

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

touches on the cataclysm of 1917. The developments during this period are shown to be of vital importance for understanding later events, events that have already attracted a great deal of attention and scholarly treatment. McKean's undertaking may be summarized as one that tries to explode the numerous myths propagated by the various contending, and certainly not always disinterested, schools of historiography that have studied pre-revolutionary St Petersburg and its workers' movement, as well as the revolutions of 1905 and 1917. Soviet historiography is bound to be the main target of any such criticism, but a number of Western authors are also included in McKean's critique.

In his treatment of particular points, McKean has not limited himself only to recent literature; he has frequently drawn on material from the 1920s, when the first scholarly accounts and memoirs of those who participated were published. In particular, the book profits immensely from the broad use of unpublished sources to which Western researchers have for so long had no access. McKean was able to make ample use of the archives of the Okhrana, the tsarist secret police. He has assembled an immense amount of factual material, and the way he presents this does much to elucidate crucial aspects of the period concerned. His work thus considerably advances our understanding of the inner workings of the movements that finally led to the downfall of tsarism.

The book begins with a concise survey of social, geographical and economic conditions, and of working-class life in St Petersburg during the last ten years of tsarism. Here McKean draws attention to the variegated nature of the working class in St Petersburg, the "hired employees" (p. 16), who included, besides production workers in various branches of industry, clerical, service and domestic workers. In addition, there were a large number of small artisanal workshops. All these outnumbered by far the number of workers employed in heavy industry, the traditional focus of revolutionary worker politics, as well as of its students. Further, McKean highlights the "peasant" element in the St Petersburg working class, which he attributes to the constant influx of migrants from the countryside. Thus the "duality of St Petersburg" (p. 36), expressed also in the stark differences between its central and more peripheral parts, is stressed even to the point that "the St Petersburg working class before 1914 was still at the transitory stage between agriculture and industry" (p. 29). Despite these assertions McKean's discussion is centred around the industrial labour force, while the remaining groups of workers emerge as the passive and ineffective force they actually seemed to the revolutionaries of the time. He does not go much further than occasionally stating, albeit forcefully, the revolutionaries' neglect for or lack of success with these groups of workers.

For industrial workers, then, the period of reaction meant above all the loss of the gains achieved during and immediately after the 1905 revolution. McKean traces this not just in the organizational failure of workers groups and state-administered repression; a central feature of his account is his close attention to the wages and employment policies of St Petersburg's employers and to their organizations, above all the St Petersburg Society of Mill and Factory Owners, whose industrial and political stance is discussed throughout the book. For workers, therefore, the period 1907–1910 brought not only severe setbacks in the fields of politics and trade unionism, but, more important possibly, a loss of shop-floor power and, above all, lower wages.

Set against this is a short account of the fortunes of the three main socialist parties, the Mensheviks, Bolsheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, and their various factions, “a bewildering variety of socialist groups” (p. 484). McKean draws particular attention to the educational societies formed after 1907; he considers these to have been instrumental “in the formation of a workers’ intelligentsia and of proletarian cadres experienced in leadership and the conduct of their own affairs” (p. 71). These people were recruited largely from the minority of “skilled, young, single male workers” (*ibid.*). They were also the “local working-class activists in illegal and legal spheres of action” (p. 78), whose impact, in McKean’s account, far outweighed the importance of the *émigré* leaders. This is a recurrent theme in subsequent far more detailed chapters on the revival of working-class militancy from 1911, labour relations and the working-class movement during World War I, and the immediate prelude to the February Revolution. These chapters too rely to a large extent on archival material.

