



Wonder and Exile in the New World

Alex Nava

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In *Wonder and Exile in the New World*, Alex Nava explores the border regions between wonder and exile, particularly in relation to the New World. It traces the preoccupation with the concept of wonder in the history of the Americas, beginning with the first European encounters, goes on to investigate later representations in the Baroque age, and ultimately enters the twentieth century with the emergence of so-called magical realism. In telling the story of wonder in the New World, Nava gives special attention to the part it played in the history of violence and exile, either as a force that supported and reinforced the Conquest or as a voice of resistance and decolonization.

Focusing on the work of New World explorers, writers, and poets—and their literary descendants—Nava finds that wonder and exile have been two of the most significant metaphors within Latin American cultural, literary, and religious representations. Beginning with the period of the Conquest, especially with Cabeza de Vaca and Las Casas, continuing through the Baroque with Cervantes and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and moving into the twentieth century with Alejo Carpentier and Miguel Ángel Asturias, Nava produces a historical study of Latin American narrative in which religious and theological perspectives figure prominently.

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