



REVISION – SPANISH CIVIL WAR



4 parts:

1. *Long-Term Causes*
2. *Short-Term Causes*
3. *1936-1939*
4. *Results*

MATERIAL: Morris = 346

LONG-TERM CAUSES:

- **Spain’s general decline - politically and economically** from the status of a great imperial power (several wars; lost it’s South American colonies during the 19th century, war against Napoleon 1808-1813, against the Carlists 1833/34-1839, and 1875-1876, against the United States in 1898 - the Spanish-American War (Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines) and against nationalists in Morocco 1921-1926): _____

- **General political instability** - Between 1808-1936 there were 109 governments. Between 1814 and 1923 there had been 43 military ”interventions”: _____

- **Very conservative** - *Aristocracy* was nearly feudal... the Catholic *Church* supported the Spanish conservatism and so did the *Army*! The earlier governments had failed to reform the country: _____

- **Weak monarchy** - Alfonso XIII had experienced a military disaster in 1921 (Morocco) which nearly overthrew the monarchy. A coup 1923 saved the king from a public inquiry:____

- **Poverty and big differences between poor and rich** - In 1900, 69% of the population were peasants. 65% of the population owned about 6.3% of the land, while 4% held 60%:____

- **Lack of industries** - landless workers could not find any job in the cities. Spain was poor in raw materials, lacked a good communications network and lacked money for development:____

- **Strong Spanish labor movement** - Anarchism influenced by the French syndicalism (*CNT* - Confederación Nacional de Trabajo) and the socialists (*UGT* - Unión General de Trabajadores) were influential. These unions especially attracted the landless laborers in Catalonia and Basque, the only real industrial areas of Spain: _____

- **Strong Regionalism** - especially in the *Basque* region and in *Catalonia*: _____

- **Effects of the First World War** - Spain was neutral. Wartime propaganda increased the demand for democracy, the war brought orders to the Spanish industry which ended when peace came: _____

- **The general world depression** - especially after 1929: _____

- **Mussolini and Fascist Italy** - encouraged the right, providing financial support and equipment to anti-Republican groups (in the 1930:s). Carlist volunteers were trained in Italy: _____

SHORT-TERM CAUSES:

- **The establishment of the Republic 1931:** In 1931 Alfonso XIII agreed to democratic elections. It was the first time for nearly sixty years that free elections had been allowed in Spain. When the Spanish people voted overwhelmingly for a republic, Alfonso was advised that the only way to avoid large-scale violence was to go into exile. Alfonso agreed and left the country on 14th April, 1931: _____

- **Election 1931:** The provisional government of the Second Republic called a general election for June 1931. The Socialist Party (PSOE) and other left wing parties won an overwhelming victory. Niceto Alcalá Zamora, a moderate Republican, became prime minister, but included in his cabinet several radical figures such as Manuel Azaña, Francisco Largo Caballero and Indalecio Prieto. On 16th October 1931, Azaña replaced Niceto Alcalá Zamora as prime minister. With the support of the Socialist Party (PSOE) he attempted to introduce agrarian reform and regional autonomy. However, these measures were blocked in the Cortes:
 Azaña believed that the Catholic Church was responsible for Spain's backwardness. He defended the elimination of special privileges for the Church on the grounds that Spain had ceased to be Catholic. Azaña was criticized by the Catholic Church for not doing more to stop the burning of religious buildings in May 1931. He controversially remarked that burning of "all the convents in Spain was not worth the life of a single Republican": _____

- **Coup attempt 1932:** The failed military coup led by José Sanjurjo on 10th August, 1932, rallied support for Azaña's government. It was now possible for him to get the Agrarian Reform Bill and the Catalan Statute passed by the Cortes. However, the modernization programme of the Azaña administration was undermined by a lack of financial resources: _____

