

impressions of what Maya buildings were before the Spaniards came. The Proskouriakoff drawings are unexpectedly impressive. Though imaginary in some details, they are founded on an acute perception of the relations between construction and deterioration. The need met by this book is the need of the tourist or museum goer who cannot from his own knowledge bridge the gap between the fragment and the whole, or between the remnant and the original. This is an important need and it is here admirably served.

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The New World Looks at its History. Edited by ARCHIBALD R. LEWIS and THOMAS F. MCGANN. Austin, 1963. University of Texas Press. Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Historians of the United States and Mexico. Maps. Notes. Index. Pp. 220. \$4.00.

This book contains a collection of papers delivered by distinguished scholars at the Second International Congress of Historians at the University of Texas on November 3-6, 1958. Most of the participants were from Mexico and the United States; others came from Argentina, Brazil, and Canada; and others were from Australia, England, France, and Spain. Scholars from Mexico and the United States planned the program with a view to an examination of the special nature of the history of the Western Hemisphere. After each paper was read, a brief period was given to commentaries upon it.

The papers were grouped into five parts. The first papers, presented by archeologists, dealt with the pre-Columbian culture in the United States Southwest. The planners of the program believed that historians frequently do not fully understand the language of archeologists and anthropologists. In the hope of bridging this gap, these papers, covering the very foundations of American culture, were presented at the outset of the programs.

Following in logical order were papers by historians interested in Iberian culture. Here the stress was Spain as a melting pot of peoples with varied backgrounds—Cantabrians, Basques, Goths, Celtiberians, Moors, and others. Emphasis also was on the Castilian as a plainsman. Brief allusions were made to the *Mesta*, the stockmen's guild in Old Spain which played such an important role in controlling the migrant pastoral industry.

Attention next was given to the Anglo-American frontier. Here Professor Billington explained most lucidly how that frontier differed from any such experience anywhere in the world. A combination of

favorable factors such as easy terrain, continuous discovery of riches, adequate rainfall, together with the political and economic backgrounds of the settlers themselves, caused the American frontier to be especially blessed. Billington stressed the fact that American frontiersmen kept on the move. Here the story dovetailed with that of Chevalier who described the northward advance of the *hacienda* system in North Mexico. The main problem facing the *hacendados* was the Apache tribe. As the Anglo-American frontier pushed westward, the Apaches pushed southward and bore down upon the haciendas. The open range of old days in Texas and the present-day Texas ranch, so well described by Dykes, may be considered as by-products of the clash of the Anglo-American and Mexican ranching frontiers.

The next part of the book dealt with the Turner thesis and also with Webb's *The Great Frontier*. Professor Lower, a Canadian scholar, leveled criticism at Webb with a bitterness rarely found in scholarly circles. This apparently stemmed largely from the fact that Webb did not dwell in detail on the Canadian frontier. Other uncomplimentary remarks about Webb's work were: "I detect in the book the same ground swell of nostalgic romanticism which seems to be present in Turner" (p. 144); and "Is it not one prolonged labouring of the obvious?" (p. 147). Professor Rodrigues, a Brazilian scholar, adversely criticized Webb for not dealing with the Brazilian frontier. Lower and Rodrigues concurred in condemning Webb in the following view: "Whatever may be the point of departure for his study, it ends up in western Texas." Both said Webb was too insistent "on universalizing facts that are peculiar to or characteristic of the North American frontier" (p. 158).

In the last part of the book, Professors Villoro and O'Gorman gave the Mexican perspective of the historian's tasks: Both held that the historian must find intelligibility in human happenings and use "the raw material of facts as a point of departure"; it is "a task in which man gives existence to the past and converts it into his own past" (p. 179). O'Gorman has dedicated much of his time to anthological history "which examines the past in order to recreate the very structure of historical change. . . ." (p. 203). Professor Whitaker called attention to the many obligations laid upon the historian. Some date from antiquity, while others are being added almost constantly. Whitaker alluded to the views of such American historians as Morison, Gottschalk, Curti, and Langer—all of whom give constructive suggestions concerning the historian's tasks.

In the final commentary Professor Céspedes of the University of Seville agreed with Whitaker that the historian's tasks are many and

varied. Céspedes also begged “that we all abstain from polemics on the virtues of one or another methodological orientation.” He held that we should not try “to prove the superiority of a certain school while despising others” (p. 207). Such a plea seemed to be in order, especially in view of the acrid attacks on Professor Webb. The book herein reviewed is well balanced and the papers are well written. The editors have compiled a useful index. A book of this sort is always worthwhile. It will long be valuable to students interested in historiography.

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Archivo General de Simancas guía del investigador. Edited by ÁNGEL DE LA PLAZA. Valladolid, 1962. Gráficas Andrés Martín, S. A. Dirección General de Archivos y Bibliotecas. Patronato Nacional de Archivos Históricos. Notes. Charts. Tables. Indices. Illustrations. Pp. CVIII, 288. Paper.

Although the Archivo General de Simancas is considered one of the “Big Three” in Spain, along with the Archivo General de Indias at Seville and the Archivo Histórico Nacional of Madrid, its complex holdings have defied those archivists who sought to write guides in the past. In 1921 Mariano Alcocer published one, and in 1958 Ricardo Magdalena did a thumb-nail sketch of the AGS. Former director, Ángel de la Plaza, has written one of the most valuable studies of the archives and its vast collections.

With an abiding affection for the “very loyal town of Simancas,” as well as for its document-filled fortress, Señor Plaza traces the panorama of the charming rural town from the fourth century to the present day. The scene of much fighting during the Reconquest, Simancas was chosen by the admirals Fadrique and Alonso Enríquez as the site for the construction of a fortress between 1467 and 1480. Although it served the Catholic Monarchs after 1490, and during the sixteenth century witnessed the torture and secret murders of a host of state prisoners, the Simancas fortress was destined to become the repository of the royal archival collections of Castile. Between 1540 and 1545 documents poured into the musty chambers under the care of Antonio Catalán, first “keeper” of the archives.

Winters are often brutal at Simancas as Spanish chronicler Juan Bautista Muñoz discovered in 1784 when he almost froze while doing research for his *Historia del Nuevo Mundo*. Because of this experience, he suggested organizing a new archives with all documents dealing with the Americas in a warmer clime, say Seville. Some 3,000 legajos