

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.

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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-

tilated as to cast doubt on his reliability in handling source material of this kind without special training. Given a topic as potentially rewarding, and Mayer's obvious promise as a Mexicanist, some formal training in paleography would seem justified.

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José Miguel de Tagle: Un comerciante americano de los siglos XVII y XIX. By LILIAN BETTY ROMERO CABRERA. Córdoba, 1973. Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. Charts. Bibliography. Documents. Pp. XI, 182.

José Miguel de Tagle was a successful creole merchant from northern Argentina whose long life (1756–1846) witnessed the end of the viceroyalty and the painful adjustments to independence. His correspondence reveals how he adapted to the changing political and commercial environment, and what prospects a creole merchant had in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Beginning as a royal tax collector and *situadista* in Jujuy and Potosí in the 1780s, Tagle later became associated with an important Spanish merchant, José Martínez de Hoz who lived in Buenos Aires. Tagle continued to travel throughout the interior to handle Martínez de Hoz' business affairs, in the same way he had travelled for the crown. Eventually Tagle found it convenient to relocate in Córdoba, where he married into the local aristocracy. There he remained until his death in 1846.

The Tagle-Martínez de Hoz correspondence provides valuable economic data on trade in the Argentine interior during these crucial moments, and the letters have been carefully reprinted in their entirety. Lilians Betty Romero Cabrera's careful introduction traces Tagle's family and business background, and summarizes the content of the documentary appendix. Though it is left to others to analyze the data, the Instituto de Estudios Americanistas and Lilians Betty Romero Cabrera have offered a useful contribution to the study of the impact of independence in the Argentine interior.

D.J.G.

A History of the Chilean Boundaries. By ROBERT D. TALBOTT. Ames, 1974. The Iowa State University Press. Maps. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiii, 134. Paper.

Boundary disputes provided the fuel for many diplomatic flareups in nineteenth-century southern South America. The discovery of untapped resources and new ways to utilize neglected lands encouraged Chile to pursue negotiations that would give her the Atacama Desert, the Strait of Magellan and valleys nestled in the Andes. Since her actions affected Argentina, Bolivia and Peru, an examination of these boundary disputes should help reconstruct the texture of inter-American relations in this region. Robert D. Talbott hoped to do this in his *History of the Chilean Boundaries*. Unfortunately, he has merely outlined the disputes without either delving into previous explanations or offering evidence to support new interpretations. He used his extensive bibliography of published