

UNIT 6.- THE SECOND REPUBLIC AND THE CIVIL WAR (1931-1939)

The Spanish Second Republic was an attempt to modernize Spain, to reach the level of development of other European countries, having as a model countries such as France, Germany or Great Britain. The traditional, conservative elite, composed of the agrarian and financial oligarchy, and traditionally allied with the Spanish Church and the army, were unwilling to lose in any degree their “status quo”, that is, any of their privileges and power, and opposed the Republic from the start. They reacted against the Republic leading to the Civil War and the Francoist dictatorship, which meant forty years of isolation and backwardness.

The Second Republic

The Fall of the Monarchy



<http://www.xtec.es/%7Eaguiul/imatges/003/p1.htm>

At the end of Miguel Primo de Rivera’s dictatorship the opposition grew stronger every day. Socialists (PSOE and UGT) abandoned their prior neutrality and started complaining, and the anarchists recovered new strength. As a result, FAI (Federación Anarquista Ibérica) was founded in 1927. Political unrest, workers’ unrest and general turmoil was patent despite the repression. The bourgeoisie was also unhappy and the lower and middle **bourgeoisie** mobilised through the students’ movement (1926).

A political scene in which a “pronunciamiento” (military coup) was attempted, and universities went on strike, convinced the king to ask General Primo de Rivera to take the decision of resigning (30-1-1930). The king, Alfonso XIII called a newly appointed government.

People wanted democracy and did not want either a dictatorship or the Restoration system that had not given them any say in politics. The cause of events that led to the fall of the monarchy were mainly the following:

1. The opposition united. All political forces excepting the Socialists (PSOE) and Anarchists (CNT) signed the Pact of San Sebastian. Politician Niceto Alcalá

Zamora was mentioned as a possible candidate for prime minister of the Republic. There was an allusion to some kind of autonomy for Catalonia.

2. People and parties transformed the local council elections into a plebiscite against the monarchy.
3. There was a military uprising in Jaca, one of the garrisons near the Pyrenees, as part of a military coup that did not succeed.
4. Unions and workers organisations coordinated workers for a general strike.

Given the situation, the king appointed a new government led by admiral Aznar. He had to create a monarchist party in order to win the elections, erase from the mind of the people the memory of the dictatorship, and return to the Restoration system.

The elections took place on the 12th of April 1931. The test was in the cities. In rural areas, caciques were very powerful and could control and manipulate the elections. Republicans won in 41 out of 50 provincial capitals. As a consequence, on 14th of April the king abdicated and the Second Republic was proclaimed. In Barcelona, Francesc Macià proclaimed the Catalan Republic within the Iberian Federation, although he had to retract afterwards.

The Party System during the Republic

PARTIES AND POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS DURING THE 2ND REPUBLIC IN SPAIN	
Acción Republicana	In 1934 merged with the "Partido Radical-socialista" in "Izquierda Republicana"
Partido Republicano Radical-socialista	Left wing of republicans
Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya	Represented the Catalan middle class
Partido Republicano Radical	Leader: Lerroux. Supported by tradesmen and industrialists from the liberal bourgeoisie
Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE)	The larger party and better organised in 14-4-1931. The trade union UGT was linked to this party
Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores (CNT)	Anarchist trade union. It did not take a clear position regarding the constituent assembly
Partido Comunista de España (PCE)	Leader: Dolores Ibarruri "La Pasionaria"
Acción Popular	In 1933 merged with "Derecha Regional Valenciana" in CEDA, a pseudo-fascist party
Falange Española y de las JONS	Spanish version of fascist party
Monarchic section	An important sector of the oligarchy

Parties were divided in right wing, left wing and centre –centre parties can also be centre-left and centre-right- according to their ideologies. This way of dividing parties started according to where people were sitting in the National Assembly during the French Revolution (see unit 1).

Left wing parties during the Republic had in common a preference for a republic as political system of government. Some contemplated federalism or, at least, the possibility of the existence of some regional autonomies. They mistrusted the influence of the Church and the army in the state and government and called for a separation between Church and state as had been done in modern European countries. They believed that intellectuals and a lay and rationalistic education would be important to carry out social changes. The two main parties on the left were *Izquierda Republicana* (Republican Left) and PSOE, the socialist party. *Izquierda Republicana* tended towards the centre-left. It was a party with many intellectuals and liberal professions such as lawyers, doctors, academics and teachers. They wanted to reform the country to be more

similar to Western European countries such as Britain or France, but they did not want a revolution. One of their main leaders was Manuel Azaña. The Socialist Party followed the ideological thought of European social-democrats and was linked to the trade union UGT. There were two main trends in the party: the moderates, led by Indalecio Prieto, who wanted reforms within the legal system and without trauma, and the more radical represented by Francisco Largo Caballero, who, being at first more moderate, changed to a more incendiary and pro-revolutionary speech and was called the Spanish Lenin, despite being more verbal than anything else. He had his first conflict with Prieto during Primo de Rivera's dictatorship due to the fact that Largo Caballero accepted collaboration with the regime while Prieto did not.

To the left of the Socialist Party, there was the Communist Party, PCE, that, as had happened all around Europe after the Second International, split from the Socialist Party in 1921. It had very little influence but had a very charismatic leader called Dolores Ibárruri, the *Pasionaria*. It followed the decisions in the Comintern or Third International –or Communist International- led by the Soviet Union. In 1935 the POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista) was created, a Trotskyist party, that is, communists against the way the Soviet Union had become with Stalin, but supporting the collectivisation of the means of production and the idea of permanent revolution. It was a small party, with some importance in Catalonia.

Until Francoism, the Spanish anarchist movement was the biggest in Europe, particularly important in Catalonia –Barcelona- and Andalucía. In 1937, there were about 1,500,000 members affiliated to the CNT, the anarchist trade union, 250,000 of which were in Catalonia. There were two factions within the anarchists: a) the moderates unionists, called *trentistas*, who advocated for specific agreements with left wing parties, and the *faistas* –from FAI- who wanted to impose the hard revolutionary way, including a group called *Solidarios* that resorted to terrorism –Buenaventura Durruti.

