

4 The Spanish Civil War

Discussion points

- 1 What is the difference between a civil war and a national war?
- 2 Can civil war be total war?
- 3 Why have civil wars often had greater impact on civilians than national wars?

Introduction

You have now studied two major total international wars. In this chapter, you will be investigating another type of war – civil war. You should approach the study of this war in a similar way, by thinking about why it happened, its nature and how it was fought, and what results and effects it had. By now you should be accustomed to thinking in terms of asking and answering key questions, as well as analysing and explaining events and their impact. **Chapter 5** deals with another civil war in a different region, and you will be able to make comparisons of key issues. There are more political terms to understand in this chapter, but you should be able to build on your knowledge of military events and vocabulary, and start to see connections between these civil wars and the world wars.

Civil wars are fought by different groups within the same country. They are often characterised by greater bitterness than national wars, and the consequences are sometimes greater – the wounds take longer to heal, and families and communities are often divided. The feelings that give rise to civil war are often stronger than those that bring about national war. National wars can be fought for territory, in support of allies, to gain security or in response to an outrage committed against a country. Decisions may be taken for a national war without the people of a country feeling any particular animosity towards their opponents. This is much less true of civil wars. The Russian Civil War (1918–21) saw great bitterness, many atrocities and a heavy toll taken on civilians. The Chinese Civil War (1926–49), which had already been raging for nearly ten years when the civil war began in Spain in 1936, was one of the most prolonged and divisive wars of the 20th century. Later civil wars, such as those in Nigeria, the Congo, Rwanda and Vietnam, resulted in similar sustained violence and unwillingness to compromise.

The Spanish Civil War (1936–39) came about as a result of an attempted military coup (takeover) against the elected government of the Second Spanish Republic. The **republic** had existed since the abdication of the Bourbon king Alfonso XIII in 1931. What sparked the revolt was the creation of a coalition government of the left-wing parties called the Popular Front in 1936. The military leaders, who started the revolt in Spanish Morocco and then crossed to the mainland, were concerned that a communist-influenced republic would destroy traditional Spain. However, unlike the coup that had occurred in 1923, the revolt encountered prolonged resistance.

In 1936, Spain had a population of 24 million. In all, the war may have directly touched a million Spaniards and indirectly many more – killed, wounded, mutilated, exiled or rendered homeless. The violence persisted well after the end of the war. In some areas there was continuing guerrilla activity, and Francisco Franco was signing death warrants for political enemies right up to 1975. The war was fought with considerable brutality on both sides, and the divisions took many years to heal.

Republican volunteers

Fact

Rwanda's civil war (1990–93), was based on tribal hatreds between the Hutus and the Tutsis, and involved mass killings that may have led to as many as 800,000 deaths.

republic A state without a monarch as its official head.



1 Origins and causes of the Spanish Civil War

Key questions

- What were the main long-term causes of the war?
- What were the main short-term causes of the war?

Overview

- Spain had a history of political instability, with deep divisions dating back to the 19th century and beyond between different regions and also between the forces of change and those of conservatism.
- The rise of a militant left wing in Spain intensified divisions, and conservative forces in the Church and the army resisted change.
- There was growing unrest in town and country, and worsening economic conditions led to more extremism.
- The dictatorship of Primo de Rivera failed to solve the underlying problems, and he was replaced by a republic in 1931. This is usually called the Second Spanish Republic (the first was between 1873–74).
- By the 1930s, Spain was deeply divided between left and right. The efforts to reform between 1931 and 1933 increased the divisions, and on both sides there was hostility towards any form of democratic and parliamentary government.
- The creation of a left-wing coalition, the Popular Front, and the murder of a leading right-wing politician (Sotelo) provoked a military coup in 1936. The initial success of the coup led to a prolonged civil war between those who supported it and those who opposed it.

SOURCE A

American journalist John Whittaker wrote of an encounter with the Moroccan nationalist General Mohammed Mizzian.

'I met this general near Navalcarnero when his troops threw two girls of less than 20 years to his feet. He discovered in the pocket of one of them a trade union card. He took her to the public school of the village where 40 Moorish soldiers were resting. He threw her to them.' A huge cry resonated in the building, writes Whittaker, horrified by what he saw. General Mizzian smiled and dismissed Whittaker's protest by saying, 'She will not survive more than four hours.'

Whittaker, J. 1942. *Prelude to World War: A Witness From Spain*. Council on Foreign Relations.

Timeline

1923 Sep: King Alfonso XIII installs a military dictatorship under General Miguel Primo de Rivera (the king ruled until 1930)

1931 Apr: Second Spanish Republic established; left-wing election victories; Manuel Azaña becomes prime minister at the head of a reforming government

1933 formation of CEDA (mass Catholic right-wing party)

1934 Oct: right-wing government takes office; revolt of Asturias

1936 15 Jan: Popular Front pact of left-wing parties

16 Feb: Popular Front wins election

Apr: general strike in Madrid, spreading throughout Spain; street fights occur between left and right; rumours of a coup

13 Jul: assassination of right-wing leader José Calvo Sotelo

17–18 Jul: military revolt

19 Jul: armed workers control Barcelona

26 Jul: arrival of German Nazi and Italian fascist planes to support Franco

Question

How useful is Source A as evidence of the nature of the civil war?

Marxism and socialism This was the belief based on the writings of the German theorist Karl Marx (1818–83) that all human history was the history of class struggle. The workers were bound to take over and dominate the state, and their rule would bring true social justice and the destruction of capitalism and the ruling class who owed their wealth to exploitation. Socialist groups and parties had spread across Europe by the 1880s.

anarchism This is a belief associated in the 19th century with the Russian thinker Mikhail Bakunin (1814–76). It rejected the need for disciplined revolutionary organisation and looked to a working-class revolution which would bring an end to state rule and usher in government by the people. Anarchism was particularly influential on the Spanish revolutionary movement.

general strike A strike not just in one industry but throughout the economy, with the aim of demonstrating the power of workers in bringing the country to a standstill.

What were the main long-term causes of the war?

Long-term divisions in Spain's history

Spain itself was no stranger to civil war. Between 1803 and 1936, no fewer than 19 military coups had taken place. Three civil wars, called the Carlist Wars, were fought between 1833 and 1876. The Carlists were members of a conservative political movement in Spain. They fought bitterly against more liberal opponents over succession to the throne. Unlike other mid 19th-century wars, the Carlist Wars, were fought with a fervour and brutality derived from deep divisions within Spain. They also lasted longer than national wars and were more difficult to resolve. They anticipated the Spanish Civil War in a number of respects.

There was a strong element of different and conflicting beliefs within the country:

- profound traditional Catholicism against modern liberal thought
- regional independence against traditional central control
- political liberalism against deep conservative monarchism.

The rise of the left

The left had few roots in Spain and its rise in the 20th century came as a surprise to many. In the mid 19th century, when **Marxism and socialism** emerged in Europe, there was little to suggest that Spain would soon have its own flourishing revolutionary movement. Spain was predominantly agricultural, and in many areas of the Spanish countryside, traditional customs and values and the power of the Catholic Church were strong. Capitalist industry had not developed in the same way as it had in Germany, Britain and America, and Spain had little in the way of organised labour.

After small-scale beginnings in 1868, **anarchism** came to be a major revolutionary influence of the 20th century, and was more widely embraced in Spain than other left-wing ideas. The movement first gained notice in the 1870s. After a violent incident at the town of Alcoy in 1873, when anarchists took advantage of a strike to spread radical ideas, causing the police to fire on the gathered populace, a clampdown was enforced that sent the movement underground. Consequently, it became largely based in rural areas, which were more difficult to police. Anarchism was reduced to individual acts of terrorism, which in turn were met by repression and torture by the state throughout the 1880s and 1890s.

By the early 20th century, terrorism had given way to a belief in anarcho-syndicalism. This was the theory that the state could be challenged by co-operative action by the workers in strikes. The Federation of Workers' Societies of the Spanish Region was formed in 1900. This movement organised strikes to exercise political power, and was again suppressed. Wage cuts and closures of factories in Barcelona in 1909, together with the call-up of men for a colonial war in Morocco, led to a **general strike** in the city on 26 July. This turned out to be a major event, with 1700 arrests, attacks on railway lines and anti-clericalism (hostility to the Church). Eighty churches and monasteries were attacked. The government response was swift and merciless, and five leaders were executed.

The Confederación Nacional del Trabajo

The need for stronger organisation was clear, and in 1910 the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT, the National Confederation of Labour) was founded.

Its loose structure meant that there were local organisations unencumbered by a central bureaucracy. The group quickly called another general strike. Troops were rushed to cities and the organisation was banned. The CNT allied with the **Unión General de Trabajadores** (UGT) and in 1917, a significant general strike was called. The city of Barcelona was the scene of clashes between workers and police and army units.

Post-war unrest

After 1917, the example of the Russian Revolution and the post-First World War depression increased unrest. In 1919, another general strike broke out in Barcelona involving over 100,000 workers. For the first time, significant concessions were gained – union recognition and an eight-hour day. The latter became law in 1919. However, political violence continued and was a contributory factor to the establishment of a right-wing military dictatorship by General Primo de Rivera (see page 143) in 1923.

The Federación Anarquista Ibérica

Anarchism was banned between 1923 and 1930. The movement split – the more radical Federación Anarquista Ibérica (FAI, Spanish Anarchist Federation) was formed in 1927 to prevent ideological backsliding by the CNT. Though membership was initially low (fewer than 30,000), it rose rapidly later on. The group was militant, and organised bank robberies and assassinations.

Rural unrest

Land ownership in Spain was concentrated among relatively small numbers of people. During the 19th century, a great deal of former royal land and church land had been sold, and – especially in the south – large estates exploited cheap labour from a mass of landless labourers. In Córdoba province (southern Spain), for example, 7% of landowners controlled 52% of the land. In other regions, a greater proportion of peasant proprietors existed, but rural wealth and landholding were still unevenly distributed. As the population grew and inflation rose, agricultural wages were kept down. It was difficult to form any kind of protest because of the close relationship between the landowners and local police and government.

