

banisation, les nationalités concernées et la force respective des différents partis politiques, les caractéristiques sociales des groupes, leur mobilisation et leur rôle concret dans les événements révolutionnaires ont varié. Partout cependant, l'auteur observe un recours aux armes spontané et massif avec les objectifs communs à tous de défense de la révolution et des intérêts des travailleurs.

Après Octobre, le nouveau rôle de défenseurs de l'Etat et de l'ordre assigné aux Gardes rouges va à l'encontre de leur caractère et de leur structure. En effet, ces milices spontanées, autogérées et essentiellement axées sur des intérêts locaux (l'usine), avaient toujours été hostiles à l'autorité politique établie. Ces caractéristiques les prédisposaient donc mal à devenir les supporteurs du système politique existant. Leur sort a finalement été lié directement au grand débat sur le type de force armée permanente dont le nouvel État devait se doter et, malgré des résistances importantes, les circonstances ont fait qu'elles ont été pour ainsi dire incorporées à l'Armée rouge au printemps 1918.

L'ouvrage repose sur une abondante documentation de première main et incorpore les résultats de plusieurs travaux russes récents. Une critique serrée des sources, particulièrement complexe dans le cas soviétique, caractérise également la démarche de l'auteur.

Wade s'inscrit avec cet ouvrage dans la foulée de plusieurs autres qui s'intéressent aux masses dans la Révolution russe, tels ceux de Diane Koenker, (*Moscow Workers and the 1917 Revolution*, Princeton, 1981) et de S.A. Smith (*Red Petrograd Revolution in the Factories, 1917-1918*, Cambridge, 1983). L'auteur réussit particulièrement bien à situer les milices ouvrières et les Gardes rouges dans le réseau plus large des autres organisations ouvrières (comités d'usine, de partis, soviets, syndicats), ce qui permet de reconstituer les liens horizontaux entre travailleurs plutôt que les liens verticaux entre les leaders et les masses plus souvent illustrés par les historiens (voir par exemple J. Keep, *The Russian Revolution, A Study in Mass Mobilization*, New York, 1976). Wade sait également reconstituer les liens dans le temps reliant les Gardes rouges de 1917 à ceux de 1905 dont le rôle a selon lui, laissé des traces profondes dans la mémoire collective.

On peut aussi apprécier chez l'auteur un sens des nuances qui colle aux réalités régionales et permet d'apporter des distinctions substantielles aux interprétations traditionnelles, par exemple sur les relations complexes entre le Parti bolchevique, les aspirations des travailleurs et le concept de pouvoir soviétique.

Dans l'ensemble donc, une étude bien documentée, prudente et intelligente qui malgré son aspect spécialisé, et peut-être à cause de lui, fait mieux comprendre la psychologie sociale de la Révolution russe et les processus révolutionnaires en général.

Christine Piette
Université Laval

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PAUL WEINDLING, ed. — *The Social History of Occupational Health*. London: Croom Helm, 1985. Pp. 267.

The Social History of Occupational Health is a conference volume generated by Britain's Society for the Social History of Medicine and edited by Paul Weindling of Oxford University's Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine. According to the dust jacket, it is the first published work on health hazards and work-related diseases explored "from the perspectives of social history." Without anywhere explaining precisely the methods, assumptions and political objectives of this "social history," the book offers thirteen generally related papers by British and German scholars the majority of which were originally presented at a 1983 conference on the "History of Occupational Medicine" held in Portsmouth, England, the remainder having been written specifically for inclusion in this volume.

The broad themes of the book are laid out in introductory essays by Weindling and Alfons Labisch, a German scholar who is co-director of a collaborative project on the history of occupational

medicine in the Federal Republic of Germany. According to Weindling and Labisch, occupational health is a field with a poorly developed history. In part, this is a result of "reductionist" biases within the modern discipline of occupational medicine which have tilted it towards toxicology, pathology and mechanical engineering and which have generally limited its history to "narrowly focused professional eulogy" or positivistic accounts of the march of scientific "progress." The development of an adequate history of occupational health has, however, also been hampered by the prevalence of a socio-legal paradigm of monocausal connection between work and disease. According to this paradigm, certain conditions in particular industries lead to specific diseases, and these precipitating conditions can be prevented from recurring at dangerous levels by legislatively enacted and legally enforced procedures. In this simple universe there are no chronic conditions made worse by the stresses and strains of work, no diseases caused by malnutrition or other social liabilities that are exacerbated by heavy labour, no complexities in workers' perceptions of or reactions to individual risks, and no gaps between awareness of hazard and effective action to eliminate danger. Because of scientific bias and paradigmatic constraint, the history of occupational medicine has been "de-thematised," that is, certain basic themes have disappeared from the historical record. They have become invisible by a combination of "public indifference, professional reductionism and socio-political repression." A proper history of occupational health, Weindling and Labisch contend, would be "re-thematised" in the sense that it would restore the full complexities, political contexts, and social and ecological perspectives that have been lost. A new history of occupational health — partly anticipated in the work of earlier historians like Henry Sigerist and George Rosen and in more recent work from the German Democratic Republic — would then develop, and this new history would fully integrate industrial processes, health risks and socio-political responses with medical observations.

