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SPANISH EXPLORATION AND THE GREAT PLAINS IN THE AGE OF DISCOVERY

MYTH AND REALITY

RALPH H. VIGIL

This essay attempts to place Spanish exploration on the Great Plains within the context of the temper and feelings prevailing in the first century of the "discovery" of the West.¹ Because many writers of texts and more specialized works view the past in the light of the present, European expansion in the sixteenth century appears to be more modern than it was. This paper views Spaniards of the early colonial period as more medieval than modern in outlook; it also suggests that mythological geography and mixed spiritual and worldly motives, considered incompatible in our day, were as important as Renaissance curiosity and technology in European expansion overseas.

Spanish exploration on the Great Plains forms part of the general theme of European discovery, exploration, and settlement of lands beyond Europe in the period variously called the

"Age of Discovery," "Age of Reconnaissance," and "Age of Expansion."² In a more circumscribed sense, exploration in what became the heart of America echoes the themes of discovery and settlement in the years 1492-1598, when subjects of Castile explored vast regions of the New World by land and sea, conquered the dominions of the Aztecs and the Incas, founded colonies in Florida and New Mexico, began the spiritual conquest of America, and searched for golden kingdoms in North and South America.

Given the romantic nature of tales of adventure, English translations of explorers' narratives and biographies of daring adventurers appeal to university students. Traditional accounts of discovery and exploration retain their authority and popularity.³ The story of discovery and conquest, as reflected in narrative works without copious notes, also appeals to a wider public that no longer reads the often reprinted pioneer studies like William Hickley Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Mexico* (1843), John Boyd Thacher's *Christopher Columbus* (1903-04), the works of the versatile and significant Hubert Howe Bancroft, or those of other traditional authorities. Because even the best of the new historical sagas emphasize the deeds of Renaissance men of action, however, they break no

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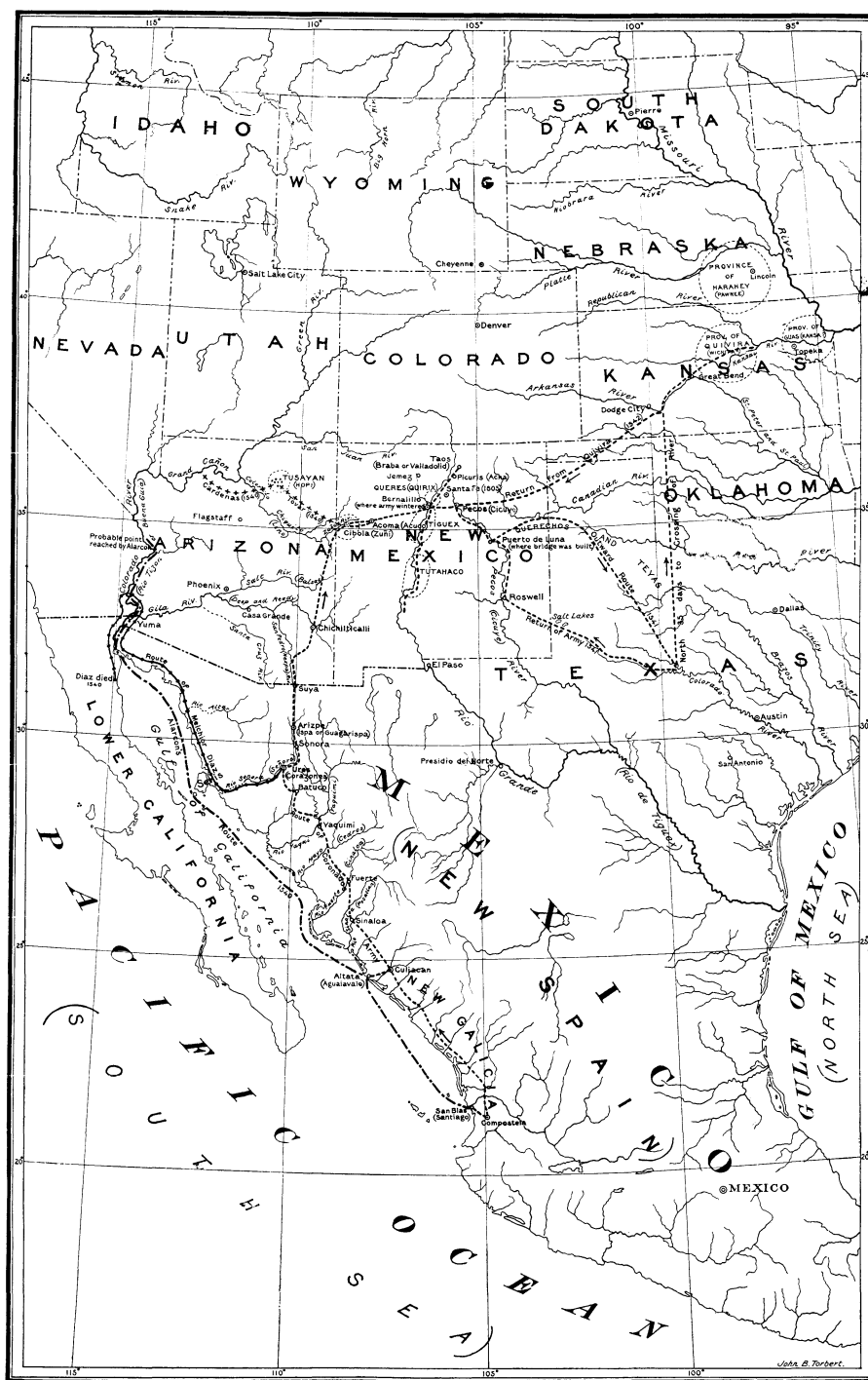


FIG. 1. Map of Coronado's Expedition. Drawn under the supervision of Frederick W. Hodge for his 1907 edition of *The Narrative of Alvar Nuñez Cabeça de Vaca*.

new ground, and the motives and personalities of the men directing the expansion of European empires seem more modern than they were.⁴

TEXTBOOK DISTORTIONS OF SPANISH EXPERIENCE

The imagined modernity of the Age of Expansion is even more apparent in Western civilization and American history textbooks. Written for white, primarily Protestant descendants of transplanted Europeans, these didactic surveys give limited attention to Spanish overseas expansion and the Old and New World backgrounds preceding the founding of Jamestown and Plymouth. In addition to distorting or ignoring Indian America, these texts give the impression that a handful of Spanish soldiers exploited and inflicted their culture on Indians.⁵

Although textbook authors give Indians and Spaniards minor background roles in the story of the epic winning of the West beyond the Atlantic, Iberians discovered and took possession of America, and these authors have to include Spain in emphasizing developments contemporaneous with overseas discoveries and conquests. Most texts join voyages of discovery beginning with Columbus to events progressively leading from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment. Overseas expansion is thus related to the rise of nation-states and to the sixteenth-century "new monarchies," new modes of expression in art and religion, dynastic and religious rivalries in the contest for empire, new forms of economic and social life, and the advance of geographical knowledge and technology.