By 1919, there were frequent episodes of rural unrest and violence. Socialist and anarchist ideas spread, as did the demand for land reform. Rebellion was suppressed in the 1920s, but the establishment of the Republic in 1931 caused a considerable outburst of unrest, as the rural workers hoped for change. However, falling agricultural prices and exports led to wage cuts. Rural unemployment also rose. Attempts at land reform were blocked by the conservative parties and the countryside became radicalised. There was a considerable rise in membership of the socialist-led peasant workers' union, the **Federación Nacional de Trabajadores de la Tierra** (FNTT – National Federation of Land Workers), which went from 27,000 members in 1930 to over a million by 1932. Land seizures and estate occupations became more frequent.

At the same time that the rise in industrial unrest was alarming conservatives, the danger of rural revolution also reared its head. This had been a potent element in the Russian Revolution in the summer of 1917. There had been a growing influence of CNT anarchism in Andalucía (southern Spain) and migration had spread it to other regions. When the Spanish Civil War began, substantial numbers of anarchist collectives were already established in the south, but also in Aragon in the west and Castile (central Spain).

The Unión General de Trabajadores

This was a trade union initially founded by the Barcelona printing workers in 1888, which supported republicanism and socialism. It led a general strike in 1909, was responsible for the first trade union member being elected to parliament, and had 100,000 members by 1913.

Fact

The post-First World War depression occurred because most European countries were economically damaged by the disruption to international trade and payments caused by the war. Agriculture worldwide was hit by falling prices and the demand for food and raw materials. Even before the Great Depression of 1929, farmers around the globe were suffering from reduced incomes.

Federación Nacional de Trabajadores de la Tierra

The socialist-led peasant workers' union of the National Federation of Land Workers.

Fact

Similar to Spanish rural unrest in 1931, the summer of 1917 – after the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II in March – saw a wave of attacks on landowners in the Russian countryside, and seizures of land by peasants who had been tenants or workers on the land. In November 1917, the new communist government recognised this by legalising land seizures.

Fact

The *Reconquista* was the reconquest by Christian forces of lands taken by the Islamic Arab forces that swept through North Africa and Spain in the 8th century. This long struggle ended with the fall of the Islamic state of Granada to Queen Isabella I of Castile and her husband King Ferdinand of Aragon (*Los Reyes Católicos* – the Catholic Monarchs) in 1492. The wars encouraged a fierce fighting Catholic spirit in Spain, which was still prevalent more than 400 years later.

Activity

Write a brief explanation of each of the following organisations:

- CNT
- FAI
- FNTT.

anti-clericalism Hostility to organised religion, particularly to the Catholic Church, which was common in Europe in the 19th century and sometimes encouraged by governments. Otto von Bismarck led a campaign in Germany against the church in the 1870s, and laws were passed against the church in France in 1902–05. In Spain, the new Republic passed anti-clerical measures between 1931 and 1933.

The Catholic Church

Fear of industrial revolt, socialism and anarchism, and rural unrest were potent reasons for the support by many Spaniards for the coup of 1936, but these factors were bound together by fears for the position of the Catholic Church. Catholicism was deeply embedded in Spanish life and history. It had spearheaded the stand against the Islamic invasions of the Middle Ages and the subsequent Reconquest (*Reconquista*) of southern Spain from the Moors, which was not completed until the late 15th century. The church was associated with the survival of Christianity and racial purity; it was also deeply linked to the power of the state – with the association between crown and Inquisition – and also with the prestige of Spain in Europe, as the Spanish kings of the 16th and 17th centuries stood against Protestant enemies. Catholic Spain had defeated France during the Napoleonic wars. Love of nation and love of church were thus deeply connected by history. The Catholic Church held a powerful and privileged position in Spain, and had not suffered the attacks by secular authorities that had been common in other Catholic countries since the 18th century.



Holy Week in Seville in the 1930s

The Catholic Church had been alarmed at the growth of **anti-clericalism**, anarchism and socialism, all of which took a hostile attitude towards religion. Politically, the church had aligned itself with the landowners, the army and the crown. It had supported the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera and had formed agrarian organisations to combat anarchism in the countryside. Church leaders were appalled by the reforming legislation proposed by the Republic after April 1931.

The army

Military coups were not a novelty in Spain. In 1874 the First Spanish Republic had been overthrown by a liberal general, Arsenio Martínez Campos. The military governor, Camilo Polavieja of the Philippines, contemplated a coup after the Spanish defeat by the USA led to the loss of the colony in 1898. Another colonial defeat in Morocco in 1923 led to a coup by the king and **Miguel Primo de Rivera**, who was commanding the army in Catalonia. The constitution was suspended and the general's own party – the Spanish Patriotic Union (Unión Patriótica Española) – was the only one permitted. When Rivera was dismissed in 1930 he was followed by another general, Berenguer, and then an admiral, Aznar, before Spain returned to constitutional rule and a second republic was established.

Like the church, the army had enjoyed a privileged position in Spain before 1931, and also like the church it felt threatened by the Republic. The Republican government of Manuel Azaña was quick to announce anti-military measures. Military judicial tribunals no longer had authority over civilians; the army was to swear an oath of loyalty to the Republic rather than being separate to the state and outside its control. The length of military service was reduced to a year, the size of the army was reduced and the Zaragoza military academy – source of much élitist military thinking – was closed. There was a renewed inquiry into military failures in Morocco and officers were put on trial. This particularly infuriated those who had served in Africa.

In return for diplomatic support for France and Britain, Spain won the right to control northern Morocco in 1906. This led to a full-scale rebellion against Spain by the Moroccan people. Ambitious young Spanish officers took advantage of the colonial war to demonstrate their merit, but they were frustrated by an old-fashioned corrupt and bureaucratic army. Enlargement of the forces was met with popular discontent in 1909. Conventional officers took the unusual step of forming an association called the Juntas Militares (military councils) during the First World War, which won some concessions towards reform. The Juntas (members of the Juntas) took a leading role in crushing left-wing revolts.

However, in 1921, the army suffered a major and humiliating defeat at Annual in Morocco, losing thousands of men. From this emerged a new and reformed Spanish African army, scorning civilian government and using brutal methods to suppress the Moroccan opposition. These forces were known as Africanistas and saw themselves as a new élite. By 1927, they had conquered Morocco, with the help of German advisers and chemical weapons. A gap emerged in the army between the Juntas and the Africanistas – between career officers in Spain and a new reckless brutal 'storm trooper' colonial force. Both opposed the reforms of the new Republic, but by 1936 it was largely the Africanistas who were spearheading the revolt, while the Juntas supported the Republic.

The most brutal element was the Foreign Legion – nicknamed the 'Bridegrooms of Death' – under the leadership of Francisco Franco (see page 149). They were intensely nationalistic and saw themselves Spain's saviours. The Moorish troops were no longer the enemy, but rather the means to suppress more deadly threats from communists, anarchists, freemasons and opponents of the Catholic Church. The Africanistas were infuriated by the reforms instigated by Azada, the minister of war, in promoting the Junteros and holding enquiries into the mismanagement of the Moroccan campaign. The Africanista general Sanjurjo launched a premature coup in 1932, but it was to these fanatical and brutal troops that the conservative Republicans turned in 1934 to suppress the risings in the Asturias, a region in northern Spain.

Fact

The First Spanish Republic lasted from February 1873 to December 1874, when King Amadeo I abdicated and Spain came under parliamentary rule. The First Republic was politically unstable. It was overthrown by military action, after which the monarchy was restored.

Miguel Primo de Rivera (1870–1930)

Rivera was born in Jerez. He joined the army and took part in the colonial wars in Morocco, Cuba and the Philippines. With the support of King Alfonso XIII and the army, he led a military coup in September 1923. He promised to eliminate corruption and to regenerate Spain after the defeats in Morocco and the rising tide of left-wing agitation. To achieve this, he suspended the constitution, established martial law and imposed a strict system of censorship. He was faced with increasing discontent in the late 1920s and was forced to resign in 1930.



Questions

What evidence is there in the chapter so far that Spain was becoming increasingly divided politically between 1931 and 1936?

Do you think it was likely that the Second Republic would be as short-lived as the First?

martial law The imposition of military discipline and courts on a country's civilians.

Bourbon The Spanish royal family from the 18th century were a branch of the French Bourbon family after the last Habsburg ruler of Spain died childless. The present king, Juan Carlos, is a member of the Bourbon family.

Fact

'Spain' is a concept rather a reality because of the diverse nature of the different areas. The biggest distinction is the language divide between Catalonia and the Basque region. Both these areas had a long history and culture of their own. They hoped for greater self-government after the Republic was proclaimed in 1931. Separatism refers to the desire for regions to have more control over their own affairs, and in this case, to have their language accepted as official.

Encouraged by **martial law** and the elimination of leftist opposition, the officers of the Africanistas began to plot. Circumstances gave the rebellion of 1936 support from landowners, industrialists, the Catholic peasantry and the opponents of separatism.

Separatism

The revolt of 1936 was a reaction to the threat of the break-up of Spain – a fear that dated right back to the formation of a united country in 1469 by the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile. The historic kingdoms did not successfully merge, and retained much of their own identities as well as different languages. The acquisition of Andalucía from the Moors (1492) and Navarre from France (1513) added territories with different traditions.

Despite the centralising activities of these powerful monarchs, Catalonia in particular proved difficult to integrate. A major rebellion occurred in 1640, and France intrigued to maintain Catalan separatism. In the War of the Spanish Succession in the early 18th century, Catalonia resisted the accession of the **Bourbon** dynasty in Spain, but in 1714 it was completely subjugated by the forces of the Bourbon Philip V, who abolished the Catalan constitution and autonomy.

The historical regions of Spain



Catalan separatism re-emerged in the 19th century, and Catalan nationalists gave their support to the conservative Carlist side to win concessions from the liberal nationalists. The resurgence really began in the 1850s, however, when serious efforts were made to revive the Catalan language.

The Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya

The separatists had some success in gaining a measure of self-government by 1913, but it was repealed in 1925 by Primo de Rivera, who insisted on the unity of Spain. By then Catalonia had adopted a more left-wing stance, and the anarchists were regarded as the best hope of liberty. Rivera's policy led to the formation of a left-wing coalition party in Catalonia – the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), or the Republican Left. The Esquerra won a sweeping victory in the municipal elections of 1931, and two days later its leader proclaimed a Catalan Republic. A compromise was worked out with the new Republic, and in September 1932 the statute of autonomy (self-government) for Catalonia became law. The association of an independent Catalonia, together with radical land reform and industrial and social unrest in the city of Barcelona, meant that the forces of conservatism bitterly opposed local rights, and national unity became one of the rallying cries of the nationalist rebels.

Foreign influences – political ideas imported into Spain

When the army of Africa began its revolt in July 1936, Spain was already deeply divided. On one side were the landowners, monarchists, the small Spanish Fascist Party, the Catholic Church, much of Castile and north and north-west Spain. On the other side were the anarchists, the socialists, the republicans, Catalan separatists, landless labourers of the south, the small Spanish Communist Party, and the trade unions, especially the UGT. On one side a secular, reforming constitutional Spain; on the other, militaristic, authoritarian, conservative, Catholic Spain. On one side, admirers of Soviet Russia and Western democracy; on the other, admirers of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy.

The international element was an important factor. Like many other civil wars, the Spanish Civil War was driven by global influences as well as ideas that were unique to Spain. What made this war special was that by 1936 Europe had become deeply divided ideologically between communism and the nationalistic fascist and Nazi dictatorships of Mussolini and Hitler, as well as their imitators in smaller states. In the middle lay the path of parliamentary democracy, and added to the mix was anarchism and Trotskyism (named after its founder **Leon Trotsky**). The establishment of militaristic right-wing dictatorships in Italy and Germany had influenced the growth of a fascist movement in Spain founded by Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera and called the **Falange**. This was modelled on early Italian fascism and was another sign of growing political extremism.

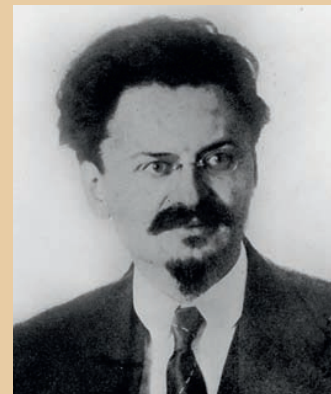
Ideologies

Spain became a battleground for opposing ideologies characterised by some strained alliances – 'Fundamentalist' Catholics allied with militarists, nationalists and fascists; democrats allied with anarchists, separatists, communists and Trotskyists – in a bewildering mixture of ideals. The war was complicated by the desire of some areas to break away from central domination. For example, Catalonia fought not only for political ideas but for regional freedom. Supporters of these ideas – or perhaps more commonly opponents of these ideas – came to Spain to fight for their beliefs. The war took on an international flavour, with volunteers from different countries enjoying a higher profile than in the other civil wars of the previous 100 years.

Catalan separatism Now an autonomous region of modern Spain, Catalonia in the north-east was initially linked to France but came under the kings of Aragon in 1258. It kept its local customs and resisted integration into Castile when Spain became united in the 15th century. With a separate language, history and culture, and one of Spain's great cities – Barcelona – it was proud of its heritage and pressed for self-government.

Leon Trotsky (1879–1940)

Trotsky was a Russian revolutionary who aided Lenin in the Russian Revolution of 1917. He broke with his fellow revolutionary, Stalin, after Lenin's death, believing in worldwide revolution and rejecting the personal power of Stalin. He was assassinated on Stalin's orders in Mexico in 1940, after having been exiled in 1928.



Falange A fascist movement in Spain founded in 1933. It was an idealistic mix of Christian nationalism and an alternative to communism for the working classes. Its founder was sentenced to death by the Republic in November 1936. It attracted a great deal of intellectual support, and its members were fervent opponents of the Republic. Some 60% died in the war.

Fact

Russia was taken over by the Bolsheviks (communists) in October 1917. However, they were a minority in Russia and their opponents organised forces against them after their leader Lenin signed a humiliating peace with Germany (the treaty of Brest-Litovsk). The Russian Civil War (1918–20) brought together a wide variety of anti-communist forces – democrats, monarchists, those who wanted regional independence. These forces were known as the Whites. France, USA, Japan and Britain sent help to the Whites against the Reds (communists). But internal disunity, the unwillingness of foreign powers to sustain aid, and the effective leadership of the communists, led to the Whites' defeat.

requisitioned When property is taken over by the state.

coalition When two or more political groups join together to form a government.

Just as with the other civil wars, however, the European powers could not ignore what was happening. The Mediterranean was a vital interest for many of them, and ideologically, the war affected communist Russia, fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Ideology prompted intervention, just as it had done for the British, French, Americans and Japanese in the Russian Civil War in their desire to crush communism. The USSR sent supplies, weapons and political advisers; Germany largely contributed air power, perhaps in a desire to test its bombers; Italy sent large-scale ground forces. Britain and France attempted to enforce non-intervention and the only direct action was an effective British threat against Italian submarines, tactfully referred to as belonging to a 'mystery power' whose presence in the western Mediterranean was seen as being undesirable.

Thus, a prolonged, brutal and costly conflict in Spain was fuelled by official and unofficial foreign intervention. Like other civil wars, it had a considerable effect on the ordinary people of Spain and determined the nation's development for a generation afterwards.

What were the main short-term causes of the war?

Rural and industrial unrest after 1931

Rural unrest

In April 1931, Spain became a republic, raising the hopes of the landless labourers of the south. Agrarian reform was a major feature of the new regime; working hours were reduced and overtime had to be paid if they were exceeded. Landowners were compelled not to bring in cheaper labour if workers were available in their own municipality. They were forced to cultivate all usable land on pain of their land being **requisitioned** and redistributed to the landless workers. This had a major impact on the wealthy landowners of the south, who depended on cheap labour. In Castile and northern Spain, where there was more small-scale peasant land ownership, the new Republic had much less appeal because, alongside agrarian reform, measures were introduced to restrict the power of the Catholic Church. Thus, Catholic farmers were attracted to the CNCA (1917) – Confederación Nacional Católica Agraria (The National Confederation of Catholic Farmers) – a mass organisation that came to rival the socialist-led Federación Nacional de Trabajadores de la Tierra (FNTT), National Federation of Land Workers.

The countryside became a battleground. Disputes took place at local level about wages and land redistribution. But the pace of change was slow – the new Republic was anxious to avoid too much dislocation, and only 10% of uncultivated arable land was in fact redistributed between 1931 and 1933. This generated a violent reaction as peasants were disappointed – most noticeably in Casas Viejas near Cadiz, where republican police shot 19 peasants. In 1933, internal divisions in the left, together with a right-wing backlash, resulted in the formation of a centre-right **coalition** which reversed the changes. Landowners dominated local tribunals, working hours legislation was not enforced and confiscated land was returned. Unrest grew in the south. Attempts by the autonomous Catalan government, set up by the new Republic, to redistribute land were foiled by a right-wing reaction that ended self-government in Catalonia.

The splits in the left and the growing power and organisation of the right frustrated land reforms and caused massive resentment. In January 1936, however, the left reunited in the Popular Front, and prospects for rural change

improved again. However, this generated even greater fears among the right, and was one of the reasons why the military coup attracted so much support.

Industrial unrest

Despite the establishment of the Republic in 1931, social unrest continued, with the army suppressing CNT strikes. The government arrested and deported anarchist leaders, leading to strikes and local insurrections. There were risings in Zaragoza in 1933 and a major disturbance in 1934 in the Asturias mining area of northern Spain. The communists and anarchists co-operated, and workers attacked police barracks and then took over much of the region. The government sent in colonial troops – the Spanish Foreign Legion and its Moorish soldiers – and the suppression of the revolt was carried out with extreme brutality.

Religious discontent

The Catholic Church was deeply angered by the initial reforms introduced the new Republic. The church lost control of divorce and marriage, as the state installed divorce procedures and civil marriages. The ecclesiastical orders were barred from teaching under Article 26 of the new constitution. Religious symbols were removed from public buildings. The church lost its subsidy from the state, phased out over two years, and its property and assets had to be declared and were liable to taxation.

An outburst of anti-clericalism in Madrid, in which 50 convents were attacked, seemed to confirm that the presence of socialists in the government was tantamount to a godless attack on the church, and that a fate awaited it similar to that suffered by the Russian church under communism or the French church at the height of the French Revolution. Clerical support for political groups culminated in the formation in 1933 of the CEDA, or Confederación Española de Derechos Autonomas (Spanish Confederation of Independent Rightists) – akin to the Catholic Centre Party in Germany. This was a mass political movement of the right to protect Catholic interests. Spain's religious and political divisions began to entwine, and many Catholics felt that they were under threat and needed to take political action.

People voting in the November 1933 election, Spain



José Maria Gil Robles (1898–1980)

Robles was a right-wing Catholic journalist who supported the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera and opposed the Second Republic. He formed the CEDA in 1933, which was basically anti-democratic and backed Franco. Robles was forced to dissolve his party in 1937, and played little part in post-war Spain.

The elections held in November 1933 resulted in a coalition between the moderate radicals and the CEDA led by **José Maria Gil Robles**, and when CEDA ministers entered government in 1934 it seemed that Catholic influence might prevent radical change. However, it also provoked fury from the left, which was afraid that a situation might develop similar to that in Italy and Germany – when extreme right-wing ministers entered government and subverted the constitution from within.

The Popular Front

When Robles failed to be appointed prime minister in 1936 he negotiated with leading generals for a coup, but failed to convince them. The reunification of the left in the Popular Front, and their election victory in 1936, marked the end of any hopes for Catholic political influence, and opened the way for a renewed campaign against the church. The early radicalism of the Republic now seemed likely to return and, as in France, the Popular Front appeared to be linked to international communism and the influence of the USSR. In May 1934, the USSR gave official approval to alliances between communists and other left-wing groups (the Popular Front) – from the extreme anarchists to the moderate reforming liberals – to enable them to gain office. This had previously been regarded as going against Marxist theory. The result was that left-wing alliances gained power in France and Spain. The coalitions were bitterly opposed by conservatives, who recognised the threat of Soviet-influenced communism. The alliances were also difficult to maintain – in France they did lead to reforms; in Spain the coalition led to military revolt and civil war. The more united nationalist forces were at a greater advantage in the end because of the disunity among members of the Popular Front parties.

