

Freshman Seminar Proposal

Stephen Summerhill
Dept. of Spanish & Portuguese

Two (2) hours credit

The Second Spanish Republic and the Civil War in Art, Literature and Film

I.

A. Course Goals.

This course proposes to study two of the most important historical events in modern Spanish history, the Second Republic of 1931-36, and the Civil War of 1936-39. The Second Republic sought to bring democracy to one of Europe's most conservative, underdeveloped nations, but over five difficult years, it failed to maintain cohesion among its supporters and ultimately provoked an anarchist revolution. In response, the Spanish military and several conservative groups rose against the government in 1936 in a bid to restore stability and traditional Spanish values. The bitter civil war that followed caused thousands of deaths and left a devastated nation in the hands of an authoritarian regime that would not relinquish power for 36 years.

The cause of the Spanish Republic became a rallying cry throughout the world and brought support from artists in many nations. Books, films, poetry, photography, popular art and painting contributed to awareness of the Civil War, but it sometimes also obscured the real tensions within the nation. Both sides in the conflict honed their propaganda skills as they defended their cause and sought to discredit the enemy. Our goal in the course is to explore the many tensions, pressures and polemics of the Second Republic and the Civil War, while studying some of the important forms of cultural expression provoked by them.

Readings and discussion will be in English; films in Spanish will have subtitles.

The course will be graded using letter grades.

B. Course Content.

Readings in history, art and literature, as well as screening of several films about the war, and studying other arts such as posters, photography, music, and painting.

C. Meeting Times:

One two-hour class per week. Classes will include discussion of assigned readings and films concerned with different themes of the era.

D. Syllabus:

Week 1. Introduction to course; student obligations.

Screen documentary film, The Spanish Civil War, Part I, Prelude to Tragedy (1 hour)

Week 2. The Second Republic: origins, evolution, problems.

Read Lannon, AIntroduction@ and ABackground to War@ (7-22)

Film of Joris Ivens, narrated by Ernest Hemingway, The Spanish Earth (1937)

- Week 3. The outbreak of the war and early months:
 Lannon, AFrom the Popular Front to the Civil War,@ ASpain Divides.@ (23-32)
 Arturo Barea, The Forging of a Rebel.
 Ch. 7: the uprising and first clashes (516-32)
 Ch. 9: reprisals, assassinations, witch-hunts (545-63)
 Documentary Film: The Spanish Civil War, Part IV, Franco and the Nationalists (1 hour)
- Week 4 The military dimension; international involvement
 Lannon: AThe Fighting: War, Revolution and International Involvement@ (32-64)
 Documentary Film on Abraham Lincoln Brigade: The Good Fight (1984) (1 hour)
- Week 5 The anarchist revolution in Catalonia:
 Selections from George Orwell, Homage to Catalonia, chs. 3, 4, 5, 8 (23-71, 101-107)
 Documentary Film: The Spanish Civil War, Part II, Revolution and Counter-Revolution (1 hour)
- Week 6 Stalinist purge of Trotskyist communists:
 George Orwell, Homage to Catalonia, chs. 11, 13, 14 (150-79, 195-232)
 Film version of Orwell: Land and Freedom by Ken Loach (1996)
- Week 7 Propaganda and the War:
 Lannon: ATwo Spains@ (68-79)
 Nelson, Cary, AArt in Flames: the Spanish Civil War poster,@ Shouts from the Wall. (pp. 15-26)
 Powerpoint presentation of posters.
 Photographs by Robert Capa and other war photographers
- Week 8 Studying Guernica by Pablo Picasso: the bombing of Guernica and the painting
 Selections from George Steer, The Tree of Gernika (5 pages)
 Analyzing Picasso=s Guernica
- Week 9 Other arts: Music, theatre, poetry
 Music from the Civil War: cd Cantos de la Guerra de España,
 Film: (Ay Carmela! of Carlos Saura (1989)
- Week 10 The end of the war:
 Lannon, AFranco>s Victory,@ AThe Spanish Civil War in Perspective@ (84-92)
 Documentary: The Spanish Civil War, Part VI, Victory and Defeat (1 hour)