As the textbooks have it, rulers of the "new monarchies" favored foreign ventures and the merchant class. Reconnaissance, or what may be called the preliminary exploration of the world beyond Europe, was made possible by scientific knowledge turned to practical account. Tools used by the explorers on their "stout, handy, and seaworthy" vessels included the mariner's compass, the astrolabe, and a rudimentary quadrant. Shipborne guns gave Euro-

peans naval superiority. Once a colony was founded, the use of horses, dogs, armor, and superior weapons secured the settlement.⁶

MEDIEVAL AND MYTHIC ROOTS OF DISCOVERY

Granted that discovery, exploration, and expansion beyond the seas took place when Europeans began to join theory and practice in a period that increasingly glorified the human and the natural, the idea that Renaissance scientific curiosity, worldly ideals, and the growth of individualism fueled the voyages of discovery is only a half-truth. As one better-than-average text correctly observes, "the motives, the knowledge, and the wherewithal for the great discoveries were all essentially medieval." The impulse for discovery and exploration of what became America was a mixture of mistaken medieval geographical theory, the ancient desire for spices, gold, and precious stones of the fabulous East, and the memory of medieval journeys made by missionaries and merchants to the Mongol Empire.⁷

America was not only a geographical goal to be reached; it was a concept to be invented. In the beginning was the West of the imagination. West became East and was thought to be part of the tripartite world made up of Europe, Africa, and Asia. This unknown land, believed by Columbus to lie at the world's end, evoked feelings of wonder and mystery. The composite West was legendary, theological, and imperial, and "might be either a place, a direction, an idea, or all three at once." For some, this cardinal direction brought to mind the setting sun of the vanishing day, "the father of reflection and of the mind's meditation." In this region of the world, "the natural goal of man's last journey," lived death and justice and the second life that follows death.⁸

Others looking beyond the dark horizon of the sun's descent saw the planet Venus, which is both the evening and the morning star. Pedro de Castañeda, the chronicler of the Coronado expedition, wrote that "the better land" he and his companions did not see might perhaps be

entered "through the land which the Marquis of the Valley, Don Fernando Cortés, went in search of under the Western star, and which cost him no small sea armament."⁹

Monsters, which Thomas More tells us "are common enough," lived in the West. So did sirens, amazons, griffins, giants, and cannibals.¹⁰ But beyond the dangerous waters of the Atlantic and the fierce beasts and men of the islands and mainland were to be found the waters of life and legendary lands of happiness. There might be found Antillia, the golden apples of the Hesperides, King Solomon's mines, El Dorado, the land of Cockaigne, the Seven Cities of Cibola, Quivira, the Fountain of Youth, and the Terrestrial Paradise.

Because modern man "with an almost Alexandrian virtuosity" makes independent concepts of pieces of reality called economics, religion, legend, history, the natural, the supernatural, and so on, life becomes compartmentalized. We distinguish between the "natural" and the "moral," while religion and economics, the world of the spirit and the world of human affairs, form separate kingdoms that have no vital connections. As a result, most of us would not question the statement that "mariners, explorers, and conquistadors were religious and 'medieval' in justifying their actions, materialistic and 'modern' in their behavior."¹¹

But what we take as rhetoric, or hypocrisy, reflects the social complex of an age that still related all activities to religion. As late as the sixteenth century, "contrasts which later were to be presented as irreconcilable antitheses appear in it as differences within a larger unity."¹² Unlike social theorists of today, Christian moralists as late as the sixteenth century attempted to reconcile economic self-interest to a religious standard beyond the letter of the law. They also accepted the feudal system, a hierarchic society in which each stratum had different privileges and functions. Wealth was necessary, but a man should receive only those temporal blessings necessary to maintain him in his station.

Given the great power of the nobility in Spain, the aristocracy determined the ideology of the age through its spokesmen. Religion ac-

cepted the hierarchic system in which each estate had different privileges and functions. Economic self-interest divorced from military and religious ideals was condemned, but wealth joined to nobility and civil power, one aspect of numerous feudal ties and patriarchal relations, was tolerated. The incentive for gold as a motive for expeditions of discovery was also considered honorable if it formed part of a trinity of motives: God, Glory, and Gold.¹³

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

Even Christopher Columbus, today a mythical figure but described by Ramón Iglesias as America's first merchant and travel agent, clothed his economic interests with a halo of chivalry. After losing his flagship in December 1492, he founded the fortress and garrison of La Navidad in Española. He trusted in God that on his return from Castile he would find a barrel of gold, obtained by barter, and hoped that those he left on the island would have discovered gold mines and spices in such quantity that the king and queen, in less than three years, could undertake the conquest of the Holy Sepulchre. "For so I declared to Your Highnesses, that all the gain of this my enterprise should be spent on the conquest of Jerusalem. And Your Highnesses smiled and said that it pleased them, and that without this profit they had that desire." Columbus, a figure in transition from the waning Middle Ages to the world of commercial capitalism, wrote of wealth in terms of present felicity and future salvation. "Gold," Ramón Iglesias quotes Columbus, "is most excellent, for it constitutes treasure, and he who has it does whatever he wants in the world, and its power is such that it rescues souls from Purgatory to the joys of Paradise."¹⁴

The mythological geography of America begins with Columbus. His idea that "the world is but small" led him to underestimate the circumference of the globe and expand the breadth of the eastern shores of Asia. These miscalculations had in their favor the opinion of Aristotle, by way of Roger Bacon's *Opus Majus* (1264) and Pierre d'Ailly's *Imago Mundi* (1483);

the Moslem geographer Alfragan of the late ninth and early tenth centuries; the Books of Esdras and *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*.¹⁵

Not only did Columbus's geographical conceptions lead to his search for the gold and spices of Cipangu, Cathay, and the Malay Peninsula (the Golden Chersonese), but on his third voyage in 1498 he thought of the paradise lost in the East when he reached the mouth of the Orinoco. Because the river made a great freshwater gulf, he correctly assumed that he had reached a continent. But he also believed that the great river had its source in the Terrestrial Paradise. "Holy Scripture makes known that Our Lord made the Earthly Paradise and in it planted the tree of life, and from it issues a fountain from which rises in the world four principal rivers, the Ganges and Euphrates, the Tigris and the Nile."¹⁶

LEGENDARY KINGDOMS AND HEAVENLY GLORY

Columbus's idea of a fountain in Paradise is not mentioned in Genesis, but it is found in a literary forgery of the late twelfth century attributed to Prester John, thought to be a rich and powerful Christian ruler of the East or Africa. This literary hoax was used by the plagiarizing author of Sir John Mandeville's *Travels*, written in the 1360s and widely read throughout the fifteenth century. The fountain of Paradise, whose waters gave lasting health and rejuvenation, was later sought by Juan Ponce de León, a companion of Columbus. Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, who knew Juan Ponce personally, explained his search in terms of credulity. The *adelantado*, he said, chose to believe a fable that "was a very great ridicule told by the Indians, and a greater stupidity on the part of the Spaniards who wasted their time in looking for such a fountain." Still, as Leonardo Olschki concludes, Juan Ponce's search, when placed in historical perspective, sheds light on the temper and feelings prevailing in the Age of Discovery. The search for the water of immortality is also "a symbol of the human effort to break the power of death and fate."¹⁷

