



# Mexico in Verse: A History of Music, Rhyme, and Power

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The history of Mexico is spoken in the voice of ordinary people. In rhymed verse and mariachi song, in letters of romance and whispered words in the cantina, the heart and soul of a nation is revealed in all its intimacy and authenticity. *Mexico in Verse*, edited by Stephen Neufeld and Michael Matthews, examines Mexican history through its poetry and music, the spoken and the written word.

Focusing on modern Mexico, from 1840 to the 1980s, this volume examines the cultural venues in which people articulated their understanding of the social, political, and economic change they witnessed taking place during times of tremendous upheaval, such as the Mexican-American War, the Porfiriato, and the Mexican Revolution. The words of diverse peoples—people of the street, of the field, of the cantinas—reveal the development of the modern nation. Neufeld and Matthews have chosen sources so far unexplored by Mexicanist scholars in order to investigate the ways that individuals interpreted—whether resisting or reinforcing—official narratives about formative historical moments.

The contributors offer new research that reveals how different social groups interpreted and understood the Mexican experience. The collected essays cover a wide range of topics: military life, railroad accidents, religious upheaval, children's literature, alcohol consumption, and the 1985 earthquake. Each chapter provides a translated song or poem that encourages readers to participate in the interpretive practice of historical research and cultural scholarship. In this regard, *Mexico in Verse* serves both as a volume of collected essays and as a classroom-ready primary document reader.

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