

Canada and the Spanish Civil War:

A Teaching Resource

[PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT](#)

[THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR](#)

[METHODOLOGIES](#)

[LITERARY TEXTS](#)

[KEY TERMS](#)

[KEY FIGURES](#)

[TIMELINE](#)

[CONTEXTUALIZING DOCUMENTS](#)

[SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS](#)

[CREDITS](#)

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document serves to introduce *Canada and the Spanish Civil War* as a teaching resource. This includes the website, spanishcivilwar.ca, the [print series](#) from the [University of Ottawa Press](#), and the [digital collection](#). The Spanish Civil War is a significant event in Canada's political and cultural history, and there is a large body of literature by Canadians about the Spanish Civil War. We want to see these texts more widely studied and taught. To that end, we have prepared this document as a way of introducing the war and its cultural-historical context to instructors, signalling some pedagogical approaches to these texts and indicating where they might fit into a curriculum or syllabi.

This document offers: a brief historical context; an annotated list of primary sources; key terms; key figures; a timeline of events in Spain and Canada; suggestions of methodologies or approaches to teaching these texts, including examples of relevant primary and secondary sources;¹ a selection of contextualizing documents; suggested assignments.

THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

The Spanish Civil War began in July 1936, when Spanish military leaders attempted a coup d'état against the democratically-elected Republican government. The Republican government was made up of a coalition of left-leaning parties, and had been shifting Spain away from a feudal system through land reform and pro-labour actions. These progressive changes empowered the people of Spain, but diminished the wealth and power of the military, nobility, and the Catholic clergy. In response, these three groups, known as the Nationalists, banded together to oust the Republican government. The so-called Nationalist values—social conservatism,

¹ We have included case studies by undergraduate and graduate students. Though not peer reviewed, they offer analysis of and context for many of the primary sources we have cited.

totalitarian rule, a disenfranchised and impoverished working class—were explicitly fascist. On the other hand, the Republican government represented democracy, progress, and equality, as well as a shift to socialist and communist politics.

The fascist coup was initially quelled by quickly-formed militias, but given the might of the fascist-controlled military, the conflict escalated into a full-blown war. The Republicans formed a people's army, supported by the Soviet Union and Mexico. On the other side, [Hitler](#) and [Mussolini](#) committed troops and arms to the Nationalist cause. The other western governments committed to neutrality regarding what they considered a civil conflict. But people all over the world did not see a civil conflict: they recognized fascism in Spain as the same fascism that threatened them at home. Thousands of people from dozens of countries travelled to Spain to fight in the International Brigades, or to support the Republican effort as medical personnel, journalists, or administrators. Approximately 1,700 Canadians volunteered for the Republican effort, many of them violating the Foreign Enlistment Act, which forbid Canadian participation in the war.

The war ended in 1939 with a Nationalist victory. [Francisco Franco](#) ruled the country as a dictatorship until his death in 1975. Western countries diverted their troops and attention to the oncoming world war.

METHODOLOGIES

- **Transnationalism and Cosmopolitanism:** Writers in Canada wrote transnationally; by bringing Spain into their work, they often imagined and wrote in dialogue with artists, activists, fighters, and civilians around the world. Nations and nationality were put aside in favour of anti-fascism and solidarity. Many texts of the Spanish Civil War are useful in

thinking through lived transnational experience as well as cosmopolitan ideologies, especially as they come up against physical borders, restricted mobility, patriotism, self-interest, and language barriers.

- Primary sources: [This Time a Better Earth](#); [Sealed in Struggle](#); [Best Stories](#); [Meet Me on the Barricades](#); [Come from Afar](#); [Matadora](#); [The Acrobats](#)

- Secondary sources:

Vautour, Bart. "From Transnational Politics to National Modernist Poetics:

Spanish Civil War Poetry in *New Frontier*." *Canadian Literature* 204 (2010): 44-60.

Sharpe, Emily Robins and Bart Vautour. "Imagining Spain: Charles Yale Harrison's

Meet Me on the Barricades." *The Massachusetts Review* 55.2 (2014): 206-210.

- **Modernism:** The Spanish Civil War was an important moment for Canadian modernism, as they wrote alongside an international community, and this global literary scene challenged Canadian literary conventions. It is useful to reflect on how Canadian authors adapted or innovated their writing to participate in an international cultural dialogue, and the discussions around poetics that occurred in Canada in reference to changing political and economic circumstances. For example, Canadian poets participated in a modernist chorus by writing elegies to Federico García Lorca.