In Catalonia there were also the nationalist parties: *La Lliga*, very conservative, and ERC (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya), republican and federalist, created in 1931 from *Partit Republicà Català*, led by Lluís Companys, and *Estat Català*, led by Francesc Macià.

Right wing parties in Spain have basically been monarchic and Catholic. They wanted to maintain the pre-existing *status quo*, that is, the social, political and economic structure that kept the power of the traditional elite, basically landowners and the financial bourgeoisie. They were reluctant to make any changes. As a Catholic and conservative response to the start of the Republic, in 1931, Angel Herrera, a priest supported by the Vatican –who later would be bishop and cardinal- founded the party *Acción Popular*, bringing together monarchists, conservatives and Catholics. Their slogan in the 1931 elections was “religion, fatherland, order, family and property”. After the elections, where the centre-left parties won, there was a frustrated military coup in 1932 led by General Sanjurjo, and some right-wing parties and groups merged to form a coalition. In 1933, a Catholic right coalition party was formed, CEDA (*Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas*), in order to win the elections in Spain that year. It became for a while the strongest party on the Spanish right. The party was formed when *Acción Popular* merged with *Derecha Regional Valenciana*, and other conservative groups. CEDA's most prestigious leader was José M. Gil Robles, who also led *Acción*

Popular. CEDA was the most important party on the right until the civil war. The most distinctive feature of the party was their defence of the Catholic religion and of a confessional state. Despite ambiguity in order to get votes from a range between moderate Catholics and extreme right-wing positions, José M. Gil Robles was accused of maintaining authoritarian political positions, and was called “*jefe*” by his junior followers. Because of these reasons, despite the fact that sometimes Gil Robles and his party called themselves republicans, and he even stated to be the only friend of the Republic, there are serious doubts about the veracity of this assertion.

There were other parties on the right. Centre-right parties did not have much following and were weak. When CEDA was formed, not all the members of *Acción Popular* merged with it. Some of them, led by José Calvo Sotelo, founded the monarchist party *Renovación Española*. Calvo Sotelo’s discourse was more provocative and openly monarchist, Catholic and anti-republican than Gil Robles’. In 1934, Calvo Sotelo founded the National Bloc, merging with Carlists. Carlists were also traditionalists and Catholics, monarchists in favour of the descendants of Fernando VII’s brother, Carlos. There were also parties inspired in European fascism, particularly Italian fascists and German nazis, such as JONS (Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista), created in 1931 by Ramiro Ledesma and Onésimo Redondo. In 1933, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, Miguel Primo de Rivera’s son, founded *Falange Española*, also a fascist party but respectful to the Church, which was a small party by February 1936, after joining JONS in 1934.



Stamp

<http://www.fuenterrebollo.com/Sellos/Anual/1930-1940/1931-cortes-constituyentes.jpg>

Phases of the Republic



República Española, 1931. Biblioteca Nacional (BNE). Catálogo carteles de la República y la guerra civil.

1. **Transformer Biennium (1931-1933).** After the constituent assembly the elections celebrated on 28 June 1931 were won by a coalition of left republicans and socialists. The intention was to carry out transformations in the political sphere more than in the social sphere, to democratise the State administration and to carry out reforms,

particularly in the military. One of their main tasks was the writing of the Constitution of 1931.



Azaña cabinet, 1936. Sitting down: Niceto Alcalá Zamora and Manuel Azaña. Standing from left to right: Marcelino Domingo, Francisco Largo Caballero, Santiago Casares Quiroga, Luis de Zulueta, Alvaro de Albornoz, Luis Nicolau d'Olwer, Indalecio Prieto, Fernando de los Ríos, José Giral
<http://www.fuenterrebollo.com/Gobiernos/rios-imagenes.html>

During this period there emerged most of the problems and conflicts that characterised the Second Republic, many of which originated in the 19th century. To summarise, those problems were basically:

- The problem of nationalism. In Catalonia, Lluís Companys proclaimed the advent of the Republic in Barcelona and Francesc Macià proclaimed the Catalan Republic as a state within the Iberian Federation. Alcalá Zamora's intervention meant that Macià withdrew his proclamation. It was then when an autonomous Catalan government was established, recovering the name it had in the Middle Ages, *Generalitat*. The Generalitat elaborated a Statute that was approved in 1932 after being trimmed by the Madrid government.
- In the Basque Country the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) was important, a Christian Democrat party where nationalism was mixed with a strong religious feeling. They did not vote for the Constitution of 1931 because of clauses about the Church. They also wanted an autonomous government and started elaborating a Statute. However, their insistence on having exclusive competence regarding relations with the Church, delayed the process.
- The problem of agrarian reform. The Law of Agrarian Reform was approved in 1932. The reform had three main objectives: 1) to end very large estates – thousands of hectares. 2) to penalise landowners' absenteeism, forcing them to cultivate their lands under the threat of expropriation. 3) To provide peasants with means of subsistence, increasing this way the number of

consumers and helping industrial growth. The enforcement of the law was very slow because of the small budget applied.

- A powerful Church and conflicts with this power, and anticlericalism. The Catholic Church in Spain had historically had a position of privilege. The intention of the Republic to normalize this situation leading to a separation between Church and State, as in other democratic countries such as France, provoked conflicts with the Church. The rigid attitude of the Church and the anticlericalism of some Republicans did not make understanding easy. The Church was identified with the dominant elite. They still had 21,000 rustic estates and other capitals. The Spanish government paid them an important sum of money each year. The Church controlled the education system, which left many people unable to learn any kind of formal education. It also had an enormous social and political influence, for instance, through powerful organisations such as the Catholic Agrarian Confederation, whose leader was José M. Gil Robles, also leader of the CEDA party. In the Constitution of 1931, articles 26 and 27 were particularly relevant. They decreed the separation from the Church, promoted secular education, dissolved the Jesuits and set the way for suppressing government subsidies of the Church.
- The military threat. The army, particularly the higher part of its hierarchy, was allied with the dominant elites and opposed the Republic from its start. In 1932 there was a frustrated military coup by General Sanjurjo. There was an attempt to renovate the army offering retirement to 50 % of generals and 40 % of army officers.