Divisions between left and right in Spain had now become part of an international battle. The right-wing parties polled 4,505,524 votes in the election but gained only 124 seats; the Popular Front polled 4,654,000 and gained 278 seats. It is not altogether surprising that many conservative Catholics were prepared to support the military coup.

Activities

- a Divide into groups and make a poster for the anarchists; the Catalan separatists; the FAI; the CNCA; the FNTT and CEDA.
- b Make up a slogan for each poster. Do your posters help to explain the growth of political extremism? The poster opposite is from the semi-Trotskyist POUM party. How useful is it as evidence for the situation which led to civil war?

‘Farmers, the Land Belongs to You’: Spanish poster, 1936, from the Republican forces



Divisions in Spain by 1936

By 1936, the rifts in Spanish society had become dangerous. Rising leftist activity had provoked a rise in right-wing extremism. The army had become increasingly involved in politics. There was a fear of anarchist revolution and concerns about the Popular Front.

When this coalition came to power, popular unrest in the countryside exploded into land seizures encouraged by radical anarchists. There was little attempt by the anarchists to moderate their behaviour, and no demands to allow the Popular Front to reassure moderate elements in Spain. A CNT conference held in May 1936 was full of revolutionary language. It seemed that the new Republic had not been able to control the major revolutionary group.

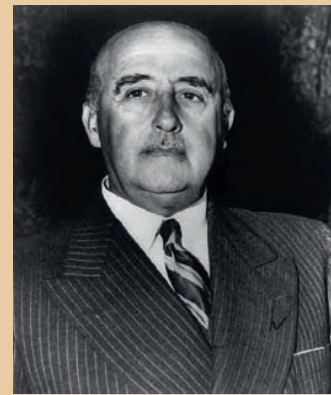
The murder of former finance minister José Calvo Sotelo on 13 July 1936 was the trigger for the war, in much the same way as the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand had sparked the First World War. Sotelo had been in exile from 1931–34, but had returned to become a leading right-wing figure associated with the Spanish fascists (the Falange) and a deputy for the Renovación Española (Spanish Revival) group. He clashed with the socialists in the assembly and was murdered by left-wing members of the Civil Guard. His death hastened the preparations for a military coup by generals Sanjurjo and Mola, and by the Foreign Legion. It may have prompted **Francisco Franco**, then in the Canary Islands, to join the coup as an influential right-wing general.

The body of Calvo Sotelo, July 1936



Francisco Franco (1892–1975)

Franco was a general who joined the military revolt in 1936 and emerged as the leader (*El Caudillo*). After victory in 1939, he introduced elements of fascism but was more a military dictator. He brutally punished his former opponents. Spain became isolated and impoverished in the post-war years. However, there was some relaxation and economic recovery by the 1960s. Franco made Prince Juan Carlos his successor in 1969.



End of unit activities

- 1 In the three wars considered so far, there were short-term triggers and long-term causes. For each war, identify the immediate causes and five longer-term causes, using a table similar to the one shown below.

War	Immediate causes	Long-term causes
First World War		
Second World War		
Spanish Civil War		



Theory of knowledge

Is anything in history inevitable?

Is it justified for historians to discuss whether events are 'inevitable' or is this an unhistorical concept? Is it helpful to show by considering 'inevitability' that the pressures for an event were very strong and the chances of avoiding it weak? Or can events always, by the nature of history, be avoided? Is 'inevitability' a 'false friend' in that it seems to be leading to an understanding of causation, but in fact leads to assumptions that because things happened in a certain way, there was no alternative?

- 2 Draw a wall chart showing briefly what all the main political groups in Spain by 1936 stood for. Put the right-wing groups on the right and the left-wing groups on the left.
- 3 *How justified was the military revolt of 1936?*
Hold a class debate based on this question. Prepare for this by each 'side' preparing cards with a clear line of argument on one side and the justification for it on the other.
- 4 Discuss the view that 'From 1931 it was inevitable that Spain would experience a civil war.' Factors might include:
 - the long-term divisions in Spanish society
 - the history of civil war
 - the fundamental problems of society and economy.

On the other hand, Spain had a Popular Front government without civil war, so without the determined opposition of a few military leaders, perhaps political events might have taken a different turn. Consider this in your discussion.

2 Nature and practice of the Spanish Civil War

Key questions

- What was the nature of the Spanish Civil War?
- What were the main events and why did the nationalists win?
- How did technology affect the outcome of the war?
- What was the importance of foreign intervention?
- How did both sides maintain support on the home front?
- To what extent was there a revolution in Spain after 1936?

Overview

- The military revolt of 1936 developed into a full-scale civil war in which foreign volunteers and powers also participated. The initial ability of the rebels to take southern Spain was crucial, and though there was a successful republican defence of Madrid, their counter-attacks were generally less successful than the assaults made by Franco.
- The divisions on the left, and their failure to win arms and supplies from the Western democracies, together with Franco's ability to use superior manpower and resources in a way that wore down the opposition, led to Republican defeat in 1939.
- There is some debate about the relative importance of different reasons for the outcome of the war.
- The war was similar in many respects to the Second World War – particularly in its impact on the civilian population, which endured bombing, evacuation, reprisals, government control and a blurring of the distinction between soldiers and civilians.
- The war also had some effect in terms of social change – for example, on the position of women – but Franco's victory meant that there was reaction rather than revolution, and traditional and repressive rule was established.
- The Republic undertook some changes that could be seen as a Spanish Revolution, but the divisions on the left and the pressure from the nationalists prevented these from coming to fruition.

Timeline

- 1936 26 Jul:** arrival of German Nazi and Italian fascist planes to support Franco
- 14 Aug:** capture of Badajoz, the first major victory for Franco's nationalists
- Autumn:** republicans hold Madrid
- 1937 26 Apr:** bombing of Guernica
- 2–6 May:** anarchist risings in Barcelona
- Nov:** Teruel offensive
- 1938 Apr:** nationalist forces divide Spain in two
- Jul–Nov:** Battle of the Ebro
- 1939 Jan:** Barcelona falls
- 28 Mar:** surrender of Madrid
- 1 Apr:** war ends

What was the nature of the Spanish Civil War?

The Spanish Civil War was such a bitter conflict between Spaniards that it bore some characteristics of total war. Civilians were often seen as legitimate targets for bombing and reprisals, and the entire resources of the Republic were deployed to defeat the revolt. When nationalists conquered regions, they too used all the resources available to them, in a war they perceived could only be won by complete victory or complete defeat. In terms of ideological commitment, the war became a life-and-death struggle for ideals. However, for the foreign countries involved – the USSR, Italy and Germany – the nature of the war was different. Limited resources were employed in a conflict that was not fundamental to their national existence. Foreign intervention meant that more aircraft, tanks and heavy artillery were deployed than would have been the case if the war had been restricted to Spanish forces. However, much of the outcome of the war did not depend on technological advantage, and desperate infantry struggles predominated. The impact of bombing on civilians anticipated that of the Second World War, as did the relatively high casualties and the impossibility of compromise.

What were the main events and why did the nationalists win?

A military coup

The war began as a military coup planned by a group of generals, including Sanjuro, Quiépo, Goded and Mola. Franco was initially uncertain about the coup, and only joined later, making his way from the Canary Islands to the Spanish Foreign Legion, which had landed in Tetuan, Morocco. Support for the nationalist rebels was focused in the Canary Islands, Spanish Morocco, Galicia, Navarre and parts of rural Castile and Aragon. The map opposite shows the regions held by the nationalists and communists in July 1936.

Popular support kept Madrid and Barcelona loyal to the Republic. The rebel general Goded was killed in Barcelona. When General Sanjuro was killed in a plane crash, three independent nationalist rebel generals were left – Franco, Mola and Quiépo – in charge of only five cities and about a quarter of mainland Spain. Most of the industrial and trading centres were held by the republican government, which also enjoyed the advantage of being the legitimate power. Much of the army was loyal to the Republic, and foreign leaders recognised its authority. Had matters been under control then rebel chances would have been much reduced, but the Popular Front coalition lacked effective discipline over a people in a crisis. There were deep divisions in government, and the attacks on monks, nuns and the clergy resulted in 7000 deaths and horrifying violence, increasing moderate and conservative support for the rebels.

Throughout August and September 1936, Franco brought his Moroccan legion into Spain with German transport aircraft – one of the key examples of foreign intervention. Under General Yagüe, nationalist forces took cities and towns in the south. The capture of Badajoz united two main nationalist forces in Andalucía. Franco then drove towards Madrid. The republicans had besieged Toledo but could not take its citadel, the Alcazar. In a famous incident the commander,

A map showing the territory held by the nationalists and the republicans in July 1936



Colonel Moscardo, refused to save his own son, who had been taken captive, by surrendering, and his son was executed. Franco relieved Toledo, which had been besieged for 69 days – an event that was of considerable propaganda value to the nationalists. For their part, the republicans mobilised an enthusiastic militia.

Franco took eastern Andalucía and Extremadura, but was kept back from Madrid by a determined defence. The war widened as volunteers arrived from overseas. Italy sent 70,000 regular troops and supplies, and military assistance came to Franco from Portugal and Germany. A German air force of 100 planes was established at Salamanca. Russia sent military aid, and international volunteers called the International Brigades were established.

A nationalist naval victory at Cape Espartel broke the republican blockade of Morocco. This ensured that men and supplies could cross the Straits of Gibraltar to reinforce the nationalists.

Fact

From February to November 1916, the French defended the forts at Verdun in eastern France, regardless of the costs. In 1936, their slogan *Ils ne passeront pas* ('they shall not pass') was adopted during the defence of Madrid: *No pasarán*.

