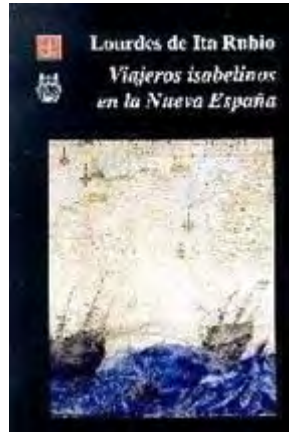


## **Reviews**

### **Lourdes de Ita Rubio, *Viajeros isabelinos en la Nueva España***

By Cristina Borreguero Beltrán

Translated by David Barnwell



Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo. Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas. Mexico, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001. 230 pp.

There have been considerable advances in research on travel, travellers and travel literature in the New World. New and diverse readings have been offered, with reflections and interpretations of the sources from a variety of angles and perspectives: history, geography, art, literature, archaeology, politics, philology and science.

1999 saw the appearance of the influential book by José Luis Martínez: *Pasajeros a Indias: Viajes transatlánticos en el siglo XVI* (México, FCE). Here the author detailed the arrival of more than 1,522 foreigners to the Indies between 1493 and 1600, his figures based solely on the official registers. In 2001, Lourdes Ita Rubio published *Viajeros isabelinos en la Nueva España*, a study of the different groups of English who arrived in the Americas, specifically to New Spain (Mexico). Since then this line of research has widened, especially in Mexico. A prolific author in this area is Blanca López Mariscal, of the Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey. In 2003 she wrote an article which can be linked to Ita Rubio's work. This was "Otros hombres con libros ilustrados: viajeros ingleses a la Nueva España

*en el siglo XVII*". (1) One year later she published her thesis *Relatos y relaciones de viaje al Nuevo Mundo: un acercamiento a la comprensión del género*. She is also author of the very interesting «Para una tipología del relato de viaje» in *Viajes y Viajeros*, Monterrey, 2006. Within her framework for the classification of travellers she analysed the stories of a number of women in New Spain in «El viaje a la Nueva España entre 1540 y 1625: el trayecto femenino» in *Historia de las mujeres en América Latina* (Universidad de Murcia and Centro de estudios sobre la mujer en la Historia de América Latina).

This field of study was given impetus by the Alexander Von Humboldt international conferences *Travel Literature to and from Latin America from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries*. Held in 2001, 2003 and 2005, these have given rise to the establishment of interdisciplinary and intercultural studies focused on the examination of tales of travel and travellers.

In the research on travel literature prominence should be given to the work *Viajeros isabelinos en la Nueva España*, (Elizabethan Travellers in New

Spain) awarded a Special Mention by the Fundación del Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia. The author, from the Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas of the Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo (Mexico), is a member of the *Society for Irish Latin American Studies*, from which she has coordinated *A través del espejo: viajes, viajeros y la constitución de la alteridad en América Latina* (Morelia, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas de la Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, 2005) and the Second Alexander Von Humboldt International Conference: *Viajes, viajeros y literatura de viajes hacia y desde México, América Latina y el Caribe, siglo XV al XX*, held in 2003. Here she herself presented work on the accounts left by the crew-members who were put ashore by John Hawkins in New Spain in 1568.

This excellent study *Viajeros isabelinos en la Nueva España* is based on the collection of testimonies by the various groups of English travellers who for one reason or another travelled to New Spain in the sixteenth century. Published in 2001, it is a reference work both for historians of the Americas and for those historians with a more modern focus who are becoming interested in this field of research.

While the presence of Spanish travellers and what they accomplished in the New World was well known, the same cannot be said of the role of English voyagers in the Colonial world. What is original about the work reviewed here is the multifaceted study of the different groups of English who arrived in New Spain. The history of Mexico had in reality been written generally from the point of view of Mexican or Spanish sources. This study, on the other hand, bases itself on English sources, and thus gives up new insights and perspectives.

The author's goals were, in the first place, to learn about the experiences of English travellers, the first non-Spanish Europeans in the New Spain of the sixteenth century. Secondly, she wished to see how English people viewed New Spain in that century, and what importance they attached to it. She sought to evaluate the geopolitical role of New Spain and finally, to consider how all these factors

