

quality as a criterion for understanding the subject. Since the early stratigraphic studies by Vaillant and others, ceramic analysis has been the outstanding technique for identifying archaeological periods and cultures of Mexico. The exceptional durability of clay and the near universality of objects made from it are what give ceramic ware its great importance to the archaeologist. The objects occur stratigraphically in the earth. Their styles and types of manufacture determine the boundaries of cultures and subcultures. As trade objects they reveal the routes of exchange and the influence of one people upon another. As everyone familiar with modern archaeology knows, a remarkably detailed history can be extracted from ceramic remains.

Noguera begins with the general subjects of stratigraphy, excavation, manufacture, and decoration. He tells how an object should be scientifically described so that the description will be meaningful for study. He then catalogues all known types of Mesoamerican ware by time and region from the pre-classic to the Aztec in central Mexico and including Mixtec, the Gulf coast, the Huasteca, the West and North, and the whole Maya zone. Thus a large area is covered and enormous erudition demonstrated. The work will be most useful to practicing archaeologists as a handbook and guide. For others it will have utility as a work of reference and as an up-to-date survey of a rapidly changing subject. At every point Noguera has tried to provide clear and meaningful descriptions of ceramic types and their differences. He has added tabulated comparative sequences both for individual regions and for the whole of Mesoamerica. Photographic illustrations and drawings are well reproduced, and there is an extensive selected bibliography.

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History of Indo-American Literature. Book I: Pre-Columbian Literatures, Aztec, Incan, Maya, Quiché. By ABRAHAM ARÍAS-LARRETA. Starkville, Miss., 1965. New World Library. Notes. Glossaries. Bibliography. Pp. xiii, 118.

The author of this book is a Peruvian student of Spanish American literature who has long been interested in the oral literature of the pre-Hispanic civilizations of Mesoamerica and the Andean area. He argues that this native literary tradition has been wrongfully excluded from the usual corpus of Spanish American (or, as he prefers to call it, Indoamerican) literature. To call greater attention to its quality and importance, Arias-Larreta published in 1951 a work entitled *Literaturas aborígenes* which included Spanish translations

of various Náhuatl, Quechua, and Quiché oral literary compositions. The book being reviewed is essentially an updated English version with added material and various modifications.

The introductory section has been expanded and is more factual and less polemic in tone than that in the earlier book. The problem of the origin of the American Indian is briefly treated, and each major late pre-Hispanic civilization (Maya, Aztec, Inca) is outlined in turn. This section is largely based on secondary, non-anthropological sources and falls far short of presenting an adequate, up-to-date picture of the great New World high cultures.

The next section is devoted to Aztec (Náhuatl) literature and is considerably enlarged and modified from the similar section in the 1951 book. This expansion is largely due to the appearance in the meantime (1953) of Ángel M. Garibay's major work on Náhuatl literature, on which this section is now principally based. Although it is nowhere explicitly stated, all of the literary compositions quoted in this chapter appear to be English renditions of Garibay's Spanish translations from the Náhuatl which he presented in his work as examples of the different Náhuatl literary genres. Garibay's versions were consciously somewhat loose and Ariás-Larreta's retranslations are also very free, a fact worth noting in any evaluation of their accuracy in conveying the sense of the Náhuatl originals.

The section devoted to Inca (Quechua) literature, with the exception of the somewhat expanded introduction, is virtually a verbatim re-edition, in English translation, of this section in the earlier work. Any student of Quechua literature is faced with a major problem, since practically nothing indubitably pre-Hispanic has survived. Ariás-Larreta quotes, in English translation, a number of poetic compositions of post-Hispanic date which he obviously believes more or less accurately reflect the authentic indigenous tradition. He also summarizes and discusses the famous Quechua drama known as the *Ollantay*. The question of whether this piece has a genuine Inca origin has long been debated; Ariás-Larreta sides strongly with those who accept it as an authentic native composition.

The last section, "Maya-Quiché Literature," slightly expanded over the 1951 version, is devoted entirely to a eulogy and discussion of the Popol Vuh. Ariás-Larreta heaps particular praise on this renowned Guatemalan "community book," terming it (p. 95) "possibly, the most brilliant expression of the ancient American mind." Waxing particularly enthusiastic at one point (p. 101), he characterizes it as "the oldest testimony of human history in the world," and "a complete encyclopedia of theogony, cosmogony and astrology."

This section is followed by an English translation of the opening, cosmogonical portion of the Popol Vuh, accompanied by some notes. (His translation, however, is not the one now most widely used—Goetz and Morley's translation of Recinos' Spanish version.) The excerpts from the colonial Quiché drama, *Rabinal Achi*, included in the 1951 book, are omitted in the present work.

Although *Pre-Columbian Literatures* displays normal scholarly apparatus, citations are general rather than specific. Also the general bibliographies after each section contain many works not directly relevant to the theme, while omitting a number of contributions of fundamental importance, and throughout there is major reliance on secondary authority. Judged by the accepted standards of professional scholarship, therefore, the book would have to be scored rather lightly on most counts. However, books on any level dealing with this subject in English are very rare. Ariás-Larreta's effort, presented with devoted enthusiasm, should help to make known more widely in the English-speaking world the considerable oral literary achievement of the leading aboriginal civilizations of pre-conquest America.

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Royal Commentaries of the Incas and General History of Peru. 2 vols. By GARCILASO DE LA VEGA. Translated and with an introduction by HAROLD V. LIVERMORE. Austin, 1966. University of Texas Press. Maps. Index. Pp. xlv, xlvii, 1530. \$17.50.

In 1951 the University of Texas Press introduced American readers to Garcilaso de la Vega by publishing a translation of his work, *La Florida*. The Press has now completed the good work with both parts of the *Comentarios Reales*. In the translation of these two volumes Harold Livermore has performed a notable and definitive work, long needed. There is no question concerning the importance of Garcilaso as one of the outstanding exemplars of *mestizaje* in the colonial period. No one can deny the usefulness of the first part of his *comentarios*, especially in those chapters relating to the life lived by his Inca ancestors and their Peruvian subjects. Nor can one find anywhere else so compendious a survey of the tumultuous years 1531-1572 in Peru—the most crucial period in all Peruvian history—as is set forth in the second part of the *comentarios*. Livermore has now offered the whole of this vast work in a convenient English edition, the first in many years. That his is not a critical edition is not