

*Son of the Alhambra: Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, 1504-1575.* By ERIKA SPIVAKOVSKY. Austin and London, 1970. University of Texas Press. Maps. Illustrations. Appendix. Bibliography. Index, Pp. xvi, 450. Cloth. \$10.00.

Don Diego has attracted interest over the centuries mainly on the basis of his alleged authorship of the *Lazarillo de Tormes*. In this first full-dress biography in English our attention is drawn to his overlooked diplomatic service as Charles V's ambassador to Venice, Rome, and the Council of Trent. The perennial quandary of a humanist in power gives piquancy to his career. In 1552 a rebellion drove him from his governorship in Siena. From his letters we discover that despite his depiction in histories of Siena as a tyrant, Don Diego pled discreetly that the city's freedoms be observed by Charles. An unforgiving Emperor drove him into mortifying obscurity from which he only occasionally escaped, and Philip II was no better, placing him under virtual house arrest during the assault upon rebellious Moriscos (1569-1571) that undermined Mendoza family power in Granada. In the tradition of readable diplomatic history associated with Garrett Mattingly, this interesting biography nicely blends travel recollections with careful research into published letters and archival sources.

Mrs. Spivakovsky points out that the period between the death of Isabella I and the advent of Philip II was a time of slack reign in Spain and of relative toleration that permitted the flowering of a "humanistic" renaissance. Don Diego could publicly defend Averroist philosophy, display sympathy for Moriscos, and feel no need to make a show of religiosity. However, one should not overestimate the degree of freedom possible, and certainly Mendoza was no fool. When called to testify before the Inquisition in the famous Archbishop Carranza case, he was alert to save his own skin. If he had heterodox opinions, he made few of them public. And since there is little proof of inner rebellion, his biographer relies upon anonymous literary works which she, as do others, attributes to his pen. Why was nothing published under his own name? The answer provided is that, to save his honor after the debacle at Siena, Mendoza forced the Emperor to grant him an ecclesiastic dignity in the Order of Calatrava. To attain the habit he had, by convention, to condemn his writings to oblivion. Faced with a choice between Honor or Fame, Mendoza made a very Spanish decision.

Another controversial point sure to add turbulence to waves

churned up in Américo Castro's wake is the firm attribution of *converso* status to Don Diego as one explanation of his wayward thoughts. Joining the ranks of the new scholar's inquisition set upon ferreting out every last bit of Jewish heritage, Mrs. Spivakovsky is even a bit cross with the Order of Calatrava for being too easily hoodwinked about the purity of Don Diego's blood!

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*The Upper Amazon.* By DONALD W. LATHRAP. New York, 1970. Praeger. Ancient Peoples and Places. Photographs. Drawings. Maps. Index. Pp. 56. Cloth. \$8.50.

In this volume Donald Lathrap guides the reader through the prehistoric record of lowland South America in search of clues to the culture history of the Upper Amazon Basin. The author, whose extensive knowledge of the region is first-hand, should be congratulated both for his multi-disciplinary approach to the archeological study of what has been, until this publication, a poorly documented area, and for the originality of his interpretation of regional development in Amazonia.

Basing his conclusions on evidence drawn from geology, ecology, historical linguistics and ethnology, as well as from thirteen years of archeological experience in the area, Lathrap provides a coherent picture of life in the Upper Amazon between the years 2000 B.C. and 1500 A.D. In a final chapter he brings us up to date on the current ethnographic situation in the Peruvian Amazon, emphasizing the Central Ucayali Basin where he worked himself.

The author's careful reassessment of the Upper Amazon environment and its resource potential sets out the foundation necessary for his subsequent claims about population movements and adaptations to ecological niches. Lathrap points out that this vast region, once thought by anthropologists to be a cultural backwater, was instead a rich and varied area which in pre-Columbian times served to attract a large number of ethnic groups. Migrant aboriginal bands coming into the region vied with one another for permanent positions along the alluvial flood plains of the major tributaries of the Upper Amazon. Unsuccessful groups in this competition for first-class riverine land were forced onto the less fertile interfluvial uplands where they had no choice but to pursue a nomadic way of life. From fishing and