

name in Nahuatl, Spanish translation, and example of use. There is no commentary. The work is stated in the foreword to be a contribution to a future complete dictionary of Mexican hieroglyphs. All who have access to the Mendoza codex will find this analysis interesting. Its primary use, however, will be limited to linguistic specialists.

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A cavalaria medieval, Ensaio sobre a significação histórica e influência civilizadora do ideal cavaleiresco por Professores do King's College de Londres. Edited by EDGAR PRESTAGE. With a preliminary note by SIR ISRAEL GOLLANCZ. Translated from the English by ANTÓNIO ÁLVARO DÓRIA. [Coleção Peregrina, N° 5.] (Oporto: Livraria Civilização, 1948. Pp. 265. Paper.)

A number of years ago Edgar Prestage, the retired Camões Professor of Portuguese at King's College, London, who is the dean of Portuguese studies in the English-speaking world, edited a series of lectures on medieval chivalry which were originally given in 1925 by members of his Department of History. This volume has now been translated into Portuguese.

Since the book has already been reviewed before, when it first appeared in English, there is no need for me to say very much about it here. But I do want to refer to the two excellent chapters on Spanish and Portuguese chivalry by A. R. Pastor and Mr. Prestage, respectively. Mr. Pastor's fine contribution is written largely from the literary point of view; Mr. Prestage's, from the historical. These are reflections of differences in training. Mr. Pastor naturally speaks of the Cid, the *Siete Partidas*, the military orders, and Don Quixote; Mr. Prestage, of Dom Afonso Henriques, the *Ordenações Afonsinas*, the chronicles, John I, the Crusades, and also the military orders. These chapters are fascinating to read, and are particularly recommended.

The book in its present dress is another tribute to Mr. Prestage by a nation that owes him so much. Our most distinguished living Lusitanist eminently deserves this additional tribute.

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Sesmarias medievais portuguesas. By VIRGÍNIA RAU. (Lisbon: 1946. Pp. 214. 75 escudos. Paper.)

"Give me land, lots of land" might well have been the slogan of medieval Portuguese warriors, as it was of our own nineteenth-century frontiersmen. Step by step as the Moslems were driven back by Afonso Henriques and his successors, the question of landownership came to

the fore. Some conquered lands were virgin, some were abandoned by their former owners, some were taken forcibly by Christians who thought themselves entitled to what belonged to infidels. Land and its use thus became the absorbing economic theme of Christian Portugal's southward march. Miss Rau's book is concerned with the legal methods of getting and holding land, and the social responsibilities that devolved on the holders.

Virginia Rau is a comparatively new star in the historical heavens of Portugal; and she shines so brightly that nobody in the future will be able to look without seeing her. This in itself is an achievement in a country where able historians are not uncommon. Her other publications include *D. Catarina de Braganca, rainha de Inglaterra* (Coimbra, 1941), *Subsidios para o estudo das feiras medievais portuguesas* (Lisbon, 1943), and a number of other books and articles. The present book was selected for review because the *sesmarias* of Portugal were the direct forbears of Brazil's land unit of the same name, rendering the understanding of the parent essential to proper comprehension of the child.

When the Christians began pushing the Moslems southward one of the first forms of landownership that developed was the *presúria*, which resembled in many ways the squatter pre-emption of our own history. Vacant lands, or lands made vacant by conquest, were seized and held pending a title to be granted by the king himself, or by a nobleman or religious order, acting in the king's name. The larger land grants to nobles and churchmen were also called *presúrias*, which in fact they were on a large scale. The legal title in the case of both large and small plots carried with it the obligation of occupying the land, or of maintaining an active possession. If abandoned the title could be lost; or, to state the case more cautiously, this was the legal theory even if not the invariable practice.

Once territories were definitely in the hands of the Christians, more settled ways of getting land were developed. Here comes the gradual introduction of the *sesmarias*. All—king, clergy and commons—had an interest in the stability of land titles. All had an interest in seeing the lands used productively. But the uses to which an individual might put his lands for private profit might not accord with the community interest. Nor did all individuals find it necessary to use their lands for food production. The paradox of vacant lands and food shortages was therefore recurrent. To stimulate the use of vacant lands, or the use for the production of breadstuffs of lands in olive groves, vineyards or pasture the concept of landownership depending on use was applied by the sovereign. Thus it was that lands not in use could be taken by those who would use them.

