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978-0-521-73780-7 - The Spanish Republic and Civil War
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The Spanish Republic and Civil War

The Spanish Civil War has gone down in history for the horrific violence that it generated. The climate of euphoria and hope that greeted the overthrow of the Spanish monarchy was utterly transformed just five years later by a cruel and destructive civil war. Here, Julián Casanova, one of Spain's leading historians, offers a magisterial new account of this critical period in Spanish history. He exposes the ways in which the Republic brought into the open simmering tensions between Catholics and hard-line anticlericalists, bosses and workers, Church and State, order and revolution. In 1936, these conflicts tipped over into the *sacas*, *paseos* and mass killings that are still passionately debated today. The book also explores the decisive role of the international instability of the 1930s in the duration and outcome of the conflict. Franco's victory was in the end a victory for Hitler and Mussolini, and for dictatorship over democracy.

JULIÁN CASANOVA is Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Zaragoza, Spain. He is one of the leading experts on the Second Republic and the Spanish Civil War and has published widely in Spanish and in English.

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
 São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521737807

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Originally published in Spanish as *Historia de España vol. VIII: República y guerra civil* by Crítica 2007, © Crítica 2007

First published in English by Cambridge University Press 2010 as *The Spanish Republic and Civil War*, © Julián Casanova 2010
 English Translation © Julián Casanova 2010

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data
 Casanova, Julián.

[República y guerra civil. English]
 The Spanish Republic and Civil War / Julián Casanova ; translated
 by Martin Douch.
 p. cm.

“Originally published in Spanish as *Historia de España*,
 vol. VIII: *República y guerra civil* by Crítica, 2007.”

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-49388-8 – ISBN 978-0-521-73780-7 (pbk.)

1. Spain – History – Republic, 1931–1939. 2. Spain – Politics
 and government – 1931–1939. 3. Social conflict – Spain – History – 20th
 century. 4. Spain – History – Civil War, 1936–1939 – Causes.
 5. Spain – History – Civil War, 1936–1939. I. Title.

DP254.C32713 2010

946.081–dc22 2010021901

ISBN 978-0-521-49388-8 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-73780-7 Paperback

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Chronology

1875–1923	Constitutional monarchy
1923: 13 September	<i>Pronunciamiento</i> by Primo de Rivera.
1930	
28 January	Overthrow of Primo de Rivera.
17 August	Meeting of republican leaders in San Sebastián. They agree to form a revolutionary committee.
10 October	The <i>Partido Socialista</i> joins the revolutionary committee.
12 December	An unsuccessful uprising in Jaca. Captains Galán and García Hernández are shot.
1931	
12 April	Municipal elections. Republican victory.
	THE REPUBLIC
14 April	Proclamation of the Republic and exile of the King.
7 May	Pastoral letter by Cardinal Segura lauding the Monarchy.
10–11 May	Burning of monasteries and convents.
May–June	Decrees on secular education, social and employment reforms.
3 June	Announcement of elections for the Constituent Cortes.
16 June	Azaña issues the first set of decrees regarding the reform of the army.
28 June	Elections for the Constituent Cortes.

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 14 July | Opening of the Cortes; closure of the General Military Academy in Zaragoza. Its director was Francisco Franco. |
| 9–14 October | Debate on Article 26 of the Constitution, regarding religious orders; resignation of Niceto Alcalá Zamora, head of the provisional government of the Republic; Manuel Azaña, Prime Minister. |
| December | Founding of the JONS. |
| 9 December | Passing of the Constitution, the first republican Constitution in Spain's history. Niceto Alcalá Zamora is elected President of the Republic. |
| 31 December | Assassination of Civil Guards in Castilblanco. |
| 1932 | |
| January | Dissolution of the Company of Jesus; implementation of the divorce law; secularisation of cemeteries. |
| 5 January | The Civil Guard kills eleven people during a demonstration in Arnedo (La Rioja). |
| 20–27 January | Rising in the Llobregat coalfield; general strikes called by the CNT. |
| 10 August | Revolt by General Sanjurjo against the Republic. |
| September | Statute of Catalonia and Agrarian Reform Acts. |
| 1933 | |
| January | Anarchist revolt in Casas Viejas (Cádiz). |
| 1 March | Founding of <i>Renovación Española</i> , an ultra-right monarchist group. |
| 17 May | Religious Confessions and Congregations Act. |
| 4–5 September | Defeat of the government in elections to the Guarantees Tribunal. Alcalá Zamora dismisses Manuel Azaña. |
| 9 October | Dissolution of the Constituent Cortes. |
| 29 October | José Antonio Primo de Rivera founds the <i>Falange Española</i> party in Madrid. |
| 19 November | Centre right wins the elections; Alejandro Lerroux, Prime Minister. |
| 8–11 December | Anarchist risings in Catalonia and Aragon. |

Chronology

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1934

- February The *Falange* merges with the JONS.
 5–11 June Strike by agricultural workers in Andalusia and Extremadura.
 1 October Lerroux governs with three CEDA ministers, the grass-roots organisation of the Catholic right.
 6 October Rising in Catalonia and Asturias; state of war declared; the Foreign Legion and Moorish troops sent to Asturias.