- **Election 1933:** In the 1933 Spanish elections, the Spanish Confederation of the Autonomous Right (Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas) (CEDA) won the most seats in the Cortes. President Niceto Alcalá Zamora refused to ask its leader, José María Gil-Robles, to form a government, and instead assigned the task to Alejandro Lerroux of the Radical Republican Party, a centrist party despite its name. CEDA supported the Lerroux government; it later demanded and, on October 1, 1934, received three ministerial positions. The Lerroux/CEDA government attempted to annul the social legislation that had been passed by the previous Manuel Azaña government, provoking general strikes in Valencia and Zaragoza, street conflicts in Madrid and Barcelona, and, on October 6, an armed miners' rebellion in Asturias and an autonomist rebellion in Catalonia. Both rebellions were suppressed, and were followed by mass political arrests and trials:_____
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- **The victory of the left-wing parties February 1936:** The Popular Front (dominated by the Socialist Party) had won a majority in the Cortes. It was a close election 34.3% for the Popular Front and 33.2% for the Right. These numbers encouraged the army leaders to act. In February 1936 Franco joined other Spanish Army officers, such as Emilio Mola, Juan Yague, Gonzalo Queipo de Llano and José Sanjurjo, in talking about what they should do about the Popular Front government. Mola became leader of this group and at this stage Franco was unwilling to fully commit himself to joining any possible uprising:_____
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- **Radical reforms:** The Popular Front government immediately upset the conservatives by releasing all left-wing political prisoners. The government also introduced agrarian reforms that penalized the landed aristocracy. Other measures included transferring right-wing military leaders such as Francisco Franco to posts outside Spain, outlawing the Falange Española and granting Catalonia political and administrative autonomy. As a result of the government's policies the wealthy took vast sums of capital out of the country. This created an economic crisis and the value of the peseta declined which damaged trade and tourism. With prices rising workers demanded higher wages. This situation led to a series of strikes in Spain:_____
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- **Disorder and instability:** 251 churches were burnt, 324 newspaper offices, political clubs and priests houses were attacked (79 being totally destroyed), 339 people murdered and 331 strikes occurred. In the south landless peasants seized land:_____
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- **Start of the coup:** On the 10th May 1936 the conservative Niceto Alcalá Zamora was ousted as president and replaced by the left-wing Manuel Azaña. Soon afterwards Spanish Army officers began plotting to overthrow the Popular Front government. President Manuel Azaña appointed Diego Martínez Barrio as prime minister on 18th July 1936 and asked him to negotiate with the rebels. He contacted Emilio Mola and offered him the post of Minister of War in his government. He refused and when Azaña realized that the Nationalists were unwilling to compromise, he sacked Martínez Barrio and replaced him with José Giral. To protect the Popular Front government, Giral gave orders for arms to be distributed to left-wing organizations that opposed the military uprising:_____
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- **The murder of Calvo Sotelo:** in July 1936. Sotelo was a right-wing politician (the head of CEDA). Sotelos assassination was actually a reprisal from the left-wing for two of their men. Though Solelos death had more impact. It could be compared to the assassination in 1914 in Sarajevo:_____
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- **Outbreak:** General Emilio Mola issued his proclamation of revolt in Navarre on 19th July, 1936. The coup got off to a bad start with José Sanjurjo being killed in an air crash on 20th July. The uprising was a failure in most parts of Spain but Mola's forces were successful in the Canary Islands, Morocco, Seville and Aragon. Francisco Franco, now commander of the Army of Africa, joined the revolt and began to conquer southern Spain:_____
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1936-1939 TIME-LINE:

