

Spanish Post Civil War Atrocities: The Execution of the Thirteen Roses.

My project is to remember the people who lost the Spanish Civil War, to remember those young people that fought against Franco until death. To remember those thirteen females, who were executed on August 5th 1939, and are remember as the “Thirteen Roses”. Their story has been told over the years, and it is how we now know what happened to them. On August 5th 1939, 56 people were executed and thirteen of those executed were females; the majority were minors, in Spain the adults were considered 21 years old. Those thirteen females were name “the minors” and “the thirteen roses”, “the thirteen roses” is the most known, whom were political prisoners, and suffer Franco’s regime repression and violence.

Eight of them were minors: Virtudes González García, Luisa Rodríguez de la Fuente, Julia Conesa Conesa, Carmen Barrero Aguado, Dionisia Manzanero Salas, Victoria Muñoz García, Adelina García Casillas, Elena Gil Olaya. Five of them were adults: Ana López Gallego, Martina Barroso García, Blanca Brisac Vázquez, (Joaquina López Laffite, y Pilar Bueno Ibáñez). Twelve of them were affiliated with the JSU (Juventudes Socialistas Unificadas), a group created to fight against Franco’s regime, and work in secrecy, because during the dictatorship it was prohibited to have any other ideas than the regime’s ideas. If the Franco’s regime found out, it was treason, and they would pay with jail, or even with their life. That is what happened to many political prisoners, they were seen as cancer for Franco’s regime. Franco wanted to exterminate any other ideologies that went against his ideas. The only one that had nothing to do with the JSU, was Blanca Brisac Vázquez. Franco’s regime said that if you did not kill anyone, you did not have to be scare. At the end it did not matter that they did not kill anyone, they were killed because they believe in the Second Republic’s values, they were killed because of their ideology.

These women lived several years of progress with the 1931 Constitution, which guaranteed equality for all (men and women). After being independent and free women during the Second Republic, they assume a traditional and submissive role during Franco's regime: home taker, whose main job is to have children. Nonetheless, the thirteen roses were executed on August 5th 1939, because they fought against Franco's ideals and supported the Second Republic's values. They were executed for being "reds" (republic women), whom felt Franco's regime repression. It is sad that this incident happened 75 years ago, but in many countries people are still fighting for their freedom, and women for their rights.

The execution of these thirteen females was not in vain, after Franco's death in 1975, Spain return to be a democratic country. Today's women are as independent and free as the Second Republic's women. It is good to know that being independent and free is not something new to women, and having as a reference the Second Republic, helps a country like Spain to be proud of that era. Julia Conesa's wish has come true, her name and the name of all Thirteen Roses have not being erase from history. ("Que mi nombre no se borre en la historia..." (Fonseca 257)).