

When there are mistakes in reporting such easily verifiable facts, one is far less ready to accept the more sensational statistics Lamb offers—for example, that 30 per cent of the female population in Gabon has venereal disease. Indeed, given the difficulty in obtaining accurate data, almost any health statistic for Africa is open to question. What is more, since the author does not provide references for many such statements, not only the factual accuracy but some of the book's general conclusions are called into question.

More serious yet, one comes away from *The Africans* with some of the same confused and negative impressions one draws from the writings of many early European explorers: Why do these people behave in such unpredictable and bizarre fashion? Human behavior seldom seems unpredictable or bizarre when one understands the values and visions that motivate it. But it takes a great deal of time and effort to understand these values; and in Africa, as elsewhere, they vary widely from people to people.

*The Destruction of a Continent* also deals with current crises, mainly the nature and causes of (but not solutions for) the economic crisis. The book is one of the worst examples of its genre, a combination of emotion, ignorance, and perpetuation of vague conspiracy theories.

Borgin, a chemist who has done research and taught in Africa, and Corbett, who has worked there as a photographer, contend that Africa is facing imminent catastrophe, for which the bureaucrats of international aid are responsible. The exact nature of the catastrophe is not spelled out, but the reader is given to understand that its arrival is imminent unless immediate and substantial changes are made. Changes in what? This too is a bit unclear. The authors feel that international aid, and particularly international aid bureaucrats (an ill-defined but clearly pejorative term that, according to the authors, includes former U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, who had very little to do with aid), is ruining the continent by imposing ill-conceived development models on reluctant Africans.

The authors reject both capitalist and socialist economic models for Africa, asserting that the Africans must develop their own. What these might be is not described, but Borgin and Corbett assume they are there to be discovered, if only the Africans were left alone. The authors object particularly to the Brandt Commission recommendations for increased international aid to assist development. They also object to

the New International Economic Order, though this is a set of policies that would fundamentally restructure international economic relations to favor the poorer countries and is favored by such countries, including those in Africa.

These two bêtes noires reflect the confusion that permeates the book. Who is actually to blame for Africa's current economic difficulties: the former colonialists, the Africans themselves through their own feckless economic management, or those pernicious international aid bureaucrats, led by Kurt Waldheim?

Of course the world is not a simple place, and Africa's economic problems have neither simple causes nor solutions. If African governments have aspired to economic progress for their people, they often have failed in its achievement—through their own shortcomings as well as through their dependence on an international economy that is unstable at best and which, in recession, adversely affects countries that rely on export earnings to pay for essential imports.

International aid and aid bureaucrats have certainly been a substantial presence in African economies, but it is an open question whether they have played a significant role in African development. Aid has remained a relatively small part of the total resources, domestic and international, that are available to African governments to promote development. Moreover, the Africans have not been passive actors in the development process. It is both patronizing and inaccurate to assume that they simply have accepted the suggestions (or commands) of aid donors as the price for obtaining aid or because they were too weak or intimidated to do otherwise. Africans have not been afraid to reject aid proposals that did not fit their priorities or to refashion them to their liking. They have proven they seldom need to be protected from Westerners. In any event, they hardly need the sort of protection Borgin and Corbett would offer. [WV]

### SONS OF THE WIND: THE SEARCH FOR IDENTITY IN SPANISH AMERICAN LITERATURE

by Braulio Munoz

(Rutgers University Press; 318 pp.; \$27.50/\$12.95)

Holly Myers

Munoz, a Swarthmore sociologist originally from Peru, has provided a valuable prism through which to view the soul of Spanish America, as well as an interesting

insight into the modern Latin American novel. Spanish American social thought, he argues, achieved its twentieth-century maturity in the development of the *indigenista* literary movement and its accompanying social movement, *indigenismo*. *Indigenista* authors—most of them nonprofessional, for a formal Spanish American literature had yet to define itself—spent the first half of the twentieth century wrestling with the "Indian question," which up to that time had been more or less ignored. To a great degree their writing was in expiation for the unending suffering of the Indian people in colonial and postcolonial times. But if their intent was to liberate the Indian, their conclusions, ironically, required the sacrifice of the Indian in favor of the new Spanish American *mestizo*. Munoz traces the long and, to a tragic extent, lost literary tradition of the indigenous peoples and provides both social and historical background for the development of Spanish American literature in three principal regions: the Andes, Guatemala, and Mexico.