McKean discusses the attitude and relationship of revolutionary parties to the underground, their connection with and use of legal means of expression, such as the Duma, the legal press, trade unions and social insurance institutions up to 1914. Separate chapters are devoted to “industrial unrest” in the period of its revival 1911–1914; relations between the government, employers and labour; and the St Petersburg general strike of July 1914. In this the author follows a pattern that reflects the main political divisions of the left: Bolshevik, Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionaries, as well as the important intermediate social democratic grouping of the Mezhraionka and anarchist currents. The main socialist groupings were split into various factions, partly as a result of *émigré* squabbles, partly also because of various attempts to form organizational nuclei within St Petersburg, resulting in more or less short-lived factions. Their fortunes are followed in great detail, but the main thrust of the argument may be summarized as one that emphasizes the importance of local “sub-elites” as opposed to the *émigré* leadership. Certainly, in contrast to prevailing Soviet and, to an extent, Western historiography, McKean insists, in particular, on the rather marginal way in which Lenin was able to influence even the Bolshevik circles that had formed in the capital. This was true, for instance, in the case of such central structures as the Duma faction and *Pravda*. The latter’s image as *Leninskaya Pravda* conveyed by Soviet literature is thoroughly shattered by demonstrating both the local origins of the initiative to launch the newspaper and the independence of editorial policy from Lenin. Similarly, the opportunities the *émigré* Mensheviks had to influence the course of events in St Petersburg are demonstrated to have been decidedly less than even current observers, especially Western researchers, suggest. McKean demonstrates that the influence of all socialist groups on workers is overestimated to an even greater degree.

A pervading theme that emerges from the efforts to create viable socialist organizations in St Petersburg/Petrograd before and after 1914 is the strong penchant towards party unity exhibited by the local “sub-elites” in spite of the *émigrés*’ bitter struggles. As his analysis of the elections to the insurance councils shows, the tendency to scorn or ignore factional differences was widespread among the rank and file as well. This striving for (party) unity was also evident in later developments during the war and in the events leading up to the February Revolution. Such findings do not preclude the fact that certain features characterized particular

organizations. Thus the Mensheviks clearly did suffer in the long run from the dismantling of their underground apparatus during the years of reaction, while the Bolsheviks tended to pursue the aim of a general strike as a means to trigger broader revolutionary developments during the rise of the workers' movement immediately prior to the outbreak of war in 1914.

On the workers' movement after 1911, McKean presents a wealth of quantitative data. He analyses union membership, strike participation, duration and objectives, the industries hardest hit and their geographical location. This material is presented in a series of tables, occasionally with only a summary identification of sources (n. 72 on p. 123, for example, reads "based on a variety of sources – archives, memoirs, secondary studies, the contemporary legal press"). Furthermore, categorizations such as "political" and "economic" strike may be inevitable in order to reach the necessary aggregations, but their delimitation is open to discussion; a number of conflicts were both politically and economically motivated. In some cases one wonders about the number of working days lost. Along with information on the numbers and types of workers involved, this is a useful measure of strike intensity; these data are not always supplied however. At times the significance of quantitative data is overemphasized; thus McKean infers from the low degree of organization among female sales employees that the majority of them did not "find union membership attractive" (p. 175).

Without doubt, the massive amount of material presented by McKean accentuates the importance of metalworking industries in the industrial struggles of the period, and he shows that St Petersburg differed markedly in this respect from the rest of Russia. The same is true for the overwhelming percentage of "political" strikes, above all in the case of those immediately prior to the war, culminating in the unsuccessful general strike early in July 1914. This is qualified by McKean's insistence on the uneven geographical distribution of strike activity, with Vyborg and, to a lesser extent St Petersburg and Vasil'evskii Island as centres of unrest, while other districts, despite having a large proletarian population, were rather less susceptible. Even within heavy industry, McKean insists on making a qualification: "The metalworking plants most prone to political disturbances were the medium-sized and smaller establishments [...] rather than the gigantic mixed production plants or the ordinance manufactories or the shipyards" (p. 223).

As was the case in previous movements, McKean identifies in the St Petersburg general strike "the relative impotence of the socialist factions to restrain their followers" (p. 307) and the "atrophy of the revolutionary organizations" (p. 316) even at a stage presented as a crucial moment in the development of the revolutionary movement in official Soviet historiography. It is important to note that this did not preclude large demonstrations of a clearly political character, above all at key events, such as the anniversary of Bloody Sunday 1905, of the Lena Massacre 1912 and on 1 May. This, as well as political sackings or more sensational instances of repression, sparked strikes or even more attempts to demonstrate. They were exploited by political parties claiming that they were proof of their popular support; McKean presents rather convincing evidence to the contrary however.

