

The Last Years of Spanish Texas, 1778-1821. By ODIE B. FAULK. The Hague, 1964. Mouton & Company. Pp. 156. 20 guilders.

In Texas, as elsewhere in the Spanish borderlands, the closing decades of the Spanish period are the Dark Ages. Faulk's *Last Years of Spanish Texas*, written from the sources, is a succinct summary of happenings, 1778-1821. It looks first at the governor, presidios, and missions and finds the Spanish Texans engaged in a holding operation rather than a program of expansion.

One reason for Spanish neglect, though not stressed in this account, was that the international frontier had advanced in 1763 to the Mississippi. Spanish policy, therefore, was more intent on strengthening Louisiana than Texas. In 1803, with Louisiana lost, Texas once more was the far frontier. Its defense was reinforced, but soon the War of Independence interfered with support of the province. American penetration, which had begun earlier, now increased and considerably exceeded the contact with California. Besides settlers and traders, there soon were the Gutiérrez-Magee filibusters, sympathetic to the War of Independence, and pirates at Galveston Island. Spanish control was not moribund—Arredondo wiped out the Gutiérrez-Magee band. Yet these were years of decline, after which Spanish capitulation to Iturbide carried Texas and the other borderlands to independence.

The interpretations offered are not all of equal value, but the details are reliably assembled. Through no fault of the author, they are miscellaneous and do not build to a dramatic climax. Little is said about relations with the incoming Americans, who in other such provinces sometimes were an important supplement to the earlier population. Here the stress is far heavier on the closing phases of the Spanish regime.

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NATIONAL PERIOD

A Century of Disagreement: The Chemical Conflict, 1864-1964. By SHELDON B. LISS. Washington, D. C., 1965. The University Press of Washington, D. C. Notes. Bibliography. Charts. Maps. Pp. 167.

In this volume Sheldon B. Liss of the Department of History at the University of Notre Dame gives a good review of the Chamizal