideological concerns on national and international levels can help a regime prolong a conflict and that emphasizing such ideological concerns can help fill the void with other factions, it seems reasonable to argue that social mobilization is an essential component of the regime's survivability in such conflicts. This case highlights the importance of ideological and social mobilization in the context of such conflicts, emphasizing that regime survival is not solely determined by military strategy or political capacity. The endurance and potential success of regimes in the face of existential challenges can be attributed to their capacity to mobilize, consolidate, and maintain collective action.

3.10 Final Remarks on the Spanish Civil War: The Nationalist Triumph

Although at first glance it would be an unlikely prediction to make that the Nationalists would emerge triumphant from the Spanish Civil War, their ability in forming a much more unified and consolidated faction against their Republican enemies paved the way for their victory. In our analysis, we observed that the Nationalists not only benefited from having a charismatic leader who supervised both the political and military aspects of the Nationalist war effort but also from the fact that their rivals lacked such a strong leadership or robust institutions that could prevent the insurgents from consolidating their power. Making the matters worse for the Republicans, they endured several noteworthy instances of inner fighting, and cases such as May Days of 1937 portrayed the ideological and political disagreements among them, jeopardizing the Republican home front further and preventing a state of unity to be achieved among the Republican ranks.

Moreover, the fact that the backbone of Nationalist movement had always been one that strongly aligned with military allowed it to preserve a sense of professionalism and discipline among its ranks, and this fact allowed the Nationalists to fill the initial gaps they had in terms of acquiring the support of professional army corps to their ranks.

[785] Stanley G. Payne, *Politics and the Military in Modern Spain* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967): 387-389.

Similarly making matters worse for the Republicans, the irregular and mostly ideological units empowered on the expense of the remaining officer corps serving under the Republicans, a move proved itself fatal by allowing the Nationalists to take an advantage of such a chaotic situation regarding the disrupted communications and command structure to bring a fatal blow to the Republic. Although there still remained a number of very skilled military specialists who caused a considerable headache for the Nationalist forces, their resistance would be mostly limited, and the central command of the Franco forces eventually crushed any resistance and turned the tides regarding the officer participation for the belligerents of the conflict. This proved itself the second noteworthy short-coming of the Republicans that significantly jeopardized their regime survivability, whereas the case for the Nationalist forces was exactly opposite of this.

Ultimately, the Republicans demonstrated their ability to sustain a protracted resistance, potentially attributable to their decentralized structure which facilitated the cultivation of diverse ideological alliances from various domestic and international factions. This collective support enabled the Republic to effectively withstand the Nationalist advancements for a period of three years. This observation suggests that social mobilization plays a significant role in enhancing the survival of a regime. The Nationalist movement, which achieved a similar level of success in this regard, was able to garner considerable support from the Spanish population. While it would be inaccurate to characterize the post-Civil War transition as entirely problem-free, the Francoist regime managed to establish a strong presence in Spanish politics. This can be attributed, in part, to its close affiliations with conservative and traditionalist groups, as well as individuals who, while not necessarily aligned with the Nationalist perspective, opposed the chaos and challenges that arose during the brief resurgence of Republican regime in Spain.

Chapter 4:
CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE FINDINGS

Our analysis has demonstrated that a multitude of factors significantly contribute to the ultimate outcome of civil wars, thereby exerting a discernible influence on the fluctuating levels of regime survivability in these crises. Based on our three key variables, it has been determined that all of these under our investigation have demonstrated their significance in determining the faction that emerged victorious from the conflict it was undergoing. Indeed, both the Russian Civil War (1917-1922) and the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) serve as suitable and compelling illustrations for examining the significant influence of these variables. Given the aforementioned considerations, it is advisable to present concise segments of analytical findings pertaining to each of the three independent variables examined in this study, while establishing explicit linkages to the two case studies that have been reviewed within this research

4.1 The Party Unity and Regime Survivability

While considering the elements that helped one faction ultimately triumph in the conflict it was exposed to, it would not be incorrect to conceptualize party unity as the most crucial component of the regime's survival, at least among the variables we have operationalized in this thesis. A faction could only consolidate control and implement the essential centralization steps if it was able to keep itself as cohesive as possible, as our earlier sections detailed in more detail. It seems preferable to provide a quick explanation outlining the influence this aspect within the framework of both conflicts in order to better comprehend how it did, in fact, contribute to the outcomes of these two civil wars.