Munoz sees the role of the modern Spanish American writer foreshadowed in the Aztec concept of the wise *tlamatini*, "he who knows something," and also in the 1609 witness to injustice, the *Comentarios Reales*, of the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega. Under colonialism, the development of the Spanish American novel was retarded, but, coincident with the struggle toward liberation, the novel became the "tool par excellence of the Spanish American critical mind."

First attempts of Andean writers to deal with the Indian, in the late 1800s, could only romanticize him. Though he had played a significant role as a soldier in the Andean struggle for independence, he was still seen according to an old and alien European image of the "savage." Finally, in 1889, an important transitional novel, *Aves Sin Nido* (Birds Without Nests), by the Peruvian Clorinda Matto de Turner, presaged the realism of the twentieth century. Matto's pessimistic vision was derived from Gonzales Prada, a Peruvian intellectual who characterized the situation of the Indian as exploitation by a "trinity of terror": the landlord, the priest, and the government representative. For Matto the Indian's only options were charity or death.

One of the important ingredients of *indigenismo* was the strong, increasingly radical student movement that was greatly influenced by both the Russian and the Mexican revolutions. The Russian Revolution provided an example of ideological purity and the Mexican Revolution provided a Spanish American model for action.

The success of the Mexican Revolution and the acceptance of the Marxist interpretation of the Indian problem as a question of unjust land tenure increased the faith of the Andean *indigenista* movement in the "creative potential" of the Indian for bringing about change and gave the Andean *indigenista* novel its strong socialist stance. *Indigenismo* in the Andean world depicted a society "led by a morally corrupt elite supported by a corrupt military machine and clergy, all of whom lived off the Indian's labor."

However, even though the purported aim of Andean *indigenista* writers was to liberate the Indian, they still clung to the long-cherished ideal of "cultural unity," an almost mystical blend of Indian and ladino that would fulfill the need for a new, transcendent society. *Indigenista* writers, themselves mestizo, could envision the Indian's future only on their own, culturally bound terms. They valued the Indian's courage, the wealth of his ritual, his high esteem for collectivism. But they did not like his belief in magic, and they found in Indian culture not only a "potential for liberation" but "reactionary forces preventing this potential." Faced with the realities of the twentieth century, they divided into "socialist" and "liberal" camps. The liberals imagined the abolition of Indian culture and the rise of a benevolent dictator who would embody national interests. Socialist writers placed their faith in the communal process of *mestizaje*, wherein the mestizo, the new man, the Indian transformed, would lead an Indian revolution. In either case, the Indian was subsumed into the larger ideal of a mestizo culture.

In Guatemala, the Indian was generally more isolated from the dominant ladino society—with the important exception of the brief period from 1945 to 1954 under Arévalo and Arbenz. The development not only of political institutions but of literature as well was made impossible by the environment created by dictatorship. The work of Mario Monteforte Toledo, Guatemala's sole *indigenista* writer, ended in despair. His two novels, one written at the hopeful juncture that followed the overthrow of the Ubico dictatorship, the other written at the close of the Arbenz era, trace a slide from optimism to pessimism. The first of these sees the Indian problem as a problem of class. The Indian "will be saved as a person, not as an Indian." By 1953, Monteforte Toledo was not so sanguine. Munoz writes that "having recognized that the Indian was reluctant to accept the ladino's solution to the Indian problem (predicated on the Indian's cultural death), Monteforte Toledo, like some liberal writers in the Andes, par-

tially returns to the preindigenista mood. His disappointment with the results of the revolution, as far as the Indian problem goes, is total. Despite his realistic portrayal of the Indian's social conditions in his second novel, he therefore returns to Matto's conclusion: either charity or death."