Columbus and Juan Ponce died believing that they had reached the shores of furthest Asia. Later explorers, including the chronicler of the Coronado expedition, persisted in this belief. Pedro de Castañeda wrote in about 1562 that New Spain was part of Greater India or China, "there not being any strait between to separate them." He believed that the Pueblo Indians of Cibola had come from "Greater India, the coast of which lies to the west of this country."¹⁸

Neither Eden's garden nor its fountain was found, but the search for legendary kingdoms and a passage to India continued. Spanish adventurers in search of golden kingdoms sang or recited lines from popular ballads celebrating the heroic deeds of the *reconquista*, and many were avid readers of the novels of chivalry. Dreams of grandeur clouded their minds, and fact was frequently confused with fiction. These hard and austere men were visionaries who gambled temporal life for love of adventure and problematic hopes of glory and gain.¹⁹

Earthly fame and heavenly glory harmonized in the idea of spreading the Gospel, gaining great wealth, and winning a good lineage. Most conquistadors failed to win fame and prosperity, but sometimes the real and the unreal met in the quest for rich kingdoms. Bernal Díaz del Castillo's history relates that when the soldiers led by Cortés saw the great cities and towns of the Aztecs,

and that straight, level causeway leading into Mexico City, we were amazed and we said that it was like the enchanted things related in the book of Amadis because of the huge towers, temples, and buildings rising from the water, and all of masonry. And some of the soldiers even asked whether the things we saw were not a dream.²⁰

SEARCH FOR THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE

North of Mexico, the search for the Fountain of Youth was replaced by the search for the transcontinental Strait of Anián and mythical lands of wealth. This search began with Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón, a royal judge of the Au-

diencia of Santo Domingo, who was lured to his death by his Indian servant Francisco, captured in the land of Chicora of the pearls. Following the expeditions to Florida of a pilot named Miruelo and that of Alonso Álvarez de Pineda in 1517 and 1519, Ayllón and other rich men of Cuba sent two ships north in 1521. On this expedition the ships visited lands located between thirty-five and thirty-seven degrees north, where Francisco de Chicora was captured and Chesapeake Bay was sighted. The bay seemed as if it might be the mouth of the Northwest Passage sought by Pineda in 1519, and Ayllón's avarice was fired by Francisco de Chicora's tales. Ayllón took Francisco to Spain, where the Indian told Peter Martyr that in the lands visited by Ayllón's ships, there were white men (European fishermen?) with brown hair that hung to their heels. These people had domesticated deer and pearls and other precious stones they prized, and they were ruled by a man of gigantic size named Datha.²¹

In 1523 the Council of the Indies contracted with Ayllón to settle and continue the discovery of the land ruled by giant King Datha. He was to sail eight hundred leagues inland and was authorized to barter for gold, silver, precious stones, silk, and pearls. Ayllón, who delayed his expedition until 1526, learned in 1525 that the pilot Esteban Gómez (who deserted Magellan in the straits to the south) had sailed from Florida to Newfoundland but had not found a strait to Cathay. Ayllón now changed his expedition of discovery to one of colonization and trade. He left for the north with five hundred men, eighty or ninety horses, and a great quantity of trade goods. On the voyage the flagship and all supplies were lost, no pearls or other wealth were found, and Francisco de Chicora and other Indian interpreters escaped. After the settlement was founded (perhaps in Virginia) Ayllón died on 18 October 1526, "when there followed divisions and murders among the chief personages, in quarrels as to who should command." Of the five hundred men who left for the north, only 150 sick and starving men returned to Española and Puerto Rico.²²

Not all of Francisco de Chicora's tales were

products of the imagination. Thirteen years after Ayllón's death, Hernando de Soto landed in Florida, turned his back to the sea, and went in search of the province of Cofitachequi. There in the sepulchers of the dead Soto found eight or nine *arrobas* of pearls, a dirk, green beads, rosaries with their crosses, and the iron axes brought to that land by Ayllón. Many of the pearls, "worth their weight in gold," had lost their hue because their holes had been bored with heat. At the town of Talomeco, a league distant from Cofitachequi, a great store of pearls was found in a temple more than a hundred feet in length and forty in width. Many gems, however, had been damaged by being buried in the earth and covered with the fat of dead Indians. Close to the portals of the temple were twelve fierce giants, "carved in wood and copied from life." When the Spaniards showed the beautiful *cacica* of Cofitachequi rings of gold and silver coins as examples of the metals they desired, her subjects brought Soto "a great quantity of very golden and resplendent copper," and "great iron pyrites which were as thick as boards." No silk was found, but mulberry trees formed part of the grove surrounding Cofitachequi.²³

LEGENDS AND TALES OF THE SEVEN CITIES

At about the same time that Soto was exploring and robbing graves in the great area known as Florida, Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo was mapping the coastline north of Mexico, and Francisco Vázquez de Coronado was chasing down rumors of mythical Indian civilizations and great wealth in New Mexico and the Great Plains of Kansas and West Texas. Coronado's search for the Seven Cities of Cíbola and the fabulous land of Quivira has its origins in a medieval legend; tales told to Nuño Beltrán de Guzmán, president of the first Audiencia of Mexico; and the voyage of Pánfilo de Narváez to Florida in 1528. Hence, while Plains exploration in the eighteenth century was primarily for military or surveillance purposes, expeditions north from Mexico led by Agustín Rodríguez and Francisco Chamuscado (1581),

Antonio de Espejo (1582-83), Gaspar Castaño de Sosa (1590), and Francisco Leyva de Bonilla and Antonio Gutiérrez de Humaña in 1593 were inspired by dreams of wealth or the idea of spiritual conquest or combined both motives.

A legend of the late Middle Ages related that when King Roderic lost Spain to the Arabs in 711, the archbishop of Porto and six other bishops sailed westward with many people for the island of Antillia. There they built seven cities, and so that their subjects might not think of returning to the mainland, they burned their ships.²⁴ This legend of seven fabulous cities in the West merged with a story told to Nuño de Guzmán by an Indian he had in his possession in 1530. This Indian, called Tejo by the Spaniards, told Guzmán that as a boy he had visited seven very large towns rich in gold and silver with his father. These towns were named "The Seven Cities" and were thought to be some forty days' distance to the north of Michoacán.²⁵ Six years later, Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, Andrés Dorantes de Carranza, Alonso de Castillo Maldonado, and Estevan, the slave of Dorantes and a blackamoor of Azamor in western Morocco, arrived on the northern frontier of New Galicia. Their tale of adventure reinforced the idea of "another Mexico" beyond the northern horizon.

