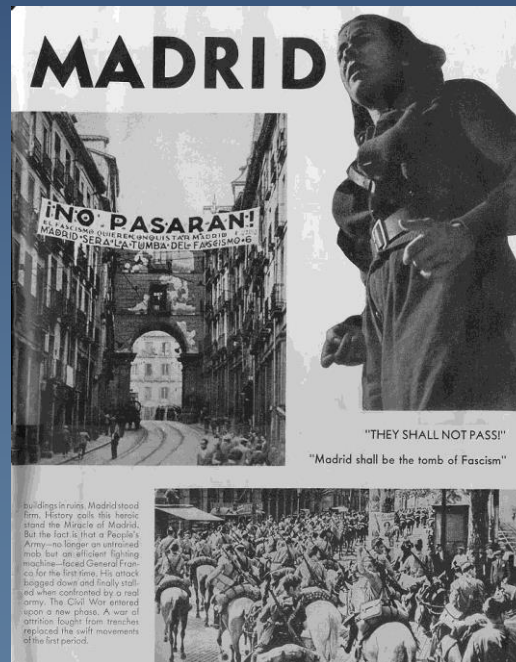


A Brief History of the Spanish Civil War



- ◆ The Spanish Civil War (1936-39), pitted the right wing Nationalists, who received support from Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, against the leftist Republicans, who received aid from the Soviet Union and from International Brigades, volunteers who came from countries all over the world, including the United States.
- ◆ Nationalists favored the restoration of the Spanish monarchy, and included business owners, the Roman Catholic church, and the military. Republicans consisted of the working classes in factories and fields and intellectuals in the universities, liberals and Socialists and a small number of Communists.

- ◆ In 1934 fighting broke out in cities like Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, and Zaragoza. A strike by miners in Asturias was suppressed by Nationalist troops led by General Francisco Franco. Elections in February of 1936 were won by the leftist Popular Front government, strongly opposed by the Nationalists.



- ◆ The army staged uprisings in garrison towns throughout Spain in July. The Republican forces had put down the military uprising in some areas, but not in southern strongholds in Seville, Granada, and Córdoba.
- ◆ More than 50,000 civilians and combatants were executed, murdered, or assassinated by both sides.



- ◆ General Franco was named head of state by the Nationalists in October 1936. The Republican government was headed by Socialists Francisco Largo Caballero, succeeded by Juan Negrín, who remained premier in exile until the war ended in 1945.



- ◆ Each side turned abroad for help. Germany and Italy sent troops, tanks, and planes to aid the Nationalists, a rehearsal for the use of aerial warfare against civilians in cities that characterized World War II.



- ◆ The Soviet Union contributed equipment and supplies to the Republicans, who also received help from the governments of France and Mexico. About 60,000 foreigners fought in the International Brigades on the Republican side, as combatants or support personnel; the most famous of these was Ernest Hemingway, who documented the war in the American press. Famed American volunteers called themselves “The Abraham Lincoln Brigade.”



- ◆ By 1939, the Nationalists had driven most of the Republican army into retreat. Half a million soldiers and civilians, including political leaders, crossed the border into France. Franco and the victorious Nationalists entered Madrid
- ◆ The number of persons killed in the Spanish Civil War can be only roughly estimated, between 500,000 and 1,000,000, including large numbers of noncombatant deaths caused by starvation and disease.
- ◆ The Spanish Civil War was regarded as the harbinger of international conflict between democracy and Fascism, and the introduction of a new form of warfare that would inflict mass death on civilians.

A Brief History of the Battle of Stalingrad



- ◆ The Battle of Stalingrad has been considered the bloodiest and longest battle in human history. From August 1942 through February 1943, nearly two million people on both sides were killed or injured in the fighting, including tens of thousands of Russian civilians. The battle in Stalingrad, Hitler's greatest defeat, turned the tide of World War II in favor of the Allied forces.

Timeline

August 25, 1942- The Battle of Stalingrad begins

September 23, 1942- The German advance in Stalingrad is stopped.

November 19, 1942- Russian forces hold Stalingrad

December 19, 1942- The Germans fail to break the encirclement of their army in Stalingrad

February 2, 1943- German troops at Stalingrad surrender after three months of extremely intense fighting

- ◆ Hitler had proclaimed that after taking Stalingrad all of the city's male residents would be killed and its women would be deported.
- ◆ Stalin ordered all Russians strong enough to hold a rifle to take up their own arms in defense of the city. Women were enlisted to dig ditches. Food reinforcements to the city were impossible because of its encirclement.
- ◆ The number of Soviet civilian casualties is unknown. However, it's believed that tens of thousands were killed or starved to death, and that tens of thousands more were captured and forced into slave labor in camps in Germany.
- ◆ The cruel Russian winter, and Hitler's stubborn refusal to retreat, killed nearly 100,000 German troops.

The final retreat of Hitler's army from Stalingrad in February of 1943 is recognized as the turning point of World War II. The battle cost two million Soviet and German military and civilian lives.

