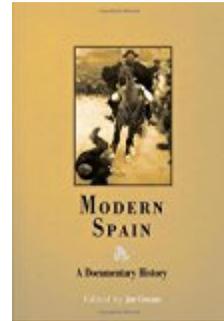


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John Cowans, ed. *Modern Spain: A Documentary History*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003. viii + 312 pp. \$69.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8122-3717-7; \$24.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8122-1846-6.

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Spanish History through Documents

Jon Cowans's document reader on modern Spain fills a major gap in the teaching of Spanish history. His reader covers the period from the Napoleonic era to the development of democracy in Spain, building on the reader on early modern Spain that he previously edited. While there have been several documentary collections published in Spanish, this is the first effort of its kind in English. The availability of such a text will make the study of Spanish history more accessible to students who likely have received little introduction to the subject.

The introduction to the text presents a basic overview of the history of Spain since the Napoleonic era, providing a framework in which to place the documents. Cowans shows a clear understanding of the issues that have affected the development of Spanish politics and society in the last two hundred years. He places emphasis on the role of changing political institutions, beginning with the Cortes of Cadiz, continuing through the Glorious Revolution (1868), then moving through the liberal period to the convulsions of the early part of the twentieth century, Franco's dictatorship, and the restoration of democracy.

The choice of texts is a difficult task, but Cowans has done an admirable job at choosing relevant documents to understand the nature of Spanish history. For instance, he has included documents from liberals, Carlists, regionalists, anarchists, fascists, and artists. He has dealt with such themes as religion, feminism, and poverty as well. In essence, the choice of documents presents a wide view of Spanish society in the nineteenth and twentieth cen-

tures.

The nineteenth century was an especially turbulent time for Spain, beginning with the Napoleonic invasion, facing the loss of its colonial empire, passing through three civil wars and a failed Republic, and coming to terms with a resurgence of regionalist nationalism in Catalonia, Basque Country, and Galicia. Cowans has chosen relevant texts that highlight this chaotic era. His inclusion of documents from the Cortes of Cadiz and Ferdinand VII's reaction to them is a key foundation to an understanding of how Spain developed throughout the entire century, though any explanation would be incomplete without mentioning the Carlists, who sought to return to a more traditional and authoritative monarchy. Probably the most interesting texts from the section on the nineteenth century are an explanation of the Catalan *Renaixena*, the Alcoy Federation manifesto, and Emilia Pardo Bazan's discussion of men and women.

After Spain lost the Spanish-American war, the nation sought to come to grips with a new sense of self, and Cowans has sought to demonstrate this with the inclusion of several documents from the Generation of 1898, including excerpts from Jose Ortega y Gasset's *Invertebrate Spain*. The institution of Miguel Primo de Rivera's dictatorship in 1923 put a break on any liberal reforms until the creation of the Second Republic. The wide variety of documents from the Republic and Civil War in the 1930s provides a good glimpse at the political and social divisions that afflicted Spain. The violence of the Civil

War is clearly demonstrated without a reliance on military history, emphasizing instead the social and political schisms that persisted even during the military conflict.

The Franco dictatorship fundamentally changed the nature of Spanish society and politics in the twentieth century, and it has been accorded its due share of space in this text. Especially important is the inclusion of a number of texts dealing with cultural issues such as the role of women in society and censorship. The inclusion of several documents that demonstrate the role of resistance to the regime is important. The variety of documents is impressive and would be a boon for an introductory course.

The section of the book on the transition to democracy following Franco's death demonstrates the complexity of the changes that have taken place in the last twenty-five years. The text includes a document on racism from 1999. This particular document bears much relevance to the current situation in Spain. It also contains the "Response to ETA" from the Mesa de Ajuria Enea, a coalition of political parties opposed to the terrorist group. Because of copyright issues, however, this section is likely the weakest of the book, failing to address a number of key issues, such as the political programs of the main parties and important economic changes such as entry into the European Union.

There is one relatively important omission in the choice of documents. While Cowans has included a key text from the author Clarin about the problems of Andalusia in the late-nineteenth century, there are no documents related to a failed attempt to improve the distribution of land, in which Church property was confiscated and sold by the government. Also, no documents relate to the redistribution of property during the Second Republic, when the government undertook a major project to change landownership patterns, becoming, along with religion, a fundamental point of contention during the Republic. These would have been important documents to include, though their lack does not diminish the overall importance of the text.

This text is a valuable tool in the creation of courses on Spanish history. The document translations are generally very good. Cowans has made a clear effort to make the sometimes florid expression of Spanish in the nineteenth century more comprehensible for the reader, and he has deliberately left out discussion of some minor details to make the documents more compact and accessible to students. This is a valuable complement to a course on Modern Spain that has been sorely lacking in English. Cowans has done a great service in editing this volume, which will hopefully become a standard text.

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