1935

- 7 May Gil Robles, leader of the CEDA, Minister of War.
 29 October Lerroux forced to resign following the *estraperlo* corruption scandal; short-lived centrist governments.

1936

- 7 January Dissolution of the Cortes.
 15 January Electoral pact and platform of the *Frente Popular*, under the leadership of republicans and socialists.
 16 February Elections won by the *Frente Popular*.
 19 February Azaña government; amnesty of political prisoners.
 13 March Failed Falangist attempt to assassinate Jiménez de Asúa, one of the fathers of the Constitution.
 15 March The *Falange* declared illegal; arrest of José Antonio Primo de Rivera.
 7 April The Cortes dismisses Alcalá Zamora as President of the Republic.
 10 May Azaña, President of the Republic.
 12 May The republican Casares Quiroga becomes Prime Minister after the post was refused by the socialist, Indalecio Prieto.
 12 July Assassination of the Assault Guard, Castillo and, a day later, Calvo Sotelo, leader of *Renovación Española*.
 17–20 July *Pronunciamiento* in Morocco and the Peninsula.

	CIVIL WAR
20 July	The republican José Giral forms a government; the government appeals to France; Franco sends emissaries to Italy and Germany.
27 July	Seville under control of the rebels; reinforcements flown in from Morocco.
28–30 July	Italian and German aircraft arrive in Morocco and Seville; outdated French aircraft go to Madrid.
8 August	Closing of the French border; unilateral declaration of non-intervention.
24 August	Italy, Germany and Portugal accept non-intervention ‘in principle’.
4 September	The socialist Largo Caballero leads a government with republicans, socialists and Communists.
7 September	Aguirre forms the Basque government, supporting the Republic.
9 September	First meeting of the Non-Intervention Committee in London.
27 September	Government of the <i>Generalitat</i> of Catalonia, with <i>Esquerra</i> , the PSUC and the POUM; anarchist participation.
28 September	The rebels seize Toledo.
1 October	The republican Cortes passes the Basque Statute; in the other camp, Franco is designated <i>Generalísimo</i> and supreme head of the military rebels.
6 October	The Soviets declare that they will feel no more bound by non-intervention than Germany, Italy and Portugal do.
24 October	First Russian tanks in action; Russian officers arrive in Madrid; German and Italian aircraft bomb the capital.
4 November	The anarchists, in a historic move, join Largo Caballero’s government.
6 November	Worried that the Nationalists will take Madrid, the republican government transfers to Valencia.
8 November	General attack against Madrid; arrival of the International Brigades.

Chronology

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- 18 November Attack on Madrid suspended; Germany and Italy recognise Franco's government in Burgos.
- 20 November José Antonio Primo de Rivera, leader of the Fascist FE JONS, is executed in Alicante.
- 1937**
- 10 February The Nationalists take Málaga.
- 6–15 February Battle of the Jarama.
- 8–18 March Battle of Guadalajara.
- 19 April Franco orders the merging of the *Falange* and Carlists, giving rise to the single party, FET-JONS.
- 26 April Bombing of Guernica.
- 3–8 May Barricades and political fighting, with several hundreds of deaths, in Barcelona.
- 17 May Dismissal of Largo Caballero; a new government under the socialist Juan Negrín.
- 16 June Arrest of POUM leaders, accused of provoking the events of May in Barcelona; disappearance of its leader, Andreu Nin.
- 19 June The Nationalists take Bilbao.
- 1 July Collective letter by the Spanish bishops supporting the civil war as a religious crusade.
- 7–26 July Battle of Brunete.
- 24 August–15 September Battles of Belchite and Quinto.
- 26 August The Nationalists take Santander.
- 19 October The Nationalists seize Gijón.
- 31 October The Negrín government transfers to Barcelona.

- 14 December The beginning of the Teruel offensive, which the republicans take – the only provincial capital they were able to seize during the war.
- 1938**
- 22 February The Nationalists recapture Teruel.
 9 March Beginning of the Nationalist offensive in Aragon.
 5 April Reshuffle in Negrín's government; Prieto resigns as Minister of Defence.
 15 April The Nationalists arrive at the Mediterranean.
 24 July Start of the Battle of the Ebro.
 15 November Retreat from the Ebro; farewell parade to the International Brigades.
 23 December Nationalist offensive in Catalonia.
- 1939**
- 15 January The Nationalists seize Tarragona.
 26 January Occupation of Barcelona.
 4 February Occupation of Gerona and mass withdrawal to the French border; the Nationalists end their occupation of Catalonia.
 13 February Nationalist Political Responsibilities Act, the principal repressive law of Franco's dictatorship.
 27 February France and the United Kingdom recognise the Burgos government; Azaña resigns.
 7–11 March Communist revolt in Madrid against Negrín's government, which hastens the end of the Republic.
 28 March The Nationalists enter Madrid.
 1 April Total surrender of the republican army. Official end of the Civil War.