McKean's account of the war years underscores, by and large, his earlier findings. He stresses the influx of new recruits into the working class, but his assertion of a "further dissolution of the 'cadre'" group (p. 330), an assertion largely aimed at

claims to the contrary by Soviet authors, seems to be based mainly on “reasonable” (*ibid.*) speculation. His point about the social stratification among Petrograd workers during the earlier stages of the war appears to be more justified: wartime inflation and differential wage increases, according to “age, sex and skill” (p. 338) but also to industry, meant that male workers in heavy industry benefited substantially at first, while real wages plummeted across the board in 1916. This coalesced with an ever-sharpening supply crisis to create one of the central conditions of political crisis in the winter of 1916–1917.

The links between activists, or the local “sub-elite”, in Petrograd and *émigré* leaders were even more tenuous than during peacetime. This is detailed, in particular, by following Lenin’s efforts to establish regular contact with Russia during his period of exile in Switzerland. Here McKean also points to the independent role played by Shlyapnikov, who temporarily served as a relay from his base in Stockholm. During the war, features such as the local autonomy of party groups, as far as they existed and managed to survive, or the quest for party unity through local cooperation were emphasized rather more strongly compared with the period before the war. This emerges, in particular, in the case of political views concerning the war. Lenin’s “defeatist” option seems to have attracted little support, but the same is true of those who ardently supported the war; generally the mood of “Petrograd revolutionary party members”, as can be gauged from the available evidence, though broadly “internationalist” (p. 365), was anti-war while still committed to measures of “self-defence”. A notable feature in McKean’s account of the fortunes of the various socialist groupings during the war is the relative stability and success of the Mezhrainka group, which set it apart somewhat from other socialist organizational efforts.

As in the opening chapters, McKean pays particular attention to the evolving relationship between government, employers and labour organizations during the war. He points to the vacillating and faction-ridden policy both of the government and of employers’ organizations. Among the latter, as before the war, employers in Petrograd took a particularly hard line, as evidenced, for example, in their hostile attitude towards the Labour Group of the Central War-Industries Committee and in their support for the abortive attempts at a general militarization of labour. This was exacerbated both by competition for wartime contracts and by the more “liberal” stance taken by Moscow industrialists. In both respects the St Petersburg factory owners managed to hold their ground before February 1917. A novel feature was the pressure deriving from the army’s interest in maintaining peaceful industrial relations lest the delivery of war materials be jeopardized. The pivotal point, however, “the evolution of a non-revolutionary labour movement”, was blocked, in McKean’s view, more by government inaptitude than by the “actions of the factory owners” (p. 458).

McKean’s conclusion that “the revolutionary politics of 1917 began in a vacuum” (p. 494) is finally borne out by his “epilogue” on the build-up of the workers’ movement in the period immediately leading up to the February Revolution. He presents the by now familiar picture of remote and powerless socialist *émigrés*, a local “sub-elite” in disarray though active to a certain extent, and a working class acting in ways and at times that could scarcely be foreseen, let alone controlled, by the revolutionaries. This was possible to some extent for activists in the factories and

for a number of organizational nuclei that had in part, like the Bolshevik Russian Bureau, been formed only shortly before the decisive events leading up to the revolution. These groups certainly tried to direct the strike movement, but they could not overcome the lack of “central direction”, while “workers reacted instinctively to the first strikes on 23 February” (p. 475). They were “compelled [...] to co-operate in fashioning a response” to what was happening on the streets (p. 470). Somewhat cryptically in the face of this evidence, McKean argues in concluding his discussion of the existing literature that “the February revolution was ‘spontaneous’ only in the sense that none of the revolutionary organizations actually planned the strikes and demonstrations” (p. 469) and that the February Revolution, as well as the general strike of July 1914, “cannot be dismissed [...] as merely ‘elemental’ outbursts” (p. 492). While pointing to the final loss of legitimacy by the tsarist government and the “desertion” of the Duma liberals in February, McKean still cannot give a more concrete account of the workings of those processes within the striking and demonstrating masses that Trotsky in his account termed “molecular”. Of course, this must be attributed in part to the understandable deficiencies in the sources at this particular point, above all in the Okhrana archives, which McKean has so amply used.