The four castaways, the only survivors of the expedition to Florida led by the inept Pánfilo de Narváez in 1528, made a report of their remarkable overland journey to Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza. Cabeza de Vaca, Dorantes, and Castillo in Mexico City also drew up a report for the Audiencia of Santo Domingo. This joint report and the more famous narrative of Cabeza de Vaca, first printed in 1542, related that the wanderers had heard from the Sonora Indians that north of these people there were very populous towns with very large houses whose inhabitants possessed fine turquoises.²⁶

The rainbow seekers had also seen "clear traces of gold and lead, iron, copper, and other metals," and Cabeza de Vaca had been given five emeralds made into arrowheads by Indians. The idea of converting the Indians of the north and finding great wealth caused the viceroy to

chase down these rumors. Meanwhile, Fray Antonio de Ciudad Rodrigo, the Franciscan provincial, sent three friars on ships commissioned by Don Fernando Cortés to make a voyage of discovery in the South Sea. This expedition of 1538 "arrived in Cíbola, a thickly populated land similar to Spain which extends as far as Florida."²⁷

CORONADO'S SEARCH FOR THE SEVEN CITIES

In the same year, Fray Antonio sent Fray Marcos de Niza and the lay brother Onorato to the north by way of the Pacific coast. They formed part of an expedition led by Francisco Vázquez de Coronado in search of new lands. When the friars and Coronado found two roads in the land of Topira north of Culiacán, Coronado elected to explore the road to the right and the friars took the road to the left. After a few days, the group led by Coronado reached rugged sierras and decided to return to San Miguel de Culiacán. Meanwhile, Brother Onorato fell ill, but Fray Marcos, in the company of the black slave Estevan and another interpreter, followed the road that led to the coast. Fray Marcos came to a land inhabited by a poor people, who treated him well; there he learned of a thickly populated land farther north whose people had houses of two and three stories in enclosed towns on the shore of a great river. Beyond the river were larger towns and the land was rich in turquoise and buffalo.²⁸

The legend of the Seven Enchanted Cities of the Seven Bishops, superimposed on the tales told by the Indians, appeared confirmed by Fray Marcos de Niza's second expedition to the north in 1539. Because Estevan was sent ahead of the main party, he reached the Zuñi settlements before Fray Marcos. At Zuñi Estevan offended the Indians when he asked for turquoises and women. The Indians also thought it unreasonable for him "to say that the people were white in the country from which he came and that he was sent by them, he being black." Estevan was killed by the Indians of Zuñi when he was taken for "a spy or a guide from some nations

who wished to come and conquer them," but the Sonora Indians who accompanied him "were allowed to return freely to their own country."²⁹

When Fray Marcos, sixty leagues from Cíbola, heard of Estevan's death, he claimed to have gone forward and seen Cíbola, a city of fine appearance larger than the seat of the viceroyalty, with stone houses, terraces, and flat roofs. This lie, or what may have been an optical illusion, persuaded the viceroy to send Coronado north at the head of 300 Spaniards and some 800 Indians. Fray Marcos went along as father provincial. When the Spaniards arrived at Hawikuh, the first of the seven villages of Zuñi, they cursed Fray Marcos on discovering it to be "a little crowded village" which looked "as if it had been crumpled all up together." Castañeda lists 71 villages with some 20,000 men, agricultural communities with little wealth.³⁰

CORONADO'S SEARCH FOR QUIVIRA

At Zuñi, the Spaniards received a delegation of Indians from Pecos (Cicuye) who welcomed them to their country. The party that went to Pecos returned to the Tiguex pueblos on the Rio Grande, where Coronado chose winter quarters. With them they brought an Indian slave of the buffalo plains who had served at Pecos. From this Indian, called the Turk, they heard that in his country to the east lay Golden Quivira. This version of "El Dorado" had fish as big as horses in a river two leagues wide (catfish on the Mississippi?). Quivira had much gold and silver, and the Turk claimed that on the river there were

large numbers of very big canoes, with more than twenty rowers on a side, and that they carried sails, and that their lords sat on the poop under awnings, and on the prow they had a great golden eagle. He said also that the lord of that country took his afternoon nap under a great tree on which were hung a great number of little gold bells, which put him to sleep as they swung in the air.

Everyone in that land had his "ordinary dishes made of wrought plate, and the jugs and bowls were of gold."³¹

When the Rio Grande thawed out in the spring of 1541, the army left the vicinity of the future Albuquerque to search for Quivira on the eastern plains. After crossing the river and the mountains, they entered the Great Plains. Past the Pecos River, where the present eastern boundary of New Mexico is now located, they met the eastern Apaches (Querechos). These "intelligent" people conversed so well by means of sign language, the lingua franca of the plains, "that there was no need of an interpreter." After reaching the Canadian River, the Turk led the army southeastward to the Staked Plains. This flat country covered by grama and buffalo grass was described by Coronado "as bare of landmarks as if we were surrounded by the sea. Here the guides lost their bearings because there is nowhere a stone, hill, tree, bush, or anything of the sort. There are many excellent pastures with fine grass."³²

The Texas Indians, a Caddoan-speaking people who guided the Spaniards, were a kind people and faithful friends who hunted the buffalo. Castañeda described buffalo hair as wool that "ought to make good cloth because of its fineness." The buffalo bulls had bulging eyes, very long beards, like goats, and short tails, "with a bunch of hair at the end. When they run, they carry it erect like a scorpion." The plentiful white wolves of the plains hunted the buffalo cows. In their march to Quivira under a vast expanse of sky, the army also saw foolish rabbits, kidney beans and prunes, groves of mulberry trees, walnuts, and rose bushes like those of France. After marching 250 leagues from the Tiguex villages on the Rio Grande, Coronado realized that he had been deceived by the Turk. After consultation, his captains and ensigns all agreed that Coronado "should go in search of Quivira with thirty horsemen and half a dozen foot soldiers," and the rest of the army should go back to Tiguex.³³

Using Texas Indians as guides, Coronado reached Quivira after traveling either forty-two or forty-eight days. He was received peacefully

by the Wichita Indians in the vicinity of Great Bend, Kansas. The people of Quivira lived in grass lodges, and their lord "wore a copper plate on his neck and prized it highly." When no gold or silver was found, Coronado had the Turk garroted. After Coronado rejoined the army at Tiguex, the soldiers endured the winter "almost naked and poorly clothed, full of lice, which they were unable to get rid of or avoid."³⁴ Although Coronado promised the soldiers that they would again search for Quivira, he fell from a horse during a race, and in April 1542, still not fully recovered, he announced the army would return to New Spain.

Many of the soldiers encouraged by Fray Juan de Padilla wanted to continue the search for Quivira, but the general's orders pleased those who "did not stumble over bars of gold and silver immediately upon commencing their march into these regions, and because the streams and lakes and springs they met flowed crystalline waters instead of liquid golden victuals, they cursed the barren land and cried out bitterly against those who had led them into such a wilderness."³⁵

MORE SEARCHES TO THE NORTH

Coronado's failure to find gold and silver did not dispel the idea that vast wealth was to be found in the north. Five years after the disillusioned Coronado returned home, "there was official talk of sending new expeditions to colonize Quivira," and the plan to Christianize the north began immediately.³⁶ When Fray Juan de Padilla, obsessed by the Seven Cities, elected to return to Quivira, he was soon killed by the Indians, but the utopian dream of the spiritual conquest of northern New Spain, including lands visited by Coronado and Soto, continued to inspire the Franciscan Order of New Spain. A decade after the silver mines of Zacatecas revealed the mineral wealth of northern Mexico, Alonso de Zorita, royal judge of the Audiencia of Mexico, and Fray Jacinto de San Francisco, a lay brother of the Franciscan Order, encouraged by the Franciscan missionaries and Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, offered to

lead an expedition numbering approximately 100 soldiers and 20 Franciscans into the Land of War beyond Culiacán and Chichimeca territory. The region to be entered led to Florida, New Mexico, Copala, lands discovered by Coronado, and other fertile provinces inhabited by large populations ripe for conversion and potentially rich in gold and silver mines.

