

contends, their suffering and sacrifices were remembered and shared through pension payments.

Holmes can be faulted for failing to give a "voice" to her grieving widows, thereby raising a complaint about several of these essays as exemplars of "social history". As a concept refined by able practitioners since the late-1960s, social history seeks to explore the history of "inarticulate" people and to view history "from the bottom up". Several contributions fall short of this goal and reflect rather traditional historical approaches. Although no essay examines an African-American community during the Civil War, and women are viewed either as widows or as benevolent volunteers, these seven selections do suggest how this war encompassed a variety of experiences refracted through the prisms of class, race, ethnicity, gender, and region. These scholars' efforts to link battlefield and homefront, soldiers and civilians, men and women, wartime and peacetime, will certainly fortify the efforts of other historians to depict war in all of its social complexity. Vinovskis and his allies have signalled the start of a new assault on the bulwark of Civil War historiography. Commence firing!

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**MARTIN, BENJAMIN.** *The Agony of Modernization. Labor and Industrialization in Spain.* [Cornell International Industrial and Labor Relations Series, no. 16.] ILR Press, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University, Ithaca 1990. xvii, 570 pp. \$ 42.00.

As a bibliographical essay at the end of this fine survey gratefully points out, the last two decades have witnessed the appearance of a large number of first-rate articles and monographs on various aspects of the history of the Spanish labour movement. South of the Pyrenees, the final years of the Franco dictatorship were marked by a resurgence of political, cultural and labour protest. Despite all manner of official obstruction, historical research on Spain's ill-fated working class, Martin informs us, at long last began in earnest. In due course, detailed scholarly works appeared on anarchism, anarcho-syndicalism, catholic unions, socialism and a host of other topics. Some of the most valuable contributions have been regional studies, not least on the industrial zones of Catalonia, the Basque Country and Asturias, as well as the troubled agricultural region of Andalusia. This is not to mention the outpourings of foreign researchers, including the excellent monographs of Edward Malefakis, Adrian Shubert, Gerald Meaker and Sebastian Balfour. From his exile in Pau, France, the indefatigable Manuel Tuñón de Lara did more than anyone to promote the study of Spanish labour history. His three volume synthesis, *El movimiento obrero en la historia de España* (Barcelona, 1972), still ranks as a seminal volume. Martin, perhaps is a tiny bit scathing in his assessment of Tuñón's achievement.

*The Agony of Modernization*, for its part, is clearly no product of the bourgeois academy. Its author, a long-standing labour activist, breathes new life into many a tired old theme. He writes with passion, understanding, clarity and painstaking objectivity. The general reader, particularly in the English-speaking world, will not

find a more balanced and challenging guide to the subject of labour and industrial relations in modern Spain.

The main theme of Martin's analysis is that the evolution of labour relations in Spain graphically illustrates the consequences of that country's belated modernisation. Incidents of worker protest and urban and rural conflict, he contends, occurred with regularity throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. However, it was not until the First World War that the so-called labour problem became a matter for national concern. In the aftermath of war Spain, which had remained neutral, was engulfed by a major breakdown in industrial relations. When General Miguel Primo de Rivera seized power in September 1923 his main aim, as is well known, was to put an end to the wave of unrest and terrorism that, in particular, had gripped the city of Barcelona since 1919. During the 1930s, the escalating polarisation in labour relations and the radicalisation of the trade-union movement threatened the very existence of the democratically-elected Second Republic. Whereas elsewhere in Western Europe, Martin argues, sustained economic growth and the improving status of wage earners made trade unions a more integral part of the institutional, social and economic fabric and had a moderating influence on their outlook and policies, Spain lost out. Here, capitalist development was only partial and highly uneven geographically. As a result, labour organisations tended to see themselves first and foremost as vehicles for popular protest. Thus, for example, while the Spanish socialists sought to emulate the democratic practices of their brothers in Western Europe, they still found themselves forced to resort from time to time to quasi-insurrectionary actions.

In a nicely-argued chapter on the socio-economic background to nineteenth-century Spain, Martin contends that the country's failure to "catch the train of the industrial revolution" can be attributed to such factors as the backward-looking attitudes of the landed elite, the absence of a spirit of modern entrepreneurship and the dead weight of an inefficient and archaic agricultural system. The combination of poor agricultural productivity and industrial retardation led to pathetically low living standards among Spain's wage earners. Thus he echoes the view of Catalan economic historians, that in the country's leading industrial sector, the cotton textile industry of Catalonia, poor demand for its products proved an insurmountable obstacle to uninterrupted expansion. Local millowners, in order to secure even modest profits, were consequently forced to squeeze their workers to the limit. In the mining zone of Vizcaya, the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie of nearby Bilbao, that very English of cities, sent their sons to Eton and Oxbridge. Whether or not the English education system rubbed off on them, Basque capitalists are credited with a more enlightened attitude to labour relations than their Catalan counterparts. Martin is certainly spot on when writing about the *latifundio* belt of Andalusia where the landlord class, when not absent from their huge estates, had little incentive to maximise profits. An abundance of labour condemned the landless proletariat there to a miserable existence. According to the *fin-de-siècle* reformer, Joaquín Costa, the latter were frequently compelled to compete with the local cattle for grass and vegetation.

