

But the exclusion is also ideological. It ties in with a basic acceptance of currently prevalent consensus- and hegemony-oriented views of intergroup relations, which may prevent the volume from becoming the standard critical reader on its topic that one had hoped for. As history, theory, and collection of data, though, it has much material to offer.

—Hartwig Isernhagen  
University of Basel, Switzerland

**Eduardo Galeano. *Memory of Fire: Genesis*. Cedric Belfrage, trans. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985) xvii, 293 pp., \$8.95 paper.**

The first volume of a trilogy by the Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano, *Memory of Fire: Genesis* has been called remarkable, fascinating, vivid, passionate, angry, celebratory, and triumphant. It could also be called a history of Latin America to 1700, though that gives little sense of its style or scope. In his introduction, the author describes himself as “not a historian,” but as “a writer who would like to contribute to the kidnapped memory of all America, but above all of Latin America, that despised and beloved land.” To do this he has created a great mosaic of stories, most of them less than a page long.

The first section of *Memory of Fire: Genesis*, called “First Voices,” consists of creation stories told by the original Indian inhabitants of South, Central and North America. These wonderful tales speak of the creation of the world, of stars, of day, night, the sun, the moon, people, animals, fire, plants, language, death, song, love, fear—the ingredients of life. Their ancient messages of wisdom reverberate through the historical narratives that follow. For instance, there is a Venezuelan myth, entitled by Galeano “Conscience,” about a “phantom born in [the] hearts” of Carib Indians who attack and kill their neighbors.” “Born among the conquerors to avenge the conquered,” this phantom who plagued the Caribs can also be seen to haunt the lives of some of the later European invaders.

The stories in the volume’s historical section, “Old New World,” appear in chronological order from 1492 to 1700. Each is identified by date and locality, and most focus on a particular person. Here are tales of Columbus, of Montezuma, of Juana Ines de la Cruz, and of Cervantes; tales of Indian warriors and monarchs, kings and popes, conquistadors and pirates, slaves and freedom fighters, poets and priests, saints and executioners—hundreds of stories. Increasingly we hear the voices of people of mixed ancestry—the mestizos, mulattoes, and Creoles who will inherit a continent.

The stories are alive with conversations, dreams, feasts, and feelings, and with the sights and sounds of nature, humanity, and strife. Galeano intersperses his prose pieces with poems, chants, and songs from the times and with dramatic skits he has created from historical sources. The result is compelling, enlightening, and disturbing—history interfused with literature in a way that emphasizes the humanity of everyone described, yet comes down strongly and angrily on the side of men and women struggling to free themselves from the slavery of others' greed.

The vivid detail of Galeano's style, which Belfrage succeeds in transmitting to English-speaking readers, leaves no reason to wish the volume had illustrations or photographs. And the author's method of cuing each story by number to historical sources listed at the end is useful and unobtrusive. Readers wishing to use *Memory of Fire: Genesis* as an engaging introduction to Latin American history, however, may regret its lack of maps and index.

—Kathleen Danker  
University of Nebraska, Lincoln

**Rodolfo O. de la Garza, ed. *Ignored Voices: Public Opinion Polls and the Latino Community*. (Austin, TX: MAS Publications, 1987) 232 pp., \$12.95 paper.**

The past several years have witnessed the publication of a handful of books and articles focusing on Latino politics in the United States. These studies fall into three general categories: the first type of research attempts to shatter the popular myths about the lack of political sophistication among Latinos by discussing institutional obstacles which hinder Latino political aspirations; the second kind of study documents the rich organizational history of Latinos over the past century; the third type of literature promotes a variety of theoretical models as a way to explain the lack of influence of Latinos on the electoral process.

The book, *Ignored Voices*, breaks new ground in the field of Latino politics by addressing public opinion polls and the Latino community. The book is a collection of papers presented at a conference held in Austin in 1985. The presenters are a cross-section of Latino and non-Latino academics, elected officials, media representatives, and public opinion researchers. The publication is divided into four sections—the significance of public opinion, the 1984 election, issues in polling Latino attitudes, and Latino public opinion research.

*Ignored Voices* is a timely contribution to the growing list of studies on Latino politics because it takes a major step in answering some questions