

National Period, the Reform, the Díaz Era, and the Revolution. Clearly the number of individuals covered in the more recent eras is inadequate as compared to the earlier. It is easy and therefore unnecessary to point out individuals who were or who might have been omitted. No choice of 150 individuals could be completely acceptable to everyone.

Since these sketches are only one or two pages long, they will add little, if anything, to the knowledge of specialists. This book is helpful to have in any library much as any collection of important individuals might be. It is not, however, worth stretching a budget.

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The Modern Mexican Essay. Edited by JOSÉ LUIS MARTÍNEZ. Translated by H. W. HILBORN. Toronto, 1965. University of Toronto Press. Pp. 524. \$8.50.

This dense and scholarly selection, first published in Mexico in 1958 (*El ensayo mexicano moderno*), is expertly translated by Harry W. Hilborn of Queen's University. As José Luis Martínez states in his lucid introduction, there are many kinds of essays—he manages to distinguish ten—and the works which the translator excluded fall into those categories not directly pertinent to the objective of this anthology. Several common traits tie these essays together. Martínez believes that “they distinguish the Mexican character: sobriety, delicacy, a profound nationalistic instinct, measured gravity, a longing for universal understanding.” The book is a harvest of the Mexican “literature of ideas” that goes back to Justo Sierra, undisputed father of the modern essay in Mexico.

The Modern Mexican Essay has fulfilled the objectives of the translator, i.e., to present a Mexican outlook and to impress the English-speaking reader with the high quality of the essays chosen. On the other hand, even if the *leitmotif* may sound a bit repetitive,

the reader will find a great variety of ideas and points of view that will appeal not only to those who are interested in Mexican culture, but also to people who are interested in good non-fictional literature.

A Successful Failure. The Saga of Texas, 1519-1810. By ODIE B. FAULK. Austin, 1965. Steck-Vaughan Company. Illustrations. Index. Pp. 218. \$2.95.

The Revolutionary Decades. The Saga of Texas, 1810-1836. By DAVID M. VIGNESS. Austin, 1965. Steck-Vaughan Company. Illustrations. Index. Pp. 214. \$2.95.

The Saga of Texas, a six-volume series of which these two volumes are the first and second, is planned to appeal to the general public by providing, in everyday language and inexpensive but attractive format, the main facts of the history of this state, largely available earlier only in widely scattered articles, school texts, or scholarly tomes.

A Successful Failure covers the period in which Spanish explorers discovered and mapped the territory and Spain struggled to guard it against foreign aggression by establishing Spanish settlers. Although unsuccessful in colonization, Spain left her impress on both land and people through her language, architecture, and colorful customs. In spite of the tragedies and hardships recounted, daring adventure and romance lend interest to the tale.

The second volume is more factual, as much had to be compressed. The settlement of colonists from the United States; their increasing dissatisfaction with the Mexican government; the underlying fear, on its part, of encroachment by the United States; and the grim determination of the Anglo-Americans to resist force—all were factors which led to the independence of Texas. The story is skillfully and largely impartially told.

The writers are to be commended for their judicious selection of material,

and with their publisher for both sensing and satisfying a long-standing need.

LOTA M. SPELL

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Memoirs of Pancho Villa. By MARTÍN LUIS GUZMÁN. Translated by VIRGINIA H. TAYLOR. Austin, 1965. University of Texas Press. Illustrations. Index. Pp. 512. \$8.50.

Pancho Villa's *Memoirs*, previously published in 1951, are now available in an exciting translation prepared by Virginia H. Taylor, translator in the Spanish Archives of the State of Texas Land Office. General Francisco Villa's military service record, a pencil-written autobiography, and Manuel Bauche Alcalde's contemporary account of the Villa papers are the actual sources for the Guzmán study, although the author's intimate knowledge of the life and age of Doroteo Arango is evident in the essential organization and editing of material that made this biographical history possible.

In this autobiographical account Pancho Villa evolves from bandit origins to revolutionary generalship in the civil wars of 1914-1915. The Villista view of the Madero Revolution of 1910-1911, the revolutionary wars against Victoriano Huerta, the Aguascalientes Convention of 1914, and the 1915 conflicts of the triumvirate of Venustiano Carranza, Álvaro Obregón, and Pancho Villa, therefore, becomes strikingly obvious in these memoirs. Military action and war emerge as significant elements in Villa's story of the Mexican Revolution. The triumvirate and all the famous revolutionary figures such as Emiliano Zapata, Rodolfo Fierro, and Plutarco Elías Calles appear—characterized and criticized—in military and political scenes or on such battlegrounds as Ciudad Juárez, Tierra Blanca, Torreón, Zacatecas, and Celaya. United States involvement in the Mexican Revolution is also clearly manifested in the documents and descriptions of the *Memoirs of Pancho Villa*. Essentially this biographical history

presents as revealing a historical portrait of the Revolution as the author's earlier historical novel, *The Eagle and the Serpent*. Both books vividly expose the men and events of the Mexican Revolution from 1911 to 1915.

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Fidel Castro's Political Programs from Reformism to "Marxism-Leninism." By LOREE WILKERSON. Gainesville, 1965. University of Florida Press. Latin American Monographs, Second Series. Bibliography. Pp. 100. Paper. \$2.00.

As Lyle N. McAlister points out in his brief introduction to this monograph there are relatively few scholarly studies of the ideology of the Cuban Revolution. Miss Wilkerson has presented such a study in concise form. Her purpose, as she herself states, "... is to seek, through a chronological approach, the reasons behind Castro's [*sic*] divergence from his earlier program; first, by considering those factors—his personal experiences and the influences of the society in which he was reared—which shaped his maturing years; second, by examining his speeches and writings from the time he became politically active until he came to power in Cuba; and third, by tracing the development of his program through the first three years of his regime" (p. 8). The first part is the weakest part of the study since the author offers us little more than a synthesis of Fidel's early years as presented by journalists such as Nathaniel Weyl, Daniel James, Irving P. Pflaum, etc. The remaining two sections are more substantial and reliable, although her conclusions differ very little from those of Theodore Draper, who plowed the ground first. Miss Wilkerson concludes: "... behind the seeming inconsistency of his political actions lies a highly consistent will to exercise virtually unchecked power" (p. 93).

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