For my part, I particularly enjoyed Martin's treatment of social reform and, in particular, its failure to improve the lot of Spanish workers before the First World War. Organised labour, he contends, was far too weak and inconsequential at this

time to influence the passing of legislation, let alone its enforcement. Early social reform Acts were received with unconcealed hostility from the employers and often with contempt and indifference by the labour force. They are best viewed as mere palliatives, enacted in times of social tension with little or no provision made to insure compliance. "In our country", said Joaquín Costa, "laws are passed to provide us with the pleasure of ignoring them".

Martin sees the emergence of modern labour organisation in Spain as proceeding along more or less classic lines. In Catalonia, the "cradle and vanguard" of the nation's labour movement, workers reacted to the introduction of labour-saving machinery in the early nineteenth century with their own variant of Luddism. The Barcelona labour force first sought legal permission to organise in the mid 1830s. Yet organisations formed for the purpose of collective bargaining were rigorously suppressed. Not until the revolution of 1868 did a permissive climate appear which enabled labour groups to flourish. Martin goes on to recount the well-known episode of the arrival of the peninsula of Bakunin's emissary, Giuseppe Fanelli and the eventual emergence of two forms of anarchism in Spain: the peasant anarchism of Andalusia and proletarian anarchism in industrial Catalonia. In both cases, the movement's strong appeal derived from the widespread distaste for the sordidness and corruption of the Restoration regime, 1874–1931.

Meanwhile the socialist trade-union federation, the *Unión General de Trabajadores*, with its forlorn commitment to securing improvements for its membership through social legislation, is portrayed as a victim of the incompleteness of capitalist development south of the Pyrenees. Without doubt, the UGT's greatest mistake in its early years was to seek to transplant Jules Guesde's doctrinaire version of Marxism which was totally unrelated to the economic and social conditions of Restoration Spain. Moreover, Martin is right to argue that the socialists' rejection of political cooperation with Spanish Republicanism contributed heavily to their long confinement in the political ghetto.

Later, the author charts the foundation of the anarcho-sindicalist *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* in 1911 and the poor performance of the Catholic Worker Circles which are viewed as a confessional response, and little more, to the rise of a factory proletariat. While the struggles of the CNT in its formative years have been recounted often enough, the fate of Spain's social catholics has been less well-chronicled outside Spain. Dominated by aristocrats and industrialists, the movement was widely seen by workers as synonymous with yellow company unionism.

Labour's coming of age during the fateful period 1915–1923 owed much to rapid industrial expansion during the First World War. Salvador Seguí, a former member of the Nietzschean group *Hijos de Puta* gets a good press from Martin, as does his associate Angel Pestaña, for opposing the intrusion into the organisation of hoodlums and toughs who shot it out on the streets of Barcelona with the hired assassins of the Employers' Federation.

In a convincing chapter on labour relations during the Restoration, Martin demonstrates how the absence of codified, enforceable contractual relations contributed to the general climate of violence and confrontation that pervaded industrial relations down to the Second Republic. Before the expansion of organised labour during the First World War, employers opposed any organised representation of their workers, except company unions. Unions, meanwhile, were generally made

up of small nuclei of committed activists who conducted guerrilla actions in order to win over the most of workers to their side.

The Primo de Rivera dictatorship (1923–1930) set out to restore order by taking harsh measures against CNT labour extremism. Yet while placing the CNT in limbo, Primo wooed the Socialists with promises of social legislation. In 1926 the regime produced a unified labour code, seen by Martin as giving greater coherence to labour policy, increasing social spending and strengthening protective provisions. Primo's "new labour order", which some termed fascist, is praised for helping to lower levels of labour conflict. Martin reminds his readers that the architect of the regime's labour policy, Eduardo Aunós, provoked the widespread opposition of employers who dubbed him "the White Lenin".

The book concludes with detailed chapters on the Second Republic and the Spanish Civil War. For the great mass of people, the Republic opened up new vistas of political consciousness. Yet, as Martin argues, the Socialist Labour Minister, Francisco Largo Caballero, was more concerned with extending the power and influence of the UGT than improving industrial relations. The CNT, which emerged once more as a potent force, accused the new regime of "reformist possibilism" when nothing less than its total destruction was required. Yet the anarchists lacked any clear notion of how the new order should be structured. Thus Prime Minister Manuel Azaña unwittingly unleashed a powerful social dynamic whose ramifications the new political elite was either unwilling or incapable of dealing with. The result, of course, was the workers' revolution of October 1934 and the polarisation of society which presaged the military rebellion of July 1936 and the internecine strife of the next three years.

Finally, I have one quibble about a work published under the imprimatur of a distinguished university press. Sadly, the *Agony of Modernization* is riddled with all manner of inaccuracies, misspellings, incorrect dates, wrongly-named organisations and *dramatis personae*. In addition, there are innumerable footnoting errors in Spanish, Catalan and French which should surely have been sifted out. All these little annoyances combine to marginally spoil the enjoyment of Martin's well-written and useful survey.

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McKEAN, ROBERT B. *St Petersburg Between the Revolutions. Workers and Revolutionaries, June 1907–1917*. Yale University Press, New Haven [etc.] 1990. xvii, 606 pp. \$ 40.00; £ 27.50.

The capital city of St Petersburg was both the focus of modernization in pre-revolutionary Russia and the hotbed of revolution during the two great uprisings of 1905 and 1917. It was also the scene of the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917. It is obvious that the development of the workers' movement and politics in the capital has always been of particular interest to researchers. McKean's large monograph does not therefore break entirely new ground, at first sight at least.

McKean's study begins with the "years of reaction", 1907–1910, and only just