- Primary sources: [Meet Me on the Barricades](#); [Sealed in Struggle](#)

- Secondary sources:

Kennedy, Leo. "Direction for Canadian Poets." *Right Hand Left Hand*. Erin, ON: Press Porcépic, 1977. 228-29.

Livesay, Dorothy. "Canadian Poetry and the Spanish Civil War." *Right Hand Left Hand*. Erin, ON: Press Porcépic, 1977. 250-55

Van den Berg, Ryan. "Dorothy Livesay's 'Catalonia'." Case Study. *Canada and the Spanish Civil War*. <http://spanishcivilwar.ca/dorothy-livesay-catalonia>

Vautour, Bart. "From Transnational Politics to National Modernist Poetics: Spanish Civil War Poetry in *New Frontier*." *Canadian Literature* 204 (2010): 44-60.

- **Cultural Production:** It is useful to discuss the conditions of cultural production in Canada in the 1930s, and to what extent cultural production was altered by contact with the global political and literary community that coalesced around the Spanish Civil War.
 - Primary sources: [Meet Me on the Barricades](#); [Right Hand Left Hand](#); *New Frontier* magazine; pamphlets²
 - Secondary sources:

Vautour, Bart. "From Transnational Politics to National Modernist Poetics: Spanish Civil War Poetry in *New Frontier*." *Canadian Literature* 204 (2010): 44-60.
- **Diasporic Studies and Jewish Studies:** The global rise of fascism in the 1930s led to an increased migration of refugees, exiles and political dissidents. Many marginalized populations fled Germany and Eastern Europe throughout the early years of the twentieth century, particularly Jewish people. The Spanish Civil War offered an opportunity to directly resist fascism, and to participate in a wider anti-fascist community. The global Jewish community was well-represented within the International Brigades. The African diaspora also intersects with the Spanish Civil War, with Black volunteers choosing to fight in the war as a way of responding to fascist aggression in Ethiopia, and the challenge of working in solidarity with Moroccan troops forced to fight on the side of fascism. Furthermore, the fascist victory in Spain led to a massive out-migration, with Spanish populations emigrating to North America, particularly to Mexico, and across Europe.
 - Primary sources: [Poetic Asylum](#); [Not in my Father's Footsteps](#); [The Acrobats](#); [Joshua Then and Now](#)
 - Secondary sources:

² Included under the "Primary Sources" page of spanishcivilwar.ca

Sharpe, Emily Robins. "Traitors in Love: The Spanish Civil War Romance Novel in Jewish North America." *Studies in American Jewish Literature* 35.2 (2016): 147-164.

—. "Jewish Novels of the Spanish Civil War." *The Edinburgh Companion to Modern Jewish Fiction*. Ed. David Brauner and Axel Stähler. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2015. 355-366.

- **Gender/Women's Studies and Queer Studies:** Many women took on new roles during the Spanish Civil War: many women fought against fascism in Spain and were known as *milicianas*; women worked as war correspondents, most notably [Jean Watts](#), Martha Gellhorn, and Gerda Taro; [La Pasionaria](#) was a powerful woman who marshalled a certain kind of femininity in her rhetoric and appearance. Spanish Civil War takes up these assertive women, but it also grapples with notions of masculinity in radical and/or military cultures, and what sexism looks like in progressive spaces.

Spanish Civil War literature also offers many representations of masculinity and homosocial relations and contexts that can be read through the lens of gender studies and/or queer studies.

- Primary sources: [Meet Me on the Barricades](#); [This Time a Better Earth](#); [Jean Watts' journalism](#)

- Secondary sources:

Sharpe, Emily Robins and Bart Vautour. "Imagining Spain: Charles Yale Harrison's *Meet Me on the Barricades*." *The Massachusetts Review* 55.2 (2014): 206-210.

Sharpe, Emily Robins. "Traitors in Love: The Spanish Civil War Romance Novel in Jewish North America." *Studies in American Jewish Literature* 35.2 (2016): 147-164.

Murphy, Emily. "Jean Watts and the Spanish Civil War: Writing, Politics, and Contexts." Case Study. *Canada and the Spanish Civil War*.

