

references to archival material in the National Archives in Washington, D.C., to the Public Record Office in London, and to a small number of articles. However, he appears to have depended primarily upon a dozen or so prominent memoirs, such as those by George Thompson, George F. Masterman, Richard F. Burton, A. J. Kennedy, and Max von Versen, and upon such secondary works as those by Charles Kolinski, William E. Barrett, and Arturo Rebaudi.

Phelps is entirely correct in seeing the history of Paraguay as a tragic drama with tremendous human interest, but it is a drama that demands the genius of a very great dramatist, novelist, or historian. Until this genius appears, we shall continue to have such books as *Tragedy of Paraguay*, which, fortunately, is well written and generally accurate. The casual reader will find it interesting; the scholar can ignore it without loss.

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La Cristiada. Vol. I: *La guerra de los cristeros*; Vol. II: *El conflicto entre la iglesia y el estado, 1926–1929*; Vol. III: *Los cristeros*. By JEAN MEYER. Translated by AURELIO GARZÓN DEL CAMINO. 3rd ed. Mexico, 1974. Siglo Veintiuno Editores. Maps. Tables. Illustrations. Bibliographies. Pp. vii, 409; viii, 411; vii, 328. Paper.

Apocalypse et Révolution au Mexique. La guerre des Cristeros, 1926–1929. By JEAN MEYER. Paris, 1974. Editions Gallimard/Julliard. Map. Illustrations. Bibliography. Pp. 244. Paper.

This study was presented as a University of Paris doctoral thesis in 1971. Siglo Veintiuno issued a first Spanish edition in 1972 and two more in 1974—a publication success that attests both to the work's merit and to the new interest in the Mexican religious question. The Editions Gallimard/Julliard volume is a collection of annotated documents, most of them accounts by participants in the Cristero rebellion who tell the story in vivid personal terms.

The format of *La Cristiada* reflects Professor Meyer's concept of a two-level conflict. The first volume describes the guerrilla war that ravaged parts of Mexico from 1926 to 1929 and resumed on a smaller scale in the 1930s. The second stresses political events in Mexico City (and Rome and Washington) that ignited the rebellion and eventually smothered it but which, the author insists, constituted a conflict of a different order. Volume III returns to the Cristeros and discusses such factors as ethnology, agrarianism, the Feminine Brigades, govern-

ment in the rebel-occupied territories, and Cristero morality, theology, and ideology. The volumes overlap chronologically and topically. This makes reading difficult at times, but the effort is worthwhile. What emerges is one of the most original and provocative works on Mexican history to appear in recent years.

Meyer portrays the Cristeros as victims of the long struggle between Mexican ecclesiastics and the civil power. The contest assumed a special ferocity when revolutionary governments after 1914 took extreme measures to subordinate the church to an authoritarian political system. Catholic leaders resisted but at the same time, prodded by the Holy See, they searched for an accommodation. The search was interrupted when President Plutarco Elías Calles decreed rabid anti-church measures and the bishops, in a desperate move, halted public worship. Tempers cooled and peace talks commenced but meanwhile, to the bewilderment of both church and government, thousands of Catholics in a dozen states rose in revolt. What had been until then a jurisdictional quarrel among members of Mexico's dominant class who were ideological foes but social and cultural kin, spilled over into a mass uprising—in Meyer's estimate the most authentically popular movement of the revolutionary period. With only ineffective help from urban Catholics, abandoned or opposed by most of the clergy, the insurgents nevertheless gained enough strength to hinder a political settlement and, according to Meyer, to imperil the existence of the government by 1929. At that point church and state leaders gratefully accepted the help of the U.S. ambassador to arrange a truce. The Cristeros were ignored; the priests returned to the churches and the rebels, in obedience to church orders, submitted.

Although the study treats all aspects of the religious conflict, its chief contribution is its characterization of the Cristeros as peasant revolutionaries. The research is massive. The author consulted all standard archival sources and uncovered valuable new ones. Most important, he made wide use of oral interviews and of questionnaires administered to hundreds of Cristero veterans. In Meyer's analysis, they were independent, self-directed people. Like the followers of Emiliano Zapata, with whom Meyer closely identifies them, they rebelled against the effects of a modernizing process that jeopardized their material and psychic world. They were completely Catholic, often having a good knowledge of scripture and theology. Religious faith (not synonymous with moral conduct—Meyer says they usually behaved no better or worse than other Mexicans) was a main motive. They lived "in a religious universe all of one piece" (III, 305), not

yet having compartmentalized their lives. As rebels they were no one's tools. Most of their priests fled to the cities for safety; the conservative hacendados sided with their enemies. They accepted military direction from a few middle-class laymen but did not follow them blindly. Their ultimate loyalty was to a clergy whose capitulation to a hostile state fractured the Cristeros' world vision. By the end of the Lázaro Cárdenas era the integration of rural Mexico into the new order, primarily by the vehicle of the ejido, was irreversible.

Meyer's study is a triumph of multidisciplinary scholarship. His acknowledged affection for his subjects—he dedicates *La Cristiada* to Aurelio Acevedo, a Zacatecas Cristero chieftain who aided him in his research—may put some readers on their guard, but his conclusions regarding the Cristeros and their movement are compatible with his data. His treatment of the Cristeros' opponents will be more controversial. The problem of the Mexican revolution's nature is far from solved and many specialists will hesitate to accept such assertions that Calle's administration was not revolutionary, or that it is contradictory to say that both the Zapatistas and the Red Battalions could have been revolutionists. As for the church leaders, one may deplore their callous stance toward the Cristeros, but it can be argued that the 1929 *modus vivendi* arrangement was a realistic solution. For while the author's evidence concerning the rebellion's magnitude is persuasive, I am less convinced than he that the Cristeros could have overthrown the government or forced a settlement very different from the one reached. But these are speculative matters. On its central topic, the Cristeros, I believe the study is unassailable. In both content and method it is a magnificent contribution.

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The Politics of Hostility: Castro's Revolution and United States Policy.

By LYNN DARRELL BENDER. Hato Rey, Puerto Rico, 1975. Inter American University Press. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiv, 156. Cloth. \$7.95; Paper. \$2.95.

Most books about the Cuban-American relationship focus either on the historical record, emphasizing the critical role Cuba has played in the formulation of American foreign policy, or assess the deeper meanings of the dramatic years from 1959 to 1962. Professor Bender devotes one brief chapter to the historical record to 1959, and another, more analytical, chapter to the deterioration in United States-Cuban