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Friedrich E. Schuler. *Mexico Between Hitler and Roosevelt: Mexican Foreign Relations in the Age of Lazaro Cardenas, 1934-1940.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998. x + 270 pp. $24.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8263-2160-2.

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Schuler, Associate Professor of History and Director of the Center for the Study of United States-Mexican Relations at Portland State University in Oregon, was a German Fulbright scholar to the United States and earned his doctorate in 1990 at the University of Chicago. This book, his revised dissertation, contains nine chapters, 646 endnotes, and a nine-page double- column index. His "Selected Bibliography" includes "Archives and Collections of Papers" (82 from Mexican, United States, British, and German archives), 167 books and 39 articles, nine newspaper series, three magazine articles, 16 dissertations, and two manuscripts.

In the Introduction he commented that by viewing Mexico from the "inside looking outward," rather than through the European and United States perspectives of viewing Mexico from the "outside in," one can understand how Mexico under Cardenas was able to exploit the weaknesses of the "Great Powers." Chapter Two, "The Reinstitutionalization of Postrevolutionary Mexican Foreign Relations (1920-1940)," documented the role of "technocrats" as central to the development and execution of foreign policy, but who were "surprisingly independent" from the president. The professionalization of Mexico's Foreign Ministry led to the creation of an effective diplomatic organization that acquired and assessed critical information with regularity and with great speed. At the same time Cardenas worked to reorganize the national economy and prepared for the European conflict was seen as inevitable.

In "An Overview: Mexico's Key Foreign Relations (1920-1936)" he assessed the diplomatic environment and the growth of U.S.-Mexican commerce, the "Good Neighbor Policy," the Silver Purchase Act of 1934, and Roosevelt's personal interest in Mexico. "The Watershed of Cardenismo" (1934-1936) was an era of economic and social experimentation, followed by a "bleak" 1937 as Mexico "struggled for survival," while 1938 was characterized as "calculating" when the expropriation of foreign-owned petroleum properties was planned and implemented. In December 1936 Mexico expropriated and redistributed foreign- owned cotton-growing lands in northern Mexico. Although the Mexican economy was in a state of severe crisis because of a strike by petroleum workers fuel shortages, Cardenas risked the expropriation in March 1938.

Chapter Five, " Mexican Economic Self-Defense in a Closing International Market (1938-1940)," viewed expropriation as an attempt to rescue Mexico's domestic economy and stabilize the government. Mexicans hailed the expropriation with enthusiasm and nationalism, while the British, Dutch, and United States petroleum companies could not present a united front against the Mexican government. Germany, Italy, and Japan negotiated separate oil-for-goods barter agreements with Mexico, but Schuler points out correctly that Mexico did its best to avoid dealing with the fascists. The Cardenas-Roosevelt relationship is evaluated in the sixth chapter, "Mexican Diplomatic and Propagandistic Self-Defense on the Eve of World War II (1938-1940)." Mexico's diplomatic successes Schuler concludes were due to three factors: 1) a long-term evaluation based upon the state of the petroleum industry before expropriation, 2) experienced Mexican bureaucrats who controlled negotiations with the oil multinationals and diplomacy, and 3) the fact that the Western Powers diplomatic bureaucracies were slow and ineffective. Roosevelt, Secretary of State Hull, Undersecretary Welles, and Ambassador to Mexico Daniels disagreed on many Mexican issues. Readers would like to know more about the contents of the Roosevelt-Cardenas personal correspondence about the oil issue and the effect these had on diplomacy. Roosevelt became convinced that Mexico was not pro-Nazi or was falling under Axis influence.

Chapter Seven " The Modernization of the Mexican Military Under Cardenas (1934-1940)," documented changes in Mexico's military, the relationships with U.S. military planners, the national security concerns of both nations, and Cardenas's attempt to establish a Latin

American defense force. A number of issues were examined in Chapter Eight, "From Cardenas to Avila Camacho: The Rise of a Conservative Development Strategy, The Almazan Rebellion, and the Presidential Inauguration of 1940." The technocratic-induced expropriations (railroads, cotton lands and petroleum companies) and the beginning of World War II fashioned the conservatism of the Camacho regime and the defeat of rightist candidate Juan Almazan. Schuler commented that "Mexican and U.S. diplomats, military forces, and secret services, as well as the two executives [Cardenas and Roosevelt] kept the Almazan rebellion from mushrooming into a more serious challenge to the Cardenas administration" (p. 170) and that "the Mexicans proved to be masters of diplomacy" (p. 191). The "Conclusion: Two Themes in Mexican Foreign Relations between 1934 and 1940: Development and War" presents Schuler's new theory of Mexican foreign relations during the 1930s. Mexican foreign relations were interpreted as a critical tool and resource employed by the Cardenas administration to gain leverage in domestic politics as well as in international relations.

