

His work is a landmark study that will critically inform future work on colonial popular politics and social history.

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U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Secret Wars and Secret Policies in the Americas, 1842–1929. By Friedrich E. Schuler. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2011. Pp. xi, 576. Map. Photographs. Notes. Bibliography. Index.

When Leslie B. Rout Jr. and John Bratzel published *The Shadow War: German Espionage and United States Counterespionage in Latin America During World War II* in 1986, the book seemed to promise an infusion of new energy into the fields of diplomatic and civil military relations by including the neglected area of covert operations in Latin America. Relatively few Latin American historians, however, have followed that lead. Now Friedrich Schuler's expansive and impressively researched book has established a benchmark for the "secret policies" of Germany, Japan, Spain, and Italy, starting from nearly a century before these Fascist nations turned to the Americas in pursuit of their aggressive global interests.

At the center of Schuler's argument is his contention that Latin America really mattered in the long term planning of the militaries and foreign ministries of the aforementioned nations. His evidence is impressive as he draws on archival sources in Germany, Spain, Britain, and the United States. Working with both shadowy contacts and top officials throughout the Americas, representatives of these four nations, both official and clandestine, wanted guarantees of strategic minerals, markets for their arms sales, critical information about the defenses of the American states, and the cooperation of select members of immigrant communities in fostering the aims of their home nations. Schuler refers to the latter activity as "manipulating immigrants" for the purpose of the home countries' interests (p. 7). German and Japanese immigrants in Southern Brazil certainly were subjected to this manipulation.

As the time frame of the book suggests, Schuler stresses the enduring nature of the German, Italian, Spanish, and Japanese interests in the Western Hemisphere. This is one of the most important contributions of the book, because Latin American historians have most often viewed the interests of Spain, Italy, Japan, and Germany in the region as primarily a post-World War I phenomenon. For example, Schuler argues that the German Reich chancellor Bernard von Bülow was determined to exploit Portugal's colonies in Africa as early as the late 1890s; Von Bülow wanted also to impose German imperialism on Brazil with the help of German immigrant colonies in the southern regions of that nation. However, Schuler's argument for German imperialist intentions comes with an important caveat: these plans could evolve only "under the

right international circumstances” (p. 29). This caveat applies to many of the scenarios he presents throughout this book. We simply don’t know how much emphasis Germany, Spain, Italy, and Japan placed on their Latin American plans in relation to more obvious priorities in Europe, North Africa, and Manchuria. The case studies are presented in a fast and furious manner that attests to the depth of Schuler’s research. Even the Irish revolutionary Michael Collins’s desperate attempt to buy guns from Italian arms merchants is discussed. The problem is that the secret diplomacy, espionage, and planned sabotage schemes of these great powers are not really prioritized. For instance, Schuler offers evidence to indicate that by November 1921 the Japanese already had contingency plans for the sabotage of the Panama Canal, but only in the “event of a war with the United States” (p. 302). What about Tokyo’s more immediate concerns in Korea, Taiwan, and Manchuria? And how do these plans play out after naval limitations agreements at the 1921 Washington Naval Conference?

No one has attempted a book of this depth and scope on this topic before, and my minor criticisms really do not significantly detract from what is a very impressive feat of scholarship. Latin American, diplomatic, and military historians will benefit from this book. Espionage “buffs” will enjoy it as well. Adding to their interest will be Schuler’s wonderful array of historical photographs.

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