This plan confirmed the idea of many Spaniards of Mexico that the happiness of the province would be assured by the conquest of the land of Florida, "which one can reach quickly and easily by sea, and the way is not too difficult by land."³⁷

Although the Council of the Indies found the plan proposed by Fray Jacinto and Zorita fanciful and excessive, and the project did not bear immediate fruit, it did have a certain significance and result. In addition to being "the first of many joint endeavors on behalf of the Indians during the next few years" by Bartolomé de Las Casas and the Mexican missionaries, the plan may have resulted in the peaceful settlement of the region beyond Zacatecas in the 1560s. Moreover, when the policy of "war by fire and blood" failed to win northern Mexico, new policies emerged "which closely resembled" the plan proposed by Zorita and the Franciscans.³⁸ Spanish domination of northern Mexico was finally achieved "by a combination of diplomacy, purchase, and religious conversion." Gifts of food and clothing were given the natives, and prospective Indian farmers were promised good land, seed, and agricultural implements. "Out of the experience of this pacification grew the mission system that was to serve Spain so well in her expansion on the American continent."³⁹

The work of conversion by the regular orders on "the rim of Christendom" led to a greater knowledge of the native civilizations of northern Mexico, the Rio Grande Valley of New Mexico, and the Great Plains. In many instances, this material was related to the Noble

Savage convention found in Renaissance thought and literature, and founded on the idea of the Golden Age of simplicity and the Garden of Eden before the Fall.

PRIMITIVISM AND MILLENNIALISM

In the same way that Old World tales of fantastic and marvelous El Dorados obtruded between the Spaniards and America's reality, the idea of a Paradise or the Golden Age of antiquity plus the admired qualities of the Indians and their supposed freedom from measures, money, and greed led to primitivism, or the idea that Indians lived in harmony with nature and reason. As Peter Martyr observed shortly after Columbus's first voyage to the Indies, the Indians lived "in a golden age, without laws, without lying judges, without books, satisfied with their life, and in no wise solicitous for the future." Drawing on this imagery, Pedro de Castañeda observed that the Pueblo Indians lived in peaceful simplicity. Ruled by a council of the oldest men and guided by their priests, these communal people worked together to build their villages. Their virgins went nude, in the manner of Eve before the Fall. Before marriage "the young men served the whole village in general, and only after taking a husband did the women cover themselves." The Pueblo people were exceptionally clean and kept separate houses where they prepared food. While a man played the fife, the women sang and ground grain to the music.⁴⁰

The Spanish linked millennialism to primitivism in articulating the role of the mission system of New Spain. Critical of the corruption of Europe and its deviation from the natural law, friars and humanists looked backward to an Indian Golden Age in which people lived happily and simply. They also looked forward to a Christian utopia that would redeem the tragic life of the Indians under Spanish rule. Millennialism and primitivism were the opposite sides of a single coin of humanity's desire for fields distant in time past or time future, and the missionaries looked forward to an Indian terrestrial paradise consecrated to evan-

gelical poverty and knowledge of the true God.⁴¹

CONCLUSION

Gold and conversion connoted America in the sixteenth century, and he who would win them would be covered with glory. Hence exploration and interpretation of America was a European dream that gradually faded and became transformed into new myths and new realities. America became America, but was first conceived as Asia and was measured by medieval Christian and classical traditions. Classical geography, Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman traditions, and myth, fable, and fiction of Old World origin accounted for the initial invention of America. Reality gradually impinged, but as late as 1598 José de Acosta noted that Spaniards still remained ignorant of the lands between Peru and Brazil. Some said it was an inundated land, full of lakes and marshes; others said it had great and glorious kingdoms, and imagined the Paytiti, El Dorado, and the Land of the Caesars, where there were marvelous things.⁴²

Explorations in this period have an essential unity in their mythic quality and religious thematic elements. Exploration on the Great Plains cannot be understood if separated from the Spanish search for the Terrestrial Paradise, El Dorado, King Solomon's mines, and other great and glorious kingdoms. As America became better known, legendary kingdoms kept moving farther and farther west. For instance, the Spanish search for King Solomon's mines eventually led to the discovery of the great circle route to Mexico from the Philippines.⁴³ In this and other instances fantasies acted as a motivating force for discovery. Ideas and legends of medieval origin became a part of the history of America: California takes its name from a mythical island "at the right hand of the Indies" ruled by Queen Calafía and her Amazons and rich in gold and griffins. Myth continues to influence the American mentality and helps to determine the shape of reality and the country's future. The smoke of dreams envelops the form of the actual for good and evil. Those of us who settle for less than the possibility of Utopia today view Amer-

ica the Beautiful as the Mecca of the Miraculous protected by one or another Western hero who will actualize the myth of star wars technology and preserve the land of the free and the agrarian utopia of the Plains.⁴⁴

NOTES

1. The elusive West can be either the entire Western Hemisphere or various New World frontiers where westward-moving Europeans or their descendants confronted "in their own territory the original possessors of the continent." For a definition of the mythological West and the "Western" as a type of adventure literature, see Leslie Fiedler, *The Return of the Vanishing American* (New York: Stein and Day, 1976), pp. 16-49; and Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), pp. 96-104. For those who subscribe to the frontier thesis of American history, there are successive Wests or Anglo-American frontiers. The frontier, "a migrating geographic area," is "the meeting point of savagery and civilization, the zone where civilization entered the wilderness . . ." (Ray Allen Billington, *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier* [New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967], pp. 1-11).

2. Arthur Percival Newton, ed., *The Great Age of Discovery* (London: University of London Press, 1932); J. H. Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance: Discovery, Exploration and Settlement, 1450 to 1650* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969); Charles E. Nowell, *The Great Discoveries and the First Colonial Empires* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1954).