Mexico, after the success of its revolution and the institution of the *ejido* ("exit") system of land tenure, focused on national character as revealed through the mestizo. Since the Mexican *indigenista* writer did not need the Indian for his "creative potential" for bringing about change, he created instead a romantic Indian who remained distant from society and outside the revolutionary process. "Indians scattered in the countryside or crowded into urban centers were either ignored or reclassified." For the Mexican writer the revolution had created the "new society," and his writing relinquished the prescriptive aims of the Andean novel in favor of documenting Indian culture in an anthropological way. On the whole Munoz deems the Mexican *indigenista* novel escapist, though these writers shared the Andean writers' bleak outlook for the Indian's future. "Having neither a liberal nor a socialist hope, Mexican writers project an image of the Indian as an isolated being, suspended in space and time; they see this situation as ending only in an undetermined future when the Indian will disappear through mestizaje or death."

The *indigenista* movement faded in the late '50s and early '60s. This was due partially to the growth of the social sciences (especially anthropology), which effectively usurped the role of the writers, and also to a mild amelioration of the Indian's social condition in parts of Spanish America. Finally, the massive urban migration of this period changed Spanish American perceptions of the pressing problem facing their societies. This migration transformed the new majority of the dispossessed into masses of "deculturized proletarians," i.e., mestizos, and not Indian peasants.

As *indigenista* writing disappeared, Spanish American literature turned to magical-realist writing (exemplified by Miguel Ángel Asturias), in which the Indian "problem" was pushed into the background of literary attention. Finally, concomitant with the development of a broad middle class, growing economies, and increased urbanization, the New Novel of the Spanish American literary "boom" appeared, typified by the works of such well-known authors as Gabriel García Márquez, Carlos Fuentes, Mario Vargas Llosa, and Julio Cortázar. For these writers, a more pressing

concern than the Indian problem is the possible loss of the unique mestizo culture to an encroaching internationalist capitalist culture. In their novels "injustices take on a semblance of fateful events," and no solution to the social problems rife in Spanish America is offered. Munoz believes the stylistic obsession of contemporary Spanish American writers places their work beyond the reach of the majority of readers in Spanish America and that the current detour into aesthetic wizardry has presented a new task for Spanish American literature. He writes: "Perhaps the greatest task for the Spanish American writer may now be self-consciously to fashion a great didactic literature: did not Martí, Vallejo, Neruda point the way?"

The search for Spanish American identity is not over; although the mestizo has indeed emerged triumphant, he "still possesses a haunted soul." The *indigenista* movement offered Spanish Americans an opportunity to come "to terms with the unhealed wounds of the conquest and its aftermath," but the vision of the *indigenista* writer was severely limited. In essence, *indigenista* writers were forced to abandon the Indian in favor of their dream of cultural unity, because behind their "demand for the Indian's self-immolation there lurked the hope that with the Indian's cultural death, cultural integration and sociocultural identity for the Spanish American might be secured." A mestizo himself, the *indigenista* writer could only envision the Indian of the future as a mestizo. A final resolution of the tension born of the sixteenth-century conquest is still not apparent. Whatever the result, it is clear that the Indian, squeezed by contending vision of class, race, and culture, will continue to suffer. [WV]

#### A BETTER WORLD THE GREAT SCHISM: STALINISM AND THE AMERICAN INTELLECTUAL

by William L. O'Neill

(Simon & Schuster: 447 pp.; \$17.95)

Larry Tool

This is an important book, not for what it achieves but for what it attempts. *A Better World* is offered as "a study of the struggle among non-communist leftists and liberals over American relations with the Soviet Union from 1939 through the 1950s." This is not diplomatic history, but, rather, a kind of sequel to studies of "the red decade." O'Neill portrays the intellectual aftermath