<http://spanishcivilwar.ca/case-studies/jean-watts>

- **Archive Studies:** Our website offers many primary sources that have not been taken up critically. These can be used by students to build digital projects, exhibitions, or as motivation for interest-based research.
- **Media Studies/Technology:** The Spanish Civil War was a site of innovative and brutal new technologies. It was the first war to broadcast internationally via shortwave radio, and featured the first live broadcasts from battlefields. Bethune developed the first mobile blood transfusion unit, and the unit's work led to major advances in transfusion techniques. War photographers were closer to the action than ever before, and documentaries brought footage of the war to audiences around the world. But advances in aircraft technology and weaponry also enabled airstrikes on civilian populations, which led to the horrific destruction of Guernica by the German Condor Legion. All of these technologies are taken up in literature, and media technology leaves its own archive.
 - Primary Sources: [Listen In!](#); [This Time a Better Earth](#)
 - Secondary sources:

Murphy, Emily. "Jean Watts and the Spanish Civil War: Writing, Politics, and Contexts." Case Study. *Canada and the Spanish Civil War*.
<http://spanishcivilwar.ca/case-studies/jean-watts>

McMillan, Julia. "Towards a Collective Body: Locating the Socialist Hero in EAQ's *Listen In* Pamphlet." Case Study. *Canada and the Spanish Civil War*.
<http://spanishcivilwar.ca/mcmillan>
- **War Literature:** Canada has a large body of canonical war literature, including First World War novels by Charles Yale Harrison, Timothy Findley, and Joseph Boyden. Canada's development as an autonomous nation is often narrativized through our participation in wars. The Spanish Civil War challenges this narrative to some extent, but it also offers more Canadian war literature dealing with issues of violence, class, camaraderie, masculinity, nationalism and technology.
 - Primary sources: [This Time a Better Earth](#); [Best Stories](#)
 - Secondary sources:

Sharpe, Emily Robins. "Traitors in Love: The Spanish Civil War Romance Novel in Jewish North America." *Studies in American Jewish Literature* 35.2 (2016): 147-164.

LITERARY TEXTS

Allan, Ted. *This Time a Better Earth*. Ed. Bart Vautour. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2015.

First published in 1939, shortly after [Allan](#) returned to Canada from Spain, this semi-autobiographical novel follows a young Canadian into Spain where he fights briefly with the International Brigades, takes up broadcasting work in Madrid, and falls in love with a German photojournalist.

Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy. *Listen In! This Is Station...EAQ Madrid Spain*. Toronto: Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, 1937.

Canadians were among those broadcasting from Madrid, across Spain and to North America during the Spanish Civil War. This pamphlet includes pieces that purport to be transcripts of some of these broadcasts, including pieces from [Dr. Norman Bethune](#) and his associate Hazen Sise, and Professor J.B.S. Haldane. They describe the conditions in Spain, the resistance of the Spanish people, and the ways they and those back home can support the Republican cause.

Garner, Hugh. *Best Stories*. Ed. Emily Robins Sharpe. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2015.

[Garner](#) fought with the International Brigades, and some of his stories—"The Stretcher-Bearers," "How I Became an Englishman," and "The Expatriates"—represent volunteers in Spain. Garner is particularly critical of the conditions and structures of war, including the Communists who led the International Brigades. His stories are useful for reading the Spanish Civil War within a Canadian tradition of war literature.

Harrison, Charles Yale. *Meet Me on the Barricades*. Ed. Bart Vautour and Emily Robins Sharpe. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2016.

Harrison's novel is experimental, including a series of fantasy sequences, and at times satiric, setting it apart from the majority of earnest Spanish Civil War literature. Harrison's novel is significant for its self-consciousness as a modernist novel and as a political document. It recounts a few days in the life of P. Herbert Simpson, a middle-aged, weak-hearted oboist with the New York Symphony Orchestra and leftist fellow traveller. Simpson is subject to wild hallucinations that are sometimes daydreams, sometimes drunken delirium, and on occasion intricate dreams while asleep. He imagines escaping his unrewarding marriage with a prudish, domineering wife through a passionate fantasy of a Russian girlfriend, and escaping his day job in the symphony to fight on the front lines of the Spanish Civil War. This is a self-consciously modernist novel that echoes the style and strategies of James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

Livesay, Dorothy. *Right Hand Left Hand: A True Life of the Thirties*. Erin, ON: Press Porcépic, 1977.

Livesay's memoir recalls her experiences during the 1930s, including her participation in political, social and cultural communities. But she destabilizes the singular perspective of her memoir by including various documents by and about other people, events, and places. This includes a chapter on Canadian participation in the Spanish Civil War, which is contextualized and juxtaposed with other sections about Canada's cultural and political scenes during this decade.