1936 July July-Sept.	<p>Military uprisings in Spanish Morocco and some towns of mainland Spain Over 10 500 men were flown across the Strait of Gibraltar – from Morocco to mainland Spain by the German military air force – Luftwaffe. This is the biggest airlift in history so far... (Hitler had already in July agreed to give military help to the Nationalists...)</p>
August	<p>France announces France’s policy of non-intervention in the Spanish Civil war. The countries in the League of Nations will follow the non-intervention policy – Germany and Italy will not (and Russia after they got paid for the aid...)</p> <p>The First International Brigades were set up in Spain</p> <p>The British Conservative government announces a ban on the exports of arms to Spain</p> <p>France closes its border and tries to stop volunteers from crossing into Spain</p> <p>The Nationalist authorities introduces conscription (which will give them 270 000 new recruits within 6 months)</p>
September	<p>Representatives from 27 countries form the Non-Intervention Committee in London.</p> <p>After the first weeks of war the Nationalists controlled about a third of the land in Spain</p> <p>Germany forms a CONDOR LEGION with around 100 aircrafts and 5200 men in Spain</p> <p>Portugal (President Salazar and his government) closes its borders to the Republicans (but let the Nationalist troops travel through the country)</p> <p>Nationalists (the Generals) appoint Francisco Franco Chief of State</p> <p>The left-wing Socialist Caballero was appointed Prime Minister (and “War Minister”). His government includes several left-wing socialists and anarchists... Caballero upset the left by concentrating on the war and not on “social revolution”. He reinforces several unpopular changes; Conscription, reintroduction of ranks and insignia into the militia and abolition of worker’s and soldiers councils...</p>
October	<p>Republican Spain plead for support from the League of Nations</p> <p>First aid from the Soviet Union arrives in Spain (510 tons of gold from the Bank of Spain was sent to the Soviet Union)</p>
November	<p>Italy and Germany formally recognizes Franco’s regime</p>

December	Communist demands the removal of P.O.U.M. from the Catalan government
	Italian “volunteers” arrives to fight for the Nationalists (30 000 “Blue Skirts” and 20 000 regular soldiers)
1937 January	President Roosevelt (USA) bans US export of arms to Spain Anarchist uprising in Bilbao fails FAL (Anarchists) and P.O.U.M. demonstrates in Barcelona in favour of a social revolution
February	Heavy fighting around Madrid where the Nationalists starts an offensive. The International brigades play an important role in stopping this offensive...
March	The Communist Party Congress demands that P.O.U.M. should be eliminated
April	Republican Army defeats Italian troops outside Madrid CONDOR LEGION bombs Guernica (the old Basque capital)
May	MAY RIOTS! The Barcelona Civil Guard (Communist dominated) tried to take over the Telephone Exchange (operated by the anarcho-syndicalists CNT since the beginning of the war). In the fighting over 400 people died. These events severely damaged the Popular Front government. President Azana was very critical of the government (under Prime Minister Caballero) – how they had handled the situation in Barcelona. Therefore he asked Juan Negrin (Communist sympathizer) to form a new government . Negrin accepts and appoints several members of the Communist Party (PCE) to important military and civilian posts. The Communists were also given control of propaganda, finance and foreign affairs . This meant that Stalin and Russia got more control over the policies of the Republican government. One of the first things the new government does is to force the Anarchist Brigades under the control of the Republican Army
May-June	German warships bombard the town of Almeria. In June Germany claims that one of her cruisers had been attacked by Republican submarines and therefore Germany + Italy decides to withdraw from the joint Naval Patrol that had been established by the Non-Intervention Committee Nationalist forces capture Bilbao after weeks of fighting and heavy air attacks (18-19 June) Juan Negrin oulaws P.O.U.M.
August	Andres Nin , leader of P.O.U.M., is murdered by agents from the USSR Madrid bombed by Nationalist air force (for the first time) Nationalist forces capture the North-Coast city of Santander The Vatican recognizes Franco’s regime...
October	Nationalist forces take Gijon. They have now conquered all the Asturias and brought North-West Spain under Franco’s control Caballero openly announces his opposition to the Republican government under Juan Negrin The Republican government moves its capital from Valencia to Barcelona
November	CNT withdraws from the Popular Front government Franco starts a blockade of the entire Spanish coast (ships from US Oil Company’s aid Franco in this blockade...) Barcelona bombed by Nationalist air force
December	The Republican Army starts a counter-attack in Aragon
1938 January	The Republican forces take the city of Teruel , but a month later they lose it again to the Nationalist forces...

