

## STANISLAWSKI, Dan — Portugal's Other Kingdom.

Austin, University of Texas Press, 1963, 273 pp.

Emphasizing the need for Americans to know other lands, the author of the present work sets out to exploit the economic geography pertinent to the Algarve area, in Southern Portugal — a little known province, where life has gone on unmolested by industrial development from even Roman times.

In each of the succeeding chapters in which the author depicts the land and resources pertinent to the various localities, he introduces also enough historical background to make the entire picture still more comprehensible. At first, he studies the unique quality of the land, showing its differences from the other adjoining Portuguese provinces. This difference was felt from earliest times, when the Portuguese monarchs began to ascribe themselves the title of "King of Portugal and the Algarves". Professor Stanislawski proves through this book that Algarve is really "Portugal's Other Kingdom".

Dividing the province into two different regions — the lower and upper — the author endeavors to interpret Algarve's climatic conditions. He studies the rain fall as well as the temperatures throughout the area. "Protected by mountains to the north, the Algarvian lowland does not suffer the winter weather of the Alentejo (its adjoining northerly province); facing south it faces the climate of the Mediterranean" (p. 16). Its three major crops are maize, figs and almonds. To process the maize, there are various wind and water mills sprouting here and there in the hilly country side. These implements have survived from earliest times with little or no change. Houses are made of stone with no fabricated floors and without the intricately adorned chimneys, a characteristic of the lower, coastal area. In contrast to the upper region, agriculture in the lower Algarve, the Coastal Plain, abounds in all kinds of crops, such as white and sweet potatoes, peanuts, capsicum, "as well as varieties of squash and beans" (p. 57). The Moors introduced into the area a system of irrigation (the *nora*), which is most vital in providing water

to the land. It consists of a wheel around which a chain of buckets dip into a well. A blind-folded mule is harnessed to a long pole that turns the wheel, while its buckets empty into a storage tank. From this tank reels sprout out taking the precious water into the now parched fields.

One of the most interesting accounts of Mr. Stanislawski's book is his study of fishing towns in Algarve's coastal area and its fishermen. Having been born at one of those towns, Olhão, I delight at the author's shrewd observation of a most lively, industrious and enterprising fishing center in Algarve. Diverging from the other Algarve towns by the unique aspect of its landscape, Olhão testifies to a North African influence brought about through the smugglers trade existing between the town and North African ports; thus, its great similarity to Morocco, Tangiers and North African ports; thus, its great similarity to Morocco, Tangiers white washed, cubic-shaped, two-storied houses of variously different levels, uneven against the skyline. Mr. Stanislawski fails to mention that the houses differing heights are due to the wives' competing desire to first glimpse their husbands entering the bar in the early morning with the day's catch. Thus, Olhão acquired its present aspect. As the family prospered, a house would be built higher than its neighbor's. The author goes on to the different manners of fishing employed by Olhão's fishermen. There is line fishing and the *sacada*, a most common method. On a summer night, the sea horizon glitters off Olhão's coast. Hundreds of lanterns attract the fish into the nets. The author fails to note that the steam-powered *galeão* big time fishing, common during the war, has been replaced by the *traineira*, a smaller craft, gas-propelled and manned by fewer men. The scarcity of fish during the last decade has made big fishing too expensive and, thus, impracticable. The smaller craft, being less expensive to run, seems better fitted for the lesser quantities of fish brought in by the fishermen nowadays. Other towns taken in consideration for their fishing importance are Portimão, off world-famous Praia da Rocha, Lagos, Villa Real de Santo Antonio neighboring Spain, and the beaches of Albufeira, Quarteira and Cabanas.

This book was published in 1963. No doubt that most of its research must have been carried out in the late fifties or early sixties. Had Mr. Stanislawski been to Algarve within the past two years, he would, no doubt, have been amazed at what has happened to his beloved province, specially in the Coastal Plain. French, German and English tourists have descended upon beaches and farms, buying them

from the local people. The once wild, beautiful beaches where only fishermen worked their daily livelihood, have now been bought off and set off limits to all, except their friends. Real estate has increased in value and even the bare necessities have jotted sky-high. The local people are desperately trying to keep up with this increasing cost of living. Mr. Stanislawski appreciated Algarve's quiet life, its prodigious climate and timelessness at a time when those qualities were soon to undergo a deplorable change.

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