López-Pacheco, Jesús. *Poetic Asylum: Poems Written in Canada 1968-1990*. Trans. Fabio López-Lázaro. London, ON: Brick Books, 1991.

López-Pacheco was already a successful writer in Spain when he and his family immigrated to Canada in 1968. He left Spain for political reasons, as he was not a supporter of Franco's regime. His poetry, translated into English by his son, confronts his complex feelings regarding his self-imposed exile, and he writes for and against major figures of the Spanish Civil War, including Franco and Canadian surgeon Norman Bethune.

Reid, Gayla. *Come from Afar*. Toronto: Cormorant Books, 2011.

In England in the spring of 1939, Clancy, an Australian nurse, waits with her infant daughter for news of her lover, who was a volunteer with the Mackenzie-Papineau Brigade in the Spanish Civil War. As she waits, Clancy shares with her daughter the story of her own childhood in the Australian bush and her disastrous marriage to an English archaeologist. When the Spanish Civil War erupted, Clancy volunteered on the Republican side. Her chance for happiness amid the chaos came when she met the young Canadian, Douglas Ross.

Richler, Mordecai. *Joshua Then and Now*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1980.

Despite his success as a Montreal television writer and journalist, Joshua is deeply unhappy. He regrets that he was born too late to fight in the Spanish Civil War, and so he dedicates his professional energies to travelling to Spain and writing about the International Brigades, an obsession that also takes him away from his family. With extensive flashbacks to Joshua's youth, *Joshua Then and Now* highlights the Spanish Civil War's ongoing cultural importance to Canadian Jewish identity.

— ***The Acrobats*. London: André Deutsch, 1954.**

Set in Franco's post-war Spain, Richler's first novel traces the interactions between Canadian and American tourists visiting Franco's post-war Spain. One character,, André Bennett, a Canadian painter, wants to return home with his girlfriend. Another, Derek, an International Brigades veteran, remembers his wartime days in Spain fondly, despite the homophobic violence he also suffered. Derek's brother-in-law, Barney, also joins them, personally destroyed by his longstanding attempts to pass as a gentile in the hopes of avoiding the antisemitism that damaged the rest of his family. These characters and others are joined by Roger Kraus, a Nazi on the run. *The Acrobats* brings together a variety of characters hoping to find some sort of personal truth in Spain.

Ruth, Elizabeth. *Matadora*. Toronto: Cormorant Books, 2013.

Set in Spain and Mexico during the 1930s, *Matadora* tells the story of Luna Caballero García, an impoverished and intrepid servant attempting to make her name in the bullring at a time when it was illegal for a girl to do so. *Matadora* carries readers from bohemian artistic circles in Mexico City and Andalusia to [Norman Bethune](#)'s mobile

blood transfusions on the Madrid front. Against a backdrop of rising fascism and the Spanish Civil War, Elizabeth Ruth has created a powerful and compelling exploration of love, art, and politics, and an intelligent mirror for our times.

Vulpe, Nicola and Maha Albari, eds. *Sealed in Struggle: Canadian Poetry & The Spanish Civil War: An Anthology*. La Laguna, Tenerife, Canary Islands: Center for Canadian Studies, Universidad de la Laguna, 1995.

Vulpe and Albari collect much of the Canadian poetry about the Spanish Civil War, including work written during the war, and for many decades after. The collection showcases some of the major themes in Canadian poetry of the Spanish Civil War, and includes a critical introduction by Vulpe.

West, Terrence Rundle. *Not in my Father's Footsteps*. General Store Publishing House, 2011.

Beginning in Montreal in the 1930s, where tensions are running high, this It's the 1930s. In Montreal, tensions are running high, this historical novel that follows two young men from the bread lines and hobo jungles of Canada to the battlefields of the Spanish Civil War. From Outremont to St. Urbain Street, people are struggling to lift off the yoke of strife and despair caused by the most devastating economic depression the world has ever experienced. For young, single men with no jobs, the only option is to ride the rails. Perhaps go to Vancouver. Or maybe Spain, to fight the fascists. What have they got to lose?

KEY TERMS

- **Fascism:** "An authoritarian and nationalistic system of government and social organization which emerge after the end of the First World War in 1918, and became a prominent force in European politics during the 1920s and 1930s, most notably in Italy and Germany, [...] an extreme right-wing political ideology based on based on the principles underlying this system" (Oxford English Dictionary). **Anti-fascism** denotes resistance to fascism and its intersecting oppressions, including capitalism and racism.
- **Republican/Loyalist:** The militias, soldiers, volunteers, and supporters associated with the democratically-elected Republican government. The government itself was a

coalition of left and left-leaning parties, which included communists, socialists and anarchists. The International Brigades supported the Republican front.

