

although attempted, was not overcome—obvious, in the case of the Spanish and French of the two Latin groups, but also much evidence that even the “English” of the native Virgin Islanders is, in effect, a different language from American English in its connotations; lack of clear definition of some of the categories of subjects—e.g. no clear distinction between religion, obeh and institutions; the multi-goals of the study, resulting in no clear-cut reaching of any of them.

But these deficiencies do not destroy the worth of the study. He appears to have forcefully called attention to the place of culture in the treatment of psychiatric patients; he has made a contribution to the understanding of Virgin Island society; his inter-disciplinary attempts are admirable; his work contains many suggestions for more exhaustive studies; he gives, in effect, a clear warning to all U.S. “continentals”: *beware of cultural differences when practicing your profession outside!*

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Introducción a la prehistoria general.

By JUAN COMAS. México, 1962. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Publicaciones del Instituto de Historia. Núm. 74. Illustrations. Charts. Bibliography. Indices. Pp. 249. Paper.

This book is intended for use as a text in the various institutions in Mexico which teach courses in prehistory on the university level. As such, it is an excellent volume. The author devotes some space to showing that evolution is not contrary to Catholic doctrine—a necessary precaution in countries predominantly Catholic.

The book deals with human prehistory all over the world. Twenty-five pages are devoted to the Americas, which seems meagre except that the condensation is so expert and the coverage so thorough. While mentioning certain controversial matters, the au-

thor manages to put them in proper perspective in a masterful way. Beginning with the history of prehistory and its methods and techniques, the author carries the student through highly condensed studies of geology, climatology and of the successive hominids culminating in modern man.

Unfortunately the bibliography lists one ridiculous volume, one generally discredited volume, and two works which are definitely out-dated. Other than this the bibliography is well chosen and will be an excellent guide for further study on the part of the student.

Any book on human prehistory is bound to be a bit outdated before it appears in print, so rapidly is the science of anthropology moving today. Such deficiencies must be remedied with supplementary reading. Such new discoveries as *Zinjanthropus boyseii* are too recent for mention in the volume under review.

We predict that this volume will be used in many Latin American universities. It is by far the best thing of its kind available in Spanish and better than most similar texts in English.

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BACKGROUND

A History of the Jews in Christian Spain. Vol. 1: *From the Age of Reconquest to the Fourteenth Century.* By YITZHAK BAER. Translated by LOUIS SCHOFFMAN. Philadelphia, 1961. The Jewish Publication Society of America. Notes. Index. Pp. 463. \$5.00.

Twenty-three years ago Yitzhak (Fritz) Baer published a collection of documents dealing with Jewish life in Spain, the result of years of painstaking research in the Spanish archives. In 1945 his narrative based on this work appeared in Hebrew; a revised edition was published in 1959. The present volume is a translation of this

revision to the end of the fourteenth century; a second volume will carry the story to the expulsion.

A work of distinguished scholarship, this volume fills a long-felt need in the field of Spanish historiography: hitherto the best account of the Jews in medieval Spain readily available in English was contained in several chapters of Américo Castro's *The Structure of Spanish History*. Professor Baer presents an absorbing story of the Jews in Spain; "history," he states, "brought one of the most creative Jewish communities of the Diaspora into collaboration with one of the most gifted people of Christian Europe, the Spaniards. Far-reaching historical developments, affecting both groups, carried this association to dramatic heights and brought it to a tragic end."

In unfolding his tale, Professor Baer presents a balanced picture of Iberian Jewish life, intellectual as well as political and social. Liberal quotation from documents enhances the story considerably. One might wish, however, that there had been a more elaborate presentation of the scientific work of the Spanish Jews; no mention, for example, is made of the Jewish authorship of the famed Alfonsine Tables, and little of the importance of the Jews as physicians. There is a lengthy discussion of the controversy over Maimonides, and of the rise of mysticism through the Castilian Cabala. Baer emphasizes the importance of the destruction of Andalusian Jewish life by the Almohades and the consequent flight of these sophisticated Jews to the north. There they became extremely useful to the Christian kings in organizing the state and collecting taxes; consequently the monarchs acted as their protectors, rarely enforcing the restrictive legislation against them.

The seventy pages of notes will be invaluable for the scholar and of considerable interest to the serious reader as well.

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Flanders in the Fifteenth Century: Art and Civilization. By THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND THE CITY OF BRUGES. Detroit, 1960. Detroit Institute of Arts. Maps. Illustrations. Bibliography. Pp. 467. Paper.

Las exposiciones retrospectivas permiten la apreciación de gran parte de las obras de arte de un cierto período, que generalmente están dispersas en museos, las más veces separados por el océano dificultándose por esta razón la comprensión de los factores que hicieron posible el arte de tal o cual época. El libro al que nos referimos es un magnífico catálogo, compendio de la exposición "Flandes en el siglo XVI, arte y civilización" que tuvo lugar entre octubre y diciembre de 1960 en "The Detroit Institute of Arts." Este libro además de ser un acucioso catálogo de los objetos expuestos que fueron cedidos por Museos de Bélgica y colecciones de los Estados Unidos, tiene artículos de introducción y comentario a los objetos expuestos de inapreciable valor.

La introducción histórica por Richard Kay, del departamento de Historia de la University of Wisconsin, es un buen resumen de las circunstancias políticas y culturales que produjeron el clima propicio para aquel momento de eclosión artística que fué el Renacimiento Flamenco (siglo XV). En el catálogo de pintura hecho por Melle, Lucie Ninane y Melle, Jacqueline Folie, además de un estricto sentido objetivo, se observa una prudente cautela al conservar las atribuciones y conceptos tradicionales. Así por ejemplo se continúa manteniendo el enigma del maestro de Flemalle y no se lo llega a identificar con Robert Campin. Se ha dado lugar preferente y creemos que lo merecen tanto en la exposición como en el texto, a los maestros desconocidos identificados solamente por su título: Maestro de la vista de Santa Gúdula, Maestro de la leyenda de Santa Lucía. Este último es uno de los mejores pintores flamencos del siglo XV. Así lo demuestra su "Asunción" de la National Gallery de Washington.

En la parte de escultura, redactada