

The growth of food studies in the West is to be applauded but it would be a pity if scholars limited themselves to delving into little ponds of kitchen and restaurant history. Food culture is dynamic. Great dangers menace our future and we need the force of intellect to lead the way in the fight for a food culture we can be proud of. These books provide us with a start in understanding what food culture is all about – as an introduction they should be read by initiates into the food game and perhaps they will lead to greater participation in the politics of food culture and its challenges.

LYNNE CHATTERTON

Since Lynne Chatterton kindly supplied her report of the Greenwood Press series, two further volumes have arrived:

Janet Long-Solís and Luis Alberto Vargas: *Food Culture in Mexico*: ISBN 031332431X:194pp.

F. Xavier Medina: *Food Culture in Spain*: ISBN 0313328196:169 pp.

My inspection of these confirms what has been said above. They are essentially student textbooks, so detail is light, brush strokes broad, useful truths sometimes buried out of sight beneath a pile of generalities. The English is not too hot either: the translation of the Spanish volume is particularly halting.

Daniel E Moerman: *Native American Ethnobotany*: Timber Press: ISBN 0881924539: 927pp, \$ 79.95.

Although first published in Oregon in 1998, Moerman's book on Red Indian plant-use has only just arrived here. There was no real hurry, it isn't likely to be bettered in my lifetime or even that of my grandchildren. The author's research over a quarter of a century has culminated in descriptions of 4,029 kinds of plants, used in 186 different ways by 291 tribal societies. Not surprisingly there is no room here for charts, maps nor virtually any pictures (though Moerman's daughter does get a credit for the illustrations) but for those who can't cope with the lack of visual stimulation I strongly recommend reading it in conjunction with an old copy of 'Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee'. This does contain pictures and a map and those who once wept with rage and embarrassment at Dee Brown's story of US ethnic cleansing will weep anew; for whereas Brown described the virtual annihilation of an entire ethnic grouping, Moerman details the culture that was flushed down the pan with it. A process which started before and continued long after the 'Indian Wars'.

The 'Food Plant' category is split into thirty two subdivisions con-