

Geographic and Hydrographic Descriptions of Many Northern and Southern Lands and Seas in the Indies, Specifically the Discovery of the Kingdom of California. By NICOLÁS DE CARDONA. Translated and edited by W. MICHAEL MATHES. Los Angeles, California, 1974. Dawson's Book Shop. Plates. Bibliography. Pp. 111. Cloth. \$18.00.

This thirty-fifth volume of the Baja California Series is part of a growing list of colonial Latin American travel literature appearing in English. Editor-translator W. Michael Mathes has produced Nicolás Cardona's *Geographic and Hydrographic Descriptions* (1632) and *Report of the Exploration of California* in one volume.

Between 1611 and 1623 Cardona explored the West Indies, and Atlantic and Pacific Coasts of New Spain in the hope of locating valuable pearl fisheries. In his *Report* concerning the exploration of the Baja California shoreline, Cardona curiously declared that peninsula to be an island. Both Cardona's *Descriptions* and *Report* relate an informative narrative of his experiences in the New World. Included are 42 black and white sepia plates illustrating his voyages.

Mathes' translation of Cardona is very good. Moreover, his research in Spanish archives resulting in a biographic sketch of Cardona is inspiring. It seems, however, little attention was given toward preserving certain Spanish nautical terms used by Cardona. Perhaps a short glossary of such terms could have been included. Also, a general reference map indicating Cardona's route would have been useful. Despite those minor points, Mathes' expertise as translator and editor combined to produce an informative piece of travel literature of the seventeenth century.

University of Arizona

JOSEPH SÁNCHEZ

The Black on New Spain's Northern Frontier: San José de Parral, 1631 to 1641. By VINCENT MAYER, JR. Edited by ROBERT DELANEY. Durango, 1974. Center of Southwest Studies, Fort Lewis College. Occasional Paper of the Center of Southwest Studies, 2. Map. Tables. Appendix. Bibliography. Pp. v, 45. Paper.

Based on early documents in the Parral archives (1632–1821), Mayer's study of blacks in northern mining communities sheds some interesting light on their legal and social status, but little else. Though Mayer estimates the number of slaves sold in Parral by 1641 at about 350 (mostly creoles and Angolese), this figure excludes free blacks and slaves arriving with their masters. The role of blacks in Parral's labor force remains unclear, with only a third of those analyzed being males of suitable age for mine work. Given Parral's Spanish population of about 800 *vecinos* by 1639, the proportion of even potential black miners seems modest indeed.

Punctuated with factual and stylistic inaccuracies and a carelessly printed text, Mayer's monograph is further marred by his obviously limited knowledge of seventeenth-century Spanish notarial script and its common abbreviations. Spanish words and proper names are misspelled repeatedly. Moreover, in checking the text of the three sample documents he transcribes (App. I) against identical microfilm copies in my own library, I find much of Mayer's text so horribly mu-