Preserving German Texan Identity: Reminiscences of William A. Trenckmann, 1859–1935 ed. by Walter L. Buenger, Walter D. Kamphoefner (review)

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the Confederate flag? Should the federal government pay their fare to and from the event? For the chosen few, state and local governments and veteran's organizations, especially the Grand Army of the Republic and the United Confederate Veterans, granted train fare and small stipends, respectively. There were few African American veterans at the Grand Reunion. Many former Confederates wore their uniforms and proudly flew their battle flags. Comparatively, few Yankees wore theirs.

Many contemporary military officers and politicians were slated to attend, including former president William Howard Taft and President Woodrow Wilson, who gave a short and uninspiring speech on July 3 but then immediately left. The politicians and high-ranking military officers had ulterior motivations. Under the Great Tent, they gave impassioned speeches about sacrifice because they were concerned with nation-state building, writes the author. As they did, most of the veterans were traversing the old battleground, reliving their summer of 1863 experiences; "it was more a litany of small search parties" (p. 50). They looked for grave markers and surviving comrades; they were happy when they found them, disappointed when they did not. They asked questions of each other and told stories; sometimes they wept silently and other times uncontrollably. "One survivor was seen weeping next to a [grave] marker, saying to passersby, 'he's under there,'" writes Flagel (p. 48). The media, military, and moguls conflated the butchering of men, who were staunchly opposed to each other, with hallowed nationalism. Flagel's important monograph provides a nuanced existential examination of what fifty years after the battle meant to the veterans in attendance: survival.

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Preserving German Texan Identity: Reminiscences of William A. Trenckmann, 1859–1935. Edited by Walter L. Buenger and Walter D. Kamphoefner. The Elma Dill Russell Spencer Series in the West and Southwest. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2019. Pp. xiv, 210. $42.00, ISBN 978-1-62349-713-2.)

William A. Trenckmann, the Texas-born son of German immigrants, lived from 1859 to 1935. His life thus spanned from the Civil War to the Great Depression. He was first a schoolteacher in several small rural German Texas communities, and then the editor of a German-language newspaper, in the Austin County seat of Bellville from 1891 to 1909 and in Austin from 1909 until the end of his life. *Das Wochenblatt*—literally, the weekly leaf, that is, a weekly paper—was initially founded to provide news and writing on a wide variety of topics for German Texans in the rural area around Bellville, but it grew to serve an audience of German Texans, rural and urban, across the state.

Trenckmann first published his reminiscences—in German—in the pages of *Das Wochenblatt* between 1931 and 1933. They were first translated into English in the late 1950s by Trenckmann's son William and daughter Else. In good German fashion, there were occasional lengthy sentences and paragraphs, which have been subdivided for this edition. The book's value is enhanced by the inclusion of two short pieces dealing with Trenckmann's memories of Christmas during the troubled times of the Civil War and his experiences as one of the first students at what is now Texas A&M University.

The editors of the present volume, Walter L. Buenger and Walter D. Kamphoefner, have provided an excellent introduction, which could easily stand alone as a scholarly article. They have made the reading much easier with thorough annotations of references to those individuals who were prominent in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Texas, but who are no longer well known. In addition to serving as a detailed biography of Trenckmann, the introduction frames his life in two critical respects: as a vocal advocate for the preservation of German language and culture in Texas, and as a "go-between" serving to negotiate the interests of German Texans while bringing them into the Anglo-American majority (p. 26).

The editors show that Trenckmann, the child of liberal *Freidenkers* (free-thinkers), grew up in a family that was not sympathetic to slavery or the Confederate cause, even though two sons served in the Confederate army. Trenckmann long remembered the harsh treatment that secessionists had delivered to Germans who were not sufficiently enthusiastic about the war. However, he came to support efforts to suppress the voting rights (and, indeed, other civil rights) of African Americans and of poor whites through such means as literacy tests and poll taxes. For Trenckmann this trade-off allowed German Texans to oppose prohibition and Sunday closing laws, both of which they saw as antithetical to German culture, while remaining within the white Texan mainstream.

This volume is a welcome addition to scholarship on German immigration to Texas and on Texas political history during the complicated and often tragic years of Reconstruction and Jim Crow.

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The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas. By Monica Muñoz Martinez. (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 2018. Pp. [x], 387. $35.00, ISBN 978-0-674-97643-6.)

The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas investigates a period of terror along the U.S.-Mexico border between 1910 and 1920, when Mexicans and Mexican Americans were murdered by the Texas Rangers and white mobs. Victims were variously U.S. citizens, poor migrant workers, or wealthy landowners; estimates of the number of people murdered during this period vary from three hundred to thousands. Martinez indicates how "[v]igilante violence on the border had a state-building function" that endures in contemporary dominant versions of Texas history, which manage both to conceal and to normalize violence against people who were often described as thieves or bandits (p. 6).

Martinez draws from various archives and historical registers but is always alert to "silences, erasures, and euphemisms" in public history and in the official records held by the state of Texas (p. 276). The book diligently offers witness to the experiences of the communities after the violence; "it lingers in the aftermath . . . to document what happened next" (p. 24). The author uses vernacular history as a way to access alternatives to the dominant story, those of loss and trauma and also of survival and resistance, through family stories, mourning, *corridos*, poetry, and storytelling.

The Injustice Never Leaves You focuses on multiple incidents of violence against Mexicans and Mexican Americans and how these events are