But this had to be done in a regular and legal way, in contrast to the grabbing characteristic of the *presúria*. Officials known as *sesmeiros*, perhaps because there were six of them or because their duties fell during the six working days, were empowered to take from one and give to another, i.e., to grant *sesmarias*. In some cases, perhaps in most, the *sesmeiros* were elected by the landowners of the community; while in others they were appointed by the king or by the nobles and heads of the church orders. If the holder of a *sesmaria* continued to work his lands he received a lifetime title which was hereditary. If at any stage of ownership, however, the lands were abandoned, the *sesmeiros* could grant the title to another. Because of this concept of ownership based on use, the duties of the *sesmeiros* continued throughout the medieval period.

The *sesmarias* were regularized in the royal decree of 1375 in the time of King Fernando, though they had existed in fact for at least a century before that time. Curiously enough, the law of 1375 does not mention *sesmarias*, its object being to clear away the economic chaos which Portugal suffered in common with the rest of Western Europe as a result of the Black Death. But the gist of the law, that man owed an economic obligation to the community, was applied to the owners of land. Hence the dictum that man must use, or lose, his land.

Many economic and legal changes came into the operation of the system after 1375; but the theory remained the same. These changes have been discussed by medievalists with much warmth and with many fine distinctions of interpretation. Miss Rau treats all this ably with reliance always on primary documents of the Torre do Tombo. But the legal points need not detain us here. Our concern is that by 1500 the *sesmaria* was the Portuguese form of land grant through which small owners received their land. Long before 1500 the system had gone to Madeira and the Azores; after 1500, it went to Brazil. In Brazil, "give me land, lots of land" could and did become a reality. *Sesmarias* became as large in Brazil as lordly grants had been in Portugal.

But Brazil's *sesmarias* are another study yet to be made. Miss Rau has written a masterful work on the Portuguese background, facilitating the task of some future historian of the Brazilian scene. And so let us stop here with the customary pious hope that somebody will do something about it in the near future.

As for the technical aspects of this book: From pages 133 to 205 there are documents concerning *sesmarias*, many hitherto unpublished, taken from the principal archives of Portugal. There is a table of contents (for which please turn to the back of the book, of course), detailed tables of contents at the head of each chapter, a bibliography of pub-

lished works, and ample footnote citations to the archives and secondary works. The only thing lacking is an index. Someday there will be no doubt a Yankee commission to teach our Latin brothers to prepare indexes. However, there are many good meals without a menu; and this is one of them.

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COLONIAL PERIOD

Cedulario Cortesiano. Edited by BEATRIZ ARTEAGA GARZA and GUADALUPE PÉREZ SAN VICENTE. [Publicaciones de la Sociedad de Estudios Cortesianos, I.] (Mexico City: Editorial Jus, 1949. Pp. 364. Illustration.)

Under the auspices of a group of well known Mexican historians, among whom figure Federico Gómez de Orozco, Sánchez Navarro, Rafael García Granados, Alberto María Carreño Leopoldo Martínez Cossío, and M. Romero de Terreros, the Sociedad de Estudios Cortesianos has begun a program of publication. Three volumes dealing with various aspects of the life of Cortés have already appeared. In this one, the editors, graduates of the Universidad Nacional and pupils of Luis G. Ceballos, paleographer in the Archivo General de la Nación, have centered their study on *cédulas* relating to Cortés. In addition to a careful paleographical transcription, the editors have provided thorough explanatory notes. They have included in their collection not only the *cédulas* proper, but also other types of documents: *pragmáticas*, letters, ordinances, capitulations, etc. The collection faithfully illustrates the shifting relations between Cortés and Charles V and the queen, Doña Juana. We see the initial astonishment of the emperor at the treasures sent by the conqueror; we note the development of the intrigue against the centaur from Extremadura, whose glory threatened to overshadow that of the monarch. Charles and his courtiers, with the economic resources they might obtain in Mexico in mind, restrained their impulse to order the punishment of Cortés that his enemies sought. The latter's father, Martín Cortés, and other friends managed to stave off this attack and the king decided to grant the honors and the title of *adelantado* in March, 1525.

Continued attacks on Cortés awakened the insatiable need of money on the part of the Emperor and he appointed a *juez de residencia* to investigate the actions of the conqueror of New Spain, a move which seriously hampered the statesmanlike plans which, according to Madañaga, Cortés had in mind. On the occasion of Cortés' visit to Spain and his matrimonial alliance with the Zúñiga family, he managed to secure