

Latin America, but expressed an occasional longing for its resources and trade opportunities.

Commercial exchange became vitally important to both Mexico and Germany after Mexico's confiscation of foreign oil concessions in 1938. As Mexico confronted an international boycott of her oil exports, which endangered her program of economic development, she sold huge quantities of oil to Germany which helped to fuel the German war machine, notably during the late stages of the Spanish Civil War and during the invasions of France and the Low Countries in 1940. In exchange, Germany destined for Mexico materials that would be useful in railroad, oil industry, irrigation, utility, or other economic development projects. This thriving commerce ended with the outbreak of World War II when Mexico resumed the conduct of an increasingly anti-German policy. Somewhat fittingly, the sinking of Mexican oil tankers by German submarines led to a Mexican declaration of war against the Third Reich.

Volland's superb research work is based upon such sources as Mexican and German archival materials and notably the diary of Hitler's minister to Mexico. Bibliographical and footnote explanations are helpful indeed. Remarkably, Volland does not hesitate to question pointedly the findings of other scholars that appear to be out of place. But his style of presentation is somewhat convoluted.

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*La vida en México bajo Avila Camacho.* 2 vols. By ALFONSO TARACENA. México, 1977. Editorial Jus. Pp. 448, 431. Paper.

Individuals seeking an example of the vehement political polemics which characterized the middle years of the Mexican Revolution will certainly find these two volumes useful. The tone is set in the author's preamble, which contends that his column of daily political commentary, which began appearing in the Mexico City newspaper *Novedades* during March of 1942, was the first of its type, alleging that Salvador Novo in the magazine *Hoy* and Carlos Denegri in the newspaper *Excelsior* subsequently imitated his format. This will undoubtedly come as a surprise to readers familiar with Novo's previously published volume *La vida en México en el período presidencial de Lázaro Cárdenas* collecting his commentaries from *Hoy*, although his later volume dealing with the Avila Camacho years begins in August of 1943.

While Taracena contends that Novo's volumes provide a sympathetic view of the administration, it should be noted that *Novedades*, for which Taracena wrote, was at the time characterized in U.S. diplomatic dispatches from Mexico as conservative and anti-Yankee.

Approximately half of Taracena's commentaries consist of impassioned attacks on the regime of Manuel Avila Camacho for committing the unpardonable sin of "selling out" to the Yankees. It is repeatedly charged that Mexico did not have to enter the war, that Mexicans were sent en masse to serve as "cannon fodder" in the European theater, and that the Yankees committed all sorts of skullduggery in Mexico under the cover of wartime exigencies, all with the complicity of the regime. Again and again the Mexican "domination" by the gringos is asserted. Citations include a comment by a Berlin newspaper and a press statement by the Japanese ambassador in Mexico. Every action, including all favorable statements by the Yankee press and by American officials, as well as settlement of major disputes, are viewed as merely further confirmation of the Yankee dominance.

The portions of the volumes dealing with domestic events consist of a similar list of charges. The alleged association of the Avila Camacho brothers with the revolt of Félix Díaz against the Madero regime is retiterated endlessly. Corruption constitutes another recurrent theme. References to the era's principal political power, ex-President Lázaro Cárdenas, are confined to his role as Minister of Defense during the Avila Camacho years, with few comments about Cárdenas' presidency.

While the references in the preamble would seem to suggest that these essays are reprints of the author's daily newspaper columns (though this is not asserted), the alert reader will spot the statement that only "la mayor parte de esto" was published during those years (I, 5). There is no further explanation of their origin. The essays are undated, and though in some cases they refer to years or even specific events that can be dated, they are not arranged chronologically. More importantly, they contain references to volumes published much later. Certainly there is room for doubt as to whether anyone writing in the World War II era would use such chapter titles as "Un Tlatelolco en León, Gto.," (II, 352), much less "Watergate Avilacamachista," (II, 79).

Illustrating the vehemence of the politics and the latent Yankee-phobia prevalent in some sectors during this era, those volumes serve to indicate the degree to which the Avila Camacho administration needed to act cautiously to restore national unity and to prepare domestic opinion for actions imposed by wartime necessities. They also un-

doubtedly constitute a complete catalog of the errors and corruption of the Avila Camacho administration, as well as of all the accusations ever leveled against it.

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*Historia de la Revolución Mexicana: Período 1952–1960.* Vol. XXII: *El afianzamiento de la estabilidad política.* By OLGA PELLICER DE BRODY and JOSÉ LUIS REYNA. México, 1978. El Colegio de México Illustrations. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. x, 222. Paper.

*Historia de la Revolución Mexicana: Período 1952–1960.* Vol. XXIII: *El entendimiento con los Estados Unidos y la gestación del desarrollo estabilizador.* By OLGA PELLICER DE BRODY and ESTEBAN L. MANCILLA. México, 1978. El Colegio de México. Illustrations. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 299. Paper.

These are the final volumes of a major study of the Mexican Revolution begun under the direction of Daniel Cosío Villegas. The entire topic was divided into eight time periods, most of which were allocated three or four volumes. The two devoted to 1952–1960 do not present a self-contained and inclusive description of the events of that period. Rather, they offer a series of essays on various aspects of Mexican political and economic life of the era by individual authors. Neither volume is indexed, but each includes a wholly inadequate listing of persons mentioned in the text. Both are profusely illustrated, though in many cases the contemporary photographs, engravings, or cartoons do not add materially to understanding of the material at hand.

Considering the original comprehensive conception of this history of Mexico's Revolution, based on Don Daniel's undoubted talents as an historian, the present two works are disappointing. This may be because the specific, topical approach precludes presenting a complete or unified description of the Revolution during the years involved. Or, as I have suggested to historians previously, this kind of topical emphasis seems to replace good, wide-scope historical analysis with poor sociology or economics. In this case, the reader is left with a feeling that the several authors of the essays do not share a common conception of what the Revolution is or of what it portended during the 1950s. In one sense the essays tell us more about individual writers' psychological or ideological outlooks than about the subject itself.