

So far as scholars are concerned, one may well hope that Michaelis-Jena's work signals a new surge of interest in the Grimms in the English-speaking world and that discussions of their ideas and of the influence of their theories will soon follow.

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Folktales of Mexico, edited and translated by Américo Paredes. University of Chicago Press, 1970.

In this superlative addition to the growing list of volumes of the Folktales of the World Series, Dr. Paredes has presented a relatively representative view of the oral narrative tradition of Mexico. He demonstrates to the reader not only the Märchen brought over by the Conquistadores and adapted and adopted by the New World inhabitants and still alive in Mexican tradition today, but also he presents a glimpse of remaining pre-Columbian beliefs and motifs. All levels of Mexican social structure are represented in the tales since Dr. Paredes has included tales from modern, cosmopolitan Mexico City as well as narratives from the campo. Aside from the usual stereotyped characters of much of the world's folktale tradition, we find Aztec deities and monsters, charismatic caudillos, psychiatrists, and such famous personages as Kim Novak and Pedro de Urdemalas (a favorite protagonist of tales throughout Central America and found as far south as Chile). The miraculous and the mundane, the fictitious and the historical are present. It is unfortunate however, that although both Paredes and Dorson, in their respective Introduction and Preface, underline the importance of religious and anti-gringo sentiments as major factors of the Mexican tradition, they have opted to present only a very few examples of narratives dealing directly with these themes.

Dr. Paredes has done an outstanding job of translating these tales into an English which retains much of the flavor of Mexican Spanish without falling into the trap of allowing the narratives to sound as if they were written for utterance by Mexican bandidos of a spaghetti western. His Introduction traces the history of the folkloristic scholarship within Mexico and points out the successes and failures of some of that scholarship. This Introduction, coupled with Dr. Dorson's Preface, which sketches the major events and influences in the development of modern Mexico, serve to give a background against which the selected tales can be better understood.

Folktales of Mexico stands as one of the few works available to non-Spanish speakers and readers which portrays with relative accuracy a Latin American tradition of oral narrative.

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