Most of the essays which follow the two introductory ones attempt to illustrate one or more aspects of "de-" or "re-" "thematisation." Dietrich Milles, for example, shows how broadly based notions of "workers' diseases" were subtly displaced by narrower and more restrictive ideas about "occupational diseases" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Germany. This displacement took place in the tangle of social insurance law, since workers' advocates with the best of intentions attempted to gain them maximum advantage by focusing on more highly compensated "accident"-like diseases rather than on diffuse and poorly compensated "disability." In a similar vein, Karl Figlio argues in a dense and difficult essay that complex and multistage transformations in "legal cosmology" were necessary prerequisites to the recognition of the rights of English workers to initiate damage claims under the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897. Before the nineteenth century, employers and workers were bound in patriarchal and mutually obligated relationships which prohibited even the conception that workers had the right to litigate compensation claims because of an employer's negligence in protecting them from accidental harm. Milles and Figlio demonstrate, in other words, that neither the legislative nor legal system acted as a simple and automatic mechanism for the redress of grievances by sick or injured workers.

Among the other essays, Antonia Ineson and Deborah Thom show how the risks of TNT poisoning resulting from artillery shell filling work by British women during the First World War were first censored in the popular and medical press and then increased by deliberate and dangerous changes in production methods. Linda Bryder documents attempts by medical experts in the 1930s to shift responsibility for the high rate of tuberculosis among slate quarry workers in North Wales from predisposing and work-related silicosis to the personal habits of the workers and their families. Peter Bartrip reveals that British unions in the 1880s and 1890s were suspected of being unenthusiastic about workmen's compensation and instead favoring older tort law which "safeguarded their own interests both by nurturing industrial tensions and by constituting a powerful recruiting device." Lothar Machtan argues that the Prussian Ministry of Trade's short-lived effort to inquire into the actual conditions of German factory workers in the 1870s was a temporary and coercive response to a wave of strikes rather than an authentic effort at investigation and reform. Also, Mel Bartley raises important epidemiological and conceptual questions about the modern incidence of coronary heart disease and suggests that much mortality attributed to the consequences of affluence may actually be the result of workers becoming "worn out" by long years of unremitting toil.

In my judgement, the two most successful essays in *The Social History of Occupational Health* are Gill Burke's "Disease, Labour Migration and Technological Change: The Case of the Cornish Miners" and Perry Willson's "Industrial Health and Scientific Management in an Italian Light Engineering Firm." Burke outlines an intriguing story of increased lung and hookworm disease among Cornish miners resulting from specific technological changes introduced by a declining and desperate copper and tin mining industry. Rather than acknowledge their own responsibility for increasing occupationally-related disease and death, mine owners attempted to shift the blame to their worker victims who, they said, were solely responsible for their own fate because they failed to comply with safety measures such as wearing masks or watering drill-generated dust. The workers, by contrast, felt that they had no options because the masks were difficult to work in and the watering slowed them down (which decreased their pay) while exposing them to hookworm disease, for which they were also held responsible. Willson explores the managerial utility of a "safety committee" which included worker representatives in an Italian factory during the Fascist period. He argues that, together with an industrial psychology department, this committee successfully manipulated workers' beliefs so that they became convinced the factory management really cared deeply about their health and safety. But Willson demonstrates that this belief derived from public relations rather than actual company policy and that the firm clearly expected to enhance productivity by the "psychologically favorable effect" on the workers of greater safety protection. The management's real motive was not benevolence but "winning their employees' passive acquiescence."

The essays by Burke and Willson are more satisfying to read than most of the others not because of their point of view — which is fairly consistent throughout the volume — but because of their lucid exposition and forceful argument. Unlike some of the other contributors — in part, no doubt, because of the problems of translation — Burke and Willson develop their cases slowly, systematically and persuasively. They present integrated interpretations in place of the sometimes stroboscopic flashes common to several of the other papers. If all the essays here were on the same level as these two, one could say with confidence that the "re-thematisation" of the history of occupational health is not only an important goal for the future but already a considerable achievement in the present.

Theodore M. Brown
University of Rochester

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J. DONALD WILSON, ed. — *An Imperfect Past: Education and Society in Canadian History*. Vancouver: Centre for Curriculum and Instruction, University of British Columbia, 1984. Pp. 218.

Canadian educational history has made great strides since the early 1960s, so much so, that a volume such as the one under review could not have appeared even a decade ago. With two exceptions, the ten essays in *An Imperfect Past* stem from papers presented at the 1983 Vancouver conference held under the sponsorship of the Canadian History of Education Association/l'Association Canadienne d'Histoire de l'Éducation and its American counterpart the U.S. History of Education Society. The collection is prefaced by two important introductory articles, one by the editor J. Donald Wilson on the current state of Canadian educational historiography and a provocative companion piece by Professor Brian Simon on the broad linkage between education and society. The remainder of the book focuses on four themes: "Literacy and Female Education", "Native Peoples and Education", "Schoolmasters, Reformers and Ideology" and "Rural Education and Ethnicity". All of these are important in the context of Canadian educational history but one wonders why other and equally important themes such as the lengthy historical conflict over bilingualism or the interplay between religion and education (to mention but two possibilities) were overlooked. In fact, such omissions illustrate the main problem with the collection. The title *An Imperfect Past: Education and Society In Canadian Education* suggests something more than is delivered in the book. In the editor's defense, he does make it clear that the essays reflect "...the current interest in regionalism