Clara Campoamor

http://www.elpais.com/recorte/20061001elpepusoc_1/SCO250/Ies/Complutense_celebra_macrofestival_75_aniversario_sufragio_femenino.jpg

The Constitution of 1931 devised a lay Republic, not centralist as it provided for the development of autonomy for the historic regions of Spain, Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia. There was one sole chamber and a Tribunal of Constitutional

Guaranties whose role was to judge breaches of the Constitution, although in practise it became a way to stop the development of reforms. For the first time in Spanish history, and after deputy Clara Campoamor's big battle in parliament, suffrage became truly universal, as women were given the right to vote in the same conditions as men.

2. **Black Biennium (1933-1936).** After CEDA's victory in the elections called in November 1933, the president of the Republic, Niceto Alcalá Zamora, asked Alejandro Lerroux, leader of the Radical Party, to act as prime minister. From November 1933 to February 1936 there were seven governments. CEDA was not part of the government until October 1934, first with three ministerial positions and later with five. Some candidates were relevant figures of the landowner's oligarchy. Their aim was to stop and make null most reforms approved in the prior period, including those regarding lay education and divorce.

This was a period of social and political turmoil, with industrial workers' strikes, peasant unrest, demonstrations of students, despite police repression and persecution, particularly against anarchists (CNT). The strong repression caused rebellions led by the CNT. This is the reason why the period from 1934 to 1936 has been called the "Black Biennium". Repression was not directed against violence from far-right parties such as the Falange. This violence increased, against the socialists and others, while the same government infringed the constitution against arresting left-wing individuals, including unionists from UGT and socialists deputies, when landlords tried to undercut the already low wages for rural labourers and they decided to call for strikes. Several thousands of peasants were deported at gunpoint and workers' societies (Casas del Pueblo) in villages were closed down.

Another factor of instability was the growing tense relations between the central government and the Catalan government. These tensions increased when the Catalan government passed a law of crop contracts that favoured vine peasants (rabassaires). The law allowed peasants to enjoy at least six years of contract and gave them the possibility to buy the land. The owners' union, *Institut Agrícola Català de Sant Isidre* together with the conservative nationalist party, *La Lliga*, recurred the law as unconstitutional.



Lluís Companys

<http://www.xtec.es/%7Eaguiiu1/calaix/032companys.htm>

During these years, Fascism was taking over in Italy and Germany and the left lived in fear. They were sure that CEDA was a Fascist party that could arrive to power through the means of democracy, as happened in Nazi Germany with Hitler. This is partially the explanation for mobilisation of workers, particularly when in October 1934, the remodelled government nominated three ministers from CEDA.

Earlier in 1934, there was an attempt to unite workers' organisations, which succeeded in Asturias, were socialists and anarchists allied in the *Alianza Obrera* (workers' alliance). When CEDA entered the government, the socialist union, UGT, called for a strike at the beginning of October, which had a big following in Madrid and Barcelona. As a result of all these events, between the 5th and the 19th of October 1934 a revolution took place in Asturias, which was not followed in the rest of Spain. In Catalonia, the Catalan president, Lluís Companys, proclaimed the Catalan State within the Iberian Federation.

The government responded with strong repression. Franco took his colonial army force in, and known generals that would be in the Nationalist side were there against the revolutionaries. It is said it was the first battle of the Civil War. Jails became full of political prisoners. The Catalan government was indefinitely dissolved and Lluís Companys was imprisoned. A new restructuring of the government gave more power to CEDA, with Gil Robles as minister of War and five more ministers from his party.

In 1935 a backward law of agrarian reform was approved. It did not make null the 1932 law, but put serious limitations to its application.

A scandal related to a game called *straperlo*^{*}, involving prime minister Lerro, forced him to call for new elections for February 1936.

A Popular Front was created by a coalition of centre-left and liberal parties such as Izquierda Republicana, and Unión Republicana with Socialists (PSOE), and Communists (PCE). Trotskyists (POUM) also participated and although anarchists were not part of the coalition, and regardless of their principles against participating in any elections, they supported it by voting for it. In Catalonia it was called Left Front (Front d'Esquerres), with Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya and its leader Lluís Companys in a prominent position. There was also a coalition on the right, between CEDA and José Calvo Sotelo's National Bloc.

* Brand of an illegal and fraudulent electric roulette game.



Give me absolute majority and I'll give you a great Spain

CEDA's electoral campaign for the 1936 elections. Gil Robles in the poster
<http://www.guerracivil1936.galeon.com/FOTOS/FOTESP/elecciones.JPG>

3. **February to 18 July 1936.** The Popular Front won the elections, very clearly in the cities, where it was particularly strong. The results in the number of votes were quite close and the Popular Front won just by a slight majority. However, they had the majority of deputies in parliament due to the fact that electoral law rewarded majorities. The Popular Front won despite the right spending five times more money on the electoral campaign than the left and used all the means they had to subvert the elections. Despite the fact that the results were not questioned at the time, they were later, as a justification on the part of the Nationalist side for the military coup and the war. The map of the elections results was very similar to what would be the map of the Republican and National sides during the Civil War. When the new Popular Front government started to function, they were submitted to great pressure from right and left. The president of the Republic, Niceto Alcalá Zamora, was replaced by Manuel Azaña, from Izquierda Republicana and less conservative than Alcalá Zamora. Nevertheless, the first government of the Popular Front was cautious and moderate. Santiago Casares Quiroga was nominated Prime Minister and the Socialists were not part of the government, partially due to the opposition of Largo Caballero. Azaña and his government intended to return to the spirit of 1931, as written in the program of the coalition. It did not seek to generate a revolution. Following their program, the government proclaimed a general amnesty for political prisoners and, on paper, intended to apply the agrarian reform that was stopped by the right in 1933, and also to develop autonomies for Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia.

