

writers. He is one of the miniscule few English Hispanists who not only acknowledges the presence in Mexico of Jews as an ethnic group but also credits them with an important role in the commercial activities.

He deprecates Woodrow W. Borah's theory accounting for Mexico's decline from 1580 onward and the adoption of the theory, in modified form, by Pierre and Huguette Chaunu. Israel fails to ascribe sufficient weight to Spain's practice of feudal mercantilism, the *alcabala*, smuggling, and the use of secret Mexican ports by the *contrabandistas* and for illegal immigration.

The book's greatest vulnerability to criticism lies in the bibliography. The Archivo Histórico Nacional de Madrid (AHN) is not included although it appears in a few footnotes. The AHN has sixteen libros of *cartas* covering 1572–1697 and, of great value to the period, legajos 1732–1738 which contain the visita of Pedro de Medina Rico and the bankruptcy proceedings of Simón Vázquez de Sevilla. The bibliography includes many books and articles not germane or even peripheral to the author's themes. Mindful of his prerogative to include what he desires in a "Select Bibliography," we still question the omission of Pierre Chaunu's "Inquisition et Vie Quotidienne dans l'Amérique Espagnole" . . . (*Annales*); Richard E. Greenleaf's *Zumárraga and the Mexican Inquisition*; Richard G. Keith's "New World Interlopers" . . . (*The Americas*); and several others.

The account of the reign of the viceroy Marquis de Escalona would have profited by recourse to Luis González Obregón's *Rebeliones Indígenas y Precursores de la Independencia Mexicana*. Many footnotes are excellent but many, such as citing Lucía Garcé de Proodian's *Los Judíos en América* (pertaining only to Peru and criticized in *HAHR* and in *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 33, Jan. 1971) are superfluous.

Despite the flaws and deficiencies, the book is a good study for use by graduate students and scholars lacking expertise in phases of Mexico's seventeenth-century history.

Miami, Florida

SEYMOUR B. LIEBMAN

*Criminal Justice in Eighteenth Century Mexico: A Study of the Tribunal of the Acordada*. By COLIN M. MACLACHLAN. Berkeley, 1974. University of California Press. Appendix. Tables. Index. Pp. viii, 141. Cloth. \$9.00.

This book adds a good chapter to attempts by the Bourbons to strengthen Spanish colonial government and administration. The

author reminds us that Spanish law was based on Roman law, plus elements added by the Visigoths and Moslems. In Spain, in practice, the administration of justice was vested chiefly in municipal *alcaldes*. Occasionally the crown sent agents to investigate administration in local areas. And in 1474 Isabella established the *santa hermandad* and empowered its *alcaldes* to enter private homes in search of criminals.

After the Spanish conquests in America, intermixture of the races led to the caste system; and codes relevant to the Indies consistently discriminated against the lower classes. Spain extended the *audiencia* to her colonies, and divided it into two *salas*, civil and criminal (*sala del crimen*). Agents of the latter hunted down delinquents and brought them before the *alcaldes del crimen*. But these agents were territorially limited; they could not catch bandits who escaped into other districts. The *sala del crimen* could not cope with crime waves, particularly in times of disaster.

In 1722 Viceroy Marqués de Valero made an agreement with the *audiencia* to establish the *acordada*—a word derived from *con acuerdo* (with agreement)—with power to apprehend bandits and bring them to justice. It had unlimited territorial jurisdiction; by the 1780s it was handling four-fifths of all criminal cases in the viceroyalty. Undoubtedly it was an improvement over other judicial bodies. It functioned effectively until 1812 when its operations conflicted with the constitution then promulgated.

The book is based on original sources in the AGN in Mexico City and on the best printed works. It is an excellent production in all respects.

Waynesburg College

WILLIAM DUSENBERRY

*New Spain: The Birth of Modern Mexico.* By NICOLAS CHEETHAM. London, 1974. Victor Gollancz. Maps. Illustrations. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 336. Cloth. \$15.00.

Written by a former British ambassador to Mexico, this book is a history of sixteenth-century New Spain which will appeal more to the general reader than to the scholar. The author devotes two chapters to a general survey of the major pre-Columbian civilizations, follows with the military and spiritual conquests, and closes with the final establishment of an orderly social and political system toward the end of the sixteenth century, although there is a decreasing amount of information on the events and society of the end of the century. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are impressionistically com-