



ed. James Matthews.

New York: Bloomsbury, 2019. Pp. xii, 263. ISBN 978-1-350-03012-1.

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Taken together, the twelve essays¹ in this well-conceived volume form a coherent narrative of social and cultural mobilization in Spain during the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War. The work of both senior and early-career scholars, they are intended to “advance recent groundbreaking research on the topic ... [and] make available a cross-section of leading Spanish-language historiography” (2) to an Anglophone audience.

In contrast to traditional military and political histories of the war, which “pit the fragmented Republic against the better-coordinated Francoist militarized state,” the book takes a comparative approach to the two camps and situates the Spanish conflict within its broader European context (141). The result is a nuanced interpretation highlighting unequal conditions, similar social dynamics, and shared modernizing frameworks.

The volume begins in July 1936 with the failed military coup. Although conditions differed for the insurgents and loyalists at its outbreak, the conflict created similar needs initially met by popular initiatives. These included the formation of a politically diverse militia on the Left, examined by Michael Alpert and James Matthews (chap. 2); the use of Carlist and Falangist militias on the Right, discussed by Mercedes Peñalba-Sotorrió (chap. 3); the emergence of amateur espionage services drawn primarily from civilian ranks, explored by Hernán Rodríguez Velasco (chap. 7); and the establishment of local social aid, considered by Ángel Cenarro (chap. 5). Within a few months, each side had built the state mechanisms needed to regulate or replace these popular initiatives.

On the loyalist side, a more conventional Republican Popular Army emerged as the government drew on the experience of the militia to establish its mobilizing myth of a “nation in arms.” So, too, when the Republic wrested control of social aid from local workers’ associations, it placed the Ministry of Health and Social Policy under anarchist leadership to assuage its revolutionary bases.

Centralization was more straightforward on the insurgent side. As the Falange had played a dominant role on the battlefield and in the rearguard early in the war, it gained control over key military and welfare institutions, and ultimately secured a prominent position within the *FET y de las JONS* party established by Gen. Francisco Franco in April 1937.

After the militia phase of the war had rallied the politicized to arms, the Nationalist and Republican armies struggled to mobilize soldiers, as demonstrated in James Matthews’s discussion of conscription (chap. 4) and Pedro Corral’s of desertion and shirking (chap. 5). Neither side, however, limited mobilization to the frontlines. Within the modernizing context that repudiated Liberalism in favor of an interventionist state, both sides mobilized women as caretakers, a subject explored in Ángel Cenarro’s account of social aid measures and Suzanne Dunai’s of home-

1. Distributed in four parts: “Initial Mobilizations,” “Mobilizing for Total War,” “Rearguard Areas and Actors,” and “Legacies of the Spanish Civil War, 1939–1944.”

front cooking (chaps. 9 and 11). Verónica Sierra Blas covers the topic of children as prime targets and subjects of partisan messages (chap. 10).

Amid these competing mobilization campaigns, the Nationalists maintained a stabler currency than their Republican adversaries, allowing them to “gain and retain support from European and Spanish capitalists ..., offer incentives to their peasants, workers, and soldiers” (123), and better provision their soldiers and civilians. Michael Seidman argues (chap. 8) that these advantages helped the Nationalists win the war.

For both victors and vanquished, demobilization was constrained by the conditions of World War II, as James Matthews maintains (chap. 1) in order to justify the volume’s extended chronology: “General Francisco Franco’s regime asserted itself through continued mobilization against its Republican enemies in peacetime and remained on a continued war footing because of the raging global conflict” (3). Ángel Alcalde adds (chap. 12) that, while veterans on the Francoist side became a “privilege group” after the war as they helped Franco consolidate power at the local level, many Republican veterans suffered imprisonment or exile, particularly to France, where some remobilized for the Second World War.

Besides Republican exiles, many other Spaniards participated in the war as well. Though Spain was not an official belligerent, some 47,000 fascists, radical Catholics, and Francoist veterans took part in the Russia campaign as part of the Wehrmacht’s “Blue Division.” Xosé M. Núñez Seixas demonstrates (chap. 13) that the motives of these Spanish volunteers were more moderate than those of their German counterparts, owing to weaker racial indoctrination and less radicalizing combat conditions.

Núñez Seixas and Ali Al Tuma (chap. 6), on encounters between Moroccan and Republican combatants, make it clear that racial conceptions shaped the behaviors and global perspective of Spaniards at both ends of the ideological spectrum. It remains less clear, however, whether the attitudes of Blue Division volunteers towards Slavs and Jews in the East and of Republicans toward Moroccans at home reflected similar or competing cultural biases.

Editor James Matthews deserves much credit for so expertly balancing breadth of research with narrative coherence in this welcome addition to the English-language historiography of the Spanish Civil War. Readers from advanced undergraduates to specialists in interwar social and cultural mobilizations will benefit from a careful consideration of the papers gathered in *Spain at War*.