Sieges, attacks and counter-attacks

The major campaign was the siege of Madrid by nationalists, which lasted from 29 October to 23 November 1936. The nationalists had professional troops; the republicans had enthusiastic militia volunteers. A plan to attack the city via the university area was discovered and the republican general, Miaja, organised the defence. The heroism displayed during this siege passed into Spanish legend. The slogan *No pasarán* ('they shall not pass') recalled the determined French resistance of Verdun in 1916, and the communist leader Dolores Ibárruri, 'La Pasionara' (see page 161), earned renown by her courageous rallying of the troops. The arrival of the International Brigades aided the defence and Madrid survived. A prolonged siege followed. Franco attempted to cut off the city from the north in the Battle of the Coruna Road (December 1936 to January 1937), which ended with 30,000 losses – and a stalemate in the conflict.

In the north, where many areas had initially declared for the rebels, a republican attack was carried out on Vitoria by Basque troops. However, superior air reconnaissance cost them the element of surprise, and better artillery and air support won the day for the nationalists in the Battle of Villareal (30 November to 5 December 1936).

The nationalists had failed to take Madrid but, despite their superior equipment and better-trained soldiers, they faced a formidable task given the regular army units that supported the Republic and the mobilisation of popular militias. Holding central positions and key cities – and having committed support – had helped the Russian revolutionaries survive the attacks of professional armies in the Russian Civil War. However, in Spain, the republicans lacked a clear central authority such as that provided by Lenin and Trotsky, and they were hampered by the difficulty of defending some of the key areas. This was clearly demonstrated when the republican city of Malaga fell to nationalist and Italian forces in February 1937. The consequence was a series of mass executions and a dramatic drop in morale.

Attacks on Madrid continued in February 1937, this time from the Jarama valley in the south. Total losses were over 45,000. The defenders managed to keep the communication link between Madrid and Valencia open, but the nationalists gained more territory. The International Brigades were once again in the forefront of the fighting. With Italian help, Franco kept the pressure on Madrid with an attack on Guadalajara in March. Well-equipped Italian motorised units were decisive in taking the city, but the advance met bad weather and determined republican counter-attacks with air support. The Italians withdrew, leaving behind much of their equipment.

The nationalists renewed their attacks against the Basques in the north in March to June 1937, supported by Italian troops and in the air by the German Condor Legion. Casualties mounted on both sides, but Bilbao – a major port and industrial centre – fell and the terror bombing of Guernica and Durango was effective. In an attempt to take the pressure off the Basques, the republicans attacked at San Ildefonso in May and June, but this only delayed Basque defeat. Another attack to draw nationalist forces from the north was launched in Aragon in June, but superior nationalist artillery destroyed the republicans, and Bilbao could not be saved.

Fact

Guernica was the ancient capital of the Basques, who had withstood the advances of the nationalist army since 1936. In April 1937, Guernica was deliberately targeted for aerial bombing. Franco allowed the city to be bombed by the German Condor Legion. 1654 people were killed and 889 wounded, as air raid defences were minimal.

The difficulties of counter-attacking had proved greater than holding Madrid, but the republicans continued to attack, this time at Brunette in Estremadura. Making similar mistakes to those of the First World War, the republicans allowed themselves to be drawn into battles for strong defensive points, and they suffered heavy losses. This time republican casualties amounted to 25,000 – more than double those of their opponents. Losses of tanks and aircraft were hard to restore, whereas the nationalists could rely on supplies from their allies.

In the north, the nationalists built on their conquest of the Basque region. Italian help meant that they outnumbered the republicans; Basque troops were disheartened and the republicans at Santander in northern Castile were overwhelmed in August 1937.

The republicans now focused on Aragon, trying to take Saragossa and unite the province, which had been divided by nationalist gains. They failed to take advantage of local successes, however, and once again a dangerous loss of men and tanks resulted (August–September 1937). The republicans had not been able to sustain a successful offensive like that of the nationalists in the north.

In autumn 1937, nationalist forces completed their northern conquests by subduing the Asturias region, though they still faced guerrilla resistance in this republican stronghold. However, many more men were now available for the campaign against Madrid.

To forestall this, the republicans launched an attack at Teruel in December 1937, beginning a hard struggle that lasted until February 1938. Teruel fell, but Franco was determined to retake it, trapping large republican forces in the city. This time total casualties came to over 100,000. The war had become one of attrition – in some ways similar to the First World War – but the series of failed offensives had weakened the republican side.

Franco divides republican territory – a turning point

The results of the failed republican attacks, the erosion of men and war materials and the nationalist northern victories became evident in 1938 when, by concentrating forces against a weakened enemy, Franco was able to drive through Aragon and reach the sea, cutting republican territory in two. This success was aided by Italian artillery and tanks, and the support of the German air force. Only determined resistance by fresh troops prevented the fall of Valencia. This attack was arguably the real turning point of the war.

When a reopening of the French frontier allowed supplies to reach the republican armies, their generals launched yet another offensive over the River Ebro to take Franco's army from the rear. A night attack caught the Moroccan troops of the nationalists by surprise. However, the nationalists stabilised their positions at Gandesa and counter-attacked, forcing the republicans back to the Ebro. The attacks lost the republicans 70,000 men and many irreplaceable aircraft, vehicles and supplies. The fighting between July and November 1938 lasted almost as long as the Battle of the Somme during the First World War

Fact

The League of Nations had formed a Non-Intervention Committee in 1937 and banned outside help from reaching the two sides in Spain. Italy and Germany ignored the ban, but Britain and France enforced it and the Republic found it difficult to import war materials. Russia did send supplies, but of poor quality and only erratically.

The final push

By the end of 1938, the outcome of the war was no longer in doubt. Nationalist forces swept into Catalonia and took Barcelona, reaching the French frontier by February 1939. In Madrid, a regular army commander on the republican side, Casado, overthrew communist leaders in order to surrender to Franco and gain better terms. A war broke out between the communists and the anarchist troops – this futile in-fighting allowed the nationalists to take Madrid on 28 March 1939, and the war drew to a close.

Franco, the dominant nationalist general since the death of General Mola in 1937, was the new ruler of Spain.

A map showing the gains made by the nationalists by February 1939



Why did the nationalists win?

- Franco managed to exert sole authority, both militarily and politically. He campaigned patiently and combined artillery, air power, infantry and tanks in a slow but careful campaign.
- The nationalists had effective foreign support. Mussolini sent a total of 75,000 troops and 759 aircraft. Italy was virtually at war with republican Spain. Germany sent 16,000 men and, more importantly, a 5000-strong Condor Air Legion. German and Italian bombing of Spanish cities was effective.
- Hitler and Mussolini gave Franco over \$560 million of credit to obtain supplies, and imports reached Spain because of his control of southern ports. Portugal supported Franco and the border was open for supplies.
- The foreign aid given to the Republic was less effective. Stalin insisted on political control, and Russian aid was difficult to bring in because of a successful campaign in northern Spain early in the war. However, 1000 Russian aircraft, 400 tanks and 3000 'advisers' were sent.
- The International Brigades, a total of 51,000 men, fought bravely for the Republic, but were hampered by problems in communication and their own inexperience. They were withdrawn in 1938.
- The republicans suffered more than the nationalists from the determination of Britain and France to enforce non-intervention. The Non-Intervention Committee, set up in Lyon in 1936, did little to stop Germany and Italy sending direct military aid, yet insisted for much of the war on preventing aid reaching the Republic.
- Whereas Franco subordinated all the anti-republican groups to his leadership, the republican side was deeply divided between anarchists, the official Communist Party, the socialists and the Trotskyists. At crucial times this led to a civil war within a civil war, as in Barcelona in 1937 where there was a workers' rising against the official communists, and in the last days of the Republic, when there was fighting in Madrid between communists and anarchists.

Historical debate

There is still strong feeling about the relative importance of the factors outlined above, as the following sources show.

SOURCE A

Franco won the war solely by the military help of Mussolini and Hitler and by the political help of [the British prime minister] Neville Chamberlain. The Republic was not incompetent, and the recriminations between anarchists and communists were not relevant to the outcome of the war.

Thomas Caverro, a modern left-wing commentator. Quoted on the left-wing website <http://lacucaracha.info/scw/index.htm>.

Partido Obrero Unificación Marxista (POUM)

The United Working Class Marxist Party, or POUM, was founded in 1935. It was initially influenced by Trotsky's writings and may have numbered 10,000 by 1936. Its founders, Nin and Maurin, later disagreed with Trotsky but the party is usually described as Trotskyist. It rejected the strictly disciplined Stalinism embraced by the 'official' Spanish communists.

Activities

- 1 What is the difference between the interpretations of the republican defeat in Sources A and B?
- 2 What evidence would you need to judge which was more accurate?

SOURCE B

While the Republicans resisted the nationalists by all available means, another struggle was going on within their ranks. A majority fought to protect republican institutions. Others, including the communists, were committed to finishing the civil war before beginning their anticipated revolution. They were resisted by comrades-in-arms – the **POUM (Partido Obrero Unificación Marxista)** and the anarchists – who were intent on completing the social and political revolution while waging war against the nationalists. A civil war waged within a civil war. The Republican army, its attention diverted by internal political battles, was never able to mount a sustained counter offensive or to exploit a breakthrough such as that on the Rio Ebro in 1938.

Solstein, E. and Meditz, S. 1988. Spain: A Country Study. *The US Library of Congress*.

SOURCE C

Franco may not have been a strategic genius, but he grasped the importance of the operational level of war very early on and of the importance of new military technologies. He displayed an importance of the need to transcend traditional rivalries and promote cooperation between artillery, air, infantry and naval units.

Jensen, G. 2005. Franco. *Dulles, USA. Potomac Books*.

Questions

Look at Source C and answer the questions.

- 1 How important do you think Franco's leadership was to victory?
- 2 What examples can you find of Franco's successful campaigning?
- 3 Why do you think it took so long to capture Madrid?
- 4 Do you think that military or political factors were more important in the nationalist victory?

SOURCE D

In the summer of 1936, the war could have taken any number of different courses. What substantially determined its evolution (and result) was the nature and extent of foreign intervention.

Tierney, D. 2007. FDR and the Spanish Civil War. *Durham, USA. Duke University Press*. p. 18.

Questions

Read Source D and answer the questions.

