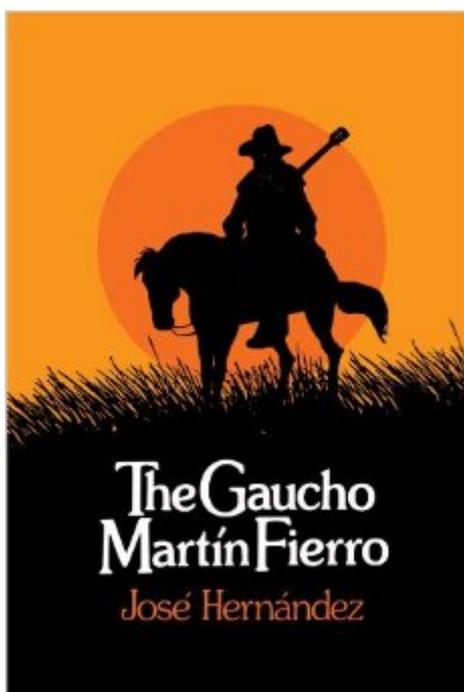


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The Gaucho Martín Fierro (UNESCO Collection Of Representative Works: Latin American)



Synopsis

This is a poem of protest drawn from the life of the gaucho, who was forced to yield his freedom and individuality to the social and material changes that invaded his beloved pampas--a protest which arose from years of abuse and neglect suffered from landowners, militarists, and the Argentine political establishment. This poem, composed and first published more than a century ago, could have been written today by spokesmen for other oppressed groups in other parts of the world. For this reason, perhaps, the poem has such universal appeal that it has been translated into nineteen languages, making it available to more than half of the world's people. Hernandez's poem was an attempt to alert the government, and particularly the city dwellers, to the problems faced by the gaucho minority in adjusting to the new, unfamiliar culture imposed on them by the Central Government soon after the fall of the dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas in 1852, under the slogan "Politics of Progress." Moreover, the poem supplied a historical link to the gauchos' contribution to the national development of Argentina, for the gaucho had performed a major role in the country's independence from Spain. They had also fought in the civil wars of Argentina and had cleared the pampas of marauding Indian bands that plagued the pastoral development of the region. According to Hernandez they had been by turns abused, neglected, and finally dispersed, ultimately losing their identity as a social group. Those interested in the *Martin Fierro* as literature, as social protest, as anthropology, or as an example of the annihilation of a minority group--and its very identity--have joined in making it the most widely read, analyzed, and discussed literary work produced in Argentina. Now, after several hundred editions in Spanish and other languages, *Martin Fierro* is recognized as a masterpiece of world literature. The aim of this English version has been to achieve a line-by-line rendition faithful to the original in substance and tone, but without attempting to recreate Hernandez's meter or rhyme. The translators present it here as a catalyst for enjoyment, provocation, and insight.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Martin Fierro is a work of art. While describing in poetry the life of Martin Fierro (a Gaucho in the Pampas in the mid to late 1800's), this poem was also a political complaint and a message of unification against the modern world for the gauchos. Hernandez's greatest achievement was to unite, in one poem, a message for all the social and cultural classes. Hernandez was a self made man, ruled by simple principles based on honesty and dignity. These principles are well reflected in his book. When Martin Fierro meets his sons, and counsels them, it is Hernandez speaking to all of us.

the complete, unabridged, bilingual edition (also published by State University of New York Press, ISBN-13: 9780791458600), available here on : Martin Fierro... while it is, admittedly, more expensive, it contains far more material / text / illustrations -- more than 400 pages longer! you can read my more detailed review of that edition on that item page.

This is a great book which describes the situation of the gauchos in ARGENTINA (of course, long ago). I recommend the readers to check the wise tips given by "el viejo vizcacha", in one of the chapters. (They are great (and real)).

Martin Fierro was written by Jose Hernandez in an era of gauchos and caudillos, not very different as what it is today with injustice and segregation. Gives a plain message of values, courage and validates the ability of the people to survive under the worst conditions and succeed. A very actual approach at very current problems. The advise he gives to his kids could be the same we today give to our kids "sibling be united , ..." A great book, with a wonderful content, some historic points of view and a nice look to the 1800 argentinean society from a gaucho's side .

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