E. Assignments and Grades

1. **Attendance and participation.** This course is based on open exchange and discussion among teacher and students. Much of what we will read and see is ambiguous, sometimes considered polemical, and always subject to different interpretations. We want to understand these differences and how they affected people in the time. This means that every student must attend all classes and participate actively in discussions. It is not enough to attend classes but never speak. (25% of grade)

2. **Weekly Written Reactions.** Prior to class, write a 2-page reaction to the week's reading assignment; submit either electronically before class or in hard copy during class. After the class, add another page or two on how the class discussion and/or film further developed your ideas. Submit electronically within 2 days of class. (50% of grade)

3. **Additional Reading Assignment.** Read one additional book on some aspect of the Second Republic or Civil War and provide a written summary of no more than 3 pages. Since possible topics are almost infinite, each student must consult with the professor about the reading no later than the third week of class. (25% of grade).

F. Reading List

Texts:

Lannon, Frances. The Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939. Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2002.

Orwell, George. Homage to Catalonia. San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1980.

Course packet: selections from

Barea, Arturo, The Forging of a Rebel. Trans. Ilsa Barea. New York: Viking, 1972 (1943) (pages 516-32, and 545-63)

Nelson, Cary, Shouts from the Wall; Posters and Photographs Brought Home from the Spanish Civil War by American Volunteers. Waltham, MA: Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives, 1996. (Pages. 15-26)

Steer, George, The Tree of Gernika, from Sperber, Murray, ed., And I Remember Spain; A Spanish Civil War Anthology. New York: Macmillan, 1974 (pages 267-72)

Words to the music in Cantos de la Guerra de España.

Films:

Fraser, I, et al. The Spanish Civil War. 6 part British documentary (4 parts to be screened)

Buckner, Noel, et al. The Good Fight; The Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War. 1984

Ivens, Joris. The Spanish Earth. 1937

Loach, Ken. Land and Freedom. 1996

Saura, Carlos. (Ay, Carmela! 1989

G. Academic Misconduct

As defined by University Rule 3335-31-02, plagiarism is the representation of another=s works or ideas as one=s own; it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person=s work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person=s ideas. Plagiarism is one of the most serious offenses that can be committed in an academic community; as such, it is the obligation of this department and its instructors to report all cases of suspected plagiarism to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. After the report is filed, a hearing takes place and if the student is found guilty, the possible punishment ranges from failing the class to suspension or expulsion from the university. Although the existence of the internet makes it relatively easy to plagiarize, it also makes it even easier for instructors to find evidence of plagiarism. It is obvious to most teachers when a student turns in work that is not his or her own, and plagiarism search engines make documenting the offense very simple.

! Always cite your sources (your professor can help with this).

! Always ask questions before you turn in an assignment if you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism.

! Always see your professor if you are having difficulty with an assignment.

To preserve the integrity of Ohio State as an institution of higher learning, to maintain your own integrity, and to avoid jeopardizing your future, DO NOT PLAGIARIZE!!!

H. **Students with Disabilities.** Students who wish to have an accommodation for disability are responsible for contacting the professor as soon as possible. The Office of Disability Services (150 Pomerene Hall; 292-3307; 292-0901 TDD) verified the need for accommodations and assists in the development of accommodation strategies.

II. **Stephen J. Summerhill** is an Associate Professor of Spanish in the Department of Spanish & Portuguese. He specializes in critical theory and its application to twentieth century Spanish literature, with particular attention to the period preceding the Spanish Republic and Civil War. He has published extensively on the work of Miguel de Unamuno, Ramón María del Valle-Inclán, the philosopher María Zambrano, and poets such as Luis Cernuda and Antonio Colinas. His current project is a study of the evolution of subjectivity and voice in twentieth century Spanish poetry. Professor Summerhill teaches all areas of modern Spain and regularly teaches a senior seminar on the Spanish Civil War (conducted, of course, in Spanish). He was the recipient of the 2004 Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching.