

Insurgencia y autonomía: historia de los pueblos yaquis, 1821–1910.

By HÉCTOR CUAUHTÉMOC HERNÁNDEZ SILVA. Historia de los pueblos indígenas de México. Mexico City: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 1996. Photographs. Illustrations. Maps. Tables. Bibliography. 185 pp. Paper.

Insurgencia y autonomía provides a short, well-written synthesis of the history of the Yaqui ethnic nation during the nineteenth century. As part of the series Historia de los pueblos indígenas de México, this book is intended to reach both students and the general reading public. The entire collection is a laudable effort to place Indian peoples center-stage in Mexican historical consciousness through well-researched studies that include a documentary appendix of primary sources. In accord with the excellent publication standards established by the earlier volumes in this series, *Insurgencia y autonomía* is generously illustrated with maps, photographs, and occasional period drawings.

In this case, the author was hardly faced with the challenge of rescuing Yaqui history from obscurity. Yaquis, or *Yoremes* in their own language, are the northernmost Cahitan-speaking peoples of the western slopes of the Sierra Madre Occidental. The Yoremes' complex narratives of encounter, alliance, and resistance with and against *Yoris*—be they Europeans, Mexicans, or other “foreigners”—have left an abundant archival legacy and have intrigued anthropologists and historians from Mexico, the United States, and Europe for over half a century. The eminent anthropologist Edward H. Spicer first drew the attention of North American scholars to the dramatic history of the Yaquis through his ethnographies of Potam, in the heart of their homeland, and of Yoreme diasporic communities in Arizona. Evelyn Hu-Dehart, whose *Adaptación y resistencia en el Yaquimi* (Mexico City, 1995) on the colonial period precedes Hernández's work in this same series, has published thoroughly researched ethnographic histories of the Yaquis in both the colonial and national eras. Likewise, Cécile Gouy-Gilbert, Jane Holden Kelley, Thomas McGuire, and Alejandro Figueroa figure among the authors who have studied the history and cultural endurance of the Yoreme.

Hernández has succeeded in writing a forceful defense of Yaqui ethnic polity around a cohesive unifying theme: the Yaquis' struggle for political and territorial autonomy in the face of Sonoran and foreign landowners' encroachments on the fertile bottomland of the Yaqui Valley. Yoremes defended the integrity of the material foundation of their communities in arable land and the life-giving flood waters of the Yaqui River; the autonomy of the internal political structures of their pueblos, fashioned largely on the colonial legacy of the Jesuit missions; and the syncretic religious ceremonialism that reinforced their ethnic identity. Hernández privileges the material and political dimensions of Yaqui “insurgency,” but pays scant attention to the religious expression of their struggle, which is intimately related to the first two and to their historical memory.

The weakness of this book is its limited documentary base, despite the rich archival sources available to the author. Hernández relied on well-known published col-

lections of documents, such as Francisco P. Troncoso, *Las guerras con las tribus yaqui y mayo* (Mexico City, 1905, and in subsequent reeditions), and Fortunato Hernández, *Las razas indígenas de Sonora* (Mexico City, 1902). He missed an opportunity to contribute new material to the political history of the Yaquis' armed insurrections by not exploiting the Sonoran state archives systematically for this interpretive history. Three important themes are not fully developed in this book that would have elucidated the complexity of the Yoremes' negotiated alliances with Sonoran governors and landowners, punctuated by episodes of insurrection. First, the significant number of Yaquis living outside the valley who labored in mines and haciendas of central and northern Sonora from the early nineteenth century onward; second, the contradictory web of antagonistic and interdependent relationships between Yoremes and Yoris across divisions of class, ethnicity, and gender; and third, the internal divisions among the Yoremes that conditioned their strategies for resisting the economic and political forces that impinged on their world.

The periodization of this study conforms to the conventional divisions of Mexican national history, beginning with the consummation of independence in 1821 and ending just prior to the revolution of 1910. However, it cuts short the story of the Yaquis' most difficult trial of persecution and forced removal to Oaxaca and Yucatán during the late Porfiriato, their flight to the United States, and the reconstitution of their pueblos during and after the revolution. Hernández's conclusions refer the reader once more to the Yaquis' "inextinguishable struggle for liberty and autonomy" (p. 145) but provide few guidelines to the contemporary story of Yoreme survival in the Mexican nation-state.

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The Irish Soldiers of Mexico. By MICHAEL HOGAN. New Orleans: University Press of the South, 1997. Photographs. Maps. Notes. Bibliography. Index. 268 pp. Paper, \$39.95.

During the years leading up to the recent sesquicentennial of the U.S.-Mexican War (1996-98), scholars have been busily preparing new accounts of the war. Two monographs turn the spotlight on the unhappy tale of the San Patricio Battalion, a Mexican unit partly made up of deserters from the American army. Many of these were captured in battle and, at General Winfield Scott's orders, most were hanged. The first of these monographs was Robert Ryal Miller's *Shamrock and Sword: The Saint Patrick's Battalion in the U.S.-Mexican War*, published in 1989. This was generally reviewed as well researched and written and a fair tribute to brave men largely ignored in general histories. Michael Hogan's newer book on the same subject uses most of the same original sources and secondary studies. It gives much the same background account of the war and fleshes out the often skeletal facts with a similarly colorful narrative. Both books are copiously illustrated. While Hogan is a little more pro-Mexican than Miller, who uses mainly American sources, both authors deplore American aggression toward Mexico and the American army's harsh treatment of the captured San Patricios.