The Popular Front government functioned from February to the failed military coup that started the war between the 17th and the 18th of July in a military coup climate. The plotting started much before but now the right, very influenced by the

development of Fascism in Europe, and particularly the Falange, resorted to the use of violence in the streets, which led to José Antonio Primo de Rivera's detention shortly before the military coup. On the other side, unions demanded a rise in salaries, prisons were opened by the people, peasants in some areas did not wait for the agrarian reform and occupied land.

The excuse for the already planned coup came when, after police Assault Guard José Castillo was killed by falangists on the 12th of July and, in retaliation, one of his friends and some police officers went to arrest José Calvo Sotelo, and was shot dead by one of them. These killings, that were not approved by the government, showed the reality of a divided Spain.

The Civil War (1936-1939)

Army, Church and Military Coup

The Spanish Civil War needs to be explained in the context of an international economic depression together with the particular development of the social structure in Spain. Inner developments worsened because of the declining activity of the economy affected by the international crisis. Although Spain was less affected than other countries, the decline in exports affected industrial and agricultural production.

Society was divided in such a way that the coup d'état that took place between the 17th and the 18th of July, quickly developed onto a civil war. The military rebellion that led to the Spanish Civil War purposed to be a "pronunciamiento" (military uprising) just like the typical 19th century coup d'état, even though the rebels called it "alzamiento" (uprising) to differentiate it from those. There were three main political options battling among themselves. The Second Republic as such represented the reformist option, which aimed to modernise Spain taking as a model European countries such as France or the United Kingdom. It was also its aim to integrate the most developed areas of Spain, until then marginalized in some ways: Catalonia and the Basque Country. This reformist option was also supported by a section of the socialist party (PSOE) and, from 1935, by the communists (PCE).

This option had the opposition of the traditional elite that was ruling Spain, that is, the agrarian oligarchy of landowners and the financial Basque oligarchy formed in the 19th century when Spain became an agrarian backward-looking capitalist country (see unit on 19th century Spain and the bourgeois revolution). They were reluctant to lose any of their feudal-like privileges and used all their means against the Republic. They were supported by most of the high hierarchy of the army and the Catholic Church. The Spanish state had been unable until then to create a state with predominance of a democratic civil power controlling the military and with a true separation between Church and state.

The third option was the revolutionary option, important in areas like Catalonia and Andalusia, and represented particularly by anarchists (CNT, FAI) and Trotskyists (POUM). Their aim was to bring about radical change through revolution, to create a society without classes and without state, functioning through cooperation instead of capital.

It is important to note that in other countries in Europe, despite positions not being as radical and not developing into a civil war, political solutions were gravitating around the same options: liberal democracy, conservative or fascist reaction and revolution.

Plotting and preparations for the military coup started from the moment the Republic was established. The Popular Front's victory in the elections was only the excuse and opportunity to go ahead. There had already been a frustrated military coup in 1932 led by General Sanjurjo. During the Black Biennium, in 1935, the conspiring generals started meeting, although informal contacts started before. One of the most important conspirators, General Mola, found economical support from rich families such as March in Madrid, and also from Catholic printing companies. The coup was planned as a network of supports around the country that was to converge in the centre. In the end, it started in Africa and spread later around the peninsula.



The Biblioteca Nacional (BNE). Catálogo carteles de la República y la guerra civil.

The Catholic Church in Spain traditionally represented the ruling elite, defending the interests of the rural oligarchy and the Basque financial bourgeoisie. Although not all sectors of the Catholic Church were part of this very conservative sector of society, part of it, particularly the Church hierarchy, supported the ruling elite. The association of the Catholic Church with the maintenance of old privileges and with social repression determined that most of the political left and republicans would become anticlerical, and sometimes bitterly anticlerical. The Catholic Church was for them the symbol of evil, poverty and social injustice.

The main sectors of the Catholic Church supported the nationalist uprising and the ideology behind it, from the beginning, together with landowners and members of the traditional elite. This was not only because of their traditional alliance to those sectors of society but also because of resentment towards the Republic, especially because of article 26 in the Constitution of 1931, which resolved to promote lay education. Education up to that time had been controlled by the Catholic Church. Also

according to article 26, the Company of Jesuits would be dissolved and the public funding of the Church would be gradually eliminated. Division within Spanish society was so deep that a posture of dialogue and tolerance became impossible, and once again there was an **outburst** of anticlericalism, especially during the first part of the war. This religious persecution was both a response to and a cause of the Church's political position. For the simplistic, radicalised masses the Catholic Church became a **scapegoat**.

When the course of events made it clear to the perpetrators of the coup d'etat that the military coup had become a civil war, they set up a propaganda war to justify their position both in the national and international arena. The Catholic Church's co-operation in this process was remarkable. The myth of the war as a crusade was actually initiated by members of the Church, and was used for the first time by the Bishop of Salamanca, Enrique Pla y Daniel, in his pastoral *Las dos ciudades* written on 30 September 1936 and soon propagated. The Joint Letter of the Spanish Bishops was an important propaganda element for the nationalists. The involvement of the Church was to prove fundamental after it became clear that the coup d'etat had not immediately succeeded. The Catholic Church lent the nationalist side the full weight of its authority and the high propaganda value of religion. But it also helped give the nationalist side territorial bases from which to succeed in its attack against the Republic, by turning Castilian small and middle peasantry towards Franco.

The reasons behind the coup were not to prevent a revolution but to end the Republic altogether and the democratic system. The interests and objectives of all of them were different but they were strong and united enough to identify Franco and later his regime with defending their interests but not as much as to be able to confront the leader and impose their views.

War and Revolution

The coup failed in cities like Barcelona because of the people's opposition and despite the fact that the government did not want to give them weapons. The map of the two sides was rapidly formed: Catalonia, Andalusia, Madrid, most of the Basque Country, most of Extremadura and Castilla-La Mancha and Asturias, in the Republican side. Galicia, Navarra, Castilla-León, most of the Balearic Islands, Canarias, in the Nationalist side.