March	Leon Blum and the Popular Front in France comes back into power. He reopens the border with Spain
April	Republican Spain was split in two when the Nationalist Army broke through the Republican defences and reached the sea at Vinaroz
May	Negrin , in an attempt to gain support from the Western governments, announce a plan to decollectivize industries and a 13-point program that included full civil and political rights + freedom of religion...
June	After Leon Blum resigns and the border between France and Spain closes again
July	In a last big offensive Negrin ordered an attack across the river Ebro – over 80 000 Republican troops participated During the offensive, in another attempt to receive international support, Negrin announced that the International Brigades would be withdrawn from Spain. They are moved back across the river Ebro already July 27 th
October	All foreign troops fighting for the Republican Army leaves all front lines USSR decided to stop their aid to the Republican government Trials of P.O.U.M. leaders start in Barcelona
November	After a few months of heavy fighting the Republican Army retreat back across the river Ebro International Brigades parade through the streets of Barcelona. Then they leave Spain Franco grants mining concessions to Germany (in return for the military aid)
1939 January	Barcelona fell to the Nationalist army. President Azana crossed the border into France (over 200 000 Republicans crosses the border)
February	Britain and France recognized Franco's government President Azana resigns Juan Negrin promotes more Communist leaders to senior posts in the army. Several government officials are now convinced that Negrin plans a Communist coup
March	Some independent socialists and anarchists + the Commander of the Republican Army (of the Centre) establish an anti-Negrin National Defence Junta. José Miaja, the Republican Commander in Madrid joins the anti-Negrin National Defence Junta. He issues an order of arrests of Communists in the city. Luis Barceló – pro-Negrin Commander of the First Corps of the Army of the Centre was ordered to try to regain control of the capital (meanwhile Negrin and his Soviet advisers prepare to fly out of Spain). Several days of fierce fighting between Communists and free socialists + Anarchists. The Communist troops were defeated and Barceló was captured and executed! Negrin and his Soviet advisers leave Spain. The new Republican Council tries to negotiate with Franco. Franco demands unconditional surrender Nationalist troops enter Madrid virtually unopposed
April 1st	Franco announced the end of the Spanish Civil War USA recognized Franco's regime

RESULTS (WHY DID THE NATIONALISTS WIN THE WAR?):

- **Nationalists received greater foreign assistance**
 - a. German and Italian help was crucial** - especially important was the prompt German and Italian airlift in 1936. Hitler provided the Condor Legion of 6000 men and 100 planes; Mussolini provided 50.000 troops, as well as 760 aircraft and 950 tanks; President Salazar of Portugal provided 20.000 troops and the use of Portuguese roads...
 - b. The British and French governments a policy of non-intervention** - the Nyon Conference in 1937 resulted in threats against the German and Italian interference, but it came to late...
 - c. British, French and US businessmen supported the Nationalists, as did conservatives in general** - They were bitter on the cuts on business made by the Popular Front. Franco guaranteed the continuation of private enterprises in Spain. Especially important for the Nationalists were the continuation of oil deliveries; $\frac{1}{4}$ came from Texaco and $\frac{1}{4}$ came from Shell...
 - d. Limited support from Soviet was not enough for the Republicans** - the supply line from Soviet was long; Stalin did not want to push the Western democracies into Fascist hands by encouraging fear of communism; Stalin demanded prompt payment in gold; after the Munich Conference 1938 (September) Soviet stopped their aid...
 - e. International Brigades of volunteers helped both sides** - 100.000 fought for the Nationalists (mostly Italians, Portuguese and Germans...) and about 40.000 fought for the Republicans (about 3000 came from the US and about 5000 from the USSR).
 - f. Pope Pius supported Franco** - Franco was a "*bastion against Godless socialism*"
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- **The Nationalist forces were superior in all ways**
 - a. Franco was very capable** - Franco was able to unite the opposition. He was also a very skillful military...
 - b. The Republicans were very disunited** - divided especially between Anarchists, Socialists, Marxists, Stalinists, Communists, Trotskyists, Republicans and Liberals. On the Republican side there was a virtual civil war within the Civil War...
 - c. The Nationalists numbered about 600.000 men against 450.000 Republicans** - Only 500 out of 15.000 officers were Republicans...
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RESULTS (FOR SPAIN):