3. Winship's translation of Pedro de Castañeda's narrative of the Coronado expedition has been reprinted without scholarly apparatus several times. See George Parker Winship, "The Coronado Expedition, 1540-1542," in *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1892-1893, Part 1* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1896). There are several translations of the journey of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca. See "The Narrative of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca," in Frederick W. Hodge and Theodore H. Lewis, eds., *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States* (1907; rpt. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1946), pp. 1-26; Fanny Bandelier, trans. and ed., *The Journey of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca and His Companions from Florida to the Pacific, 1528-1536* (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1905); and Cyclone Covey, trans. and ed., *Cabeza de Vaca's Adventures in the Unknown Interior of America* (1961; rpt. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983). Other explorers' narratives are found in the Hakluyt Society's *Works* and Cortés Society's *Documents and*

Narratives. For major trends in the writings by United States scholars on colonial Spanish America, see Benjamin Keen, "Main Currents in United States Writings on Colonial Spanish America, 1884-1984," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 65 (1985): 657-82. For literature on Southwestern exploration and conquest, see Ralph H. Vigil, "Exploration and Conquest," in E. R. Stoddard, R. L. Nostrand, and J. P. West, eds., *Borderlands Sourcebook: A Guide to the Literature on Northern Mexico and the American Southwest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983), pp. 31-35.

4. See Samuel E. Morison's *Admiral of the Ocean Sea: A Life of the Admiral Christopher Columbus*, 2 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1942). Rewritten for a wider public in 1954 and titled *Christopher Columbus, Mariner*, it appeared as a Mentor book. This work is traditional and conservative; the author states, "My main concern is with the Columbus of action . . . I am content to leave his 'psychology,' his 'motivation' and all that to others" (1942, p. 6). The most durable general work on Spanish discovery, exploration, and conquest is Edward Gaylord Bourne's *Spain in America, 1450-1580*, first published in 1904. Bourne's sympathetic interpretation of Spain's Indian policy was influenced by the climate of opinion that made for American expansionism and the creation of an overseas empire between 1865 and 1914. For a criticism of the "bardic version of the Columbian voyages and their consequences" by "narrative historians, most of them nineteenth-century writers" who described "the American past in ways consonant both with the documentary record then available and with the ethnocentrism of their fellow white citizens of the New World, particularly of the United States," see Alfred W. Crosby, Jr., "The Columbian Voyages, the Columbian Exchange, and Their Historians," Michael Adas, ed., *Essays on Global and Comparative History* (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1987), pp. 1-29.

5. For the role of Indians in American history textbooks, see James Axtell, "Europeans, Indians, and the Age of Discovery in American History Textbooks," *American Historical Review* 92 (June 1987): 621-32; Frederick E. Hoxie, "Teaching History Today," *Perspectives* 23 (April 1985): 18-22; and Neal Salisbury, "Indians in Colonial History," (Chicago: D'Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian, Occasional Papers in Curriculum, Washington Conference, 1985), No. 4, pp. 1-26.

As Axtell notes, American college students are "still being shown the Spanish empire through the distorting lens of the 'Black Legend.'" One learns from one popular college textbook that "only selected persons" migrated to the New World and these were few, male, and exploitative. We are also told that

Spanish colonists quickly mated with Indian and black women, "thereby creating the racially mixed population that characterizes Latin America to the present day" (Mary Beth Norton et al., *A People and a Nation: A History of the United States*, 2 vols. [Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1986], 1:16). This text also claims that Spain failed to establish true colonies, i.e., *agriculturally based settlements* inhabited by literate, white men and women who read and understood the King James version of the Bible (p. 20).

Norton et al. state that "approximately two hundred thousand ordinary men and women" (p. 20) came to North America in the seventeenth century. Although the authors view America's early colonists as very religious people, they fail to note Jon Butler's point that "American colonists had an ambivalent relationship with Christian congregations" and that the English colonists "proved surprisingly ignorant of elemental Christian beliefs" (Jon Butler, "Magic, Astrology, and the Early American Religious Heritage, 1600-1760," *The American Historical Review* 84 [April 1979]: 317-46). They also fail to mention that emigration from Spain to the New World in the years 1492-1600 may have reached 200,000 or more. Perhaps 450,000 Spanish emigrants came to the American colonies in the seventeenth century. At the end of the sixteenth century, 35.3 percent of the emigrants to the Indies were women. See articles by Woodrow Borah, Peter Boyd-Bowman, Magnus Mörner, and James Lockhart in Fredi Chiappelli et al., eds., *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old*, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 2:707-804. Although legally forbidden to migrate to the Indies, converted Jews and Moors and the hopeless, the bankrupt, the criminal, and the delinquent of Spain were found in the Indies in abundant numbers. By 1550 the *conversos* of Española controlled the island politically and economically. See Ralph H. Vigil, *Alonso de Zorita: Royal Judge and Christian Humanist, 1512-1585* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), pp. 41-82.

Racial and cultural mixture between Spaniards and other ethnic groups is usually considered to have taken place in the New World colonies, giving rise to the idea that *pure* Spanish blood was diluted by Indians and blacks. This ignores the fact that Spaniards had experienced ethnic and "racial" *mestizaje* before their arrival in America. As Brian R. Hamnett notes in his review of Philip Wayne Powell's *Tree of Hate: Propaganda and Prejudices Affecting United States Relations with the Hispanic World*, "Much more needs to be said about the racial and cultural *mestizaje* within Spain before the American expansion. Here, precisely, may lie the *real* root of foreigners' contempt for Spaniards. The great flowering of sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Spain should not be viewed in our future research without references to this me-

dieval past. Similarly, *mestizaje*, always subject to denigration, is the most interesting, significant, and enduring contribution of Latin America to a world poisoned by deeply rooted racism" (*Hispanic American Historical Review* 53 [1973]: 671-72). For examples of *mestizaje* in Spain, see Vigil, *Alonso de Zorita*, pp. 44-45, 246, 248; Magnus Mörner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), p. 16; and Claudio Esteva Fabregat, *El mestizaje en Iberoamérica* (Madrid: Editorial Alhambra, 1988), pp. 127-28. For the different kinds of Spaniards who came to the Indies, see J. Vicens Vives, ed., *Historia de España y América*, 5 vols. (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1961) 3:393-97. At the end of the colonial period there may have been 3.2 million "whites" in Spanish America. Lucas Alamán stated that 1.2 million Spaniards resided in New Spain; of these, 70,000 were *peninsulares* (Lucas Alamán, *Historia de Mexico*, 5 vols. [Mexico: Editorial Jus, 1942] 1:17, 30).

6. For the tools of the explorers, see J. H. Parry, *Europe and a Wider World* (London: Hutchinson University Press, 1966), pp. 13-25. For the idea that Spain under the Catholic Kings was not the "new monarchy" theoretically characteristic of the renaissance state, see J. H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain, 1469-1716* (New York: New American Library, 1977), pp. 75-76.

7. Edward McNall Burns et al., *Western Civilizations: Their History and Their Culture* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), pp. 457-59; see also Edward P. Cheyney, *The Dawn of a New Era, 1250-1453* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1962), pp. 276-97.

8. Loren Baritz, "The Idea of the West," *American Historical Review* 66 (April 1961): 618-40, quoted pp. 619, 620; Hartley Burr Alexander, *The World's Rim* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), p. 17.

9. Hodge and Lewis, *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States*, p. 283. For Venus as a symbol of purity and evil, see Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 303; Isaiah 14:12-15.