It is necessary to point out that military forces from both Republican and Nationalist sides cannot be compared. On the subject of professional army, and counting soldiers from Africa, the total of forces in the Nationalist side was almost double that of the Republican side. Concerning police forces and civil guard forces the distribution was quite similar, while middle position officers were mostly in the Nationalist side. A relevant number of generals did not back the Nationalist side, but were not loyal to the Republic either.

Foreign help was also important, mainly for the Nationalist side, supported by Hitler and Mussolini. Spain was for Hitler a testing experiment for World War II. He tried all kind of new weapons during the war. German and Italian help, and particularly German help, meant for the Nationalist side not only soldiers and cadres but also arms and technical and financial support. Support for the Republic from the Soviet Union is

not comparable, it was subject to impositions and was not in the best of conditions. As an example, many rifles that came from the Soviet Union were not suitable for use.

In the first part of the war the Republican army was dissolved and there was an attempt to create a new army with battalions of volunteers. Almost spontaneously, popular militias were created within political organisations and unions. Nevertheless, these militias were militarised at the end of 1936.

As a result of the military coup there was an important revolutionary effort, particularly in places such as Catalonia, where anarchists (CNT) tried to put into practice its social project through agrarian and industrial collectivisations.

People's organisations became a parallel power to the Republican government of the state or the autonomous government of Catalonia. This "de facto" power took the shape of different committees such as the Antifascist Militia Committee. The popular mistrust due to the negative answer of the government to give arms to the people was one of the reasons for that. The government could only acknowledge the committees and give them legal power, despite their will to control the situation.



Collectivised taxis

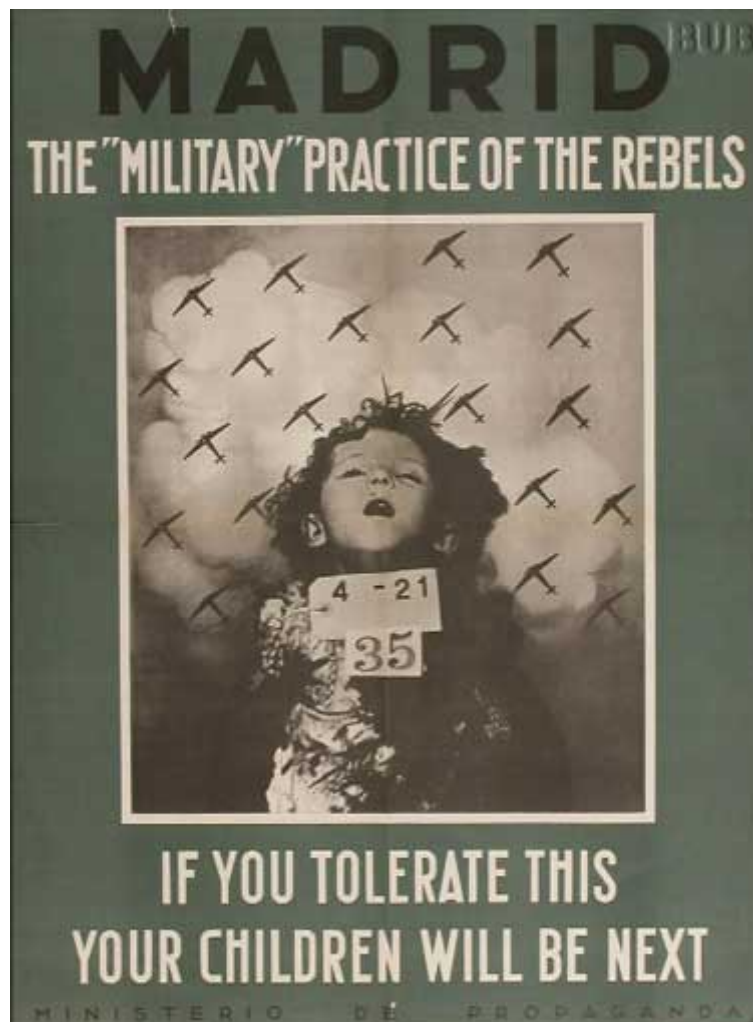
http://increvablesanarchistes.org/affiches/aff1936_45/36collect_taxi.jpg

When Francisco Largo Caballero became prime minister in September 1936, he tried to consolidate a popular front government uniting political and union forces, nominating four anarchist ministers –one of them, Federica Montseny, was the first woman to hold a ministry in Spanish history. This was an attempt to unite all republican forces against fascism. The events of May 1937, mainly in Barcelona, in the Telefonica building in Plaça Catalunya, damaged this possibility and was a big blow for the Republic. These events were led mainly by Stalinist communists (PSUC) against anarchists and troskyists (POUM) in order to avoid the possibility of a revolution. Civil Guards under the influence of communists attacked the Telefonica building run by anarchists in order to take it over. There was a confrontation between anarchists and troskyists with communists and the ruling central left in Catalonia, Esquerra Republicana (ERC). As a result, government control was reinforced at the expense of workers' organisations, but it paid a high price, as it demised any possibility to win the war. Soviet diplomats intervned to wipe out the troskyists (POUM). When the crisis finished, the communists tried to force Largo Caballero to persecute and jail members

of POUM, and also anarchists, but he did not want to do so and was forced to resign. The new Prime Minister, Juan Negrín, dependant on Soviet help did not stop the communists, who persecuted troskyists killing one of their main leaders, Andreu Nin.

The Spanish Civil War and the International Scene

The Spanish Civil War has been considered a precedent for World War II. Its influence on the European political development of events was that of aggravating more than causing. The allied countries were more worried about German expansionism than about Spanish democracy. As a matter of fact, nobody was neutral and the pact for “No Intervention” favoured without any doubts the Nationalist side. France, after a first attempt at help, decided to listen to the United Kingdom and the idea of non intervention was accepted by different countries at the London Conference. Among these countries there was Portugal, through which Nationalist troops passed to Spain. There was also Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union, that is, those that were in full intervention. Republicans denounced many times that this pact was not followed but they were not listened to.



