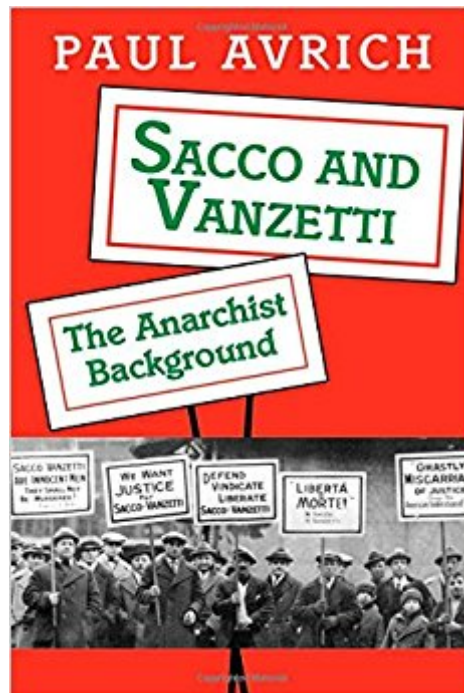




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Sacco And Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background



Synopsis

The Sacco-Vanzetti affair is the most famous and controversial case in American legal history. It divided the nation in the 1920s, and it has continued to arouse deep emotions, giving rise to an enormous literature. Few writers, however, have consulted anarchist sources for the wealth of information available there about the movement of which the defendants were a part. Now Paul Avrich, the preeminent American scholar of anarchism, looks at the case from this new and valuable perspective. This book treats a dramatic and hitherto neglected aspect of the cause cœlœbre that raised, according to Edmund Wilson, "almost every fundamental question of our political and social system."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"[Avrich] uses Italian sources to situate Sacco and Vanzetti within the immigrant anarchist culture they devoted their lives to advancing. This emphasis differentiates his book from those that preceded it and constitutes his signal achievement.... In placing Sacco and Vanzetti in this anarchist movement, Avrich greatly expands our understanding of them and their circle."--Nick Salvatore, The New York Times Book Review
"Reading [Sacco and Vanzetti] is like listening to a seasoned virtuoso musician whose performance seems effortless in its brilliance. [It] will be as compelling to the uninitiated student as to the sophisticated scholar of anarchism."--Candace Falk, The Journal of American History
"Avrich does away with the picture of innocent, hapless, working-class immigrants brutalized by the state. Sacco and Vanzetti were clearly victimized, but they were also militant anarchists, part of a small circle that preached and practiced revolutionary violence. Avrich relates

their story with intelligence, grace and drama."--Martin Blatt, The Nation"The Sacco and Vanzetti case may never be fully resolved; but we have Paul Avrich to thank for bringing us tantalizingly close to the conclusion of a fascinating story."--George Esenwein, San Francisco Review of Books

The Sacco-Vanzetti affair is the most famous and controversial case in American legal history. It divided the nation in the 1920's, and it has continued to arouse deep emotions, giving rise to an enormous literature. Rather than focusing on the robbery and murder at the shoe factory near Boston, the infamous trial, and the worldwide protests that it occasioned, this author tells the absorbing stories of the lives of Nicola Sacco, a shoe worker, and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, a fish peddler, both Italian immigrants and anarchists.

Item as described. Quick delivery.

Historian Paul Avrich is the indispensable source for the anarchist background to the internationally famous Sacco-Vanzetti case. This book treats a subject never taught in American schools: anarchism in America. Among the book's astonishing insights is that the FBI was created to deal with perceived threats by "radical" groups in the early 20th century, of which the "most dangerous," according to its founders, was the network of Italian anarchists that Sacco and Vanzetti were associated with. Long before nine-eleven, or Oklahoma City, Americans were whipped into a frenzy of fear and loathing for terrorist violence. That climate of fear explains, perhaps more than anything else, why two Italian immigrants were framed for a payroll robbery-murder most likely committed by a professional criminal gang. This book is a major source for my new novel "Suosso's Lane." For more information see <https://www.web-e-books.com/index.php#load?type=book&product=suosso>

