This volume in the series "Wege der Forschung" differs from most of its predecessors in two respects. In the first place, it consists largely of severely shortened articles. In the second, it presents studies written in English in the original language rather than in a German translation. Both of these variances from earlier practice are apparently the result of an attempt to be inclusive in the presentation of the topic (and perhaps to stay within a restricted budget). The volume lists thirty-three titles under nine headings. Needless to say, it is impossible to do justice to the "paths of research" in any area within this kind of framework. The best that can be done is a kind of smorgasbord approach, which is what the editor has chosen.

His attempt to lend some unity to the volume in the introduction is also doomed to failure, as he himself admits, and one asks oneself if the effort might not have been better spent in an attempt to deal with one or two aspects of the problem, rather than presenting snippets of many different traditions. Many of the articles chosen have serious implications for the whole question and it might well have been better to collect them around such a central theme.

This having been said, some attention must now be given to what is included in the volume at hand. The first division of the book deals with the question of "Indogermanische Heldendichtung." Necessarily the contributions here deal more with language and overall narrative structures than with a consideration of the actual poetry, since no trace survives.

The second section deals with Greek heroic poetry and it is here that two brief studies are allowed to stand for the Parry-Lord oral poetry direction. They reflect the state of the question a quarter of a century ago, but there is no trace of the interesting contributions.
that have been made since Combellack's "Milman Parry and Homeric Artistry."

The following sections deal with various European traditions and it would be needlessly repetitive to weigh the contributions within each section against those that might have been included. Suffice it to say that a collection of essays on heroic poetry that includes no original contributions by Andreas Heusler, Ramon Menendez-Pidal, Jean Rychner, Albert Lord or C. M. Bowra certainly cannot be said to deal with the question of traditionalism in an even-handed way. This is particularly unfortunate in light of the fact that the volume in this series devoted explicitly to oral poetry turned out to be of rather poor quality.

There is a slight bias in favor of the sociological approach and an exploration of the "heroic ethos" betrayed by the considerable number of articles dealing with such questions as "Das römische Mannesideal" (by Hellfried Dahlmann) and "Volks tümlich oder aristokratisch? Soziale Ideologie in der Heldendichtung" (by Viktor Schmirmunski). This is a valid direction of study, and the collection as a whole might have been stronger had the editor chosen to focus it on this one question. He might have had to change his title a bit, but it would have been a more satisfying offering.

Romance epic has come off quite well in this collection. The studies of French and Spanish epic together occupy more than a fifth of the book. There are nine titles from scholars as various as Alwin Kuhn, Ernst Robert Curtius, Hans-Wilhelm Klein, and Erich Köhler. D. D. R. Owen's "The Secular Inspiration of the Chanson de Roland" is the one contribution in English on the Roland. It is also the most recent of the nine contributions, dating from 1962. The section devoted to Spanish epic is surprisingly extensive, offering three articles (by Walther Kienast, George Tyler Northrup and Edmund de Chasca) devoted entirely to the Cid and a Forschungsbericht by Walter Mettmann on Old Spanish Epic.

Collections of this generality are probably doomed to be critical failures. There is no way that an editor can meet the critical biases of anyone but himself. This having been admitted, I would have welcomed a collection of complete articles examining the question of Heldendichtung from a comparative point of view. As it stands, the collection presents neither a consistent contribution to
our understanding, nor a compendium of articles to which the student and the scholar can refer. Two earlier volumes from this series provide far more useful contributions to the questions dealt with here by providing the reader with complete contributions (and in some cases, updated ones) selected for their contribution to a specific aspect of the problem. I refer here to Karl Hauck's 1965 Volume Zur germanisch-deutschen Heldensage (WdF 14) and Walter Johannes Schröder's Das deutsche Versepos (WdF 109).

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1985 Société Rencesvals
American-Canadian Branch Meeting

The December meeting of the American-Canadian Branch of the Société Rencesvals was held on Sunday morning, December 29, 1985, in Chicago's Marriott Hotel in conjunction with the annual convention of the Modern Language Association of America. Professor Hans-Erich Keller of Ohio State University, President of the Branch, presided. There were two principal orders of business:

a) announcement of the newly elected officers of the Branch:

President: Alice Colby-Hall, Cornell University
Vice-President: Joan B. Williamson, Long Island University, Greenvale
Secretary-Treasurer: Robert Francis Cook, University of Virginia
Bibliographer: Jean-Louis G. Picherit, University of Wyoming

b) discussion of the proposed Branch constitution:

Following an explanation by Professor Keller that the constitution had been distributed prematurely for a vote, Professor John Grigsby (Washington University, St. Louis) distributed and
explained amendments to the proposed constitution worked out by his sub-committee. After approval of the amendments, they will be incorporated into the constitution, which will be redistributed for approval by the membership of the Branch.

After the business session, Professor Keller introduced the three morning speakers and their topics:

Susan Farrier (Cornell University), "A Linguistic Dating of the Chanson de Roland."
Miroslav J. Hanak (East Texas University), "Names of Slavic Tribes and their Geographic Ambivalence in the Baligrant Episode of the Chanson de Roland."
Jean-Louis G. Picherit (University of Wyoming), "Le thème de la dépossession, de l'exhérédation, et celui de la reconquête du fief dans quelques chansons de geste."

On Sunday afternoon a second session, presided over by Salvador Martínez (New York University) and devoted to the medieval Spanish epic, was also sponsored by the American-Canadian Branch. The speakers were Alan D. Deyermond (University of London), John S. Miletich (University of Utah), Colin C. Smith (Cambridge University), and Ruth Webber (emerita, University of Chicago).

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1988 International Congress of the Société Rencesvals

It was announced at the Strasbourg conference that the 1988 International Congress will be held in Spain, hosted by Professor Martín de Riquer. Exact dates and locations are pending, but will be announced in Olifant as soon as they are determined.