<http://www.bib.ub.es/cgi-bin/showlib.pl?gcivil>

For this reason, different progressive organisations from around the world recruited men to fight in the war and nurses. These were volunteers integrated into the International Brigades. There were also volunteers on the Nationalist side, but in much

smaller numbers. Volunteers had no preparation to go to war, they were not soldiers, but just people with ideas. This is why the Spanish Civil War is called “The Last Great Cause”.

The Role of Women



The Second Republic was an opportunity for women’s liberation, despite its many limits. Many women saw an opportunity to overcome the role of wife and mother to which they had been tied until then. Many women were active intellectuals, politicians, unionists. The Republican legislation, despite some paternalism towards women, was an obvious improvement in the way of recognising women’s rights. In 1931, Clara Campoamor achieved one of the greatest merits of the Republic, real universal suffrage, winning votes for women. Later other laws also favoured women: divorce, coeducation, the right to abortion in Catalonia, full legal capacity for women. This was a step forward despite the still sexist mentality of society, particularly men.

However, it was particularly during the Spanish Civil War that women acquired the sense of freedom and participated more completely in public life. They were active leaders in the anti-fascist civil resistance, they developed feminine associations and some were part of the militias –*milicianas*.

Women anti-fascist organisations had more than 60,000 affiliates in more than 250 local groups. The *Asociación de Mujeres Antifascistas* (Anti-fascist Women’s Association) comprised women from many political ideologies, socialists, communists, republicans, Basque Catholics and others. Also important was *Mujeres Libres* associated with anarchism and aware of the need of women’s emancipation.

In the Francoist zone and when the war was lost, all these progressive laws were revoked, and women were treated as under age inferior beings by Francoism.

SOURCES AND ACTIVITIES

The Second Republic

Los 13 puntos del Gobierno de la República española

se implantarán por la victoria de nuestros soldados en los campos de batalla y por el trabajo de los hombres y mujeres en la milicia.
(Viva España!)
(Viva la República!)

-  **1** La independencia de España.
-  **2** Liberarla de militares extranjeros invasores.
-  **3** República democrática con un Gobierno de plena autoridad.
-  **4** Plebiscito para determinar la estructuración jurídica y social de la República española.
-  **5** Libertades regionales sin menoscabo de la unidad española.
-  **6** Conciencia ciudadana garantizada por el Estado.
-  **7** Garantía de la propiedad legítima y protección al elemento productor.
-  **8** Democracia campesina y liquidación de la propiedad semifeudal.
-  **9** Legislación social que garantice los derechos del trabajador.
-  **10** Mejoramiento cultural, físico y moral de la Raza.
-  **11** Ejército al servicio de la Nación, libre de tendencias y partidos.
-  **12** Remoción a la guerra como instrumento de política nacional.
-  **13** Amplia amnistía para los españoles que quieran reconstruir y engrandecer España.

PROPAGANDA DE LA REPUBLICA

<http://www.bib.ub.es/cgi-bin/showlib.pl?republica2>

Activities:

1. Which facts led to the proclamation of the Second Republic? When was it proclaimed? How was it proclaimed in Catalonia –what followed these events? Who was the first president of the Republic?
2. Classify the following policies carried out during the Second Republic according to whether they are left wing or right wing policies: Agrarian Reform Law, restriction of democratic freedoms, lay education, divorce law, law of crop contracts, reinforcing the Church’s control of education.
3. Place the policies in question 2 in their context: locate the period when they were approved and explain their main content.
4. The transforming biennium and the black biennium: Events and reforms. Give examples –different to the ones above.
5. Read the poster above about the 13 points of the Republic and relate to question 2. Under which kind of politics or ideologies would these points fall: reformist, revolutionary or reactionary. Explain.
6. Explain the evolution of social classes in Spain during the 19th and 20th centuries in Spain and Catalonia. Relate this evolution to the expansion of trade unions and workers’ organisations.

Women: Clara Campoamor



Poster from the Second Republic

<http://www.bib.ub.es/cgi-bin/showlib.pl?republica2>

“Do not forget, that you are all the sons of women! We are all equal by nature! The Spanish woman awaits her redemption by the Republic!”

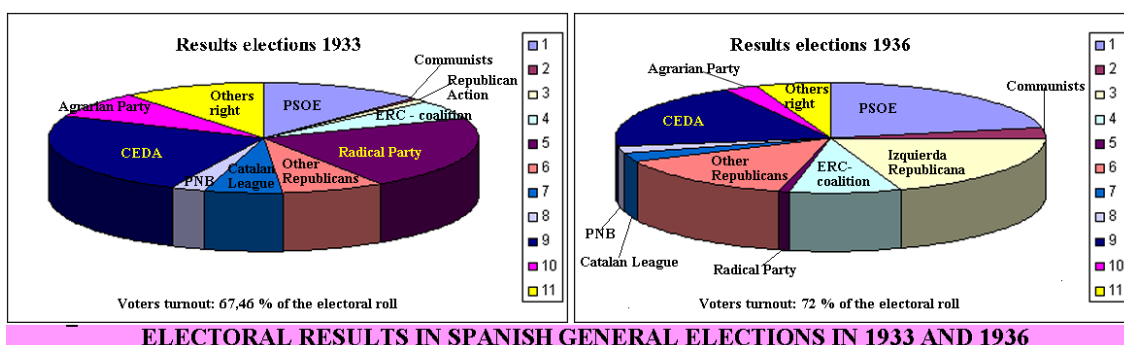
“We learn freedom by exercising it”.

