

would be mounted and, conversely, employer pressure sustained".² A further response was their attempt to carve out some measure of independence for themselves by cultivating small plots of land on their own behalf, using their cash bounty on re-indenture to buy a cow, and acquiring some interest in land cultivation off the estate.

Chapter 6 examines the opposition of humanitarian groups and the black creole community to Asian immigration, but concludes that it was left to forces outside the West Indies – in particular, Indian nationalist opinion – to bring to an end the system of indentured labour.

In Chapters 7 and 8, attention is turned to the post-indenture experiences of these migrant groups, focusing on their occupational mobility and the extent to which they preserved their social autonomy. Whereas Indians largely remained agriculturalists and showed little interest in assimilation, the Chinese increasingly went into trade, and intermarriage and conversion to Christianity resulted in a greater degree of assimilation.

Finally, the Conclusion offers very brief comparative perspectives with other unfree labour systems and with other Asian labour migration streams.

Indentured Labor, Caribbean Sugar is a most welcome addition to the growing literature on Asian migration to the West Indies. It is well structured and well written, and, in general, achieves its objective to be an integrated social history of these migrant streams. There are, however, some limitations to the work in terms of topics covered and sources used. This reviewer would have welcomed a much more detailed discussion of the caste origins of the Indian recruits and the extent to which caste distinctions persisted in the new environment. In addition, demographic issues relating to mortality (on the voyage and in the new West Indian disease environment) and fertility are hardly mentioned. Look Lai has also not followed the lead of Raymond Smith and Brij Lal in quantifying material in the shipping lists, which are extant for Guyana, Trinidad and Jamaica. These lists give individual-level information on the caste and regional origins of recruits, and allow for the reconstruction of their family structure.³

Ralph Shlomowitz

CASTILLO, SANTIAGO (Dirección). *Solidaridad desde Abajo: Trabajadores y Socorros Mutuos en la España Contemporánea*. Centro de Estudios Históricos de la UGT, Madrid 1994. viii, 567 pp. Ptas 2100.

In Spain, as elsewhere, the history of the working class was for all too long reduced to that of the organizations which aspired and claimed to represent it.

² D. Munro, "Patterns of Resistance and Accommodation", in B.V. Lal, D. Munro and E.D. Beechert (eds), *Plantation Workers: Resistance and Accommodation* (Honolulu, 1993), p. 8.

³ On these topics, see R. Smith, "Some Characteristics of Indian Immigrants to British Guiana", *Population Studies*, 13 (1959), pp. 34–39; B.V. Lal, *Girmitiyas: The Origins of the Fiji Indians* (Canberra, 1983); R. Shlomowitz and L. Brennan, "Epidemiology and Indian Labor Migration at Home and Abroad", *Journal of World History*, 5 (1994), pp. 47–67 (and references cited therein).

The often overt political concerns of those who contributed to the flood of research in the 1960s and 1970s also meant that trade unions and political parties were privileged over other, apparently less significant, manifestations of working-class organizational capacity and associative life. Mutual benefit societies were amongst the victims of this hierarchical vision of social movements, considered, if at all, as mere precursors of more "mature" forms of working-class organization, trade unions. If one thing alone stands out from this volume on the history of mutual aid in Spain, it is the inadequacy of this interpretation, the obligation to take mutualism seriously if we are to be able to understand its place in the history of the Spanish working-class and labour movement.

Originating from a conference held in Madrid in June 1992, the book includes almost thirty papers presented on that occasion, two appendices, and an introduction by Santiago Castillo. This opening survey is not just the obvious, but the only, place for the reader to begin. Without it, there is a danger of losing sight of the wood for the trees, since the majority of articles consist of case studies of individual societies, towns or regions. Whilst these provide a mass of valuable detail, only rarely is this explicitly related to the wider trends and interpretive problems identified by Castillo. Not least, however, these studies confirm that the Spanish mutualist movement, if this is the appropriate term for thousands of societies until recently characterized by their small size and dispersion, has been too heterogeneous to permit easy generalization.

The bulk of the volume is dedicated to the heyday of mutual benefit societies at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, a number of contributions enable us to locate this high point within a much longer chronology. This begins with Sánchez Madariaga's study of the *Hermandades de Socorro* or Aid Confraternities which proliferated in late eighteenth-century Madrid. She shows that these were a new type of voluntary association of mutual aid, generally providing sickness and funeral insurance for a mainly artisan membership, quite distinct from the pre-existing guilds. Martínez Gallego traces the more familiar and probably more frequent tendency for mutual benefit societies to emerge from disintegrating guild structures. He studies the case of mid-nineteenth-century Valencia, but a number of authors provide similar examples of mutual benefit societies with identifiable guild origins developing in other parts of Spain. It appears, however, that the majority were new, "spontaneous" reactions to the uncertainties of life caused by the spread of capitalist social and economic relations and the erosion of traditional forms of aid or solidarity. The number of mutual benefit societies grew steadily during the latter half of the century to peak around the time of the First World War when Castillo estimates that more than five thousand societies existed all over Spain. The diversity of these is striking. Whilst the majority provided personal insurance of one kind or another, thanks to the inclusive definition of workers' mutualism employed in this collection, we also find numerous examples of societies primarily offering insurance of property (cattle, crops, fishing boats or houses). Territorially-defined societies with a popular, socially-mixed membership appear to have predominated over others restricted to members of a particular profession or occupation. Nearly all applied other criteria for eligibility, including economic status, health, age, morality and, most common of all, gender. Only García Checa's article on the women's mutual benefit societies established in Catalonia under the aegis of the Catholic church focuses on the rare brand of