10. Thomas More, *Utopia*, Edward Surtz, S.J., ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 14. More had read Amerigo Vespucci's account of his voyages, which mentions giants, cannibals, and Indians who lived 150 years. On his first voyage Columbus looked for human monsters; he found none but did have a report of an island called "Caniba" by some Indians, and by others "Carib." This island was inhabited by a ferocious people "who eat human flesh." On 8 January 1493, Columbus "saw three sirens, who rose very high from the sea, but they were not as beautiful as they are depicted for somehow their faces had the appearance of a man." The Indians at Samana Bay also told him that the island

of Martinino (Martinique) was "entirely peopled by women without men" (Christopher Columbus, *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*, Cecil Jane, trans., L. A. Vigneras, ed. [London: Hakluyt Society, 1960], pp. 143, 146-47, 200). For the idea that griffins had lived in Mexico's great sierras and in the Río de La Plata region and Peru, see Alonso de Zorita, *Historia de la Nueva España*, Manuel Serrano y Sanz, ed. (Madrid: Imprenta de Fortanet, 1909), pp. 222-24. Zorita also noted that the Indians related things that appeared to be fables, stating that giants had arrived in Mexico by way of the Pacific Ocean. "In order to feed each one of these giants, it was necessary for one hundred Indians to grind corn for tortillas. They were thus assigned various regions in the land so that they might be fed, and their bones have also been found in Peru and in the East Indies and in some parts of Spain." The Indians of Mexico also told Zorita that "in ancient times bearded and very tall men had arrived in the land; this surprised them because they have the custom of shaving their beards" (pp. 224-26).

11. Julio Caro Baroja, *The World of the Witches*, O. N. V. Glendinning, trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), p. 9; R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (New York: Mentor, 1954), pp. 11-60; John P. McKay et al., *A History of Western Society*, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983) 1:519.

12. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, p. 25.

13. Mariano Picón-Salas, *A Cultural History of Spanish America from Conquest to Independence*, Irving A. Leonard, trans. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), pp. 34-35.

14. Ramón Iglesias, *El hombre Colón y otros ensayos* (Mexico: El Colegio de México, 1944), pp. 17-49, quoted p. 49; Bartolomé de Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, Agustín Millares Carlo, ed., 3 vols. (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1951) 1:282-83.

15. Boies Penrose, *Travel and Discovery in the Renaissance, 1420-1620* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), pp. 8-9; Ferdinand Columbus, *The Life of the Admiral Christopher Columbus*, Benjamin Keen, trans. and ed. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1959), p. 16; George E. Nunn, *The Geographical Conceptions of Columbus* (New York: American Geographical Society). See also A. P. Newton, "Introduction: The Conception of the World in the Middle Ages," in A. P. Newton, ed., *Travel and Travellers of the Middle Ages* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1926), pp. 1-18.

16. Nunn, *Geographical Conceptions of Columbus*, pp. 70-75; Las Casas, *Historia* 2:43. Columbus believed that the Earthly Paradise would be found far inland where earth was closest to heaven. He be-

lieved that the Western Hemisphere (which began 100 leagues beyond the Azores) was pear-shaped and had a high projection like a woman's nipple on a round ball. As a result, ships rose gently toward the sky beyond the Azores and the weather became milder. He noted that the people he found at Trinidad and the mainland were whiter (or less dark) than Africans living in the same latitude. Moreover, the fairer people he met at Trinidad and the mainland lived in a milder temperature, their hair was long and smooth, and they were more astute and of greater intelligence and not cowardly (Las Casas, *Historia* 2:41; Cecil Jane, ed., *Select Documents Illustrating the Four Voyages of Columbus* [London: Hakluyt Society, 1933], pp. 32-36).

17. Leonardo Olschki, "Ponce de León's Fountain of Youth: History of a Geographic Myth," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 21 (May 1941): 361-85; Malcolm Letts, ed., *Mandeville's Travels: Texts and Translations*, 2 vols. (London: Hakluyt Society, 1953) 1:121-22, 2:325-26, 376, 459-60. Prester John's letter stated that in the wood situated at the foot of Mt. Olympus (Ceylon) there "springs a clear fountain which has within itself every kind of taste. It changes its taste every hour by day and night, and is scarcely three days' journey from Paradise, whence Adam was expelled." He "who tastes of this fountain thrice, fasting, will suffer no infirmity thereafter, but remains as if of the age of 32 years as long as he lives." Mandeville wrote that the Terrestrial Paradise "is the highest land of the world, and it is so high that it touches near the circle of the moon" (Letts, *Mandeville's Travels* 2:505, 1:215-16). Columbus, like Mandeville, understood that "no man living may go to Paradise." By land, says Mandeville, the way is blocked by wild beasts and impassable hills and rocks. "By water also may no man pass thither, for those rivers come with so great a course and so great a birr and waves that no ship may go ne sail against them." In summary, Mandeville and Columbus placed Eden's garden "so far in the east that it is also at the extremist end of the west" (Newton, *Travel and Travellers*, p. 164). See also George Boas, *Essays on Primitivism and Related Ideas in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1948), pp. 154-74; Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, *Historia general y natural de las Indias*, 5 vols. (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 1959) 2:102. As Campbell observes (*Hero with a Thousand Faces*, pp. 172-92), the desire for physical immortality is as old as the epic of Gilgamesh and as modern as George Bernard Shaw's *Back to Methuselah*.

18. Winship, "The Coronado Expedition," pp. 447, 454, 513, 525.

19. Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *The Spaniards in Their History*, Walter Starkie, trans. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966), p. 20; Antonio Pastor, "Spanish Civ-

ilization in the Great Age of Discovery," in Newton, *Great Age of Discovery*, pp. 10-44; Federico Fernández de Castillejo, *La Ilusión en la Conquista* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Atalaya, 1945), pp. 13-17.

20. Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *The Discovery and Conquest of Mexico, 1517-1521*, A. P. Maudslay, trans. (New York: Grove Press, 1956), pp. 190-91, quoted in Irving A. Leonard, *Books of the Brave* (New York: Gordian Press, 1964), p. 43.

21. Francis Augustus MacNutt, *De Orbe Novo: The Eight Decades of Peter Martyr D'Anghera* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912), pp. 259, 267-68.

22. Manuel Lucena Salmoral, "La extraña capitulación de Ayllón para el poblamiento de la actual Virginia: 1523," *Revista de Historia de América*, nos. 77-78 (January-December 1974), pp. 9-31; Oviedo, *Historia general*, 4:327; Hodge and Lewis, *Spanish Explorers* p. 174.

23. Oviedo, *Historia general*, p. 168; Garcilaso de la Vega, *El Inca, The Florida of the Inca*, J. G. Varner and J. J. Varner, trans. and eds. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1951), pp. 303-16. The weight of the pearls found varies depending on the report consulted. The factor (business manager) of the expedition, Luis Hernández de Biedma, stated that about seven *arobas* were found (an *aroba* is equivalent to 25 pounds). The Gentleman of Elvas states that there were found 350 pounds' weight of pearls. It thus appears that the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega exaggerates when he writes that "there were more than 1,000 *arobas* of pearls and seed pearls." See Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, *La Florida del Inca: Historia del Adelantado Hernando de Soto, Gobernador y Capitán General del Reino de la Florida, y de otros heroicos caballeros españoles e indios* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1956), p. 220.