“You have the right that law gave you, the law that you made yourselves, but you do not have the fundamental natural right, based on respect for every human being, and what you do is to hold power. Let women act by themselves and you’ll see that you cannot keep holding that power”

Activities:

1. What did women expect from the Republic according to Clara Campoamor's text?
2. Comment on the sentence "We learn freedom by exercising it".
3. What did Clara Campoamor think would happen when women were free to act by themselves? What is the meaning of this sentence?
4. Clara Campoamor said years later that what she did was the only achievement remaining from the Republic. What did she achieve? Why did she have so much opposition?
5. Look at the graphs below. Do you think women's votes affected in any form the electoral results in 1933 and 1936? Explain.
6. Look at the poster above. Look for information about the women's names written on it.

The Party System: electoral results



Activities:

1. Make a list dividing left wing, right wing and centre parties during the Second Republic and the civil war. Give the complete name, the most important leaders and main ideas of the following parties: PSOE, POUM, ERC, CEDA, FE y de las JONS.
2. Explain how during the war Falange (FE y de las JONS) became Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las JONS.
3. Compare the results in the elections in 1933 and 1936. Give possible explanations of the changes.

The Spanish Civil War

Flash map of the Spanish Civil War

http://users.erols.com/mwhite28/spain_cw.htm

If working without computer you can use the following maps:



August-September 1936



October 1937



November 1938

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Atlas_of_Spain#Maps_of_divisions



The Biblioteca Nacional (BNE). Catálogo carteles de la República y la guerra civil.

Activities:

1. Which were the three main conflicting standpoints during the Second Republic that were confronted during the civil war. Give details about them.
2. Where did the coup d'état against the Republic succeed? Where did it fail? Why? Explain the succession of events in Barcelona after the coup.
3. “No pasarán” (They shall not pass) is a slogan used during the Spanish Civil War referring particularly to the siege of Madrid, and also as an anti-fascist slogan. It was used by *Pasionaria* in a speech at the beginning of the war. Analyse the poster above, its significance and describe who the people are fighting on them. Which period of the war does it refer to?
4. Explain the siege of Madrid and the advance of Franco's troops during the war –see maps.
5. Explain who the Militia people or *milicianos* were, how the war was organised in the Republican side with them and the reorganisation of the popular republican army from October 1936.
6. Look for information about militia women and how women were at some point encouraged to leave the battle front to go to the rearguard.
7. Why did Barcelona appear to be still in the grip of revolution? When was this?
8. What is revolution? What are the events that allow us to talk about revolution? When did they happen?
9. War or revolution: Relate the events of May 1937 and the political positions involved.

International Brigades

“I went to drive. They probably considered that in case something went wrong I could do a lot of clerical work. On that basis they were willing to send me there.

I had driven a number of ambulances here around the city, taking them back and forth to the boat, and they were satisfied that I really could handle the cars (...) I was a girl, I was small and didn't weigh much but I was doing a job and wasn't that enough. They would like to take pictures of me next to my truck; because I was small they thought it was very funny (...)

I remember when Mussolini issued a decree -I was just a kid at the time- he issued a decree that women were not to wear short skirts, and that they were to keep their proper places. Well, Mussolini was definitely out so far as I was concerned. I was convinced that anybody with that kind of an attitude was absolutely no good for the people generally. I never felt that I was an outstanding genius, but people had to give me a chance to think and develop whatever think-abilities I had. If a person would not give me a chance I would fight them. Hitler has the system where he sends women to camps to be breeders. That strikes me at my very most innermost desire for freedom, and self-expression, and for culture, and education. Just being an ordinary human-being I couldn't tolerate a thing like that. It has gotten to mean so much to me that I don't care what I do in the process of fighting against conditions like that.

I got the idea of going to Spain first and then my husband got the idea and my brother got the idea, and they got there ahead of me (...).”

Excerpts from an interview with Evelyn Hatchings, by Peter N Carroll and David Christiano. Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives. <http://www.alba-valb.org/pdf/btw.pdf>

Activities:

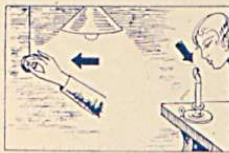
1. How were the International Brigades recruited. Where did they come from?
2. Relate Evelyn Hatchings' experiences as a woman in the International Brigades. Few women went to Spain with the International Brigades. Do some research to see what they did.
3. What were E. Hatchings' reasons for joining the Brigades?
4. Look for information on the Lincoln Battalion –Lincoln Brigade (USA).



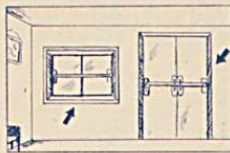
GENERALITAT
DE CATALUNYA
DEPARTAMENT DE DEFENSA

CONSELL DE SANITAT DE GUERRA

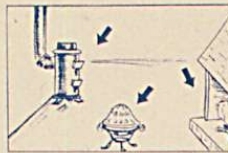
Instruccions a seguir en cas de bombardeig



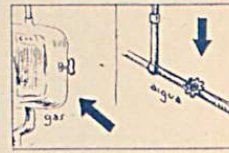
Apagueu els llums
Apagad las luces



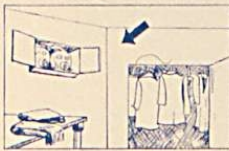
Tanqueu portes i finestres
Cerrad puertas y ventanas



Apagueu els focs
Apagad los fuegos



Tanqueu l'aigua i el gas
Cerrad el agua y el gas



Recolliu roba d'abric i màscares si en teniu
Recoged ropa de abrigo y máscaras si las tenéis



Agafeu queviures
Recoged viveres



Tingueu llum preparat
Tened luz preparada



Aneu als refugis assenyalats
Id a los refugios señalados



Amb ordre
Con orden



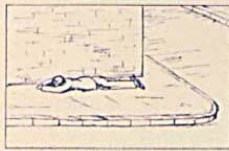
No correu
Sin correr



No feu el curiós
No hagais el curioso



No us pouseu darrera les portes, feu-ho als angles de les parets mestres
No os resguardéis detrás de las puertas, hacedlo detrás de las paredes maestras



Si no teniu refugi aprap, aïlleu-vos a terra
Si no tenéis refugio, cerca, echaros al suelo junto a las casas



No abandoneu els cotxes al mig del carrer
No abandonéis los coches en medio de la calle