- 1 Which different courses could the war have taken?
- 2 What foreign intervention took place?
- 3 Do you agree that foreign intervention was the factor that most influenced the outcome of the war?

How did technology affect the outcome of the war?

The use of air power had been developed in the First World War, and its potential had been recognised by military theorists. Japan had used air raids as part of its assaults on Manchuria and Chinese cities after 1931. The Spanish air forces were not developed enough to have a decisive effect on the outcome of the war, but Franco did have the assistance of German and Italian aircraft. This gave him an initial advantage, allowing him to move his troops from Morocco in 1936. It also enabled the nationalists to gain air superiority in key campaigns, and to use bombing to terrorise republican-held cities. However, the war could not be decided quickly because neither side achieved permanent air superiority. Individual successes often depended on the ability to deploy aircraft. It was the first war in history in which so many aircraft were used (3000 in all). Franco's successes in Aragon and Catalonia owed a lot to air power, and pointed the way for the use of aircraft in the Second World War and beyond. It continued the total war of the First World War and anticipated the mobilisation of resources and the lack of distinction between soldier and civilian in the Second World War. Franco's co-ordination of aircraft, artillery, tanks and infantry in the Catalonia offensive showed the way forward and anticipated the *Blitzkrieg* (see pages 102–105) in the Second World War. The most important symbol of this total war was the bombing of Guernica, immortalised in **Pablo Picasso's** painting and vividly demonstrating the devastation inflicted on civilians in 20th-century warfare.

Bomb-damaged buildings in Guernica after the city was devastated by the worst air raid of the Spanish Civil War in April 1937



Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)

One of the pioneers of the Cubist movement in art, Picasso is Spain's most famous modern artist. He painted *Guernica* while living away from Spain, and worked in France for most of his life.

What was the importance of foreign intervention?

The Spanish Civil War was international. It involved 30,000 foreign volunteers from 52 countries on the republican side. On the nationalist side were regular forces from Germany, Italy and Russia, who were nominally 'volunteers', together with genuine pro-Franco volunteers from Ireland, Romania and Portugal. However, from 1937 the League of Nations' Non-Intervention Committee banned foreign volunteers. The International Brigades were disbanded by the Spanish Republican government in 1938 to try and gain foreign diplomatic support.

The International Brigades took part in the defence of Madrid in 1936, in the battles of the Jarama River and Guadalajara in 1937, in Teruel and the Ebro offensive in 1938. Initially their arrival was good for morale – it seemed that the world was supporting the Republic. They were incorporated into the Spanish army as a Foreign Legion in 1937. Many had served during the First World War, but despite their fervour it is doubtful if they were decisive, and they may have turned European governments against the Spanish Republic – many were treated with great suspicion on their return, and some of the more extreme political groups among the volunteers fought amongst themselves. They brought little equipment, and language problems seriously weakened their military effectiveness.

There was more effective support from foreign governments for the nationalists – the tanks, artillery and machine guns offered by Germany and Italy were more significant than the manpower of the International Brigades. The USSR did send the Republic 800 planes and over 350 tanks, but these were erratically delivered (they were often lost on the way), and some were outdated. Mexico contributed some more modern planes and \$2 million of aid to the Republic.

In the end the war was won by dogged application of superior manpower and firepower by Franco. By the time of the Ebro offensive in 1938, he had an army of a million men. Five hundred cannon bombarded the republicans with 13,500 shells a day for four months. In this context, the efforts of the International Brigades – their bravery and willingness to endure losses (one in five volunteers died in Spain) – were less significant than the embargo on arms imports imposed by the League of Nations under British and French pressure, or the equipment given by Germany and Italy to the nationalists.

How did both sides maintain support on the home front?

Propaganda

Both sides recognised the importance of propaganda. The republicans set up a ministry of public instruction in September 1938 under Jesus Hernandez, and used Spanish artists to create heroic and encouraging images. In all, over 2000 posters were designed and produced. The nationalists drew on the experience of the fascist states and urged slogans promoting unity and belief in their leader Franco. Key incidents were used to promote heroic images – the killing of the son of the commander of the Alcazar in Toledo by the republicans, the republican attacks on priests and churches, and even religious statues, which were formally executed by firing squad, were used to rally Catholic Spain. Republicans made

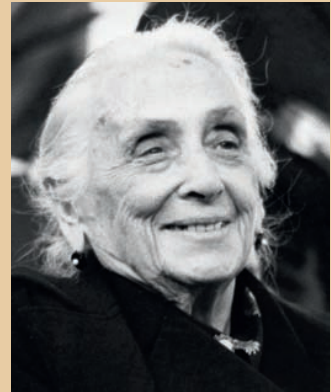
much of the bombing of Guernica. Some iconic figures like 'La Pasionara', a vibrant and dedicated communist, **Dolores Ibárruri**, were used for propaganda purposes, touring the front as a symbol of the people's resistance. Revolutionary and counter-revolutionary songs rallied troops and people. Most Spaniards did not fight in the war and it was vital to get their support if possible.

This poster was issued by the Junta Delegada de Defensa de Madrid, with the caption ¡Atacad! Soldados de la Republica (Attack! Soldiers of the Republic); it seems more like a Nazi-style poster but it was issued by the republicans, urging the people of Madrid to attack the military rebels



Dolores Ibárruri (1895–1989)

Ibárruri was of Basque origin and became a dedicated communist. She was elected to the parliament in 1936. She became famous for her slogans ('they shall not pass') and her ability to rally crowds with her oratory. She was known as the Passionate Woman ('La Pasionara'). She left Spain in 1939 and was secretary general of the exiled Communist Party in Russia.



Theory of knowledge

Visual sources and the historian

How useful are visual sources to the historian of the 20th century? Are they likely merely to illustrate or should their provenance and value of evidence occupy the historian in the same way, say, that historians of earlier periods pay careful attention to artefacts? Do modern historians pay insufficient attention to visual evidence?

Impact on civilians

The Spanish Civil War had a considerable effect on the civilian population which, as with European civilians in the Second World War, suffered bombing raids and reprisals. The clergy endured republican violence; teachers, trade unionists and known political activists were likely to be killed by the nationalists. Perhaps 77,000 were executed by the right and 55,000 by the left during the course of the war. The dangers of being taken prisoner or having one's territory occupied must have been more motivating than any poster or political speech, and the desire for revenge and retribution ran high.

The fighting made no distinction between civilians and combatants, and evacuation was a feature of both sides. The republican authorities arranged the evacuation of children. These refugees were sent to many European and South American countries. Some returned after 1939, others stayed with their families, especially those who had been sent to Russia. The nationalist side also arranged evacuations of children, women and the elderly from war zones. Refugee camps were established in Portugal, and some refugees went to Belgium and Italy. Again, this evacuation foreshadowed what became a common occurrence in the Second World War.

War and social change

The war forced both sides to take considerable control over the resources of their territories and their civilian populations. In some republican areas this led to a social revolution, involving the confiscation of landowners' property and the establishment of local communes. Anti-clericalism was widespread and there were concessions to separatism with regional self-government. In nationalist areas the power of the church grew, but there was little attempt to put fascist social and economic reforms into practice. As nationalist troops advanced, the social revolution was suppressed.

The war did see an increase in the movement for greater rights for women in the Republic. Lucía Sánchez Saornil, secretary general of Spain's version of the Red Cross, joined with Amparo Poch, director of social assistance at the Ministry of Health and Social Assistance, and established in Barcelona what became known as the **Mujeres Libres**, an organisation that fought for women's rights. This was the rallying cry for women all over Spain to join the war effort. Women participated in some of the fighting, and set up hospitals as well as working in factories. There was a greater politicisation of women in the Republic. Against that, war resulted in more widespread prostitution, and resulted in the death of women and children in air raids. Women, too, were political victims, and hundreds were executed. The victory of the nationalists brought an end to emancipation, but the experience of playing a more active part in public affairs, as well as the greater economic, social and sexual freedom they experienced during the war, did lay the basis for long-term change in Spain after the end of Franco's dictatorship.

Mujeres Libres Meaning 'Free Women', this organisation did not insist on voting rights or feminism but worked for greater health care and social rights for women.

To what extent was there a revolution in Spain after 1936?

Some historians see the civil war as part of a wider social revolution, simmering for several years, which broke out in 1936. From February to July 1936, a wave of strikes had broken out across Spain, sometimes involving over 1 million workers – not just in the cities, but also amongst agricultural workers.

The nationalist revolt on 17 July 1936 galvanised the left into revolutionary activity, and working-class organisations clamoured for weapons – but the Republic at first refused. Hugh Thomas, in *The Spanish Civil War*, sees this refusal as aiding the initial success of Franco’s rising, which could have been crushed by the trade unions and left-wing parties.

In Barcelona, the CNT called a general strike and seized arms. For the radical unions and the POUM, the war was an opportunity for revolution, and the unions managed war production in Catalonia with remarkable effectiveness, in an unusual democratic experiment. Revolutionary militias were formed, organised along anarchist lines with elected officers. Where they advanced, they encouraged land reform and, especially in Aragon, there were collective farms set up from land taken from landowners. After 17 July 1936, workers seized weapons and took over factories. As news spread from the cities, peasants seized land – often forming collective farms. This collective movement was extensive in the republican zones, with over 1600 collective farms established.

Whilst strongest in Catalonia, similar actions were taken in areas such Asturias, Valencia, the Malaga province in Andalucía, and Madrid. In some areas there was educational reform, with industry and transport being run directly by workers’ committees.

When weapons were reluctantly distributed by the government, the ‘Revolution of 19 July’ took place. In every town and village remaining loyal to the Republic, the normal machinery of government was replaced by local committees of militants, and real power began to pass to armed workers’ organisations and factory committees.

SOURCE E

The officers’ counter-revolution had unleashed the most profound European working-class revolution since 1917.

Carr, R. 1980. *Modern Spain, 1875–1980*. Oxford, UK. Oxford University Press. p. 137.