24. Enrique de Gandía, *Historia crítica de los mitos de la conquista americana* (Madrid: J. Roldán y compañía, 1929), pp. 59-69. The island of Antillia, or the Island of the Seven Cities, described as some 2,500 miles from Japan and 200 leagues due west of the Canaries in the 1470s, was allegedly visited by a Portuguese ship in the time of Prince Henry the Navigator (1394-1460). When the sailors visited the church of Antillia, "the ship's boys gathered sand for the firebox and found it was one third fine gold." Other ships of Portugal sought Antillia in the years before Columbus's discovery but could not find it. Following the discovery, the island of Española was called Antillia by the Portuguese; Amerigo Vespucci called it Antiglia. F. Columbus, *The Life of the Admiral*, pp. 21, 25-27; Las Casas, *Historia* 1:64, 68; 2:119, 161, 212. See also Angelico Chavez, O.F.M., *Coronado's Friars* (Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1968), pp. 15-16.

25. Hodge and Lewis, *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States*, pp. 285-87.

26. Oviedo, *Historia general*, 4:311.

27. Hodge and Lewis, *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States*, pp. 106, 111; Alonso de Zorita, "Relación de las cosas notables de la Nueva España y de la conquista y pacificación della y de la doctrina y conversión de los naturales," Biblioteca del Real Palacio, Madrid, MS 59 (1585), folio 496. For interpretations of the route of the castaways, see Donald E. Chipman, "In Search of Cabeza de Vaca's Route Across Texas: An Historiographical Survey," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 91 (October 1987): 127-45.

28. Zorita, "Relación," folios 496-97; Fray Toribio de Motolinía, *Historia de los indios de la Nueva España* (Barcelona: Herederos de Juan Gili, Editores, 1914), pp. 173-75; Francis Borgia Steck, trans., *Motolinía's History of the Indians of New Spain* (Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1951). Other than Zorita and Motolinía (Fray Toribio de Bonaventura), I have failed to find other chroniclers or documentary sources that mention Fray Marcos making a journey north in 1538. What is certain is that the instructions for the 1539 expedition given to Fray Marcos were accepted by him on 20 November 1538. As early as 15 July 1539, Coronado wrote the king that Fray Marcos accompanied by native Indians and the Negro Estevan had traveled into the interior of the country beyond Cuicacán and had discovered "a very fine country" (George P. Hammond and Agapito Rey, trans. and eds., *Narratives of the Coronado Expedition, 1540-1542* [Albuquerque: Coronado Cuarto Centennial Publications, 1940], pp. 45-49, 61, 63-82).

29. Hodge and Lewis, *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States*, pp. 289-90. Fray Marcos's report does not agree with Castañeda's narrative. The friar wrote that two of the Indians who escaped told him that of the Indians who accompanied Estevan to Cibola, "more than three hundred were dead" (Hammond and Rey, *Narratives of the Coronado Expedition*, p. 76).

30. Hammond and Rey, *Narratives of the Coronado Expedition*, p. 79; Chavez, *Coronado's Friars*, p. 12; Hodge and Lewis, *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States*, pp. 300, 358-59.

31. Hodge and Lewis, *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States*, p. 314.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 330; Hammond and Rey, *Narratives of the Coronado Expedition*, p. 186. In his study of the Llano Estacado, or the Staked Plains, William B. Conroy notes that the landscape through which the Spaniards passed "and the forms of life they encountered, including the buffalo and the Plains Indian, were described with accuracy and in detail" ("The Llano Estacado in 1541: Spanish Perceptions of a Distinctive Physical Setting," in Oakah L. Jones, Jr., *The Spanish Borderlands—A First Reader* [Los An-

geles: Lorrin L. Morrison, 1974], pp. 24-32; originally published in *Journal of the West* [October 1972]).

33. Hodge and Lewis, *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States*, pp. 335, 382-83.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 336, 337, 367; Hammond and Rey, *Narratives of the Coronado Expedition*, p. 187.

35. Chavez, *Coronado's Friars*, p. 58; Gaspar Pérez de Villagrà, *History of New Mexico*, Gilberto Espinosa, trans. (Los Angeles: The Quivira Society, 1933), pp. 58-59.

36. Herbert Eugene Bolton, *Coronado, Knight of Pueblos and Plains* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1940), p. 400. As late as 1720 the governor of Coahuila, the Marquis of San Miguel de Aguayo, led 500 mounted troops into east Texas to check French defenses beyond the Red River and to discover Gran Quivira. See Luis Weckmann, *La herencia medieval de México*, 2 vols. (Mexico: Colegio de Mexico, Centro de Estudios Históricos, 1984) 1:63.

37. Vigil, *Alonso de Zorita*, p. 218, quotation p. 217.

38. Alonso de Zorita, *Life and Labor in Ancient Mexico: The Brief and Summary Relation of the Lords of New Spain*, Benjamin Keen, trans. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1963), p. 50; Henry Raup Wagner with Helen Rand Parish, *The Life and Writings of Bartolomé de Las Casas* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1967), p. 231.

39. Philip Wayne Powell, *Soldiers, Indians and Silver: The Northward Advance of New Spain, 1550-1600* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952), p. 204.

40. MacNutt, *De Orbe Novo*, pp. 79, 103-04; Hodge and Lewis, *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States*, pp. 352-54.

41. For primitivism and millennialism and their relationship to the Golden Age of simplicity and the Garden of Eden where "no pleasing habit ends," see Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, pp. 72-75; see also Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries* (New

York: Harper, 1960), pp. 39-43; Hoxie Neale Fairchild, *The Noble Savage: A Study in Romantic Naturalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928), pp. 1-22; and Henri Baudet, *Paradise on Earth* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965). For the Franciscan belief that they had been "given the unique opportunity of creating, on the eve of the world, a terrestrial paradise where a whole race of men would be consecrated to evangelical poverty," see John Leddy Phelan, *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970).

42. José de Acosta, *The Natural and Moral History of the Indies* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1880), p. 171. Acosta also noted that "some affirm there is another strait under the North, opposite to that of Magellan," and that "the new world, which we call Indies, is not altogether severed and disjoined from the other world . . . I have long believed that the one and the other world are joined and continued one with the other in some part, or at the least are very near" (pp. 18, 60).

43. Harry Kelsey, "Finding the Way Home: Spanish Exploration of the Round-trip Route Across the Pacific Ocean," *Western Historical Quarterly* 17 (April 1986): 145-64.

44. The name "California" probably comes from a novel of chivalry called *Las Sergas de Esplandián*, written by Garcí Rodríguez de Montalvo and published in Saragoza in 1508, in Seville in 1511, in Rome in 1519, and in many subsequent editions. It was translated into French, Italian, English, German, Dutch, and Hebrew, and forms part of the series of the Amadis de Gaula novels of chivalry. For Amazons and Calafia's islands, see Leonard, *Books of the Brave*, pp. 36-53; for the American West as symbol and myth in the imagination of nineteenth-century America, see Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950).