

ical thunderbolts—proclamations and encyclicals of the likes of a *Syllabus of Errors*, the *Infallibility of the Pope*, *Rerum Novarum* on new conditions in society, the censorious *Pascendi*, and the condemnatory *Lamentabile*.

Personally, the popes were interesting operators. We see the politically obscure but personally benevolent Pius IX sinking into epileptic senility as he locks himself into the Vatican. Yet, to the end, he exerts a frightening authoritarian dominance and fixes the Council of Bishops to get the declaration of infallibility. Then there is the aged, astute Leo XIII, ready to negotiate with any government on anything to enhance the prerogatives of the Church. Leo seeks to preserve the traditional legacy by reducing antagonisms generated by *Pio Nono's* confrontations. Pius X, the only canonized saint among these pontiffs, struggles to enforce highly intransigent and conservative disciplines. Finally, ineffective Benedict XV claims strict neutrality during World War I but is suspected of pro-German sentiments. His mediations fail, and he is peremptorily excluded from postwar peace discussions.

Exotic subcharacters, like the venal and able Cardinal Antonelli, also people this colorful pageant. What they all have in common is an absolute belief that "the Catholic Church remains the light of civilization...her power extends over all other powers and can in no way be subject to civil authority."

Ranged against these strong protagonists are political leaders of mythic stature seeking to castrate the potency of Rome. The Hammer of the Church, the heroic Garibaldi, never hesitates to urge "the extermination of the vipers." The more subtle statesman Cavour unifies Italy and depletes the papal states. Bismarck launches an anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf*. Waldeck-Rousseau and Combes separate church from state in France. Prime Minister Costa of Portugal declares his goal to "eradicate the Catholic

Church entirely from our land." Unwillingly, Rome is drawn into the Irish controversy in Britain, not endearing it to the Protestant government. In far-off Mexico, President Juarez disestablishes the Church. Everywhere the struggle against Catholicism and papal influence escalates. Still, the Church survives and even grows.

Few authors are given such vivid materials, yet Anthony Rhodes, a British writer with many worthy books to his credit, fails to take advantage of them. He writes straight history, suggesting as a central theme merely the importance of adaptability in the survival of the Church. It is a conventional and respectable approach, but insufficient to illumine the intricacies of this complex web. There are essentially three problems with *The Power of Rome*. First, Rhodes apparently did not decide whether his book was to be: (a) a history of institutional development—the triumph of structure and organization over unfavorable events; (b) a tapestry of personalities who manage an enormous spiritual patrimony—the triumph of intangibles, mystique and charisma, sanctified by old venerations, over powerful secular opponents and forces; or (c) an analysis of the context of ideas in which the most modern concepts are counterpoised against the verities of faith—the triumph of the ethic of coexistence over the intractable desire for destruction nurtured by the antagonists. Rhodes tries to mix all of these perspectives but fails to integrate them.

A second problem is that Rhodes misses the significance of fundamental changes in the geography and constituency of the Catholic Church. Between 1870 and 1922 there were signs that the Third World was the future constituency of the Church, a trend now confirmed. Did a Eurocentric Italian pontificate miss out on an opportunity to anticipate, accelerate, and align itself with this wave, which it might have done by, for example, encouraging anticolonialism? It is also striking that so many of yesterday's issues persist, even if in somewhat different guise: the Irish question, American individuality and resistance to Roman conformity, the German problem, Church influence in the Levant. Indeed, Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* foreshadowed church-state relations in modern Eastern Europe.

A third problem is the book's unusual number of errors. The general reader will be confused by conflicting dates for the same event, contradictory facts, and poor proof-reading. Even more glaring inaccuracies will assail those with a bit more knowledge.

Though one feels that the author has missed an extraordinary opportunity, there is modest merit in perusing this volume.

For it does provide a loose, overall survey of events and issues infrequently written about, events and issues which even in their broadest outline need to be better known.

**TINA MODOTTI:
A FRAGILE LIFE**
by Mildred Constantine

(Rizzoli International Publications; 190 pp./
115 photographs; \$30.00)

Holly Myers

Photographer Tina Modotti was a heroine of the early twentieth century, of the vigorous years from the early 1900s to the Second World War. Her personal saga, marked by dedication to a course of artistic and political development that was guided by faith in the triumph of the individual and in the unfolding revolutionary movements of the era, captures the spirit of the age. Whether beginning anew in yet another country, surviving personal crises, or integrating her artistic and political interests during different phases of her life, Modotti depended on no one but herself. Her ability, resolve, and beauty exercised a powerful hold over those who knew her; and her essential grace made her a woman of unusual interest even to people who knew her only peripherally. Rumor, romance, and mystery surrounded her name.

Born in 1896 in northern Italy, Modotti migrated with her family to San Francisco in 1913. Throughout her childhood she worked in factories to help support her family. When she married in 1917, Modotti and her poet husband moved south to Los Angeles. There, her husband's studio served as a salon for local artists, including photographer Edward Weston; and Modotti worked briefly in Hollywood, portraying vamps in inconsequential movies. This was a significant time for her, because it was in Los Angeles that she began to explore her own artistic potential. Concurrently, she began a legendary affair with Weston.

