

United States and in Latin America. Most of the titles listed are familiar, but page 47 contains a useful list of recent articles, some of them in Latin American journals and probably not listed elsewhere.

BACKGROUND

The Aztecs. The History of the Indies of New Spain. By FRAY DIEGO DURÁN. Translated and with notes by DORIS HEYDEN and FERNANDO HORCASITAS. New York, 1964. Orion Press. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xxxii, 382. \$12.50.

This is a beautiful book with excellent plates and maps. The publishers are to be congratulated on a fine contribution to the historiography of pre-conquest Mexico. With Charles Dibble's translation of Sahagún's work and Francis Borgia Steek's Motolinía, it is one of the all-too-few Indian histories available in English. The text is useful for reconstructing the Aztec rise to power, but one must admit that it is not easy to read, and that it is more important for content than for style. Also much valuable material in the original edition on Aztec culture has been omitted. We must still turn to the Spanish version for accounts of Aztec religion, for example. In a well-written introduction Ignacio Bernal traces the history of the Durán manuscript and makes clear its importance in reconstructing the pre-conquest history of Mexico.

In Search of the Cid. By STEPHEN CLISSOLD. London, 1965. Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd. Maps. Illustrations. Notes. Index. Pp. 254. 35s.

Two Englishmen have this year produced works on the charismatic figure of Spain's Middle Ages, Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar. One by Robert C. Goldston is entitled *The Legend of the Cid* (Kaye, Ward: London, 1965), and the other is the carefully studied biography here noticed. The author of this second

work, who has written interestingly on Pedro de Sarmiento Gamboa and the Seven Cities of Cibola, found inspiration for his latest book in a youthful reading of Lockhart's *Ancient Spanish Ballads*. Owing to the heavy mist of myth enveloping them, the life and deeds of the eleventh-century hero, El Cid Campeador, inevitably remain dim and imprecise. (The fact that the Cid began his career fighting *against* the Christians does not make for clarity.) To validate his account the author has combed the *romances* or ballads and the chronicles of the period, particularly the epic *Poema de Mio Cid* (written about 1140). Aided by modern scholarship, notably the vast investigations of the remarkable nonagenarian Spanish scholar, Menéndez Pidal, this earnest effort to separate history from myth for the English-reading public justifies the author's use of the word "search" in his title. The task remains difficult owing to the confused background, the complicated chain of events, the numerous petty kings and rulers, Moslem and Christian, and many intertwined legendary elements. The narrative is often too dense to hold the general readers' attention. Of special interest is the final chapter tracing the Cid theme in literature down to the recent film *El Cid*, in which the medieval hero becomes a paladin of the "new creed" of "peaceful coexistence" between Islam and Christendom.

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COLONIAL AND INDEPENDENCE PERIODS

The Century after Cortés. By FERNANDO BENÍTEZ. Translated by JOAN MACLEAN. Chicago, 1965. The University of Chicago Press. Illustrations. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 296. \$7.50.

Describers of the past range from the dry-as-dust "scientific" historians plodding after facts in the manner of Leopold von Ranke to the historical

novelists who invent more than they discover. Somewhere in between, the "happy medium" perhaps, are the Prescotts, the Parkmans, and the Morisons. These exemplary historians realize that great events demand great prose to reconstruct them. In attitude if not in accomplishment Fernando Benítez belongs in the middle group. All of his books on colonial Mexico are read with great pleasure. He makes his characters live—as they did live—in time and in space as bold and colorful men and women. Unfortunately his imagination seizes the initiative all too frequently. As Irving A. Leonard pointed out in his perceptive review of the Spanish edition of 1962 (*HAHR*, Feb. 1964), Benítez introduces "colorful passages with invented discourses and dialogues for the sake of readability." But perhaps this is, after all, not too great a price to pay for enjoying what one reads. A good translation by Joan MacLean carries into English the high literary quality of the original Spanish edition. In short, Benítez gives us a good account of the transformation of the Spanish conqueror into the Mexican creole of the sixteenth century.

Mayorazgos de la Nueva España. By GUILLERMO S. FERNÁNDEZ DE RECAS. México, 1965. Instituto Bibliográfico Mexicano. Notes. Index. Illustrations. Pp. 509.

Socio-economic historians of the colonial period will find excellent source material in the Biblioteca Nacional de México's recent publication *Mayorazgos de la Nueva España*. This study of the sixty-one *mayorazgos* listed in the Archivo General de la Nación offers a detailed survey of the history, genealogy, legal structure, and styles—i.e., regular or irregular—of this type of entail in New Spain. Obviously, Guillermo S. Fernández de Recas, the author and editor of three other editions in the series published by the Biblioteca Nacional, has invested an enormous amount of time in this careful and scholarly investigation of the *mayorazgos* of México, Hidalgo, Puebla, Veracruz,

Querétaro, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, Zacatecas, Oaxaca, and Yucatán. More than one-half (33) of the total number of *mayorazgos* existed in Ciudad de México, while four others were located in the Estado de México in such areas as Chalco, Cuauhtitlan, and Texcoco. The colonial period is almost entirely covered by the dates of various *mayorazgos*. Pertinent laws and precedents of the establishment of the *mayorazgo* in Spain and New Spain are included as appendices to the text. *Mayorazgos de la Nueva España* is also replete with illustrations of *casas de mayorazgos*, escutcheons, and portraits of some of the heirs of *mayorazgos* in New Spain.

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NATIONAL PERIOD

Contenido literario de "El Siglo Diez y Nueve." By MALCOLM D. McLEAN. México, 1965. Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público. Bibliography. Notes. Pp. 357. Paper.

Malcolm D. McLean, professor of Spanish at Texas Christian University, completed the manuscript upon which this book is based as his master's thesis in 1938. Subsequently parts of it were published in Mexico, but now for the first time the entire study appears in print. It is a valuable contribution to the study of Mexican literary developments. The first seventy-eight pages are devoted to an introduction to the newspaper *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, published in Mexico City between 1841 and 1896. The largest part of the book consists of an alphabetical list of authors of literary articles, and, under the author listings, a chronological arrangement of their writings. Among the scores of foreign writers represented in the pages of *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* are Daudet, Zola, Anatole France, Poe, Longfellow, Daniel Webster, Goethe, Schiller, and Tolstoy, Arabs, Austrians, Belgians, Danes, Greeks, Hungarians, and Swedes, as well as representatives of Spain and the several South American countries. The strongest representation, of course, is