

Chapter VIII. But these mistakes detract little from the overall quality of the study. This is an excellent addition to the literature on the field.

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Emilio Kosterlitzky: Eagle of Sonora and the Southwest Border. By CORNELIUS C. SMITH, JR. Glendale, California, 1970. Arthur H. Clark Company. Pen and ink sketches by the author. Illustrations. Map. Notes. Appendices. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 344. \$12.50.

The beguiling name, Emilio Kosterlitzky, dashing romantically but ever so fleetingly across the literature of Mexico's Sonora and the U.S. Southwest at the turn of this century, has long intrigued viewers of that epoch. These brief written glimpses have molded the man into a despotic "fighting Tartar," who exercised the "mailed fist" of Díaz along the border. Now the evasive Kosterlitzky has been caught in a full-length biography by Cornelius C. Smith, who dispels some of the myth surrounding the individual, but at the same time creates new (or reinforces old) illusions about Díaz and his quest for domestic peace.

Kosterlitzky (sometimes spelled Kosterlitsky), a nineteen-year-old Russian naval cadet, jumped ship in Venezuela and reached northwestern Mexico in time to join the rebellion that in 1876 brought Díaz the presidency. As a soldier in Sonora's national guard, the immigrant, who became a Mexican citizen, somehow (it would be interesting to know precisely how) caught Díaz's eye, and in 1885 won the president's appointment as the commander of a mounted rural constabulary called a *gendarmería fiscal*, which functioned in northeastern Sonora. Residents of the district, and subsequent historians, loosely referred to the corpsmen as *Rurales*, confusing Kosterlitzky's local troop with the famous federal force that proved so instrumental in cementing the Díaz regime throughout much of Mexico. Kosterlitzky's unit was also referred to as an *Acordada* (Smith uses the colloquialism *Cordada*), but the relationship, if any, between the nineteenth-century Sonoran outfit and the *Acordada* of Mexico's colonial past is not explored. The *gendarmería*, says Smith, was a dependency of the federal treasury department, while the Ministry of Domestic Affairs directed the genuine *Rurales*. Local governments and even private individuals financed *acordadas*. Kosterlitzky's service record at the National Defense Archives in Mexico City (apparently not consulted by Smith) has Kosterlitzky assigned to the Military Colony of Sonora. In short, myriad security units, from the federal army to privately sponsored patrols, operated during the *Porfiriato*. The precise nature of and the interplay

between these armed forces remains unstudied. One suspects, but it has yet to be proved, that Díaz deliberately encouraged such diversity; it permitted him to enforce domestic order while balancing potentially dangerous political threats against one another.

Smith's Kosterlitzky is all soldier, ". . . including courage, daring, obedience, and loyalty. He was not a sophist or a politician, rather a straight-forward individual, honest, dedicated, and industrious." The author finds nothing in Kosterlitzky's background that points to "graft, looting, pilfering, [or] 'protection money'." His men, according to Smith, were frequently "ruffians and villains of the lowest order. . . . President Díaz himself gave the orders to recruit in jails and labor camps for this hardnosed force." Yet Smith repeatedly refers to the troop as "an elite force."

In preparing his biography Smith used Kosterlitzky's personal papers, which had been preserved by the commander's descendants. These materials, which include several hundred letters, telegrams, military citations, reports and photographs, are now owned by the University of Arizona, but are not yet open to researchers. Because of a paucity of footnotes, it is not clear how Smith applied the documents to his text. Many important statements are not substantiated at all. There is, for instance, no citation for the contention that, "In so many words, [Francisco] Madero asked Kosterlitzky to go to Morelos, gain the confidence of Emiliano Zapata, and kill him." Kosterlitzky, says Smith, declined the mission not because Zapata should live, but because he decried murdering the man through subterfuge.

What is apparent, however, is that Kosterlitzky enjoyed direct personal communication with the President (a typical Porfirian procedure), and that Díaz treated seriously even the smallest concerns of his military commanders. Documents also show that Madero, as president, leaned on former Porfirian military chiefs, such as Kosterlitzky, for support sorely needed to contain disorderly forces unleashed by the revolt. For other sources the author depends upon the limited use of U.S. and Mexican newspapers, a few interviews, plus a random selection of secondary works, ninety per cent of them in English. One chapter is devoted to the important strike at Cananea, but in his research Smith apparently did not consult the fundamental *Fuentes para la historia de la revolución mexicana, III: La Huelga de Cananea* by Manuel González Ramírez. Had he done so, he might have reconstructed his concept of the roles played at Cananea by Kosterlitzky and the Arizona Ranger Thomas Rynning.

The book, therefore, has limited scholarly value. It is, however,

thoroughly enjoyable reading, well written in a somewhat folksy style, and still contains sufficient historical presence to engage a large spectrum of readers. When Kosterlitzky, fighting for Victoriano Huerta, was defeated in 1913 by Alvaro Obregón's numerically superior forces at Nogales, he retreated into exile within the United States, and specifically into the custody of U.S. Army Captain Cornelius C. Smith—the author's father. The elder Smith's reminiscences about Kosterlitzky enrich the book, as do the recollections of other Californians who knew Kosterlitzky in later years when he was employed as an undercover agent by the U.S. Justice Department to work in Los Angeles and along the Mexican border.

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They Sought a Country: Mennonite Colonization in Mexico. By HARRY LEONARD SAWATZKY. Foreword by CARL SAUER. Berkeley, California, 1971. University of California Press. Map. Tables. Illustrations. Appendix. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xi, 387. Cloth. \$11.50.

This book sets forth in a clear and always interesting way the intricate details of the search by a religious group for a place where harmonious and lasting adjustment of its members to each other and to the earth's physical landscape can be made. Beginning in the sixteenth century, persecution drove the Mennonites from western to eastern Europe and from there in the eighteenth century to Russia. In Russia they remained under the official guardianship of Germany until this protection ceased in 1870. A few years later, owing to interference with their way of life by Russian authorities, some 7,000 Mennonites fled to the New World and settled eight townships set aside for them near Winnipeg, Canada. By the 1890s, Mennonites began expanding westward along crown and railroad tracts. However, the flourishing Canadian experiment ran aground about the time of World War I because of the Mennonites' insistence on non-participation in public schooling, their pacifism, and their German cultural orientation. During the 1920s mass migration once again took place to Mexico and Paraguay.

The Mexican settlements, which this book investigates, were mostly located on the high western flanks of the Sierra Madre Occidental in basin and range country, and have grown to a population of some 30,000. Here they have flourished, thanks to the governmental *Privilegium* granting religious, educational, and economic freedom, and exemption from military service. Nevertheless problems have developed