The Russian Civil War demonstrated that the Bolsheviks achieved victory amidst the tumultuous revolutionary conditions in Russia by effectively consolidating their power through centralization and presenting themselves as a cohesive faction. This allowed them to confront not only their counter-revolutionary adversaries but also other leftist factions, such as the SRs and Mensheviks, who dismissed their more radical philosophy. Furthermore, the reacquisition of power by the Bolsheviks can be attributed to their adept exploitation of the inherent vulnerabilities present within their adversaries, as exemplified

by the precarious nature of the Provisional Government led by Kerensky, even prior to the outbreak of the civil war.

Upon the emergence of the conflict, the Bolsheviks were compelled to temporarily withdraw. However, this retreat primarily served as a strategic maneuver aimed at regaining power. The logical nature of this decision was subsequently demonstrated when the Bolsheviks successfully defeated the feeble and fragmented White Movement on multiple fronts. It can be argued that the presence of charismatic leadership, exemplified by figures like Lenin, Trotsky, and other prominent Bolsheviks, played a crucial role in enabling them to establish a cohesive movement that effectively countered their adversaries across the ideological spectrum. In contrast, the White Movement demonstrated a deficiency in this capacity, which consequently rendered their actions more akin to a military insurgency rather than a well-organized political campaign with distinct and coordinated maneuvers. Furthermore, the absence of a distinct leader with a charismatic leadership style comparable to that of Lenin hindered their ability to mobilize the masses effectively in their opposition to the Bolsheviks.

We have shown that the Bolshevik Party's ability to establish itself as a more well-defined and stronger political front, which can be traced back to the charismatic leadership centered around Lenin, was crucial to their survival during the civil war. Hence, one could contend that party or faction cohesion emerges as the paramount factor, as it forms the foundation for a faction to establish a robust political footing. This is a crucial element in a regime's ability to construct a formidable faction, which is essential for its survival in times of conflict, as exemplified by the Russian Civil War.

A comparable viewpoint can be derived from the Spanish Civil War, wherein the Republicans, who held the position of power, encountered analogous deficiencies as the counter-revolutionary forces in the Russian Civil War. Specifically, they faced challenges stemming from the absence of a cohesive and centralized organizational framework, as well as the absence of a charismatic figurehead. The presence of diverse ideological perspectives within the Republicans definitely played a significant role in the inability to maintain cohesive unity among its supporters. They comprised a diverse range of political factions, encompassing socialist, communist, anarchist, and liberal ideologies. Although all of these factions expressed opposition towards the Nationalists, internal conflicts and power struggles were frequent occurrences as a result of divergent ideological

perspectives. The presence of significant ideological differences, alongside individual aspirations and diverging objectives, resulted in a fragmented coalition that lacked the ability to present a cohesive opposition against the Nationalist forces.

Furthermore, the absence of proficient leadership and a well-defined hierarchical framework intensified the internal divisions within the Republican faction. Based on our prior analyses, it is evident that numerous Republican governments were established; however, they exhibited a deficiency in the essential element of unity required to sustain a more cohesive and expansive governance. The lack of a robust central authority resulted in prolonged decision-making processes that were frequently influenced by the preferences and agendas of individuals or groups. Consequently, the Republican faction experienced frequent internal conflicts and a state of disorder, which hindered their capacity to organize military tactics and adequately counter the advancements made by the Nationalist forces.

Contrarily, the Nationalists had far more success in building a centralized and unified faction in their fight to overthrow the Republican government. Despite the presence of diverse ideological groups with occasionally divergent interests, the level of collaboration among them was significantly greater compared to the groups aligned with the Republicans. Guided by the charismatic leadership of General Franco, they effectively solidified their position as a more cohesive faction. It is imperative to emphasize that Franco possessed the necessary military and political aptitude essential for a tumultuous conflict such as the Spanish Civil War. By employing strategic propaganda tactics and bolstering his military achievements, he emerged as the unquestioned leader of the Nationalist movement. While quantifying the precise extent of his leadership prowess is challenging, it can be contended that he possessed charismatic leadership abilities that bolstered the Nationalist party's prospects of emerging victorious in the civil war. Taking all of these factors into consideration, one could make the argument that the Nationalist factions exhibited a greater degree of party cohesion, which facilitated their ultimate emergence as victors in the Spanish Civil War.

These two examples provided more evidence that a more unified party (faction) increases the likelihood of a regime's survival. The dissimilarities in the fundamental structure of the Soviet Bolsheviks and Spanish Republicans can be argued as a key factor contributing to the contrasting outcomes of their respective civil wars. In a comparable

vein, when a faction of adversaries possessed a greater degree of power consolidation and party cohesion relative to their competitors, their prospects of successfully overthrowing the regime they were actively campaigning against were correspondingly enhanced. Due to the inherent significance of this particular factor in the conflicts, the Nationalists successfully overthrew the Republicans, whereas the White Movement and other counterrevolutionary forces were unable to achieve a comparable outcome against the Bolsheviks.

