

ANARCHISTS, ANARCHISM, LIBERTARIAN IDEAS AND HISTORY

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The Spanish Holocaust — Franco's Empire of Death by Paul Preston (Feb 2011 — U. of London) see FILMS

Author readings, Historical Memory, Lecture, Prisons, repression, Spain, Spanish Revolution/Civil War



Hispanist historian **Professor Paul Preston** talks about his forthcoming, long-awaited new book (September 2011): *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination during the Civil War and After* (*El holocausto español. Odio y exterminio en la Guerra Civil y después*), a definitive account of the murders and massacres of civilians that took place during and after the Spanish Civil War, which remains a sensitive and controversial topic three-quarters of a century after the start of the war.

Author Paul Preston says the book proved to be his harshest challenge to date, both because of the vast scale of the subject matter and because of its harrowing nature. "The gratuitous cruelty it recounts ensured that it was an extremely difficult book to write," says Preston, who is regarded as the world's foremost historian of modern Spain. Preston, who is professor of modern Spanish history at the London School of Economics, makes a clear distinction between violence in the Republican and Francoist zones, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The murders and semi-judicial massacres perpetrated by the fascist-backed rebels were almost always officially sanctioned and were an integral and carefully-planned part of their policy of terrifying the Spanish people into submission. By contrast, the killings in Republican-held Spain took place in the first few months of the war when law and order broke down and elements on the left, including so-called 'anarchists', took spontaneous revenge on individuals and groups – such as the Church – who backed the July 1936 coup against the elected Republican government. Murders in the Republican zone, for which there is a reliable figure of 49,272, says Preston, were exhaustively investigated, both by the Republic before its defeat and by the victorious Francoists. The process of counting the victims of Francoist violence could only begin after the dictator's death in 1975 and is still incomplete. "It is unlikely that such deaths were fewer than 150,000 and they could well be more," says Preston. This figure excludes battlefield deaths on both sides, along with the unknown numbers killed in the bombing campaigns against Republican cities such as Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia. Nor does it include the many thousands of refugees who died in bombing attacks as they fled Francoist advances, nor the tens of thousands of refugees and prisoners who subsequently died from disease and malnutrition. "All of this constitutes what I believe can legitimately be called the Spanish Holocaust," says Preston.

Statistics, however, fail to convey the intense horror of what took place, the author concedes, and he includes many stories of individual victims from both sides. "I hope the book will show the extent of the suffering unleashed upon their own fellow citizens by the arrogance and brutality of the officers who rose up on 17 July 1936. They provoked war, a war that was unnecessary and whose consequences still reverberate in Spain today." See **FILMS**

ANARCHIST/LIBERTARIAN FILM ARCHIVE

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Post calendar

March 2011

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Anarchism

Anarchism swept us away completely, because it demanded everything of us and promised everything to us. There was no remote corner of life that it did not illumine ... or so it seemed to us ... shot though with contradictions, fragmented into varieties and sub-varieties, anarchism demanded, before anything else, harmony between deeds and words
- Victor Serge, *Memoirs of a Revolutionary*

Anarchism in film



A comprehensive database of anarchist films compiled by Santiago Juan-Navarro. [Click here](#)

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Posted by christie at 1:22 pm

Tagged with: extermination, Francoism, General Franco, hatred, Paul Preston, repression, slaughter, Spanish Civil War, Spanish holocaust

One Response to “**The Spanish Holocaust — Franco's Empire of Death** by Paul Preston (Feb 2011 — U. of London) see FILMS”

1. **The Telegraph – Still Apologising For Francoism After All These Years by Stuart Christie » Christie Books** says:

February 28, 2012 at 11:08 am

[...] the criteria used by the Sunday Telegraph books editor to dredge up its reviewers? In a review of Paul Preston's 'The Spanish Holocaust,' Sunday's (26/2/12) 's ST magazine carried what is [...]

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On Modern Servitude – (2009 by Jean-François Brient et Victor León Fuentes)
see FILMS

Historic Memory? — Plus ça
change ...

Mani Olive Oil



Get in touch ...

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