

handy guide to almost all of the rebellions, even in the borderland provinces of Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas.

While it is encouraging to find Mexican historians turning to a serious study of this subject, it is disheartening to discover that the bibliography excludes almost all of the many excellent works published in English. On this score the book leaves much to be desired. Its major flaw, however, is to be found in the first thirty pages, where the author discusses the causes of the rebellions. The causes which she lists are social-economic-political privileges, the distribution of wealth and political position, and the "indolence" of the viceregal regime. There is no study of the clash of cultures or of the differing attitudes about the value of life and property that so often led to bloodshed. The author instead subscribes to the devil-saint theory of history, the Spaniards falling into the former category and the Indians into the latter. For example, she states that the Indians "preferred death to slavery," although she admits that they were "barbarous and irreducible" (p. 10). In this intractability, however, she finds merit, for "the rebellions of the Indians of the North during the viceregal epoch contributed, in part, to the creation of a vigorous revolutionary spirit in large masses of the population conquered by the Spaniards" (p. 10). In other words, Spanish cruelty was good in that it produced recruits for the Mexican revolution. Such a simplistic approach makes history easier to write—and perhaps to research—but it leaves wide gaps in our understanding of the real causes of Indian rebellions.

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*San Juan Bautista. Gateway to Spanish Texas.* By ROBERT S. WEDDLE. Austin, 1968. University of Texas Press. Illustrations. Maps. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiv, 469. \$8.50.

A glance at the drowsy village of Guerrero, Coahuila, suggests meager prospects for research in local history. True, on December 30, 1917, Texas rangers, soldiers, and civilians crossed the Rio Grande on the trail of goat rustlers and killed six or twelve or seventeen. But highway builders—and before them railroaders and stage operators—preferred the crossings at Paso de Águila, thirty-five miles upstream, or downstream at Laredo.

Robert Weddle demonstrates that from the time the Spanish frontier reached this place until mid-nineteenth century, the site of

Guerrero with its fords, Paso de Francia and Paso Pacuache, was the gateway to Texas. Here passed the soldiers and missionaries sent to counter La Salle's intrusion. Here in 1700 Spain established Mission San Juan Bautista and then several others. Presidio del Río Grande soon was added. Here came the debonair Frenchman Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, who won the hand of Manuela, granddaughter of the Spanish commandant. From this site issued the several entradas for the reoccupation of Texas under such leaders as the Ramóns and Martín de Alarcón and Fathers Hidalgo and Espinosa. Fray Antonio Olivares transferred one of the gateway missions to the bank of the San Antonio. In 1731 the Canary Island pobladores for the Villa de San Antonio passed through.

Later the presidio served as base for numerous Indian campaigns. It was also on the itineraries of the Marqués de Rubí, Nicolás de Lafora, Juan Morfi, Hugo O'Conor, Teodoro de Croix, and Zebulon Montgomery Pike. In the War for Independence the people of the presidio supported both sides, first by intercepting the fleeing royal treasurer of Coahuila and the treasury of some 300,000 pesos, then by taking counterrevolutionary action against Hidalgo and Allende and against the Magee-Gutiérrez forces in Texas.

After independence the missions were secularized. The presidio was renamed "puesto de Río Grande" and shifted to Villa de Guerrero. Visitors now included a Texas empresario with a party of settlers on their way from San Antonio to present Kinney County; Ben Milam, hero in an early action of the Texas Revolution; the army of Antonio López de Santa Anna en route to attack the Texans at the Alamo; skirmishers in the contest between Centralists and Federalists; Adrian Woll and almost a thousand men en route to capture San Antonio; and the San Antonio prisoners on their way to the dungeons of Perote.

In 1846 Harney's raiders occupied Guerrero temporarily. Monterrey having fallen, Guerrero admitted General John Wool's Army of Chihuahua without resistance. Meanwhile a small American detachment tested the navigability of the river. Their little steamer reached Laredo, but in a descent by dugout from Guerrero they found many and serious obstacles. Guerrero might remain "the most historic place on the lower Rio Grande," but it was not destined to flourish any longer.

Parts of the history of San Juan-Guerrero have been covered by chroniclers such as Espinosa, Rubí, Lafora, Morfi, Pike, and Gregg and by historians such as Bolton, Castañeda, Alessio Robles,

Hoffman, Kinnaird, Vigness, Brinkerhoff, Faulk, Avera Sánchez, Nance, and Horgan. Weddle draws on their findings, but also on manuscript materials in the archives of Spain, Mexico, Saltillo, and Béxar and in the University of Texas collections. On a number of points he offers corrections, and on the total history of this important way-point he provides excellent coverage. His book is a most useful addition to the literature on the Spanish borderlands.

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*Spanish Government in New Mexico.* By MARC SIMMONS. Albuquerque, 1968. University of New Mexico Press. Illustrations. Maps. Figures. Notes. Appendix. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xv, 238. \$6.95.

Marc Simmons has opened a door for graduate students who might have a yen to probe Spanish colonial activities north of the Rio Grande. He spotlights the half-century between 1772, when the *Reglamento e instrucción para los presidios que se han de formar en la línea de frontera de la Nueva España* was proclaimed in a royal cédula, and 1821, when Mexican independence was consummated. Simmons' study details the organization of New Mexican government under the commandancy general down through the governor to the *alcaldes mayores* and *tenientes alcaldes*, the lowest levels of local officialdom. Present-day political activities in the United States sound like a 200-year-old echo from this far-off frontier. There was legal assistance for those unable to pay: "The protector *partidarios* were obligated to defend the rights of the Indians, in court if necessary; to free them from all oppressors; and to make certain the natives were receiving proper religious instruction. The Indians were not to be charged any fees for these services, but they should each contribute one-half a real yearly to defray legal expenses incurred in their behalf" (p. 190). And the rights of the underprivileged were insured by governmental decree: "These men (*alcaldes mayores*), while they served, were enjoined by their superiors to exercise absolute impartiality and to maintain the rights of the Indians in the manner prescribed in the *Recopilación* [1756] and in royal cédulas of September 30, 1779, and of March 11, 1781. All *alcaldes* were forbidden to interfere with such activities and were required to assist in seeking justice for the Indians. The clergy in particular were delegated to report to the protector any infringement upon native rights" (p. 191).