

edited in Freiburg by Lutz Rörich and Sabine Wienker-Peipho, makes an important contribution to the current debate on the subject which it addresses and, in many instances, moves that debate considerably along. That, nevertheless, there remains so much to be said and done, so much thinking to do, will astonish only those who have preferred to stay aloof from that debate. Storytelling will never cease to excite scholarly curiosity, and the investigation of that phenomenon which forms the title of this journal is by no means one of the least fascinating and rewarding in that ongoing discussion. While, in certain respects, it might have been useful to have all the papers read at the Budapest Congress published together, even if only as a historical record, the limited collection under review is proof that, in the absence of the possibility of such complete publication, a judiciously chosen subset can be very satisfying insofar as it has the kind of cohesion often missing in more comprehensive *Acta*. The "Theory Commission" of the ISFNR has completed its work nobly; the publication of these papers also answers our initial question very positively, confirming that there is not only the room but also the necessity for what may at first glance look like a customary and expected response to our conference-going age.

W.F.H. NICOLAISEN  
University of Aberdeen

Candace Slater. *City Steeple, City Streets: Saint's Tales from Granada and a Changing Spain*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1990. xii + 240 pp. ISBN 0-520-06815-7.

This fascinating and richly textured study focuses on various narratives concerning Fray (Brother) Leopoldo de Alpandei (1864-1956), a Capuchin friar, a man out of peasant stock, and particularly well-known provincially as his Granada monastery's official alms collector for nearly fifty years. Reports of his miraculous powers, which began circulating during his lifetime, have increased steadily in the period following his death. The present scholarly investigator completed almost a year of

fieldwork in Andalusia in 1984 and 1986, building, however unobtrusively, on her earlier like studies in Brazil, that field work resulting in her fine *Trail of Miracles: Stories from a Pilgrimage in Northeast Brazil* (1986). As the title indicates, the analysis focuses on: "the essential pluralism of the Fray Leopoldo tales, their undercurrent of resistance to institutional authority, and their deep concern for the relationship between past and present" (p. 1). The last points are implied in the short title, concentrating as it does on the dichotomy between "official" and "popular", "sacred" and "secular", "written" and "oral", and pre- and post-Franco lifestyles, as well as on the amazing changes in so many attitudes over the last thirty years or so. Fascinating, too, is the indebtedness of the stories and the tensions inherent in them to the highly traditional genre of the saint's legend. In short, the collected stories, anecdotes and occasional objections to the cult confirm the vital nexus between (traditional) narrative and social forms, particularly those of technological urban living.

As has also been found elsewhere, the recounters of the tales tend "to be members of the middle- and upper-classes" (p. 183) and often male, whereas those telling "Counterlegends", and often denouncing the Capuchins, are frequently simple folk who yet accept the miraculous in relation to Fray Leopoldo, not least because there is perceived to be little or no future in their own lives (p. 175), due to Spain's chilling "economic modernization". The links between religious imagination, narrative and folklore, already explored by Jean-Claude Schmitt and Stephen Wilson in recent years, are now probed particularly from the point of view of seeing the tales as "an expression of a particular group of people in a specific time and place" (p. 5).

The actual treatment is a very lucid one, describing initially the setting for the particular devotion and offering vacuous possible motives for this. Then there follows analysis of the friar's behaviour in relation to the official Articles of Canonization and to his formal biography. The actual contemporary storytellers are categorized, many of them revealing violent anti-clericalism, as well as overlaying the particular incident with so much personalization. The final chapter is a model illustration of the difficulties for the collector endeavouring to divorce the popular from the official and to get past Church-endorsed

orthodoxies. Once this was achieved many reminiscences followed, showing very guilelessly the place of the friar within the tellers' lives. Perhaps not surprisingly many radical clergy saw Fray Leopoldo as other-worldly and conformist, while the Archbishop deemed him "an expression of a bygone era" (p. 182).

Very clearly the friar, like St Joan of Arc herself, has and still does represent differing values to the interviewed men and women as to the meaning of twentieth-century experience, both nationally and personally. This alone makes the tales about him very characteristic of many contemporary legends on superficially very different themes, the consequences of which is that the scholar, or the reader "comes to appreciate the considerable flexibility of the most outwardly traditional folk-literary forms" (p. 195). Perhaps it is fairest to see the work as yet another fine piece of ethnographic research into theology or popular religion, with the final conclusion that these particular tales are remarkably human, innocent, trusting and defiantly dismissive of the technological wonders of the later twentieth century.

J.S. RYAN

University of New England, Australia