

Archeological *Chronology of Venezuela*, Vol. I and II in the same series. Some corrections have been made, but this Spanish edition of Vol. I as text and Vol. II with illustrations is basically a direct translation of the original monograph that summarizes Venezuelan archeology as of 1958 and develops detailed chronologies for the area. The work is the result of long collaboration between Cruzent, who personally has examined more of Venezuela in search of archeological sites than anyone else, and Rouse, his most frequent collaborator in fieldwork, classification, and interpretation.

The authors divide Venezuela into five arbitrary regions: The Islands, the Coast, the Mountains, the Llanos, and the Orinoco, and each of these regions is subdivided into smaller units called "areas," and for each area they describe the archeological cultures according to a unit of study they call a "style" based on pottery traits or a "complex" referring to non-ceramic sites. From the non-ceramic complexes to historic times, using 25 Carbon-14 dates as a basis for absolute dates, they establish five arbitrary periods and assign all their material to these Periods I through V even though proof is not always supported by stratigraphic excavation or seriation, but only by the impressionistic feelings of the authors.

They regard their major contribution to be the establishment of an areal dichotomy between western and eastern Venezuela, and the reconfirmation of paths of diffusion in Venezuela according to Osgood's H-theory rather than Steward's Circum-Caribbean hypothesis.

Except to the professional archeologist specialized in Latin American archeology the volumes will be difficult to follow and use, and may appear unusually complex. The specialist will find useful comparative materials in the large number of excellent colotype plates, maps, and charts and artifact drawings.

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Don Juan Meléndez Valdés et son temps (1754-1817). By GEORGES DEMERSON. Paris, 1962. Librairie C. Klincksieck. Illustrations. Bibliography. Pp. xv, 665. Paper.

Juan Meléndez Valdés was one of Spain's forgotten *afrancesados* of the 18th and early 19th centuries. As a poet his contemporaries regarded him the equal of a Garcilaso or a Lope de Vega. He was, in the words of Martín Fernández de Navarrete, "the best poet of the epoch," the precursor of the romantic movement in Spain. He was highly regarded in Italy, Germany, England, and especially in France. Poet by choice, jurist by training, humanist by inclination, and philosopher by conviction, Meléndez was a complex personality, a man of both deep reflection and action. He was, unfortunately, never able to develop his talents fully.

Meléndez served both the government of Charles IV and the French regime of Joseph I, being especially influential in the effort to develop a system of primary education and in the revival of the Spanish theater. He went down to ruin with Joseph, and spent the last years of his life, 1813-1817, in exile in France, his adopted motherland. He died in Montpellier, a forgotten and disgraced patriot whose great wish had been to serve his country well.

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COLONIAL PERIOD

Puntos negros del descubrimiento de América. Estudio histórico-crítico. By LUIS VEGA-REY. México, 1961. Editorial Nacional. Colección Económica. Epilogue. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 491. Paper.

Me resulta difícil comprender por qué este libro ha sido reimpresso. Ni su autorperiodista y ensayista de pluma fácil, pero nada más—ni el libro en sí pueden considerarse representativos de nada. Ni siquiera de las diatribas auto-críticas a que los españoles de fines del siglo pasado fueron particularmente inclinados, como lo son en general todos

los pueblos que atraviesan una grave crisis. En este sentido se escribieron cosas mucho más originales. Si la reimpresión se debió al título un tanto truculento, temo que algunos lectores han de llamarse a engaño: no van a encontrar en estas páginas todos los puntos negros que se imaginan.

En ellas hay de todo. Verdades, medias verdades, errores, cuentos, poca crítica y muchos prejuicios. Fuera de la experiencia personal que pueda haber tenido en Cuba y Puerto Rico, el autor se basa en fuentes de segunda mano. Parece desconocer la existencia del Archivo General de Indias (pp. 203-204). Cabe dudar, además, de que haya examinado todas las obras que cita al final. No tiene la menor duda, por ejemplo, acerca del ficticio Fray Juan Pérez de Marchena, aunque por entonces (hacia 1895) ya parecía bien demostrado que se trataba de dos personas distintas: Fr. Juan Pérez y Fr. Antonio de Marchena. Hace morir al virrey. Núñez Vela en la batalla de *Las Charcas*—supongo quiso significar la de Huarina—ignorando la de Añaquito (Quito) donde efectivamente cayó el virrey (pp. 178-179); ignora la abdicación y destierro de Iturbide (p. 435) y escribe cosas tan peregrinas como las estampadas en la p. 398 sobre las *Leyes de Indias* y los funcionarios que administraban la justicia en América. Bastan estos ejemplos como botón de muestra.

En resumen. El libro de Vega-Rey puede tener importancia como testimonio de la pervivencia de la actitud criticista española respecto a su propia obra en América; como fuente de información histórica sobre el tema, es mediocre, tendencioso y desorientador. Debí dejárselo dormir en el olvido en que se hallaba.

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Academy of American Franciscan History

La tasa de Gamboa. By AGATA GLIGO VIEL. Santiago de Chile, 1962. Editorial Universidad Católica. Estudios de Historia del Derecho Chileno. No.

6. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 238. Paper.

This study, which won the Miguel Cruchaga Tocornal Prize of the Academia Chilena de la Historia for 1961, is focused upon one important aspect of Spanish-Indian relations in Chile during the closing years of the 16th century: an attempt to eliminate the *encomienda* for personal service and to replace it with a tribute system. Miss Gligo thus provides a detailed account of a Chilean phase of the crown-cum-humanitarians attack upon the system of Indian peonage.

Curiously enough, the *encomienda* had been transferred to Chile in the 1540's, coincidental to Pedro de Valdivia's conquest of the area, in almost the same years that this system of dependent labor had been under such heavy attack in the earlier-established colonies of Spain. Then, almost forty years later, the campaign for Indian betterment reached a moment of crisis in Chile when the new governor, Martín Ruiz de Gamboa, in the space of a few months in 1580 drafted, promulgated, and applied, a new set of ordinances regulating the *encomienda* in general and the employment of Indians in particular. However, the ordinances, proclaimed in May, 1580, and soon provisionally confirmed by the Audiencia of Lima, were almost immediately opposed by the majority of the Chilean colonists and their full implementation largely blocked by stalling and delaying tactics. When a new governor, Alonso de Sotomayor, took office in 1583 virtually all attempts to enforce the new regulations were ended and they were soon revoked, though on a piecemeal basis rather than all at once.

It is upon this brief period, which marked both the appearance and disappearance of the new code, which Miss Gligo has centered her attention. In a very brief introductory section the author discusses the origins of the *encomienda* in Spanish America, its appearance in Chile, and the first attempts at a survey of its Chilean incidence with an eye to reform in the *tasa*