affected how the territory of Mexico was organised four centuries ago. The primary source for this work is Richard Hakluyt's *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation made by sea or overland*, (published in twelve volumes by the University of Glasgow in 1903-1905 from Hakluyt's second edition of 1598-1600). In 1965 the Hakluyt Society published a two-volume facsimile of the London first edition of 1589 (Cambridge University Press, London and Toronto).<sup>\*</sup> This is an extremely important source for Spanish-language historians. Richard Hakluyt was at pains to record all the information that English travellers could give him and asked them to provide written testimony. Because it was based on these accounts, his work was crucial in forming a new paradigm as to how the Anglo-Saxon mind viewed the changed world order of the sixteenth century. Without his efforts in compiling the material, the history of England would have been written differently, as indeed would have been the impact of New Spain on the people of England. In this light, the *Principal Navigations* formed a crucial contribution to the historiography of Mexico. Other documentary sources for the study of English traders in New Spain include the *State Paper Rolls*, which house registries of their patents and ties to the court. Finally in addition to these sources, though secondary to them and not consulted directly by the author, is the documentation in the Archivo de Indias, specifically the Patronato Real or Mexico sections. Most prominent in the study of English pirates is Richard Hawkins' own work, edited by James Williamson, "*The Observations of Sir Richard Hawkins, from the Text of 1622 with Introduction Notes and Appendices*" (London, The Argonaut Press, 1933). This book was republished by the Da Capo Press in New York in 1968 as *The observations of Sir Richard Hawkins, knight, in his voiage into the South Sea. Anno Domini. 1593.* (London, Printed by I. D. for Ihon Iggard, and are to be sold at His shop at the Hand and Starre in Fleete-streete, neere the Temple Gate, 1622).

*Viajeros isabelinos* is composed of an introduction and three substantial chapters

which analyse the diverse experiences of the three groups of English citizens who travelled to the New World or lived there during the century. In her introduction, the author poses a central research question: Is it true that Spanish America was hermetically sealed to English trade? In some very original ways, however, the introduction offers a more general history of the relations between Spain and England.

The first chapter studies the English merchants who traded with Mexico during the sixteenth century. The second examines the activities in New Spain of John Hawkins, Francis Drake and Thomas Cavendish. Finally, the third chapter considers the story of the 114 English sailors who were abandoned by John Hawkins on the Tampico coast after the battle of San Juan de Ulúa in Veracruz in 1568. The structure of the book is clear and well put together, though the author is guilty of occasional repetitions in various contexts and chapters. The author skillfully deals with three questions. What implications did the arrival of traders and pirates to New Spain pose for the Spanish Crown? And for England? And for New Spain?

While the Spanish Crown could incorporate English merchants in its own trading companies without jeopardising its monopolies, the advent of English pirates or corsairs posed grave threats, especially in the Pacific, hitherto considered a Spanish lake. For England, the arrival of merchants and pirates bringing all types of merchandise and booty from the New World supplied an attractive incentive for English traders and adventurers. At intervals of about a decade three English pirates arrived in New Spain: John Hawkins in 1568, Francis Drake in 1578 and Thomas Cavendish in 1587. These were to determine subsequent English sailing routes and conditions in New Spain. The battle of San Juan de Ulúa left its mark on Hawkins and especially on Drake, who from then on thought only of revenge for the “treachery” of the Spaniards. One of the main results of pirate raids on New Spain was the development of changes in the design of English ships. Hawkins’ efforts led to the remodelling of the Elizabethan Royal Navy, which in 1588 was to achieve its victory over

the Spanish Armada. Ironically, as the author points out, England’s\*\* eventual triumph owed much to what it learned from its failure at the Mexican port of San Juan de Ulúa.

Another event that had repercussions for English shipping was the arrival of Drake at Huatulco, then the Mexican Pacific’s international port. His appearance provoked panic through the Spanish colony, since till then the Pacific had been exclusively Spanish. This left its effects on the geography of New Spain, as it forced coastal settlements to be moved inland to avoid pillage by pirates. A third element of great moment was Thomas Cavendish’s voyage around the Strait of Magellan, for the first time open to English shipping. The capture and looting of the galleon *Santa Ana*, as it made its way from Manila was unprecedented. It demonstrated to the Spaniards their strategic weakness in defending the American Pacific. Spain had failed to construct sufficient or adequate fortifications on its vast American coasts.

The activities of pirates are well known to English-language historians. However, as Rod Lévésque of the *Society for the History of Discoveries* has pointed out, few have paid attention to the testimonies of two youths - Miles Philips and John Hortop - as published by Hakluyt. These attracted interest not so much for the fact that they, in company with 112 others, were cruelly marooned and abandoned by Hawkins on his way back to Europe, but rather for how they managed to survive. Miles Philips faced down every danger with intelligence and audacity, but Hortop’s fate was much more bitter. The former lived for fifteen years in New Spain and learned to speak Spanish and Nahuátl perfectly. Condemned and sentenced, he yet was able to reconcile himself with the Inquisition at Mexico City. At length he managed to return to England. In contrast, Job Hortop was seized by the authorities in New Spain, sent to Seville, and forced to serve in the galleys.

The author brings to life all of these characters and is able to situate their activities into the landscape of New Spain. The historical geography which underlies this study, receives support from no fewer than 13 maps.

