

*Seventeenth-Century North America*. By CARL O. SAUER. Berkeley: Turtle Island Foundation for the Netzahualcōyotl Historical Society, 1980. Maps. Figures. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 295. Cloth. \$19.95. Paper. \$9.95.

Carl O. Sauer, dean of American environmental and cultural geography and historical geographer, played an important part in the development of geography as an academic discipline in the United States. The founder of a large school of geographers, Sauer was also largely responsible for the establishment of the *Ibero-Americana* series published by the University of California Press.

Sauer was trained and began his career in the Midwest, and was brought to the University of California, Berkeley, in 1923. His field work and publications during the major part of his teaching career on the Berkeley campus dealt with Lower California and northwestern Mexico. That his horizons were always broad, his analysis profound, becomes clear from his contributions to scholarship that appeared following his retirement from the classroom. His well-known *Early Spanish Main* appeared in 1966, *Northern Mist* in 1968, and *Sixteenth-Century North America: The Land and People as Seen by Europeans* in 1971.

The volume under review deals with the Borderlands of New Spain, New France, and the Gulf area. It relies heavily on excerpts from contemporary sources, such as government reports, accounts, and records. It is essentially an introduction to the conditions of land, nature, and Indian life as seen by Spanish and French participants. The volume was in draft when Sauer died in 1975. It does not read as smoothly as does his sixteenth-century volume. Although the study does not contain new material, it will prove useful as a good summary and outline of the author's ideas and interpretations. Among its other virtues, the book establishes what a helpful handmaiden geography can be to history.

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*José de Ezpeleta, gobernador de la Mobila, 1780–1781*. By FRANCISCO DE BORJA MEDINA ROJAS. Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1980. Illustrations. Maps. Tables. Notes. Appendix. Bibliography. Index. Pp. lxxxii, 869. Paper.

The ten months that José de Ezpeleta spent as governor of Mobile (May 1780 to March 1781) were critical, in Father Borja Medina's view, not only to his rise in government service, but also to the success of

Bernardo de Gálvez's campaign against Pensacola. Further, they illustrate the problem of the hero in history, a theme that justifies the stunning detail in which these months are covered.

The book begins with a long prolog that summarizes each chapter. This is followed by a thirty-page chronicle of Ezpeleta's life; by discussions of Indian affairs and policy in three chapters (2, 3, 6) and almost 200 pages; by Ezpeleta's policy in the face of the disloyalty of his British subjects (chapter 4 and elsewhere; about 75 pages); by the defense of Mobile (chapters 5, 9; about 200 pages); and by the second and third expeditions against Pensacola (chapters 7, 8, 10–12; 292 pages). Fifty maps and drawings, together with a color reproduction of Ezpeleta's portrait, complete the presentation.

The bibliography and notes reveal a thorough, exhaustive study of all available Spanish, English, and even French sources, including the box of personal papers Ezpeleta was able to save from the 1797 wreck of the ship carrying him to Spain after his term as viceroy of New Granada. For the subjects covered, this study is as close to being definitive as details can make it.

Impressive as it is, the book fails to convince this reviewer that the decisions Ezpeleta made while in command at Mobile were as critical to the success of Gálvez's campaign as the author would have us believe. Further, Ezpeleta's subsequent rise in royal service, while it might have been hampered had he failed at Mobile, seems to have been assured by abilities previously demonstrated, by his patronage relationship with Alejandro O'Reilly, and by his membership in the first class of the Zaragoza Military Academy. Among the cadets of that stellar class was Bernardo de Gálvez, whose liking for Ezpeleta accounts for the latter's appointment to govern Mobile (p. 30). As to the larger philosophical question that underlies this book, each reader will have to judge for himself how much Ezpeleta shaped his times or was shaped by them.

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*La frontera con los indios de Nueva Vizcaya en el siglo xvii.* By GUILLERMO PORRAS MUÑOZ. Mexico City: Fomento Cultural Banamex, 1980. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 457. Paper.

Though not the first regional history of Spanish-Indian hostility on New Spain's northern frontier, *La frontera con los indios de Nueva Vizcaya en el siglo xvii* stands alone as an original examination of seven-