Sinó a les voreres
Hacedlo junto a las aceras



Si llenen gasos, un mocador mullat amb aigua que tapi el nas i la boca
Si echan gases, poneros un pañuelo mojado que tape la boca y la nariz



Baixeu dels tramvies
Bajad de los tranvías



Ajudeu als vells, nens i paralítics
Ayudad a los ancianos, niños y paralíticos



Fugiu dels llocs mullats
Huid de los lugares mojados



Marxeu contra la direcció del vent
Marchad contra la dirección del viento

CONSELL DE SANITAT DE GUERRA
SECCIO DE DEFENSA PASIVA DE LA POBLACIO CIVIL



March 1938. "EFFECTS OF THE BIGGEST BOMB DROPPED IN SPANISH WAR. TEARS UP BARCELONA STREET - MANY KILLED. -- This picture, just received in London, shows the destruction wrought by only one bomb -- the biggest ever dropped during the Spanish war -- during the air raids of Barcelona. Houses on each side of the road have been totally wrecked while the windows of houses in background have all been blown out. The depth of the crater can be gauged from the men working inside it."

Photojournalism during the Spanish Civil War. Planet News Ltd.
<http://orpheus.ucsd.edu/speccoll/swphotojournalism/m629-f07-99.html>

1. How did the war affect daily life?
2. Hitler tried methods in Spain that then were used in World War II, like the blitzkrieg. What was it? How did it affect Spanish civilians? Comment on the bombing in Guernica and the Barcelona bombing according to the picture above.
3. Why do you think the Generalitat gave instructions to follow in air raids? What do you think about those instructions?
4. Imagine you were living in Barcelona in March 1938, not far from the street bombed above. Write a letter to a friend explaining your daily life and the experience of the bombings.

Repression



Poster and poem on Federico García Lorca's death.

http://increvablesanarchistes.org/affiches/aff1936_45/affichistes.htm

Estimates of deaths during the Civil War, 1936-1939 (according to Hugh Thomas):

Republicans killed in combat: 110,000
Nationalists killed in combat: 90,000
Executed by Nationalists: 75,000
Executed by Republicans: 55,000
Bombs: 10,000
Malnutrition: 25,000
Total of 365,000.
After Franco came to power: 100,000 executions.

The terror in the nationalist zone was crucial in establishing the power of the nationalists. General Franco had learnt to instill loyalty through fear during his time in Africa. He was cold, ruthless and secretive. Terror was directed from above and was a rule all through the hierarchy since before the coup d'état. General Mola's quotes are quite clear in this respect: "Action has to be extremely violent to reduce the enemy as soon as possible (...) All leaders from political parties, societies and unions not from the *Movimiento* will be imprisoned, applying to them an exemplary punishment (...) It is necessary to spread terror... to leave the feeling of control by eliminating with no qualms or vacillation all who do not think the way we do". In many places, prisoners underwent a rudimentary trial and were shot for crimes such as failing to go to mass, reading Rousseau or Kant, criticizing Hitler and Mussolini or admiring Roosevelt. Members of the Popular Front parties and the trade unions were shot in their thousands as the Nationalists conquered each new piece of territory. Under the watchful eye of the Church and the forces of law and order, at least 200,000 liberal and leftists lost their lives, although there is controversy about the figures.

In the republican side, the revolution led to uncontrolled groups, particularly from the communist party and *faistas* anarchists and some groups of peasants that had suffered strong repression in the past, to assassinations of priests and *señoritos*. Over 6,000 priests and religious people were killed. Spontaneous *checas* were set up by those groups but they were never accepted by republican authorities, who helped many religious and right wing people to leave. Most of it happened during the first months of the war, while it was much less visible later.

Taken from Paul Preston, *A Concise History of the Spanish Civil War* and my own sources

Activities:

1. Look for information about the circumstances of Lorca's death.
2. What was the position of the so-called nationalist side regarding republicans and those who did not share their point of view, according to General Mola's opinions when preparing the coup? How did the nationalist army and institutions deal with republicans while they were advancing during the war and after?
3. Relate this behaviour with what you have learnt in unit 2 about the characteristics of fascism and dictatorial regimes.
4. There were also excesses on the republican side, but they were not as widespread and did not share the same principles, what were the main differences? Who were the targets on the republican side? Why were there people who took advantage of the war situation to take revenge on personal enemies?
5. Why did repression and killings continue by Francoists after the war was finished?
6. Look for information on concentration camps for republican prisoners.

Memories of Exile



February 1939. Le Perthus (France) "GIRLS PEER FROM BARBED WIRE "HOME". -- Spanish refugees at the French frontier town of Le Perthus. They are living in concentration camps, and have appealed to France not to send them back to Spain."

Photojournalism during the Spanish Civil War. Keystone View Company
<http://orpheus.ucsd.edu/speccoll/swphotojournalism/m629-f05-68cln.html>

Activities:

1. Describe the picture above and explain what happened to Spanish republican refugees in France.
2. How did people live in concentration camps in France?
3. Soon after, World War II started. What happened to Spanish refugees then, men and women?
4. Do some research about what happened after the war to: Lluís Companys, Francisco Largo Caballero, Manuel Azaña, Clara Campoamor, Margarita Nelken.

Other activities:

The Spanish Civil War, 1986. BBC-Granada Television (for Channel Four). Six part documentary series.

See particularly : 1. Prelude to Tragedy, 5. Inside the Revolution.

Or

Land and Freedom. Directed by Ken Loach, 1995. About a British international brigadier in Catalonia and in the Ebro during the Spanish Civil War.



Sculpture in London honouring the International Brigades

Summarise the story in the film, and:

In the first one: What were the most positive elements in the Republic? What were the problems? Why did the right reject the Republic? What were their interests? What was the role of the Church in the Republic and the war according to the film?

In the second one: The story can be compared to the book *Hommage to Catalonia* by George Orwell. What happened in May 1937 in Barcelona? Which groups were in the militias? What did the international brigadier expect and what did he find?