4.2 The Support of Professional Military and Regime Survivability

The support of professional military is crucial for ensuring the survival of a regime during crises, as it strengthens party cohesion and extends control over civilian and military bureaucracy. The success of a belligerent in an armed conflict of this nature relies on a professional and well-coordinated military strategy that emphasizes the professionalism and discipline of army corps. Therefore, it is crucial for any belligerent to secure the support of these army corps to have a chance at succeeding in their struggle. Considering this, it appears beneficial to provide a brief explanation explaining the influence this component had within the framework of both conflicts so that it will be easier to better understand how it did, in fact, contribute to the outcomes of these two civil wars.

The Russian Civil War demonstrated that the Bolsheviks were more successful than their counter-revolutionary rivals in recruiting a greater proportion of former military officers. This suggests that the cohesion of a faction is crucial in gaining support from professional officers. By developing effective mechanisms and consolidating their political movement, the Bolshevik leadership successfully attracted former empire officers to join their ranks, despite expectations regarding their motivations. When comparing the numbers regarding the participation of former Tsarist officers in the Red Army, it is possible to argue that the White forces had fewer professional military personnel involved, contrary to popular belief. In contrast, the Bolsheviks, under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, mobilized a greater number of these military experts to command their army. Considering these, it is possible to argue that The Russian Civil War successfully demonstrates that a regime's ability to maintain a higher number of professional officers contributes to its increased survivability in conflicts.

The Republicans clearly held the upper hand in the early stages of the Spanish Civil War, while a consolidation of power among the Nationalist leaders had not yet occurred, according to the data that is currently available regarding the participation of the professional army corps to the belligerent factions of the war. But as the struggle dragged on, the Nationalists showed that they could unite under General Franco's charismatic leadership, who was able to present an effective leadership style for the rebel forces. The Republican army suffered a significant setback due to the flaws of the Republican faction itself, despite his efforts to recruit more officers for his forces through the use of effective propaganda methods.

The officers were vital in planning, carrying out military campaigns, and maintaining order among the ranks, giving the Nationalists a tactical advantage. In contrast, the Republican side suffered internal divisions, a lack of a unified command, and a severe scarcity of senior military officers despite initially controlling the government and receiving supplies from overseas. The Nationalists' victory in 1939, which marked a turning point in Spanish history and would have an impact on the political and social atmosphere of the nation for many years to come, was eventually made possible by this lopsided distribution of officer support.

The importance of having the support of military corps and maintaining their long-lasting cooperation in affecting the outcome of such conflicts is also visible in with these two critical cases. Throughout the Spanish Civil War, the Nationalists showed stronger military coherence and gained a significant degree of officer support, both of which were essential to their eventual victory. A similar tendency may be seen in the Russian Civil War (1917–1922). The Red Army, the Bolsheviks' military force, was able to improve military cohesion and centralize command under the leadership of people like Leon Trotsky. The Red Army first dispersed and lacked experienced officers because of the destruction of the Tsarist officer corps, but it eventually came together as a well-organized force. Its major competitors, the Whites, too experienced significant disintegration, and a lack of a cohesive cause, much like the Republicans in Spain. Both times, the group with superior military planning, a unified command structure, and a shared objective prevailed, highlighting the critical role these components play in determining how civil wars turn out. As a result, it is possible to argue that having such a long-lasting support of the

professional military proves itself as an integral element of debates concerning regime survivability in such crises and conflicts.

4.3 Social Mobilization and Regime Survivability

While it may seem that the preceding two independent variables have a more pronounced impact on determining the likelihood of regime survivability in the context of civil war, as demonstrated by the Russian and Spanish Civil Wars, the significance of social mobilization remains an indisputably crucial element in this broader discourse. Social mobilization influences the factors by which warring factions adopt strategies to garner greater societal support and hinder the prospects of their adversaries in achieving victory. Given this perspective, it is advantageous to offer a concise elucidation delineating the impact exerted by this particular element within the context of both conflicts, thereby facilitating a more detailed comparison of its substantive role in shaping the outcomes of these two struggles.

The Russian Civil War shows that the Red Army of the Bolsheviks was the faction that best exemplified a highly effective social mobilization strategy that combined the use of propaganda with specific promises of land and food, a thorough and coherent ideological framework, and enforcement mechanisms encompassing forced conscription and coercive tactics like the Red Terror. The Bolsheviks' skillful use of these tools allowed them to competently recruit and sustain a sizable armed contingent, aiding in the durability and consolidation of their emerging rule. Contrary, White Army's strategy was relatively less successful because it lacked a unifying ideology, made poor use of propaganda, and relied too heavily on punitive measures that unintentionally stoked opposition rather than encouraging obedience. The White Army's ability to generate support and maintain a formidable force was hampered by the previously mentioned problems, internal factions, and affiliation with outside interference, which ultimately contributed to its demise and the failure of the White Movement.

The Spanish Civil War, on the other hand, provides a detailed examination of the effects and consequences of social mobilization strategies within a rapidly changing global political environment. The conflict involved two belligerent factions, namely the Republicans and the Nationalists. Each faction adopted distinct strategies, which were influenced by their respective ideological frameworks. The ideological mechanisms

played a dual role in both instigating the conflict and exerting a substantial impact on its course and the global politics of that era.

The international dimension of social mobilization was a significant aspect of the Spanish Civil War. The formation and deployment of the International Brigades on the Republican side exemplified this phenomenon. The Brigades, consisting mainly of international volunteers and operating under the Comintern, demonstrated the worldwide extent and impact of the ideological conflicts during that period. The International Brigades played a crucial role in supporting the Republicans during the interwar period. However, they also represented the larger ideological conflict between left and right ideologies.

Despite their initial numerical and material advantage, the Republicans faced challenges due to internal political fragmentation. The absence of unity hindered their ability to develop a centralized and cohesive mobilization strategy, ultimately harming their long-term regime survivability. The adoption of a decentralized approach had advantages, including the heightened empowerment of industrial workers and trade unions. The diversity of ideological and political views within the Republican party hindered their ability to establish a cohesive and persuasive narrative, impacting their effectiveness in propaganda and strategic coordination.

In contrast, the Nationalists employed a centralized strategy that differed significantly from the Republicans' approach but played a crucial role in their ultimate victory. The cohesion of the group enabled them to establish a united front, not only in their domestic activities but also in their efforts to garner support from international allies. As a result of their strategy, the Nationalists received substantial military support from Germany and Italy, greatly impacting the military outcomes of the conflict.

Therefore, it is possible to argue that both the Russian and Spanish Civil War demonstrate the intricate relationship between social mobilization strategies and ideological foundations within the framework of civil conflict while exploring the influence these concepts have over the broader regime survivability phenomenon. The different approaches of Bolsheviks and White Movement within the case of Russian Civil War, and the Republicans and Nationalists within the case of Spanish Civil War, both domestically and internationally, and their effects on regime stability and conflict outcomes highlight the significant influence of social mobilization on the course of civil

wars. This case underscores the complex connection between civil conflicts and wider international political dynamics, underscoring the importance of taking these interconnected factors into account when comprehending and examining scenarios including such conflicts.

4.4 Final Table and Comments on the Research

The findings of this study can be summarized in the table provided below. The purpose of this table is to provide a concise summary of the findings related to three independent variables in the Russian Civil War and Spanish Civil War case studies. This contribution aims to enhance the existing literature on conflict studies, regime survivability, and comparative politics. Based on these important findings, further studies can be implemented with a goal of further delving into such mechanism and other in an attempt to better understand which factors do contribute the determination of conflict outcomes and varying levels of regime survivability within their contexts.

Table 4.1 Summary of The Findings Regarding Regime Survivability

Variables	Russian Civil War		Spanish Civil War	
	Bolsheviks	White Movement	Republicans	Nationalists
Party Unity	**Strong**	**Weak, Fragmented**	**Weak, Fragmented**	**Strong**
Support of Professional Military	**Strong**	**Weak, Fragmented**	**Weaker (1/3)**	**Stronger**
Social Mobilization	**Strong**	**Weak**	**Weak**	**Strong**
Outcome	***The Bolshevik Regime Survived the Conflict, Defeated the Insurgency.***		***The Republican Regime Could Not Survive, Insurgents Won.***	

Since I learned so many new details about the political and historical context of the Spanish and Russian Civil Wars, this was a very enjoyable research experience for me. I am quite pleased with the results of my research, despite the fact that there were times when it was challenging to track down the precise facts and numbers I needed. It is my sincere desire that my study will prove fruitful in advancing the ongoing debates and serve as a starting point for other young scholars who wish to build upon my work by following these steps of mine and arrive at even more satisfying outcomes.

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