

tion of millions of migrants, who once intended to return to the countries of their origin, into settlers and ethnic minorities in different nations. The circumstances, the problems, the tragedies, the successes, the consequences are all before us.

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John R. Chavez. *The Lost Land: The Chicano Image of the Southwest*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984) 199 pp., \$9.95 paper.

The Lost Land is a fine example of ethnic cultural history. Chavez contends that various attitudes of Spanish, Mexican, and Anglo settlers who migrated to the Southwest (the states of California, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas) have shaped the sense of identity of contemporary Chicanos in terms of where they live. Many Chicanos feel like “strangers in their own land,” and certain features of non-indigenous cultures have fostered a sense of alienation.

Some Anglo immigrants believe that God has given the Southwest to them. They saw local inhabitants as inferiors and believed that it was their place to take the land. Chicanos had to respond to certain stereotypes which carry over today. They have to encourage group cohesion, advocate ethnic loyalty and pay attention to where a community is in the Southwest.

The Lost Land underscores how traditional interpretations of United States history are often uni-directional—from the eastern seaboard west to glory. Chavez suggests that Chicanos understand the Southwest and thus themselves in terms of another axis of movement. Indigenous people moved through the Southwest from north to south and vice versa. Spaniards and Mexicans moved into the area from the south. In 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico surrendered most of the Southwest to the United States. Mexicans who opted to stay in the newly acquired territory were guaranteed the rights of citizenship. However, the victors used the issues of land rights, cultural superiority, religious pre-eminence, and mastery of the English language as a means to remind former Mexicans they were second class citizens in a land they had lost through conquest.

Chicanos and other ethnic groups do need to correct a view of United

States history which is Euro-centric. Blacks have pointed out that their origins and development are an afterthought in certain surveys of American history. Japanese, Chinese and other Asian citizens, Philipinos and Pacific Islanders have their own sense of place which includes movements of people from the Pacific to the western United States and vice versa.

Furthermore, the ways in which Chavez uses the concept of ethnicity as a means to critique how a sense of place relates to a sense of peoplehood raises questions about traditional scholarship. No fact, interpretation of history, or discussion of a region can be separated from the point of view of a culture or of a people. Once the concept of ethnicity appears in discourse about the United States, different points of view emerge. Ethnic individuals have at least two perspectives: the vista from an indigenous culture and that of a “majority” culture which sets them apart. For Chicanos, a sense of place refers to a homeland and a lost land.

The Lost Land calls attention to how ethnic scholarship modifies traditional methods of working with ideas. Chavez clarifies how facts, data, and concepts about Chicanos are not value free nor “objective” but spring from an ethnic point of view. Moreover, symbols, facts, and concepts are not hermetic and set apart from people but shape behavior and relationships. Chavez shows how a sense of place, an image of the Southwest, keys differing notions of social cohesion, group loyalty, and self-definition among Chicanos.

Finally, *The Lost Land* is complex and sophisticated in scope and method. Some scholars might disagree with the weight Chavez gives certain sources of information, with the way he integrates certain types of data and with the implicit polemic that shapes his point of view. It is nonetheless, an important work which integrates scholarship and ethnicity.

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