

Richard Nebel's goal is to examine critically the Guadalupe event; its transcultural relation and value; its multiple and adverse effects on church, theology, and society; and its continuity and transformation over time as observed in the religious history of Mexico. He accomplishes his objective through an analysis of the Guadalupe event in three settings: historical, in both Spain and Mexico and as a factor in the missionization of New Spain; literary, particularly its treatment in the *Nican Mopohua*; and theological, both for its impact on the church and its meaning to greater Mexican society. The historical section contains little that earlier studies have not already included, but it is comprehensive. The literature section includes a credible and valuable line-by-line German translation of the *Nican Mopohua* (Br. Luis Lasso de la Vega, 1649 edition). Both a facsimile of the Nahuatl edition (1649) and a modern rendering of the text of this edition by Mario Rojas Sánchez (1978) are included in the appendixes. Another useful appendix contains a list, dates, and derivations of the numerous copies and translations of the *Nican Mopohua*. The book's theological section examines the meaning of the event for the church and society in today's Mexico. Portions of the theological presentation themselves require a leap of faith that some readers will view with considerable skepticism, but those with an interest in present-day Mexican religion will find much to stimulate their thinking.

While readers might not always agree with Nebel's own interpretation of the Guadalupe event as a means to examine religious continuity and change in Mexico, his thoroughness and attention to detail are admirable. His book provides an excellent overview of the literature on the Virgen de Guadalupe, and he presents a sensitive analysis of this timeless, polysemous Mexican symbol.

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Mexican Ballads, Chicano Poems: History and Influence in Mexican-American Social Poetry. By JOSÉ E. LIMÓN. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992. Maps. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xii, 219 pp. Cloth, \$38.00. Paper, \$15.00.

Historians who are persuaded that literature both mirrors and shapes history will find here the work of a kindred spirit. As professor of English and anthropology at the University of Texas at Austin, José E. Limón brings the perspectives of several related disciplines into this rather ambitious project. It is a study of the origins, content, and evolution of selected northern Mexican and Chicano political poetry between the 1850s and the early 1970s, and of the cultural and historical factors that both influenced and were in turn influenced by that artistic production.

Limón identifies the north Mexican epic heroic ballad, or *corrido*, as the ancestral poetic form. These narrative folk songs appeared in South Texas by the middle of the nineteenth century and flourished through the Mexican Revolution

into the 1930s on both sides of the border. Generated in areas and eras of social and cultural conflict, especially conflict of race and class, the *corrido*'s dominant theme was the violent confrontation of men over honor and ideology. The *corrido*, according to Limón, became "a master poem of social struggle" (p. 30).

The form declined in the 1930s as a vehicle of protest and resistance in the face of changing social and cultural conditions. Its historical importance was rediscovered and transmitted to a later generation, Limón explains, by the "*corrido*'s foremost scholar" and practitioner, Américo Paredes (p. 42). In his work, especially *With His Pistol in His Hand* (1958), Paredes gradually revived the art form by updating it to address social concerns of Mexican Americans in the 1950s and 1960s. Paredes, with his book, concludes the author, "provides one model for the development of the Chicano movement, and that model was itself wholly indebted to the precursory master poem—the *corrido*" (p. 90).

With its power and potential thus restored, the *corrido* clearly influenced the poetry and ideas of a number of prominent literary intellectual activists in the Chicano movement between 1965 and 1972. Of the three most significant, the first was José Montoya, who exemplified the cultural alienation of the initial stage of the Chicano movement. Rodolfo "Corky" González illustrated the second phase of assertive cultural nationalism. Juan Gómez-Quiñones represented an ensuing stage of reflection and maturity. The third poet, Limón finds, transformed the *corrido* through his appreciation of modernist poets and the cultural importance of women to produce in his "Ballad of Billy Rivera" the "true ballad of our time" (p. 151).

The historian who is patient with the jargon of literary criticism and theory in this book will find the effort well rewarded. Its author provides an engaging, thoughtful, and knowledgeable explanation of the link between the *corrido* and modern Chicano poetry and a no less informative and persuasive analysis of the relationship of both to Chicano history.

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Wild Majesty: Encounters with Caribs from Columbus to the Present Day. Edited by PETER HULME and NEIL L. WHITEHEAD. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. Photographs. Plates. Maps. Bibliography. Index. x, 369 pp. Cloth, \$65.00. Paper, \$18.95.

The Columbus Quincentenary spawned a tremendous resurgence of interest in the interplay of Native American and European cultures that began five centuries ago. Unfortunately, many of the books associated with this resurgence are simply ancient European texts republished without comment. One result is that European commentators of the day have been promoted as objective observers of native cultures, their fears and prejudices attaining the status of fact. With *Wild Majesty*, Peter Hulme and Neil Whitehead forcefully attack this practice.