

## BOOK REVIEWS

### GENERAL

*The Public Man: An Interpretation of Latin American and Other Catholic Countries.* By GLEN CAUDILL DEALY. Preface by RICHARD M. MORSE. Amherst, 1977. University of Massachusetts Press. Notes. Index. Pp. xv, 133. Cloth. \$10.00.

Glen Dealy has written a provocative and thoroughly enjoyable book which comes as a welcome relief to those tired of quantification, dependency, and reworked dissertations. Although brief, the book consists of only three chapters or essays, *The Public Man* is packed with ideas, interpretations, anecdotes, and thoughtful observations. Readers will likely ponder Dealy's thesis long after they have finished the book. Many will not agree, but they will have been made to think deeply about the essence of Latin America and about the Latin Americans' state of mind.

In a frontispiece Dealy quotes from *The Waning of the Middle Ages* wherein Johan Huizinga states that "The specific forms of the thought of an epoch should not only be studied as they reveal themselves in theological and philosophic speculations, or in the conceptions of creeds, but also as they appear in *practical wisdom and everyday life*" (italics mine). This is precisely what Dealy does throughout much of the book, thus the anecdotes and observations. Dealy attempts to set down in a more scholarly way (his footnotes and bibliographic citations are exciting and drawn from a wide range of disciplines) what many of us have observed while casually sitting in plazas, having coffee in a sidewalk cafe, or while trying to figure out what appears to us as illogical behavior on the part of our Latin American hosts. Not to worry. Dealy explains, and rather convincingly, that the behavior is logical given the Latins' propensity to the spirit of caudillaje, the Catholic ethos, and the religious foundations—all of which are the subjects of his three chapters.

In attempting "to record the internal functioning of a culture" (pp. xvii–xviii), Dealy has written a book that "can be read as a manual to take and hold power in Catholic countries" (p. xvii). He attempts "to describe behavior in Latin America and finally to deny implicitly "the validity of most current explanations for Latin American 'problems'" (p. xix). Some

of the misinterpretations attacked by Dealy are the concepts that the Latin Americans' behavior and life style are irrational, that a culture of poverty permeates Latin American life, that Latin American society is revolutionary, and that culture traits of the Latins are rooted to "Romance language or Latin Culture." The latter misconception provides a major thrust of the book in that Dealy attempts to explain that Catholicism is the major causal factor in the Latins' behavior.

Dealy's thesis is that monolithic Catholic societies (in Latin America and elsewhere) produce the spirit of caudillaje, that the "Catholic man is public man" and that the "public man is a leader." In pursuing the aggregation of a following, the public man follows a behavior pattern which is rooted in the Catholic ethos and in what Dealy calls the "religious foundations of public virtue."

As noted before, not everyone will agree, and probably few will agree totally, with Dealy's work. As book reviewers are wont to say "given the limitations of space" it is difficult to do justice to a study which "raises more questions than it answers." Suffice it to say readers will not waste their time if they read this book.

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*Preliminary Survey of the Mexican Collection.* By SUSAN M. COTTLER, ROGER M. HAIGH, and SHIRLEY A. WEATHERS. Salt Lake City, 1978. University of Utah Press. Maps. Illustrations. Pp. xvii, 163. Paper. \$12.00.

Burrowed into a mountain outside of Salt Lake City are vaults holding an historical treasure of staggering size. Over one million, 100-foot rolls of filmed manuscripts—with the number growing rapidly—from forty-two countries have been collected by the Genealogical Society of Utah. The Mexican holdings total 105,584 rolls of film, about one-tenth of the entire collection.

*The Preliminary Survey of the Mexican Collection* (the first publication in a series entitled Finding Aids to the Microfilmed Manuscript Collection of the Genealogical Society of Utah) introduces the Mexican holdings with the specific intention of giving scholars a clearer picture of what is available and what is not" (p. xix). Given the immense size of the collection, the book succeeds in an admirable way.

The introduction describes the extent of the collection, emphasizes the diversity of documents, and repeatedly demonstrates that there is much of interest to more than just demographers and genealogists. Ma-