

of those worldwide political ideologies whose struggle is not yet done. The conservative oligarchy, he believes, turned to fascism, while many intellectuals and some workers sought in communism a solution to the nation's ills. A socialist himself, Romero detests both extremes.

Such an analysis, however, fails to account for the role of Juan D. Perón as a recent political phenomenon. No conservative, Perón has been tinged with fascism; no intellectual, he yet understands and uses Marxist terminology. For all the elements of foreign ideology, his role is essentially the one which Rosas played a century ago. He has built a popular dictatorship by exploiting the democratic aspirations of the great, inarticulate mass of Argentines.

Thus we return to the paradox that in Argentina democracy has meant dictatorship, and class rule, political liberalism. The conclusion is difficult to avoid that without political preparation, no people can be successful in the democratic experiment. In Argentina, education for self-government has been limited to the few, the privileged, and the educated.

Dr. Romero's history is very good indeed. It is unfortunate he did not see fit to bring it up to date; but ending where it does, it still illumines those dark corners which baffle any serious student of Argentine political history.

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El dictador del Paraguay: Dr. Francia. By GUILLERMO CABANELLAS. [Biblioteca de grandes biografías, Serie B, Vol. 12.] (Buenos Aires: Editorial Claridad, 1946. Pp. 397. Illustrations, facsimiles. Pastebord. \$5.00 m/arg.)

The aura of mystery which surrounds the life and career of José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia maintains its century-old appeal. Twentieth-century biographers, like nineteenth-century critics, have sought to probe the mysticism and legendry which have grown up around the first of Paraguay's authoritarian rulers. Best of recent attempts to plumb the secrets of Francia's power was Julio César Chaves' *El supremo dictador* (1942). Now Guillermo Cabanellas has produced an able volume which does not supersede but gratifyingly complements that of Chaves. Chaves' is the better narrative of a man in his epoch; Cabanellas' is the better analysis—or psychoanalysis—of the man.

Modest but frank in appraising his task, Cabanellas does not profess that he has solved all the unknowns which confront the student of Francia's career. Indeed, he appears to believe that historians may never explain the enigma of Francia, at least not until they are able to

diagnose his temperament, his frenzies, and his stubbornness. Yet, the author is unwilling to leave the assignment to historical alienists. Convincing factors seem to exempt the dictator from simple dismissal as a case for the mental clinic: the steadfastness with which he fixed the direction of his governing; the studied mysticism, conceived solely to assure enduring power; his premeditated spells of rage; his continuous concentration upon study, however sterile in social benefits; the discipline manifest in every act of his life. For all his actions, therefore, and still more for the authority he abused, Francia must be held accountable before History.

Seeking some figure with whom Francia might be compared, Cabanellas discards the usual parallels with Cromwell, Robespierre, Nero, Tiberius, and Caligula. He discusses isolated characteristics reminiscent of Iturbide, Rosas, Porfirio Díaz, Gómez of Venezuela, and Machado, then decides that these are mere resemblances. He flirts with a new analogy—Napoleon's minister of police, Joseph Fouché, Duke of Otranto. But, however intriguing the similarities in these cases, Cabanellas finds the differences too great for effective comparison and concludes that Francia is unique in America, unique even in all history. Hence, he moves beyond the confines of Paraguay and becomes worthy of study.

The contrasts within Francia's personality were as vivid as those with other men. Though frugal in matters of household economy, he delighted occasionally to appear publicly in elegant attire. Professing to be inspired by the writings of Rousseau, Voltaire, and Volney, he refused to admit any opinion contrary to his own. He milked ideas from carefully selected foreign visitors, but these ideas brought no well-being to the Paraguayan people. A lifelong ascetic and mystic, his sense of authority exceeded every other concept. His will was imposed even upon the sanctity of the home, but he made no salutary use of the opportunities which that power gave him. Such incongruities Cabanellas effectively underscores as he portrays the dictator's tastes, his daily routine, his appearance, and the mystery with which he surrounded himself.

One significant theme recurs throughout the volume—the Paraguayan people constituted a nationality which Francia might degrade and edge toward decadence but which he could never destroy. An indomitable nationality was forged before Francia appeared and by independence had attained the strength to survive the total plan to sap its intrinsic institutions. The mentality of a man who could thwart or eliminate his own relatives, all local opposition, and citizens of foreign nations could not devise means to destroy the homogeneity of the Paraguayan people. The methods by which Francia changed Para-

guay from a place of refuge to a place of captivity are familiar but here take on new meaning under the psychoanalytic approach. That a virile people did not rebel against this authoritarian rule is attributed chiefly to the childish imagination of the Guaraní, augmented by legends transplanted by the Spanish and carefully nurtured by Francia, to the beliefs of these simple people in his supernatural powers, and to the exact knowledge of every event which his consummate espionage afforded him.

Cabanelas appears to have made his investigations with care and patience. He seasoned himself by six years' residence in Paraguay, visiting the scenes of Francia's activities. His bibliography lists all sources used, confused and contradictory as he confesses he often found them. Wherever possible, he sought to confirm his data by original documents in the Archivo Nacional, but these, of course, have been severely wounded by fire, revolution, war, time, and indolence. He used foreign archives much less than did Chaves, but, considering the approach of this work, that was perhaps logical. The volume contains sixteen photographs and facsimiles, but lacks an index.

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Güemes el señor gaucho: Historia—leyenda—novela. By MANUEL M. ALBA. [Biblioteca de grandes biografías, Serie A, Vol. 11.] (Buenos Aires: Editorial Claridad, 1946. Pp. 297. Illustrations. Pasted-board.)

Admitting that this book is a fictionalized biography, written by a journalist rather than by an historian, its author disclaims any intent to write with serenity. Yet, with blithe disregard of an objective consideration or evaluation of his materials, he claims that history is only a journalist's note written by a man who has been a bit late in reaching the scene of the action. In the sense of this definition, he seems to imply that perhaps he intends that his book be regarded as history after all.

It is unfortunate that an interesting biography of one of Argentina's most fascinating historical characters should have been based upon such non-scholarly premises. This is especially true in this case, since Manuel M. Alba has performed a long-needed and highly useful task in his unusual approach to Argentine history as he turns from the point of view of the revolutionary governments of Buenos Aires to that of the northern provinces which bore the weight of all the Spanish invasions.

In this book Güemes stands sentinel, guarding the fatherland as he