- **Fascist/Rebel:** Includes those who orchestrated the coup against the Republican government and their supporters, and eventually won the civil war. These terms often include much of the Spanish military, the Spanish Catholic Church, and upper-class families. The term **Nationalist** is also used to refer to this side of the conflict, but is falling out of use among (particularly leftist) scholars.
- **International Brigades:** The International Brigades comprised an international volunteer army created to fight with the Republican Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War. The vast majority of volunteers adhered to leftist politics, especially communism, although to varying degrees. Between thirty-two thousand and thirty-five thousand volunteers from around the world enlisted.
- **Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion (Mac-Paps):** A predominantly Canadian battalion of the International Brigades. It was formed in July 1937, and named for Canadians Louis-Joseph Papineau and William Lyon Mackenzie, leaders of the Rebellions of 1837-38. Many Canadians also served with the British, American, and several Eastern European battalions. The terms ‘Mackenzie-Papineaus’ and ‘Mac-Paps’ are often used to refer to all Canadians who fought in the Spanish Civil War, regardless of which battalion they fought with.
- **No Pasarán:** Translated from Spanish: They shall not pass. Rallying cry of the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War made famous by [Dolores Ibárruri](#) in her “No Pasarán” radio broadcast of 18 July 1936.

KEY FIGURES

- **Dolores Ibárruri [Gomez] (La Pasionaria):** (1895-1989) Spanish communist leader. Secretary general of the Communist Party of Spain (PCE) (1944-1960), President of the PCE (1960-1989), and a member of the Spanish national assembly (1936 and 1977-1979). Her orations against the fascists earned her the name La Pasionaria (“The Passion Flower”).

- **Francisco Franco:** (1892-1975) Spanish general and fascist dictator. Franco participated in the July 1936 coup d'état against the elected Popular Front government. After the failed coup had evolved into the Spanish Civil War, Franco emerged as leader of the Nationalists who fought against the government. With the help of Mussolini and Hitler, Franco defeated the government forces and assumed authoritarian control of Spain until his death.
- **Norman Bethune:** (1890-1939) Canadian surgeon, activist and communist. Bethune was a renowned thoracic surgeon in Montréal, but when the war broke out he traveled to Spain to organize a mobile blood transfusion unit. He returned to Canada in 1937 to tour and fundraise for the anti-fascist cause. In 1938, he went to China to use his medical skills to support communist comrades under attack by Japanese forces. He died in China, where he is a national hero.
- **Jean Watts:** (1909-1968) Canadian journalist. Watts was deeply involved in the cultural and anti-fascist scene in Canada, and funded the leftist magazine *New Frontier*. In Spain, She was the correspondent for the *Daily Clarion*, a radio broadcaster at Station EAQ Madrid, an ambulance driver, a censor, and a publicist for Norman Bethune's Blood Transfusion Institute. She served in the Canadian Women's Army Corps during the Second World War.
- **Ted Allan:** (1916–1995) was born Alan Herman in Montréal. A dedicated Young Communist, he was a correspondent for the Toronto Daily Worker and The Clarion, and it was then that he adopted the name Ted Allan to infiltrate a fascist organization and write an exposé. He served in the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War, of which *This Time a Better Earth* is a fictionalized account. Ted Allan's best-known book is *The Scalpel, the Sword: The Story of Doctor Norman Bethune* (1952), written in collaboration with Sydney Gordon and later adapted for the screen.
- **Hugh Garner:** (1913-1979) Before working as a journalist, editor, and fiction writer, Garner travelled to Spain to volunteer with the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War, and then enlisted in World War II. Best known for the novel *Cabbagetown*, he also published over a dozen books, a trilogy of plays, and hundreds of scripts and

articles for Canadian magazines and newspapers. Garner was remarkably prolific, writing approximately one hundred short stories (many of them included in his five collections), with more unpublished manuscripts in his archives.