Composed by the author herself, they provide a magnificent accompaniment to the text. The book is written in clear and non-technical language, with a clarity that maintains and indeed increases the reader's interest as he is introduced to different places and personalities. The two final appendices bring together in table form the various travellers who arrived in New Spain. In the first, we see a synthesis of the activities of the 16 English merchants who operated in New Spain between 1522 and 1585. The second table offers an overall view of a number of merchants, pirates and sailors who arrived in New Spain, and gives their experiences in that country, together with the varied fortunes they met as they came to terms with the country and sought to ply their trades.

The bibliography in this area is copious, but almost always from English sources. In general, the literature owes much to the work of historians such as Bernardo García Martínez or Peter Gerhard, and their studies of sixteenth century shipping, especially that of England's merchants and pirates, together with the formation of the Spanish Empire. Perhaps a pioneering work on the English travellers was that by Joaquín García Icazbalceta entitled *Relación de varios viajeros ingleses en la Ciudad de México y otros lugares de la Nueva España*. Madrid, 1963. But it is not just the travel literature which is becoming more extensive. The history of English pirates, particularly Hawkins, Drake and Cavendish, and indeed of piracy in general

in the New World, has attracted interesting studies in Spanish. For example, see José Antonio del Busto, "Los últimos corsarios isabelinos", in *Historia Marítima del Perú*. Tomo III, volumen 2, Lima, 1973.

The story of the marooned English is well known in Mexico and has been covered in many publications. The article by Samuel Temkin: *Los méritos y servicios de Carvajal, 1567-1577* (Revista de Humanidades del Tecnológico de Monterrey, num. 21, pp. 147-186), chronicles the testimony given by Hortop and Phillips when they reached Tampico. There are also statements by Spanish witnesses of the encounter, and these show that the English were viewed with great suspicion, notwithstanding their dishevelled and defenceless condition.

Regrettably, this book lacks a geographic index, be it organised by place or by theme. But to sum up, the work reviewed here brings us on an emotion-filled journey to the New Spain of the sixteenth century, as we follow the English travellers from their disembarkation at the ports of Mexico. We see their first steps in the New World and their failures and successes. It is a journey made through English eyes, one that sees the reality of New Spain from a different perspective.

Cristina Borreguero Beltrán

## Notes

1. Published in the *Revista de Humanidades: Tecnológico de Monterrey*, n° 15, Autumn 2003.

## Author's Reply

Translated by Claire Healy

I thank Cristina Borreguero for her review of *Viajeros Isabelinos en la Nueva España* (FCE, México, 2001, 230 pp) and for her kind and interesting comments on my book. I wish only to refer to the penultimate paragraph of her review. In my opinion, the story of *los desembarcados*, (those put ashore by Hawkins at Pánuco in 1568) is, despite its importance, quite unknown in Mexico. It has attracted little treatment in Mexican historiography. The Battle of San Juan de Ulúa between the fleet of John Hawkins and that of the Viceroy Enríquez de Almansa has similarly received insufficient attention. I decided to use the term *los desembarcados* following the English sources. The term used to refer to the 114 Englishmen is that they were *put on shore* on the wild and dangerous north-eastern coast of New Spain. This term - *los desembarcados* - as well as the very structure of *Viajeros Isabelinos en la Nueva España* - was reused two years after its publication, in 2003. The author of the article in question was Blanca López de Mariscal, and

her title is very similar to that of the work reviewed by professor Borreguero: *Viajeros Ingleses en la Nueva España en el siglo XVI*. It was published in the journal of the Humanidades section of the Tecnológico of Monterrey, coincidentally the same review which in 2005 published the article by Samuel Temkin which the reviewer cites above. Temkin's article mentions, as I myself state in *Viajeros Isabelinos* (p.163), that the testimonies of Hortop and Philips refer to Luis de Carvajal, mayor of Tampico. This man was later to be condemned by the Inquisition as a secret Jew, a few years after the surviving marooned English sailors appeared before that body at Pánuco. In my view, prior to the publication of *Viajeros Isabelinos* in 2001, few Spanish-language historians had dealt with Philips, Hortop and the 114 "desembarcados" at Pánuco. Those who did so generally took as their source the translation to Spanish of the testimonies published by Hakluyt towards the end of the sixteenth century. These were done by Joaquín García Icazbalceta and published after his death by José Porrúa Turanzas. This may explain why the *Relación de varios viajeros ingleses* by Icazbalceta leaves out any mention of Hakluyt as source. It appears that the editors were unaware of it. As professor Borreguero indicates, one of the goals of my book was to establish the importance of different sources, specifically English, for their rich descriptiveness and their usefulness as accompaniment to other material. I hope to have achieved this to some degree.

My thanks to Cristina and to the editors of this journal.

Lourdes de Ita