Great am enjoying the book thanks

I read another book about Sacco and Vanzetti which is very good. This one, however, is great. It is well organized, and, while the other book spent a good portion of the book on the trial, in this one you got to understand better who these anarchists were. It is not biased either for or against their conviction. Extremely well written.

great information

Most people know nothing of why the United States has such prohibitive laws against the first amendment now. But long before 9/11, terrorism struck the USA. Another set of terrorist acts were passed at that time that led to many restrictions on speech and association. These laws were similar to, and in some cases more extreme than Bush's invasive and repressive laws in the first Patriot Act and the Democrat's invasive and repressive laws that followed in the second revision of the Patriot Act. You may even see parallels in how extreme shock led to extreme removal of constitutionally protected activities and led to absolute invasion of privacy, similar to how the modern 9/11 led to extreme laws such as the Talent-Feinstein inclusion in the Patriot Act that mandates warrantless law enforcement monitoring of those with rhinosinusitis. You will see many other parallels as you go through this book between how people in the United States responded to the shock of terrorism on American soil then, and how they respond now. Though the purpose of this book is merely to cover in detail what is known about the surroundings of the largest previous terrorist act in the United States, which also took place in NYC. It is a highly entertaining book from start to finish. You will get to know each of the terrorists, along with the controversial evidence for and against each of them. But the terrorism of that era wasn't the extreme Islamic terrorism of our era. The terrorists of this book were members of the extreme anarchist parties in Europe.

Paul Avrich has made a career out of anarchist history -- anarchistory, I suppose you'd call it. He's an excellent writer and this book is a welcome addition to his series. The title is a little misleading, as Sacco and Vanzetti, who were executed in the late 20's in one of the most controversial criminal cases of this century, aren't really dealt with too much. What is dealt with are the Galleanists, the followers of Italian anarchist Luigi Galleani, who really framed American anti-radical policy (unintentionally) by way of a series of bombings that occurred in 1919 and 1920. These bombings offered the government the pretext for the unlawful series of police actions called the "Red Scare". These events are important even today because they framed American policy toward domestic leftist radicalism, much of which remains in force today. The book follows the lives (and deaths) of many Italian anarchists, including Galleani himself, and is a fascinating exploration of their lives and their anarchist subculture at a time when anarchism was on the wane everywhere except Spain. To the modern anarchist, the book offers as much of a sense of what anarchism shouldn't be as what it used to be. The Galleanist use of bombs did anarchism a considerable disservice as it gave the press something sensational to latch onto -- even today, some 70 years later, people still link anarchism with bombs. This is a direct offshoot of the Galleanists' activities, as explored in this book. Avrich has a very readable writing style, and the book is jam-packed with historical references

and interesting stories. Like all of his anarchist books, this one is worth your time.

Avrich's book is extraordinary as an account of the varied principle protagonists in the Italian Anarchist circles of 80 years ago, though it provides only a historical account of the characters without a perspective of history's judgment. The only reason I give the book 4 stars instead of 5 is that Sacco and Vanzetti are almost minor characters, popping up now and then amongst Galleani, Malatesta, Buda, Salsedo, et al, though their story and their fate is symbolic of the entire movement: All were relatively ordinary people who despised governments, and in turn were wiped off the face of America by ours. Avrich gives rich detail into the lives of Sacco and Vanzetti as well as all of the other mad bombers running around New York and Boston. The story of "Ella", the dynamite courier, with a side dish of Emma Goldman sharing her prison cell for a while, is superb. If you're an Anarchist fan, or maybe even a real Anarchist, Avrich is your man for history of the movement. As a side note, read this book on an airplane some time and see how many people sitting next to you ask you what it's about. As significant as S&V were in American 20th Century history, their names are lost now to anyone but an Anarchist or the occasional college student doing required reading.

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