ceived. Among influences of Osuna on later writers, that on the metaphysical poets seems most important.

The author has performed a welcome service and done so with skill and subtlety. Specialists in Spanish literature or in mysticism will derive the most benefits, but the few non-specialists who are likely to pick up a book with such a title will find unexpected rewards. The book does not make easy reading, to be sure, as in the case of Osuna himself not through the obscurity of the subject or through deficiencies in style but through complexities in the sequence of thought. Is this evidence of some lack of clarity, or is it a necessary reflection of Osuna's own complexities? It is difficult to know without a mastery of Osuna's thought, and the author seems to be practically the only expert. By restricting herself to certain aspects of Osuna's use of figures she could undoubtedly have written a neater and more approachable book. But then we should have learned less about Osuna, and this in the present state of research we could ill afford.

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Gareth A. Davies, *A Poet at Court: Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza (1586-1644)*. Oxford: The Dolphin Book Co. Ltd., 1971. Pp. 367. £4.50.

In this work Dr. Davies offers the first comprehensive study of a writer who, although now virtually ignored, in his day figured prominently among the *littérateurs* of the court of Philip III. Davies's interest in Mendoza was awakened by the contradiction between Gracián's admiration, expressed in his *Agudeza y arte de ingenio*, and the subsequent demise of the poet's fame.

A Poet at Court is a splendid work. The approach is that of a literary historian and critic, with well-appointed judgments succinctly expounded. Following Mendoza's biography—his relationship with Olivares and his participation in court life make fascinating reading—Dr. Davies discusses Mendoza's reputation among his literary contemporaries. Although Mendoza's position at court may have elicited some exaggerated eulogies, there is little doubt that he was highly regarded not only as an outstanding poet but also as an accomplished *entremesista* and dramatist. Among his acquaintances he could count such luminaries as Quevedo, Lope de Vega, Luis Vélez de Guevara, even collaborating with Quevedo in the composition of dramas.

The discussion of Mendoza's verse and drama is detailed (Chapters V-VI, IX-XII). As poet Mendoza excelled in the use of traditional forms: the *romances*, *coplas*, *redondillas*, *endechas*, and above all the *décima* (in the use of which Lope acclaimed him as unequalled). Davies attributes Mendoza's predilection for the *décima* to his love of the conceit, the intellectual exercise so favoured by seventeenth-century Spanish writers, and the basis of Gracián's admiration. As dramatist Mendoza composed some twelve works, a small number considering the enormous output of some of his contemporaries. His greatest success appears to have been in his social comedies and his spectacle play, *Querer por sólo querer*. Nevertheless, Davies concludes that Mendoza's plays, although interesting, are of secondary order in the Spanish theatre of the seventeenth century.

Dr. Davies's major contribution for those whose interest in Mendoza is marginal is to

be found in Chapters III, IV, and VIII. The first, "Mendoza and *Conceptismo*," contains a discussion of what is understood by the conceit and, more important, traces some of the possible parallels that might have contributed to the *conceptista* vogue. For instance, Davies examines the relationship between the emblem and the epigram, the cult of the device, the admiration for the epigrammatists Martial and John Owen, the importance of the Belgian humanist Justus Lipsius, the possible influence of Jesuit sermons, the *cancionero* tradition. These, as Davies correctly argues, are not individually the sources of the conceit, but they reflect a habit of mind conducive to the ready acceptance of the *concepto*: they exercised the mind and demanded the participation of the *ingenio*. This excellent chapter is followed by "Poetry, a Courtly Art," a splendid analysis of the emergence of a literature responding to the demands of the court, where wit, elegance and decorum were esteemed traits. Such courtly preoccupations burst forth in Philip III's reign (Philip II, austere and strong-willed, had directed his attention almost entirely to matters of state). Davies sees this period as the culmination of a number of factors existent in the sixteenth century: the knightly ideal, the courtier perfection elucidated by Castiglione, the expression of Platonic love, the debates of love, and the vogue of the pastoral novel (frequently *romans à clef*), which proved so popular that the king and queen acquired the pastoral pseudonyms of Fileno and Belisa.

Chapter VIII ("A Poet and his Audience") describes the kind of audiences that a poet/dramatist had at his disposal in the seventeenth century, and also examines the much underestimated question of music in the formation of lyrics—whether a work was intended as a poem or as a musical composition.

A Poet at Court not only is an excellent analysis of Mendoza's life and work, and the demise of his fame (attributed largely to a change in poetic sensibility away from courtly wit), but also provides substantial and illuminating material on the poetic and dramatic practices of the day. We are reminded that *conceptismo* is not a sudden literary phenomenon; it is the culmination of earlier manifestations in the same way that *culteranismo* marks the extreme of preceding tendencies. For anyone interested in the development of *conceptismo* and in the literary atmosphere of Philip III's court Dr. Davies's book will be an invaluable source. It is a scholarly work, but Dr. Davies displays his erudition modestly. Translations of Spanish quotations at the foot of corresponding pages substantiate Dr. Davies's desire to reach a wider audience; success in this aim is further enhanced by pertinent and judicious references to contemporary events or writers in English and French literatures.

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Germaine Lafeuille. *Cinq Hymnes de Ronsard*. Genève: Librairie Droz, 1973. Pp. 239. Fr.s. 54,—

This important dissertation, written at Harvard University between 1950 and 1952 under the direction of Herbert Dieckmann, has finally found its way into print. Those who have followed Ronsard scholarship were not ignorant of the existence of this work, principally because of the considerable place I. Silver gave to it in his "Ronsard Studies" for the peri-