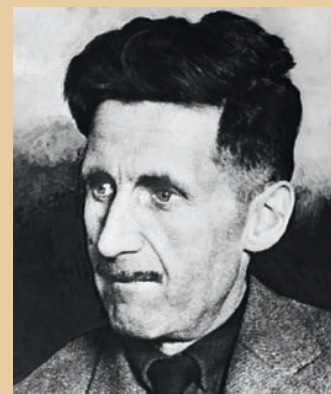
The government in Madrid opposed these revolutionary developments, and a sort of dual power arose. This led to divisions on the left: the republican government wanted to avoid alienating the liberal middle classes in Spain, while the communists regarded the factory committees as inefficient and the militias as undisciplined.

From 4 September 1936, steps were taken to restore government control. The government broke up the militias and enforced the authority of the regular army, and the police repressed workers’ movements. In Barcelona, in May 1937, there was a civil war within a civil war, as police and pro-communist forces attacked anarchist headquarters. In the fighting, hundreds were killed and wounded and the anarchist revolution was violently suppressed. These events were described by the British writer, **George Orwell**, who fought in a POUM troop.

This in-fighting weakened the left; but the reforms of the Spanish Revolution, though short-lived, passed into legend among anarchists and elements of the revolutionary left.

George Orwell (1903–50)

Orwell (born Eric Blair) was a British journalist and writer famous for *Animal Farm* and *1984*. He was born in India and educated at Eton before becoming a civil servant in India. He became a socialist and went to fight in an International Brigade in Catalonia in 1936. He witnessed the bitter suppression of the POUM by the communists – Nin, the POUM leader, was tortured to death. Orwell was wounded in 1937 and returned to Britain to write an anti-communist account of his experiences in Spain, called *Homage to Catalonia*; it reveals both the revolutionary idealism and the divisions on the left.



End of unit activities

- 1 Look at this table of important events in the war and create a similar one. Consider whether these events show that Franco's leadership (FRANCO), foreign aid (FOR), and/or divisions in the Republican side (DIV) were significant.

Key event	FRANCO/FOR/DIV
July 1936: Franco's forces cross from Morocco with German and Italian air support	
August 1936: the capture of Badajoz links nationalist forces in the south with those in the north and seals the border with Portugal	
September 1936: the nationalist general Mola's victory at Irun controls much of the northern Spanish coastline	
September 1936: the nationalist navy controls the Straits of Gibraltar	
June 1937: Bilbao falls and the Basque region is conquered by the nationalists	
1937: persistent failures of Republican offensives	
1938: Franco's Aragon Campaign	
1938: the decision by the communist prime minister Juan Negrin, who replaced the Socialist leader Largo Caballero, in conjunction with Stalin to remove the International Brigades	
September 1938: the distraction of Europe by the Munich crisis	
March 1939: the revolt in Madrid and the fall of the city to Franco	

- 2 Find out about the foreign volunteers who fought for Franco. What impact did the International Brigades have on the Spanish Civil War and has their importance been overrated? What impression do memoirs like George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* give? What can films like Ken Loach's *Land and Freedom* tell us about this war?
- 3 *Should the democracies have given more assistance to the Republic?*
Discuss this question. Britain and France pursued a policy of non-intervention. This has often been criticised as being unfair and part of an attitude of appeasement towards the dictators. What are the arguments for and against this view? To prepare for this, write a clear argument on one side of a card and then find some supporting material for it and put it on the other. Arrange the cards in order of importance to help your speech or your contribution to the debate.
- 4 To what extent can the Spanish Civil War be seen as a 'total war'? Think about the characteristics of the total wars you have studied and find factors that the Spanish Civil War shares with them.
- 5 Find out about a civil war in Africa in the 20th century. Are there any similarities between it and the war in Spain?

3 Effects and results of the Spanish Civil War

Timeline

- 1939** Second World War breaks out; Franco maintains neutrality
- 1942** Law of the Cortes
- 1945** referenda on major issues introduced at Franco's discretion
- 1946** Spain is suspended from United Nations
- 1950** relations with US are restored
- 1953** Spain–USA defence treaty
- 1959** Basque terrorist group ETA set up
- 1959–64** Spanish 'economic miracle'
- 1961** law to establish equal rights for women
- 1969** Prince Juan Carlos appointed successor to Franco
- 1975 20 Nov:** Franco dies

client state A state which, usually in return for economic or political support, gives uncritical allegiance to another state.

Key questions

- What were the political results of the war?
- How did the war affect Spain's economy?
- How did the war affect Spain's position in the world?

Overview

- Spain's population in 1936 was 24 million. By 1938 there were 2 million people in the armies of the contending sides. Of these, half a million died in battle. Many more were wounded and post-war Spain had many severely mutilated inhabitants. There were also 250,000 exiles, many of whom did not return until after Franco's death in 1975. Thousands were homeless and the war destroyed a considerable number of homes and buildings.
- The war caused a great deal of bitterness and a desire for revenge, with concentration camps, reprisals, punishments and executions continuing for years afterwards.
- Politically, Franco established a dictatorship that lasted until his death in 1975, but which had more in common with a military dictatorship based on tradition and support for the church than with the fascist states who supported him in the 1930s.
- Spain stayed out of the Second World War and was not invaded by the Allies. Following the war, it experienced isolation from Europe. For many in Europe, Spain was an outcast state tainted by repression, a thinly disguised dictatorship and association by its ruler with the failed Nazi and fascist regimes brought down in the Second World War. Only with the Cold War and the US need for allies did it emerge from isolation and begin to shake off its pro-Nazi reputation. These circumstances led Spain into closer relations with the USA, but as a **client state**, receiving large amounts of aid.
- Economically, Spain stagnated until the late 1950s, but then saw economic growth and the development of the modern tourist industry.
- The war ended the social changes and reforms getting underway in the 1930s, and Spain seemed increasingly old-fashioned by the late 1950s. It was only after 1975 that the country modernised socially and politically.
- Franco did look forward near the end of his rule by fixing the succession on the future King Juan Carlos.

What were the political results of the war?



General Francisco Franco in 1936

Dictatorship after 1939

Franco ruled until 1975, but he did not attempt to introduce a fully fledged fascist state. Repression in Spain was greater than that in Mussolini's Italy, but there was little in the way of compensating social policy. The historian Paul Preston has written: 'From 1939 Spain was governed as if it were a country occupied by a victorious foreign army.' There were restricted educational opportunities and expenditure on health and welfare was among the lowest in Europe. The dictatorship was, by and large, backed by the pre-war élites in business, the Catholic Church and the army. The 1938 Labour Charter established syndicates of workers and employees to discuss conditions, but its main policy was to make the right to work fundamental. It also made strikes a crime against the state.

Caudillo Like Hitler's title *Führer* or Mussolini's *Il Duce*, Franco's meant leader. There was a 'cult of Franco' but he did not encourage this to the extent of other 20th-century dictators.

Regional self-government had to wait until the post-Franco era: the events of 1939 were a victory for the dominance of the centralised Castilian Spanish-speaking state. There was a façade of constitutional government. The law of the Cortes of 1942 established a parliament, but this was powerless and, like the cabinet, or Council of State, consisted largely of people appointed by Franco, who reserved the right to rule by decree as the supreme leader or **Caudillo**. A law of 1945 introduced referenda, or direct voting on key issues, but this remained at Franco's discretion. The constitution most resembled that of another military dictator – Napoleon I of France (1799–1814). Like Napoleon, the Franco regime kept a tight hold on regional and local government.

Spain was to be traditional, Catholic and monarchical – Franco was merely a regent and could nominate a royal successor. After his death the Bourbon monarchy did in fact return by his wish. In place of politics, there was the National movement – a mixture of pre-war Catholic, fascist parties, administrators, and professional and technical experts. Talk was of 'family' rather than class or party.

In 1966, these constitutional arrangements were confirmed, but overt fascist terms were removed. Behind a façade of elections and referenda, the old authoritarian dictatorship continued, supported by the church and army. Censorship and oppression of opposition continued for 26 years after 1939, but Franco did not establish a totalitarian system – obedience, but not wholehearted commitment, to an ideology or total control of the economy was required. In this respect, the results of the civil war were very different from those of Russia or China. The fascist Falange had little real influence, especially after most of its key leaders were killed in the civil war.

There was a reaction against the reforms of the Second Republic: civil marriage and divorce were not permitted; trade unions were prohibited, as were all political parties except the National movement; regional independence and official use of the Basque and Catalan languages were forbidden. Land was returned to the landlords and strikes were punishable as treason.

How did the war affect Spain's economy?

Spain's economy was burdened by economic dislocation of trade and industry and a large war debt owed to Germany and Italy. The loss of labour, of economic expertise, and the diversion of resources to war production took their toll. In 1951, wages were at only 60% of 1936 levels.

Economically, Spain reverted to self-sufficiency as a result of the war; wages were very low but prices rose because of shortages in the 1940s. Unlike other European countries, Spain could not benefit either from Marshall Aid after 1947 or from the communist bloc's subsidies from the USSR.

Rather, as in the case of post-Mao China, Spain had to relax its controls and self-sufficiency. The USA, eager to sustain an anti-communist regime, encouraged investment and there were relaxations on economic activity. However, as in China, there were no relaxations of the dictatorship. From 1956, Spain's economy began to modernise and there was more contact with other European countries.

It was not until the later 1950s that post-war isolation began to give way to modernisation. The 1960s were a period of economic growth, greater prosperity and a resurgence of industrial unrest. It was as though Spain had been frozen from the late 1930s, and only after 25 years did there seem continuity with the pre-war period. With the prosperity and the arrival of mass tourism in the 1960s the regime began to relax, permitting greater religious toleration and less stringent censorship. In 1969, Franco named his heir, Prince Juan Carlos de Borbón, giving some hope for a New Spain. Juan Carlos succeeded Franco in 1975, after which there was a return to democratic government. In the 1970s, with Basque terrorism and demands for regional autonomy, the right to strike and political freedom, pressure for change finally began to make its mark.

How did the war affect Spain's position in the world?

Franco was favourably inclined to the Axis powers, but despite a meeting with Hitler in 1940, Franco restricted this to allowing German aircraft and submarines the use of Spanish facilities and allowing 'volunteers' – some 18,000 men of the **Blue Division** – to fight in Russia between 1941 and 1943. When the tide turned, Franco was careful to cultivate better relations with the Allies and was 'benevolently neutral' in 1944. This defused Stalin's suggestion that the Allies invade Spain in 1945.

