

biography by the deposed president, General Isaias Medina Angarita. The volume is brief and rather sketchy. It encompasses Medina's entry into politics after a military career, outlines the major policies of his administration, and concludes with a description of his ultimate removal from office.

Writing in measured tones of his executive responsibility, the author declares that "in order to avoid for my country the ills of prolonged turbulence, of insecurity, of civil war and of loss of international prestige, I hesitated not a moment in sacrificing . . . the Government over which I presided." Yet this does not square with the fact that sometimes heated fighting continued some two days after his departure from Venezuela. Furthermore, it is questionable whether the bulk of the military remained loyal to Medina, as he believes.

There is little question that the *medinista* period marked a substantial stride forward in the evolution of Venezuelan public affairs. Yet Medina's intellectual ties with the traditions of the past are apparent in his almost naive discussion of political problems and his unguarded optimism in the armed forces. A certain primitiveness shines forth in broad criticisms of the value of political parties in a constitutional democracy.

In sum, this book gives Medina's views on certain important matters but is far too brief to provide the kind of detailed analysis that might strengthen the position of his administration in the eyes of history.

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Los días y la política. By GONZALO BARRIOS. Caracas, 1963. Editorial Arte, C. A. Pp. 463. Paper.

With the passing of years Gonzalo Barrios has assumed an increasingly unique position in Venezuelan public affairs. One of the original founders of the movement that became today's *Acción Democrática*, he has been in the forefront of the struggle for political democracy and human freedom for over

three decades. Now his views of recent and contemporary developments, as expressed through a series of newspaper commentaries, have been reproduced under one cover.

More than 125 columns from *El Nacional* and *La República* of Caracas have been included, covering the period from May, 1958, to October, 1963. The diversity of subjects makes elaboration impractical. Among the subjects under discussion are, to mention but a few, the problem of leftist terrorism, government security measures, revision of the electoral code, operation of a bi-party coalition, policy toward recognition of non-constitutional regimes, the implementation of agrarian reform, and the role of a partisan democratic opposition.

In each of these areas, and in many others, Barrios is—as he concedes in the introduction—a partisan. Leader of his party's congressional organization until the recent elections, he has now succeeded to the presidency of *Acción Democrática*. Yet his position within the national polity is in large degree a function of character and temperament. A man with long experience in international circles, Barrios combines inward serenity with a subtle and discriminating mind. His spirit of compromise and toleration of hostile views are uncommon among Venezuelan figures, accounting in part for the esteem in which he is held by political antagonists. Thus his comments, while representing an important partisan view, at the same time provide enlightenment on major contemporary political issues in Venezuela.

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Derecho territorial ecuatoriano. By RAFAEL EUCLIDES SILVA. Guayaquil, 1962. Universidad de Guayaquil. Maps. Bibliography. Pp. xvi, 526. Suces 120.00.

This new publication on Ecuador's border problem was originally presented as a doctoral dissertation in law at the University of Guayaquil by one of its well known history professors. Never-

theless, the book does not contain any new addition to our knowledge of the subject. It is largely a heaping together of a great amount of loose historical data, some of it quite erroneous, and none of it based on archival research. For example's sake, it is surprising to see Humboldt invoked as "autoridad indiscutible" on Ecuadorian prehistory (p. 48). Of bad taste are the author's repeated manifestations of political opportunism. However, the book can prove itself useful concerning the colonial antecedents of the border dispute, since most authors dedicated but little space to these. It also contains an excellent bibliography, though Dr. Silva feels compelled to give excuses (p. XVI): "no ha sido vanidoso prurito del autor el trazar una bibliografía extensa. . . ."

ADAM SZÁSZDI

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Once ensayos. By ALFREDO PONCE RIBADENEIRA. Quito, 1963. Editorial "Fray Jodoco Rieke." Pp. 222. Paper. Sucre 18.00.

This new book by Father Ponce is, as the title indicates, a collection of essays, most of which reflect the author's reminiscences of a long visit to Spain. However, one of the essays, on the August 10, 1809, movement in Quito, is of some interest; and almost a third of the volume is dedicated to a biographical sketch of General Francisco Javier Salazar, one of the outstanding figures in Ecuador in the period 1864-1891. Father Ponce could make a real contribution by developing this essay into a full-scale biography of Salazar.

ADAM SZÁSZDI

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Páginas de sangre, episodios trágicos de la historia de Bolivia. By MOISÉS ALCÁZAR. La Paz, 1962. Bibliography. Pp. 294. Paper.

This is really a corrected and enlarged version of the author's 1956 book entitled *Sangre en la historia*. It referred to Bolivian history and this new book also means bloody pages in

the history of Bolivia. It applies to such cases as the various assassinations or lynchings of Bolivian presidents (Belzú, Córdova, Blanco, Melgarejo, Morales, Pando, Busch, and Villarroel). Córdova, Melgarejo, and Pando were assassinated or lynched when enjoying the peaceful status of ex-president. The violent deaths of these eight presidents make eight out of fifteen chapters of this book. The others describe other episodes of violence—some of them of recent decades.

The author is modest; in his introduction he does not claim to be a historian, just someone who has gathered a little data and developed and summarized it. It is a useful book, readable, and written with a restrained dignity and a welcome impartiality.

CHARLES W. ARNADE

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Melgarejo y su tiempo. By M. RIGOBERTO PAREDES. La Paz, 1962. Ediciones "Isla." Notes. Pp. 163. Paper.

Few good Bolivian historians have received proper attention in Bolivia, and there have been only a few of them. Bolivia has had plenty of mediocre historians. Among these was Manuel Rigoberto Paredes (1870-1951)—maybe he was a shade better than mediocre. In 1955 Paredes received a biobibliographic study by a foremost Bolivian scholar, the late José Antonio Arze (see my review, *HAHR*, Vol. 37). Now another study in honor of Paredes is published. Why the attraction for Paredes?—his pseudo-scholarship, his folklore bent, his love for the Indian, his localism, his biographical studies of the most colorful personalities loved by the mob, indeed, make his productions most appealing.

This book collects six essays of the late Paredes, of which the incomplete study of Melgarejo is the longest and has about seventy pages. The others deal with Ballivián, Belzú, and René-Moreno. There is also a short essay entitled "Los estudios históricos en Bolivia." Another essay deals with the Mojos and Chiquitos missions. Space