Schuler presents an astute analysis of the complex interrelationships between Mexico's politics, economy, culture, and defense, and the dynamics of the international environment between 1934 and 1940. He confirms that Mexican policy makers and diplomats were better skilled in international negotiations, more realistic in the evaluation of the historical contexts, and exhibited greater creativity in situations of crisis that counterparts from Europe and the U.S. He also contends that the Europeans frequently had limited vision, indifferent bureaucracies, and "second-class diplomats" (U.S. Ambassador Daniels was the exception). Mexican bureaucrats, particularly Foreign Minister Eduardo Hay and Minister of Treasury Eduardo Suarez, were able to exploit the major powers. It appears that Schuler may underrate Hay and particularly the influence of Suarez on Cardenas. The Mexicans often told foreigners what they wanted to hear, used opportunities to their own advantage, and focussed upon their own long-term national objectives, namely, economic and political sovereignty. Schuler has documented these activities and marshaled compelling evidence.

This reviewer wonders how Cardenas's administration viewed the expropriation of Standard Oil properties by Bolivia in 1937 and the Roosevelt administration's subsequent lack of response. Was this a potential model for Mexico? Did the arrogance of the oil companies' negotiators contribute to Mexico's decision? And did the cotton-land and railroad expropriations provide "test cases" for the seizure of the petroleum production? We would like to have had more information on "Davis" the Houston-based independent oil dealer who assisted the Mexicans and Davis's role in the German proposal to construct aircraft factories in Mexico that Cardenas rejected. Likewise, little is said about Trotsky and the anti-Stalin Marxists–did his asylum and subsequent assassination affect Mexican policy? There is confusion regarding foreign military attaches in Mexico. For example, we are informed that Japan had military and naval attaches in Mexico by 1935 but that the United States had none (p. 57), yet the military staff at the U.S. embassy in Mexico City was augmented in 1933 (p. 156). The attaches' roles should be clarified, and the activities of the F.B.I in Mexico in 1939 could be emended (p. 141)–the declassified documents are available.

The publisher asserts that this is "the first book to analyze the link between Mexico's foreign and domestic relations in the 1930s." This is true, judging from my review of the literature, much of which appears in Spanish as well as English. Niblo[1] and Paz[2] provide excellent evaluations of the prewar and World War II periods. Hall's[3] analysis of the period 1917-1923 is a good introduction to Mexican foreign policy during an era when Mexican resources were exploited with little financial benefit to Mexico. Niblo's volume, covering 1938-1954, parallels a recent work by Paz who documents the era from 1940-1945. However, Niblo contends that the advent of World War II in Europe rather than Mexican diplomatic expertise assisted the Cardenas administration's survival. Niblo relied on declassified U.S. Department of State documents, whereas Paz and Schuler delved into archival materials of great quality and quantity on both sides of the Atlantic. There is much wartime intelligence service literature in the United States, Britain, and Germany that is yet to be studied. Neither Paz nor Schuler's treatises were intended as comprehensive studies of Mexican domestic and foreign policies. These books can be used in conjunction to cover an extremely complex and dynamic period of Mexican history–both provide insights into Mexican wartime and post-war period diplomacy, politics, and economy.

Readers would benefit if there were additional chapter headings and subheadings, and a map depicting principle Mexican locations would be a useful emendation. A consistent minor error is the reference to the United States "National Archive"–actually the National Archives [and Records Administration].

Nonetheless, this is a serious, scholarly work that has not been "written down" for popular consumption; in-

deed, the volume reads like a dissertation but the narrative style is pleasing. Scholars from Latin American studies, diplomatic and military history, cultural geography, and comparative economics will find useful material. The book is masterful and comprehensive, and the text is resplendent with detailed information and insights on the topic of foreign relations and diplomacy. Schuler's unique contribution is that he has used the German archives (not just captured Nazi materials) in addition to British, U.S., and Mexican primary documents. His book is a thoughtful and thought-provoking account of an extremely complex period in Mexican history and in the international relations of the United States and Latin America.

Notes:

[1]. Niblo, Stephen R. *War, Diplomacy and Development: The United States and Mexico, 1938-1954.* Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1995.

[2]. Paz, Maria Emilia. *Strategy, Security, and Spies: Mexico and the U.S. as Allies in World War II.* University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997.

[3]. Hall, Linda B. *Oil, Banks, and Politics: The United States and Postrevolutionary Mexico, 1917-1924.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995.

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