- **Adolf Hitler:** (1889-1945) the leader of the German National Socialist (Nazi) Party from 1921 to 1922, and the chancellor and *Führer* of Germany from 1933 to 1945. He established a Nazi dictatorship constructed around ethnic nationalism, industrialization, and militarization. During the Spanish Civil War, Hitler supplied Franco with troops via the Condor Legion, which is most notably responsible for the bombing of Guernica in April 1937.
- **Benito Mussolini:** (1883-1945) the prime minister and dictator of Italy from 1922 until his deposition in 1943. He established Italy as a repressive fascist state, implementing policies favouring nationalism, militarism, imperialism, and censorship. During the Spanish Civil War, Mussolini assisted Franco's nationalist front by sending troops, funding the *Falange Española*, and training officers for the *Requetés*, the Spanish Carlist militia.

TIMELINE

- February 16, 1936—The Popular Front narrowly wins the Spanish election. The Popular Front—or Republican Government—is a coalition of left-wing political organizations. The government begins seizing land from the biggest landowners for redistribution.
- July 17-18, 1936—The Spanish military attempts a coup, aiming to seize Spanish Morocco and then move on to major military, economic and political centres across Spain.
 - Unions declare a general strike. Leftist groups, as well as some sections of the national police, resist the military uprising with varying degrees of success.
 - The coup fails to gain control and the government and worker' associations fail to crush it. The resulting stalemate is the beginning of the Spanish Civil War.
- August 1936—Spearheaded by French and British diplomats, 24 countries—including Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and the Soviet Union—sign the Non-Intervention Treaty,

declaring that they will not interfere in what is labeled a civil war. Despite the treaty, Germany and Italy send combat troops and a great deal of material aid, while the USSR sends military advisors, equipment, and pilots.

- October, 1936—Canadian leftist magazine *New Frontier* begins publishing Canadian poetry about the Spanish Civil War, beginning with Dorothy Livesay's "Two Poems." —Delegates from the Spanish Republic tour Canada to garner support. They are met with a [riot in Montréal](#).
- October 1, 1936—[Franco](#) becomes *Generalissimo* and supreme commander of the right-wing coalition, or the Nationalists.
- November 8, 1936—The first units of the International Brigades arrive in Madrid.
- November 14, 1936—Canadian Dr. [Norman Bethune](#) conceives his mobile blood transfusion unit, the *Servicio canadiense de transfusión de sangre*.
- February, 1937—The Canadian leftist magazine *New Frontier* publishes a special issue on Spain. The article "Where I Stand in Spain" collects brief statements from prominent Canadian artists and organizers.
- April 26, 1937—The Nazi Condor Legion and the Italian Legionary Airforce bomb the Basque town of Guernica. The attack becomes a rallying point for Republican supporters and is made famous by [Picasso's painting, Guernica](#).
- May 3-8, 1937—Sections of the Republican forces turn on each other in Barcelona. This leads to street fighting, the departure of the Anarchists from the Popular Front, and the dissolution of the political organization Workers' Party of Marxist Unification (POUM). The leaders of POUM are eventually executed.
- May, 1937—[Bethune](#) leaves Spain under complicated circumstances. Back in Canada, he begins a successful speaking tour, raising funds and public support for the Republican cause.
- July, 1937—Leftist magazine *Canadian Forum* publishes [Norman Bethune's](#) Spanish Civil War poem "Red Moon."

- July 1, 1937—The Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion is officially formed by Canadian volunteers.
- July 31, 1937—The Canadian parliament passes [“The Foreign Enlistment Act of 1937,”](#) making it illegal to enlist in either the Republican or Nationalist sides in Spain. Canadian volunteers’ passports’ are stamped “Not Valid for Spain.” Many volunteers travel under the auspices of attending the 1937 World Fair in Paris.
- September 21, 1938—All international volunteers are withdrawn from Spain.
- October 29, 1938—International Brigades are given a farewell parade in Barcelona. [La Pasionaria](#) gives her [famous speech](#), which includes the words: “You can go proudly. You are history. You are legend. You are the heroic example of democracy’s solidarity and universality.”
- January 26, 1939—Barcelona falls.
- February 28, 1939—[Franco](#)’s government is recognized by Great Britain and France.
- March 31, 1939—Madrid falls.
- April 1, 1939—Republican armies surrender and [Franco](#), now the leader of Spain, declares the war to be over.
- September 1, 1939—[Germany invades Poland](#) and World War II begins.
- November 20, 1975—[Franco](#) dies, and his dictatorship comes to an end. Spain declares the Pact of Forgetting, making it official policy not to prosecute those involved in war crimes or responsible for fascist oppression, in the hopes of transitioning to democracy more smoothly.
- September 4, 2013: Jules Paivio, the last surviving Canadian veteran of the International Brigades, dies at age 96.

CREDITS

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