

In the final years of Franco's regime television acknowledged the republican's bravery

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In the final years of Franco's regime television acknowledged the republican's bravery. Credit: Pablo Menezo

A study by the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM) into the development of speech about the Civil War on Television Española (Spain's national state owned public television broadcaster) states that from the 70's, public television stopped portraying republicans as national enemies and acknowledged their bravery as combatants.

"In the final years of the dictatorship, in Television Española (TVE) documentaries and news programmes, they began to recognise the merits of the defeated republicans, claiming that they simply had a different stance, and they even had 'love for Spain' and they were brave

combatants" Julio Montero y María Antonia Paz, lecturers and researchers at UCM, in the School of Information Science, told SINC.

The researchers examined all audiovisual resources from 1956 to 1975 kept in the TVE archives about this topic, both documentaries and, to a lesser extent, news reports.

They concluded that from the second half of the sixties, the topic of peace replaced war.

"The negative connotation of war began to take shape. This culminated in a speech, including a documentary that we do not even know if it was transmitted, in which the war was displayed as the failure of that generation. The Spanish transition to democracy was being prepared, perhaps unintentionally, or deliberately" they stated in the journal *Comunicación y Sociedad*.

The authors also highlighted that in these documentaries the brave description was not applied to the international brigades, and the interest centres around how the war developed for the Spaniards, and not the support for one side or the other. "The help Spaniards received was not even mentioned" Paz and Montero explained.

The study also stated that TVE's intention in that era was not to discuss the war, but to forget it, if we consider most of their broadcasts and productions.

Some 37 programmes were found that discussed significant dates for the regime. Almost half referred to 18 July 1936 (46%), the date the war started, and almost a third referred to the first of April "victory day" and 24% to 24 October. "The glorious military uprising", the start of the War, is the anniversary that received the most preferable [television](#) exposure, and the end of the [war](#) came second. The important finding in

this analysis is that this type of broadcast practically disappeared from programmes published in the press from 1969.

"Furthermore, the most distinctive observation that we have made is that a programme written by Ricardo de la Cierva (Union of the Democratic Centre's Culture Minister in 1980) highlights that Franco himself began the reconciliation in Spain in his own family. One of his granddaughters married the republican Colonel who organised the defence in the Madrid trenches" the researchers stated.

More information: Julio Montero, María Antonia Paz. "La Guerra Civil en Televisión Española durante el franquismo (1956 – 1975)", *Comunicación y Sociedad* 2: 149 -197, 2011.

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