How much influence did the Romans, Visigoths and Muslims actually have on Spain?

- Greek presence in Spain was scarce as they never settled or conquered Spain; they only went there to trade

- Roman presence was in particular for economic and career orientated reasons
- The fact that in the 1910s people in the North of Spain still lived in rural huts makes you wonder how Romanised it really was. Did remote tribes still exist?
- Salamanca still has Roman foundations and fortifications – a good example of a Roman city
- Saguntum has many Roman constructions
- Christianity was easy to pose on an area especially if it had been Roman before
- Spanish units found on Hadrian’s wall may have only kept the original name but recruited from UK or other countries – doubtful
- Christianity spread and built chapels in buildings such as the Roman amphitheatre in Tarragona
- Most Spanish medieval military camps were built on old Roman areas
- Cities that suddenly became fortified by Romans – was this to protect against rebellious locals or foreigners?
- They were erected quite quickly given that many recycled statues or stones were used
- When do prehistoric hillsites become used again?

- Germanic Spain – wrong side of Christianity
- Didn’t have enormous wealth or architectural construction
- Burgos has no traces of Visigoths now
- They had problems with people in the North especially Cantabria
- It was easier to travel from North to South than East to West due to the mountainous terrain
- Meanwhile Muslims pushed up from South but the North rebelled – were they Visigoths or locals that stood up to the Romans too?
- Examples of a Catholic priest with a Muslim cloak or a Catholic church bell in a Mosque – reminder of past conquests

- Perhaps Islam had the most influence on Spain
- We must consider that the Christians weren’t all about confrontation
- Alfonso X lived in acceptance of Muslims and Jews and the scholars were given honourary titles
- Some say that Fernando and Isabel were examples of Christian zeal
- We must remember that the Granada war started after a Muslim attack on Christian territory
- By surrendering, they were allowed to use Arabic and practice their religion
- If they rebelled, there would be conversions and expulsions
- However in 1600s, the Muslims that converted continued to practice Islam on the side

- Jews – had a great political culture in Castell Leon
• In 1618, the 30 year war began where 500,000 soldiers battled, something that the world had never seen before
• This ended with the fall of Breda in 1625 when the Dutch were defeated and the Spanish Empire peaked once again
• The Empire appeared to be a giant but it was soon to enter into a period of irretrievable decline and implosion
Spanish America under Habsburg rule

- In 1521 with the fall of Tenochtitlan, a wave of further explorations from Spain came to the New World for wealth and social advancement all encouraged by the news of Cortez’s success. They wanted to look elsewhere in South America to find another civilization as grand as the Aztecs.

- Soon they found another civilization just as large: the Inca Empire. The expedition of Francisco Pizarro in 1532 led to this find as did the 1536, fall of Cuzco, the Inca capital. The Inca Empire extended from Southern Colombia all the way to Chile and Northern Argentina. The domain was created through diverse autonomous groups that had been conquered. The Incas were more successful than the Aztecs at integration but discontent and frequent rebellion soon fragmented and collapsed the Empire.

- The consequences were that Spain was given control of two of the most advanced civilizations of the New World. These civilizations had large hierarchal populations sometimes four times the size of Spain and thus they were accustomed to providing tributes and labour. By 1540, there was a population of 50 million. The town of Castile ruled it all. There was also a huge difference in space between Spain and Latin America so the crown needed to devise a method to control the existent Empire and impose his own authority on it.

- His challenges included the vast territory, the population size, the distance (it took 67 days by boat to get from Cuba to Spain), the question of how to govern, how to convert them, how to impose authority over the conquerors and how to protect them from other European rivals.

- Early in 1570, the structure of the colonial governments was established and remained in place until the middle of the 18th century. It was subject to a major overhaul under the Bourbon Charles III.

- The Crown had 4 main objectives: to prevent too great a concentration of power in the hands of conquerors and early settlers, to control and limit exploitation of indigenous people and convert them to Christianity, to regularise and regulate the delivery of good and revenues to the metropolis through taxation and agriculture and to protect territories from European rivals.

- The main institutions of government in Spain was the Consejo de Indias established in 1524. In Latin America, there were viceroyalties headed by viceroys who were established in 1535 and centralised in Mexico City and Lima. They were the centre of power. They were followed by Audiencias who were supreme judicial tribunals then gobernaciones who were headed by governors and finally corregimientos headed by mayors. Alongside these were treasury officials.

- By 1570s, the districts kept increasing and so new officials were put into place. There were rationale for the design of government built into colonial governments with checks and balances in order to prevent too big of a power in one single constitution.
The Franco dictatorship and democratic transition 1939-1982

- There is a lot of difficulty in analysing Francoism due to many aspects. Firstly, his lengthy rule for a dictator (1939-1975) Secondly, the manipulation of history during the regime thus hampering the investigation afterwards. Thirdly, the democratic transition was based on the compromise formula of Pacto del Olvido where the political elites of the country agreed to forget the past and move forward. It made sense politically but left too many skeletons in the closet. Finally, the persistence of myths as old bits on Franco were repelled as if they were something new.

- The families of Franco were the army, Monarchists (Alphonsines and Carlists) the Falange, Catholics, and Apolitical Bureaucrats as Franco’s strategy was to build a homogeneous governing coalition. They were all bound by the Pacto de Sangre meaning that they were willing accomplices of brutal extermination and repression.

- Franco perpetrated the Spanish Civil War climate on Spain until his death as Spain was always divided between the victors and the vanquished. The victors represented Franco at administrative level and shared the spoils. Franco was the bulwark ensuring that the revenge of the defeated never occurred.

- MYTH NUMBER ONE – The National Crusade against Communism. After the Francoism victory, Spaniards were taught in school that there had never been a Civil War and that Franco rose in order to stop a Communist conspiracy re-enacting the Reconquista to save Spain. Francoism was a blend of national militarism fascism with religious fanaticism and for this, he was always portrayed in a Crusade like uniform.

- MYTH NUMBER TWO – Neutrality during World War II. Spain didn’t enter the war formally but clearly, they were ideologically linked to Hitler and Mussolini. The problem for Mussolini and Franco was the problem of timing. Both knew that their countries weren’t prepared for a conflict like World War II yet they still wanted to be with Hitler on the victory parade day. So, to get away with this, Mussolini coined a new phrase – non belligerency to support Hitler but not be in the actual war.

- In June 1940, Germany expanded and France was about to fall. So Mussolini decided that if he joined the war now, it would soon end. On doing this, Franco declared Spain non belligerent. On thinking that England would soon collapse, on the 23rd October 1940, he met with Hitler in Hendaye. It was the greatest exercise of deception ever. Spain were told that Franco went to fool Hitler so Spain would have to enter the war and he succeeded. But Franco was left angry and frustrated as he expected Hitler to grant him a colonial empire in Africa and as Hitler wasn’t willing, Franco signed a treaty that would enter Spain into the war when their military was well prepared.

- But the war went from bad to worse as England resisted and in 1941, Hitler invaded Russia. Franco tried again and claimed Spain to be moral belligerent and sent 50,000 troops to Russia. But the moment never arrived as everyone was turning against Hitler. In 1944, Franco began to steadily move towards a more neutral position. And in 1945, when the war finished, people declared that Franco had saved Spain.

- MYTH NUMBER THREE – Social peace. People believed that after years of history characterised by social upheaval, Franco had put an end to that. But really, Franco repressed. He never forgot or forgave. There were two social classes in Spain – the victors and the vanquished. Spain survived in pacificy and submission as any kind of