Modotti followed her husband to Mexico in 1922, where, early in the year, he died of smallpox. Savoring that country's dynamic revolutionary character, she returned to Mexico City in July, 1923, now accompanied by Weston, and both were soon caught up in the vital Mexican art movement spearheaded by Orozco and Rivera. Over the next three years under Weston's tutelage Modotti developed a distinctive photographic style and, as a member of the Mexican Communist party, developed her political instinct. When Weston left in 1926,

Correction

A line was inadvertently dropped from "U.S. Security and World Peace," Stefan H. Leader's contribution to "Great Decisions '84" (*Worldview*, January). The completed sentence on page 11, penultimate paragraph, reads: One political scientist with ties to the Christian Democrats cheered the March, 1983, election victory of the CDU/CSU coalition by stating that it "changed German foreign policy from dreams of a security relationship with the Soviet Union...to the traditional security partnership with the United States."

in part because of Modotti's political activism and in part because their romance had cooled, Modotti remained and forged an independent existence. She became seriously involved with a Mexican political leader, who eventually left for the Soviet Union, and later with a Cuban exile. When this man was assassinated in 1929, most likely by an agent of the Cuban government, Modotti's reputation—Modotti the libertine, the beautiful, independent artist—was sullied by a scurrilous press. As a result, and immediately following a triumphant exhibition of her work at the National Library, she was expelled in 1930 by the newly installed conservative government.

Six months of solitude in Berlin, where Modotti attempted to establish herself as a working photographer, was followed by nearly four years in Moscow, where she put her energies into political work. Here she found her final companion, fellow Italian Vittorio Vidali, and together they fought the war for Republican Spain. When that dream died in 1939, Modotti returned to Mexico with Vidali. Death—from a heart attack while alone in a taxi—came a few years later.

This handsome book includes many worthy examples of Modotti's photographic vision, at once political and ironic—as well as intriguing portraits of Modotti herself, notably by Weston and Rivera, and of well-known Mexican contemporaries. Modotti's correspondence is quoted extensively throughout the narrative, and her own words confirm her reputation for remarkable strength of character.

While Constantine's biography has rescued Modotti's life and work from some of the mystery that surrounded it, the prose is lamentably diffuse and only clumsily revealing of an elegant and moving subject. A detailed chronology of Modotti's complex life would have been a welcome addition to—or substitute for—the often inept text. Nevertheless, Tina Modotti emerges from *A Fragile Life* (the title is taken from Pablo Neruda's elegy on Modotti) a memorable, noble woman. [WV]

THE SECOND SICKNESS

by Howard Waitzkin

(The Free Press; 282 pp., \$19.95)

Albert L. Huebner

Nearly 140 years ago Friedrich Engels described the conditions in which English factory workers lived and the ill health those conditions caused. He traced tuberculosis,

typhoid, typhus, and other major killer diseases of that time to malnutrition, inadequate housing, contaminated water supplies, overcrowding, and abominable working conditions.

Engels's study paved the way for the work of Rudolph Virchow, the great pioneer of social medicine. Virchow, maintaining that the origin of disease is multifactorial, found that among the most important causative factors are the material conditions of people's everyday lives. He also concluded that an effective health-care system cannot limit itself to treating the diseases of individual patients but requires broad social changes.

These ideas became unpopular during the rising tide of conservatism that followed the struggles of the 1840s. They had virtually vanished by the end of the nineteenth century as the germ theory gained ascendancy and a unifactorial model of disease became dominant. Not until the turbulent 1960s did investigation of the social causes of illness reappear with vigor in the West. By bringing together a wide variety of material from scattered sources and using a fresh approach in evaluating this information, *The Second Sickness* makes an important contribution to the revival of interest in social medicine.

Recent analysis of public health data indicates that, contrary to longstanding popular belief, the sharp decline in the prominent infectious diseases of the nineteenth century resulted chiefly from profound social changes rather than from advances in modern medicine. In England, for example, the death rate from tuberculosis declined more rapidly in the year preceding identification of the tubercle bacillus and the introduction of drug therapy than it did subsequently. Waitzkin writes, in summarizing this analysis: "A convergence in public health research has shown that, with a few exceptions, the technical advances of modern medicine have not led to major improvements in measures of health, illness, life expectancy, or death. Instead, the health status of large populations seems more closely related to broad changes in society, including socioeconomic development, better sanitation, environmental conditions, and nutrition."

Waitzkin devotes relatively little space to the striking successes of the public health movement, however. From his Marxist viewpoint, the influence of capitalist social order goes too deep to be fully corrected by simple reforms; what is needed is radical restructuring that leads to a socialist society. Waitzkin does not reject reform. Rather, he imposes the criterion that reforms are worth struggling for only if they lead to lasting changes in the structure of power. Nor does

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he see the mere proclamation of socialism as a panacea. He freely criticizes practices that occur in some socialist countries without wavering in the conviction that transformation to socialism is essential if the origins of socially generated illness are to be eradicated.

Using this frame of reference, *The Second Sickness* offers a thought-provoking critique of diverse aspects of health and health care ranging from the contradiction between profits and safety to the medicalization of social problems, from the maldistribution of physicians and medical facilities in the U.S. to medical "imperialism" in the Third World. Waitzkin, who holds a doctorate in sociology and a medical degree, both from Harvard, treats these topics with just the right blend of scholarship, political intensity, and moral concern.

Nevertheless, the Marxist framework is certain to weaken the central thrust of *The Second Sickness* for the many readers who approach the subject from a sharply different perspective. Like all Marxist humanists, Waitzkin carries a heavy burden. He views the transition to socialism as the path to full equality and democracy, as well as to an improved health system. For most of his readers, however, that transition will raise images of the Stalinist terror or of fleeing boat people. Waitzkin is probably correct in his guess that "the book's style and tone will be most troublesome for those least distressed by our current predicament," but few of those who are distressed seem to view socialism with much favor.

The Second Sickness will alert its readers to the importance of social medicine. It will