- **General Franco came into power** - General Franco and his conservative party came into power 1939. They would remain in power until Franco's death 1975:_____
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- **There was great death and destruction** - 70.000 died at the Nationalist side and about 100.000 died on the Republican side. After the war was over a "*White terror*" set in which killed between 40.000-200.000. About 200.000 civilians were also killed (often put at 1 million):_____
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- **Many Republicans had to spend years in concentration camps:** _____

- **Between 10 and 15% of the nation's wealth was destroyed** - 1/3 of the Spanish merchant marine was put out of action: _____

- **Reconstruction was difficult** - when Spain tried to get loans (credits) it was refused by Britain, France and Germany: _____

- **Second World War eased the situation** - France and Britain made trade arrangements with Spain: _____

- **There was a legacy of great bitterness** - this often split families: _____

- **It meant end of reforms and progress** - the wealthy and the Church got their privileges restored: _____

RESULTS (GENERAL):

- **Reduced confidence in Communism** – both in Spain and in Europe. USSR gave support to the Republican side- Even if it was limited, this side was defeated: _____

- **The war helped to bring the end of the League of Nations** – League of Nations once again proved itself ineffective. The Nyon Conference was an initiative made by Britain and France not the League of Nations: _____

- **Many military lessons, especially for Germany** – The Germans got to test bullet-resistant fuel tanks, they learnt valuable lessons about the techniques of Blitzkrieg, they realized the need of radio contact between tanks and they got to exercise air strikes. These lessons contributed greatly to German success in 1939-1940: _____

- **Soviet-German relations deteriorated** – at least for a while. However, the Civil War was also one reason for the Soviet-German pacts of 1939: _____

- **It discouraged Stalin from making an alliance with the West** - If France would not try to prevent Fascist encirclement, then Stalin could expect no or little help against Hitler. The West had shown itself weak: _____
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- **It made it easier for Hitler and Germany to expand into Austria and Czechoslovakia (and it generally encouraged Hitler)** - It preoccupied Britain, France and Italy. The Anglo-French inaction convinced Hitler that Britain and France would not act against him. The British non-intervention policy in Spain was intended to preserve peace. It had the opposite effect as it encouraged Hitler's expansion in Europe: _____
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- **It prevented an alliance of Britain + France with Mussolini** - The Italian involvement in Spain cemented the ties between Germany and Italy (before 1935 they had several serious arguments). This strengthened Hitler's position: _____
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- **It encouraged the Anglo-French policy of appeasement** - the bombing of towns and the general suffering of civilians reinforced the view that war was impossible because the bomber would always get through. This was one of Chamberlain's arguments for appeasement policy. The clashes between German forces and Soviet also gave some credence to Hitler's claim to be defending the world against communism: _____
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- **The Spanish Civil War contributed to bringing about the Second World War** - most historians argue that the Spanish Civil War was the prelude to the Second World War. Though A.J.P. Taylor, a famous revisionist, has a different opinion (in his classic book - *The Origins of the Second World War*) - he argues that the Spanish Civil War was "*without significant effect in causing the Second World War*". He also criticizes the Anglo-French appeasement policy "*British and French policy, or lack of it, not the policy of Hitler and Mussolini, decided the outcome of the Spanish civil war. The republic had greater resources, greater popular backing. It could win if it received the correct treatment to which it was entitled by international law: foreign arms for the legitimate government, none for the rebels. It could even win if both sides received foreign aid, or if both were denied it*": _____
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- **The fighting produced a literary and artistic outburst** – Ernest Hemingway, Arthur Koestler, George Orwell, Pablo Picasso...: _____
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