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Nota di contenuto	Education and entropy in Bernal Diaz del Castillo's War to stop time -- Compromised free markets in El Periquillo Sarniento : teachers, albureros, and other shouters -- Alexander von Humboldt's work on Mexico : cultural allegory, and the limits of vision -- Jose Vasconcelos and the necessities of failure -- The threats of collapse in Cambio de piel (or Fuentes the frail) -- Guillermo Gomez-Pena : bordering on madness and performing liminality -- General Santa Anna's leg and other failings.
Sommario/riassunto	While the concept of defeat in the Mexican literary canon is frequently acknowledged, it has rarely been explored in the fullness of the psychological and religious contexts that define this aspect of "mexicanidad." Going beyond the simple narrative of self-defeat, The Uses of Failure in Mexican Literature and Identity presents a model of failure as a source of knowledge and renewed self-awareness. Studying the relationship between national identity and failure, John Ochoa revisits the foundational texts of Mexican intellectual and literary history, the "national monuments," and offers a new vision of the pivotal events that echo throughout Mexican aesthetics and politics. The Uses of Failure in Mexican Literature and Identity encompasses five

centuries of thought, including the works of the Conquistador Bernal Díaz del Castillo, whose sixteenth-century True History of the Conquest of New Spain formed Spanish-speaking Mexico's early self-perceptions; José Vasconcelos, the essayist and politician who helped rebuild the nation after the Revolution of 1910; and the contemporary novelist Carlos Fuentes. A fascinating study of a nation's volatile journey towards a sense of self, *The Uses of Failure* elegantly weaves ethical issues, the philosophical implications of language, and a sociocritical examination of Latin American writing for a sparkling addition to the dialogue on global literature.