The Cold War led to the USA lifting restrictions on trading with Franco, and offering financial aid in 1950. The 1953 Pact of Madrid made Spain a virtual US ally and more aid flowed in. The reward for not being an enemy to the winning side was considerable US support in the Cold War period, when Franco was seen as a bastion against communism. Thus his dictatorship, like that of the Portuguese dictator Salazar, lived on while those of Hitler and Mussolini did not.

European countries were not willing at first to allow Spain to join NATO or the EC, but a trade agreement in 1970 came close to bringing Spain back into better relations with Europe, apart from Britain, with whom there was a long-standing quarrel over Gibraltar.

Blue Division These were the 18,000 Spanish volunteers that went to fight for Germany in Russia in 1941. In total, 45,000 Spaniards served with German forces and suffered some 14,000 casualties. They wore red berets at home – the uniform of the 19th-century Carlists. They saw themselves in a tradition of defending Christian values against communism.

Discussion point

What would have been the consequences if Franco had been defeated?

Historians should not really think counter-factually (i.e. try to think what *might* have happened as opposed to what *did* happen), but it has been suggested that:

- A successful republic would have been heavily dependent on the Soviet Union. The communists had purged their enemies and by the end of the war had managed to install a pro-communist prime minister.
 - A virtual Soviet colony dominating the Mediterranean would have had enormous consequences, not least for France and Britain.
- 1 Would these countries have been so ready to go to war with Germany in 1939?
 - 2 Would Hitler have been seen much more as an anti-communist saviour and would he have avoided a two-front war?

In conclusion, it is worth considering the consequences of a republican victory for Europe. The initial rebellion was not guaranteed to succeed, and victory was only achieved after a long, gruelling war. Would a republican victory have given Spain a better future or more sustained and continuing violence and repression? Would it have been safer or more dangerous for the Western democracies? Would it have had a major effect on the outcome of the Second World War? Do you think that this sort of 'guess work' has any value? Should a historian even attempt to think 'counter-factually' and speculate on what might have happened?

Probably the sad truth is that the divisions in Spain by 1936 were so profound that whatever the result, the mixture of social conflict, ideological extremism, regional tensions and a lack of strong democratic tradition would have resulted in a tragic outcome.

End of unit activities

SOURCE A

With all my heart, I pardon all those who declared themselves my enemies, even if I did not regard them as such. I believe and wish it to be the case that I never had any other enemies than those who were the enemies of Spain.

From the deathbed testament of Franco, 1975. Quoted on www.altafilms.com/las13rosas/descargas/FrancosCrimesCrome.pdf.

SOURCE B

In mid-July 1939 Count Ciano, the foreign minister of fascist Italy, arrived in Barcelona (on a state visit). Having been an enthusiastic advocate of Franco's cause during the war, he was assured of a warm welcome. Among the entertainments ... was a tour of the battlefields. Near one of them, he was shown a group of Republican prisoners working. He noted 'They are not prisoners, they are slaves of war'. He described Franco to a friend, 'That queer fish of a Caudillo (leader) ... surrounded by mountains of files of prisoners condemned to death.'

Preston, P. 1986. The Spanish Civil War. London, UK. Harper. p. 317.

Activities

- 1 Compare the impression of Franco given in Sources A and B.
- 2 Which do you find more reliable and why?
- 3 What additional knowledge would confirm or challenge Ciano's view in Source B?

End of chapter activities



Benidorm in the 1960s

Discussion points

- 1 The Spanish Civil War had considerable effects on Spain. Using ICT, create a presentation on why you consider one element to be more important than others. Do you think that the political impact was the greatest? If so, why? Select illustrations to make your talk more interesting.
- 2 Many people refused to go to Spain for holidays in the 1960s. The photograph above shows new building for hotels in the 1960s. Given what you know about post-1939 Spain, were they right?

Paper 1 exam practice

Question

With reference to their origin and purpose, assess the value and limitations of Sources A and B (page 172) for historians studying nationalist aims in the Spanish Civil War.

[6 marks]

Skill

Utility/reliability of sources

SOURCE A

There must be liberty and fraternity without the abuse of liberty and tyranny; work for all; social justice accomplished without rancour or violence, and a fair and progressive distribution of wealth without destroying or endangering the Spanish economy. Before this there must be war without mercy on the exploiters of politics, on the deceivers of the honest worker, on the foreigners and the foreign-orientated people who openly or deceitfully endeavour to destroy Spain. There must be Fraternity! Liberty! Equality!

Text prepared by General Franco and broadcast on Radio Tenerife, 18 July 1936. Quoted in Crozier, B. 1967. Franco. London, UK. Eyre and Spottiswood. p. 184.

SOURCE B

The scale of repression and terror in those areas easily taken by the rebels made it clear that their objective was not simply to take over the state but to eliminate an entire liberal and reforming culture. The rebels were waging war on the urban and rural workers who had benefited from the reforms of the Republic. General Mola's apocalyptic declaration in Burgos said 'The government which was the wretched bastard of liberal and socialist concubinage (prostitution) is dead. It will not be long before two banners – the sacred emblem of the Cross and our own glorious flag – are waving together in Madrid.'

Preston, P. 1986. The Spanish Civil War, Reaction, Revolution and Revenge. London, UK. Harper. p. 109.

Examiner's tips

Utility/reliability questions require you to assess **two** sources – over a range of possible issues/aspects – and to comment on their **value** to historians studying a **particular event or period** of history. The main areas you need to consider in relation to the sources and the information/view they provide, are:

- origin and purpose
- value and limitations.

Before you write your answer, draw a rough chart or spider diagram to show, where relevant, these various aspects. Make sure you do this for **both** sources.

Common mistakes

When asked to assess two sources for their value, make sure you don't just comment on **one** of the sources! Such an oversight happens every year, and will lose you 4 of the 6 marks available.

Remember to make sure you understand what the question is asking.

Simplified markscheme

Band		Marks
1	Both sources assessed, with explicit consideration , of both origins and purpose and value and limitations.	5–6
2	Both sources assessed, but without consideration of both origins and purpose and value and limitations. or explicit consideration of both origins and purpose and value and limitations but only for one source.	3–4
3	Limited consideration/comments on origins and purpose or value and limitations. Possibly only one/ the wrong source(s) addressed.	0–2

Student answer

Source A is a declaration, published in 1936 just when the military revolt was beginning, written by someone who was a major leader. While its origin might present both value and limitations, it is not difficult to assess its purpose. It is intended to rally support from as wide a section of the people as possible and to give the impression that this is a crusade for justice and not just a military coup. It refers to justice for the workers and uses language from the French revolution – ‘Liberty, Fraternity and Equality’. It attempts to draw a distinction between false liberty – presumably the abuses carried out by the anarchists in pursuit of their ideas of freedom and true liberty.

These aspects affect the source’s value and point to possible limitations. It certainly provides some valuable ‘insider’ information about how the aims of the rebels were set out, but it is not reliable. It seems to suggest a concern for the whole population, but the rebels were opposed to the reforms of the Republic for workers and peasants. When it refers to ‘War without mercy’ it is probably closer to the real aims of Franco, as there were many brutal executions of enemies, as Source B shows.

There is limited reference here to conservatism, tradition and the intense Catholicism shown in Mola’s speech in B, and so it is not representative of the real aims of the rebels: to oppose anti-clericalism and to bolster the power of the Catholic Church. However, it was written before the fighting and it may be that the aims became narrower once the bitterness of war had set in. However, this is more useful for showing how the rebels tried to get support and present their aims to Spain and the world than for a completely accurate portrayal, which is seen more in B.

Examiner’s comment

There is good assessment of Source A, referring explicitly to both origin and possible purpose, and to value and limitations. These comments are valid and are clearly linked to the question. The candidate has thus done enough to get into Band 2, and so be awarded 3 or possibly 4 marks. However, as there are not enough comments about Source B, this answer fails to get into Band 1.

Activity

Look again at the two sources, the simplified markscheme and the student answer on pages 172–73. Now try to write a paragraph or two to push the answer up into Band 1, and so obtain the full 6 marks. You need to consider whether there are any similarities.

Summary activities

- 1 Produce a mind map with a central circle 'The causes of the Spanish Civil War', and then 'branches' for each of the **key elements – the army, the rise of the left, religious issues, short-term causes**. To do this, use the information from this chapter, and any other resources available to you. Remember to make sure you include **all** the main events and turning points.
- 2 Prepare revision cards to help you assess the results of the war. On the front of the card, write the key result with a brief explanation. On the back, put in as much supporting detail as you can.
- 3 Make sure you have attempted all the various questions that appear in the margins – many of these are designed to help you understand key events and turning points. There are also questions designed to develop your skills in dealing with Paper 1-type questions, such as comprehension of sources, and assessing sources for their value and limitations for historians. Remember, to do these sorts of questions, you will need to look at a **range** of aspects, such as origin, nature and possible purpose. Don't forget, even if a source has many limitations, it can still be valuable for a historian.



Paper 2 practice questions

- 1 Analyse the causes and results of the Spanish Civil War.
- 2 Assess the social and economic effects of the Spanish Civil War.
- 3 Compare and contrast the reasons for and impact of two of the following: the Spanish Civil War; the Russian Civil War; the Chinese Civil War.
- 4 Analyse the reasons for the outcome of the Spanish Civil War.
- 5 How important was foreign intervention in any two civil wars you have studied.

Further reading

Try reading the relevant chapters/sections of the following books:

- Beevor, Antony. 2007. *The Battle for Spain*. London, UK. Phoenix.
- Brennan, Gerald. 1990. *The Spanish Labyrinth*. Cambridge, UK. Cambridge University Press.
- Browne, Harry. 1996. *Spain's Civil War*. London, UK. Longman.
- Carr, Raymond. 2001. *Modern Spain*. Oxford, UK. Oxford University Press.
- Preston, Paul. 2006. *The Spanish Civil War*. London, UK. Harper.
- Romero Salvado, Francis. 1999. *Twentieth Century Spain*. London, UK. Palgrave.