women's mutual aid society. The Church was just one of the institutions to promote mutual aid. Different political parties and trade unions created mutual benefit societies or incorporated mutualist activities into existing organizations. So too did employers, above all in the mining villages of Asturias and the Basque Country or the industrial colonies of rural Catalonia. In contrast, the State was largely indifferent to mutualism. Only rarely, as in the case of the Basque province of Guipúzcoa studied by Martínez Martín, or the school societies discussed in Urías's article on Asturias, did the local authorities encourage mutual aid. The introduction of State welfare provision in the 1920s and 1930s marked the beginning of the end for most forms of mutual insurance, although De la Calle's study of the system of State insurance established by Franco shows how this made "use of the most popular elements of mutualism in an attempt to legitimize the New Regime". Presented as appendices, two final articles report on the current, altogether marginal, position of mutual insurance in a scenario dominated by the State and private commercial companies.

It is far from easy to evaluate the achievements of the mutual benefit societies. Their popularity suggests that many considered membership to be advantageous, and there can be little doubt that payments received by members alleviated much individual hardship. Despite this, their overall impact on the quality of working-class life was surely modest, and certainly less significant than that intended. Organizational and financial difficulties, often compounded by the failure to apply actuarial principles of any kind, prevented many ambitious intentions expressed in statutes from being put into practice. Nearly all plans to establish unemployment insurance, for example, remained just that. But mutual aid societies had other implicit functions and roles. These were perhaps most obvious in the case of the Church-sponsored societies, seen by García Checa as "instruments of education and practical moralization of the people in the values of foresight, saving and the faith", or in the often obligatory societies which employers created as an integral part of paternalist strategies of social control. Other, independent, societies played an equally important social role as vehicles of sociability which fostered new collective identities, ties and values, not least those of a democratic society autonomously run by its members.

The relationship between mutual benefit societies and other working-class organizations is one of the main themes running through this book. In his article on Galicia, Brey argues that nineteenth-century artisan mutualism constituted an important stage on the path from guild solidarities to those of class-based trade unions, an argument which is common ground for a number of contributors to this volume. Ralle, however, suggests that mutual benefit societies may have played a less direct role in the rise of early trade unionism in Spain than they did in some other countries. Although there certainly exist examples of mutual benefit societies conceived as camouflage for other, more conflictive, ends, and others which later evolved into trade unions, Ralle sees the relationship between the two as essentially reciprocal. The expansion of both coincided in time, reflecting the emergence of new forms of sociability and visions of a future centred on the almost limitless potential of workers' self-organization. Although the anarchists continued to oppose mutualism on the grounds that it was a distraction, if not an obstacle on the path to revolution, by the turn of the century both the Catholic and socialist union movements adopted mutualism as a practical response to the needs of the working class as well as a means of

consolidating their organizations. González Gómez traces the socialist unions' attempts to establish the *base múltiple*, or combined mutual benefit and union system of finance and organization, in the period after the First World War. This steered them towards centralization and the modern "service union" conception of the organization, a development which was brought to an abrupt end by the Civil War but which is now once again at the centre of the unions' agenda.

Yet as a number of articles in this collection make clear, wage earners were as likely to be members of popular, in the sense of inter-class societies, as of exclusively working-class initiatives. This was not only the case in the mainly rural areas that were home to most Spanish workers before the Civil War, but also in many urban areas. Despite the expansion of class or occupationally defined societies in larger towns and cities, in 1915 these still only accounted for a fifth of all mutual benefit societies in Spain. The implications of this mutualism, and of the persistent strength and appeal of the popular sociability and identities on which it was founded, are crucial questions raised in this book which certainly merit further study and analysis, not least by labour historians.

Inevitably in a collection of this type, not all contributions are of equal interest. Excessive empiricism blights some, whilst the limitations of others can be attributed to the premature publication of work still very much "in progress" or to the poverty of the available sources. The latter may explain the virtual absence of references to non-permanent forms of mutual benefit (the dividing societies found elsewhere) or to informal networks of solidarity which may have been particularly important in the lives of less-skilled, migrant and female workers often excluded from mutual benefit societies. This collection is essential reading not only for anyone setting out to explore these neglected areas of research, but also for all those interested in Spanish labour and working-class history in the nineteenth and twentieth century.

Justin Byrne

TEITELBAUM, KENNETH. *Schooling for "Good Rebels". Socialist Education for Children in the United States, 1900–1920*. Temple University Press, Philadelphia 1993. xi, 258 pp. \$44.95.

Just about the time that much of what remained of the once-active US radical movements virtually disappeared amidst the global collapse of the left, a new and promising phase in the historical study of these movements had been reached. Of course the US left's decline began long before the current crisis. The events of 1919 pretty much finished off the Debsian Socialist Party and 1956 did roughly the same for the Communists. Yet during their respective heydays both movements achieved much. The earlier studies by David Shannon, James Weinstein and Frank Warren emphasized the American Socialists' political strategies, the rise and fall of their party structures, while Theodore Draper ably charted the main outlines of both external and internal US Communist politics. Now, building on and extending this previous work, a new group of mostly younger scholars has begun examining the social and cultural dimensions of the American Socialist and Communist movements' histories. Kenneth Teitel-