The novelty of the movement in February 1917 lay in its overcoming the limitations and particularisms that McKean has stressed in the earlier movements he has reviewed. With eighty per cent of the workforce in the major industries out on strike, formerly marginal proletarian groups as well as students were drawn into the movement, resulting in a “popular rather than a purely working-class general strike” (p. 464). To this must be added the decisive “response of the soldiers” (p. 466) and the geographical spread of the movement into quarters hardly affected in earlier instances.

The acute crisis in procuring vital supplies, the dramatic fall in real wages, the collapse of the legitimacy of the political as well as the factory regimes would probably be the main factors contributing, in McKean’s view, to the final demise of the tsarist regime. He certainly has demonstrated that this was not coterminous with a victory of revolutionary organizations and even less of the *émigré* leaders who have, for obvious reasons, figured so largely in later historical writing and research. Still, he leaves open a number of questions, partly as a result of abruptly ending his study at 27 February 1917. His closing statement reads: “The development of mass revolutionary consciousness in the form of a commitment to a specific socialist party or political philosophies was fundamentally a phenomenon of the months after the fall of Nicholas II, when the politicization of the masses began in earnest” (p. 494). While aptly summing up the argument against the importance of organized revolutionaries by again pointing to the lack of effective political organization before February, this contains a number of positive assertions that when tested would possibly also shed a different light on McKean’s research. One wonders, in particular, about the kind of political loyalty actually formed between February and October. Furthermore, how does one explain, in the light of McKean’s account, the pivotal role of the *émigré* leaders once they had returned to Russia, and specifically to Petrograd? This applies above all, of course, to Lenin’s reshuffling of Bolshevik theory and strategy during April 1917. These are intriguing questions, and it may be seen as one of the merits of this book that they have to be posed now against the

background of the massive amount of material evidence presented by McKean on just how fragile the links actually were between the various instances of a political process that, all the same, eventually resulted in nothing less than a revolution.

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JANCAR-WEBSTER, BARBARA. *Women & Revolution in Yugoslavia 1941–1945*. [Women and Modern Revolution Series.] Arden Press, Inc., Denver 1990. xvi, 245 pp. Ill. Maps. \$ 26.50. (Paper: \$ 16.95.)

This book is a reviewer's nightmare: the author's argumentation is so opaque that the reader constantly ponders whether the author indeed denies what she just has asserted on the previous pages. It is not easy to give an outline of her main theses.

The author's point of departure is G. Lerner's questionable periodization of the development of women's consciousness in four stages: (1) the recognition by women of "a collective wrong suffered"; (2) efforts to remedy these wrongs in terms of political economic and social rights; (3) development of women's culture – "sex-segregated living styles"; (4) final shift from man-centred to woman-centred mode of thought and behaviour (p. 2). This American-centred or West-European-centred scheme serves as a theoretical framework for the description and the explanation of the women's liberation movement in Yugoslavia from times immemorial until the beginning of the 1980s. The stress lies on the period of World War II.

Drawing on primarily (if not exclusively) the Communist sources – carefully sifted published documents and synthetic works – the author offers a picture of women's exploits during the war. These efforts resulted in gaining political, economic and social rights, Lerner's stage 2. Further progress to stages 3 and 4, thus achieving the ultimate liberation, has been blocked by the rapidity of moving through the first two stages: it made it impossible for women to develop the required political and organizational skills: they rolled back into patriarchal oppression.

Massive women's participation in the armed struggle receives most attention, since the author wants to prove that women were at that time equal with men in playing male roles and thus created the basis for their postwar equality. At the same time Jancar-Webster furnishes numerous arguments in favour of the thesis that very few women joined the struggle with women's liberation in mind and that the Party did not cherish women's liberation as one of its priorities. This contradiction does not strike her since she has to defend Lerner's presumably universally valid scheme of the development of women's consciousness. Therefore Jancar has to construct a continuity of prewar "bourgeois" and Bolshevist "feminism" (stages 1 and 2) and neo-feminism (stages 3 and 4), a link which is, certainly with her arguments, hard to maintain.

In contrast to Jancar-Webster, Yugoslav neo-feminists understand that the whole body of conventional women's history in Yugoslavia has to be purged from Party bias and submitted to radical re-thinking free from schematism and romanticism. When this line of thought is pursued further, the hypothesis could perhaps be formulated that women's liberation under Communist auspices was a gift from