

## **We are Spanish** by Rubén Sàlaz Màrquez

*TO THE ROYAL CROWN RESTORED*, pages 9-10, edited by Kessell, Hendricks, & Dodge: ... Colonial New Mexico has been aptly described as a colony of cousins... the Velasco-Farfàn colonizing expedition... reveals a complex web of relationships uniting many of the colonists... Fathers and sons, brothers and sisters, and cousins of all kinds enrolled for New Mexico. Compadrazgo further tied many of the families... The Velasco-Farfàn colonists were alike in another important way, which makes them unusual in the peopling of the Spanish frontier in America. Almost all the male heads of household proudly bore the *casta* distinction *español*, as did their wives and children. At the baptismal font, during prenuptial investigations, and at their weddings, this group of future New Mexicans was almost uniformly placed in this highest *casta*...and in New Mexico they tended to intermarry ... they considered themselves *Espanoles*, and what is more important, their fellow citizens saw them as such. Equally remarkable, most couples could provide the names of both parents when they wed, and both parents appeared in baptismal entries. The apparently very low rate of illegitimacy among them was in pointed contrast to the high rate prevalent at the time in the societies of both the peninsula and New Spain. (The names of the colonists in the Velasco-Farfàn colonization can be found on pages 85-86 of my *NEW MEXICO: A BRIEF MULTI-HISTORY*.)

### **Heroes (and one villain) of the Spanish People - Suggested Reading**

Excerpts from *Epic of the Greater Southwest* by Rubén Sàlaz Màrquez



Reina Isabel la Católica

**Queen Isabel la Católica**, usually referred to as Isabella, was the greatest and noblest of European queens. She is considered to be the Patroness of the Americas, the first Protector of the Indians. [See *Isabella of Spain: The Last Crusader* by William Thomas Walsh] Upon her death on Nov. 26, 1504, Peter Martyr wrote: "The world has lost its noblest ornament; a loss to be deplored not only by Spain, which she has so long carried forward in the career of glory, but by every nation in Christendom, for she was the mirror of every virtue, the shield of the innocent, and an avenging sword to the wicked. I know none of her sex, in ancient or modern times, who in my judgment is at all worthy to be named with this incomparable woman."

**Cristóbal Colón, Christopher Columbus**, was one of the greatest and most influential personalities in world history. He changed the history of the world by discovering the Americas in 1492. In the Europe of his day the aristocracy controlled everything worth controlling. In America, personal initiative, not birth, would often decide success. Anyone could have opportunity to make his fortune, despite his rank at birth. This would never have been possible without Columbus and the discovery of the Americas. It should also be pointed out that while writers have promoted a "European Age of Discovery", most discoveries were made by Spaniards or other Europeans sailing for Spain. For example, Magellan (Magalhaes, 1480-1521) circumnavigated the globe in 1519-1522. The age was actually one of Spanish discovery. [See Stewart Udall's *Majestic Journey*.]

**Philip II of Spain** was one of Europe's greatest kings. Possibly remembered because of Spanish Armada of 1588: Popular historiography: the Armada went against England in an effort to stamp out Protestantism. This is false. It was sent because English thieves on the high seas were robbing Spanish shipping and established settlements. This was English government sponsored terrorism because there was no war. Popular psychology doesn't admit to this historical fact. What does that tell you about American historiography? [See *Philip of Spain* by Henry Kamen, 1997]

**Francis Drake-El Draque** (1543?-1596) was the most successful of English pirates, he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth I of England for his successful thieveries. Usually portrayed in movies as a swashbuckling hero who sailed around the world, his real mission was to rob Spanish settlements and/or vessels laden with treasure from the Americas. His voyage around the world was from Dec., 1577 to Sept. 1580 and its purpose was the theft of Spanish gold & silver. Since there was no war between England and

Spain at the time, Drake was English sponsored terrorism. Drake was the Osama bin Laden of the 16th century though he isn't portrayed as such in American historiography.

**Hernàn Cortés (b.- d.-1547)** The Spanish *conquistadores* are usually vilified in American historiography. But some writers appraise them accurately. Lesley Byrd Simpson wrote in his *Many Mexicos* that Cortés "became the founder of modern Mexico, a builder and statesman as well as conqueror, a child of the Renaissance, ruled by intelligence, moderate when compared to other conquerors, then and now; achieved pacification with remarkably little bloodshed; he showed no tendency to abuse his power and he set governmental policy for New Spain for the next 300 years."

**Bartolomé de Las Casas** - Missionaries went where the conquistadores went. While any number of missionaries fought to protect the Indians, Las Casas was the greatest of civil rights champion in the history of the Americas. Las Casa efforts at reform, written up as *Destrucción de las Indias*, now used against Spain, its people, and its Church, was a plea to protect the Indians of the Americas. While he was hated by those who wanted to utilize Indian labor, Las Casas was listened by the Spanish government and reforms were ordered in the treatment of Indian populations. There is no one to rival Bartolomé de Las Casas in the history of civil rights in the Americas.[See *Las Casas* by Gustavo Gutiérrez].

**Fr. Eusebio Kino, Jesuit;** (b. 1645, d. 1711) was born in Segno, Italy. In 1663 he suffered a mortal illness and vowed to become a Jesuit if he was spared. Miraculously, he recovered and he kept his vow. He wanted to missionize in China. While waiting to be assigned a missionary field he became a university professor at Innsbruck then was assigned to Mexico. He went to Spain in 1678, to Mexico in 1687 and to the Sonora/Arizona frontier where he became a missionary to the Indians, explorer, cartographer, rancher, and founder of 19 towns on the map. He was among the noblest of pioneers. Whenever he was insulted or treated poorly he would merely tell the offender "You are and ever will be my dearest master."

**Juan Bautista de Anza**, the "Great Captain", was American born. The Captain of Tubac presidio, he blazed an overland trail to California, defeated chief of the Pàpagos in hand to hand combat, led settlers to the San Francisco area, was the Governor of New Mexico, defeated Cuemo Verde and forged the Comanche Peace in 1786. H.E. Bolton has written : "There is no one with whom to compare Anza."

**Fr. Junípero Serra:** (b. Nov. 24, 1713--d.) was born in Mallorca, Spain; ordained a Franciscan in 1737; a university professor by the age of 27; Ph.D. at 29 Diminutive at 5 ft. 2 inches. He founded the first nine missions in California and is memorialized today in Statuary Hall.

**Fr. Fermin Lasuén** (born ca. 1720-d. 1803.) He was born in the Basque country of Spain. In 1773 he was assigned to San Gabriel in California (San Gabriel became the most prosperous mission) and remained there for the rest of his 30 years of his ministry, though he had never intended to remain in California. Lasuén was appointed "President of Missions" in 1785 after Serra's death and he completed the chain of 21 missions along the California coastline. He was a superlative administrator and is today considered as important as Fr. Serra himself.

**Francisco Dominguez & Silvestre Escalante:** In July, 1776, Francisco Dominguez & Silvestre Escalante set out to blaze a new trail to Monterey, California. The group consisted of nine men, one of whom is the famous Bernardo Miera y Pacheco. They never made it to Monterey but they explored the Great Basin in their 2,000 mile trek. [See *Without Noise of Arms* by Walter Briggs]

**Pedro Vial**, an Hispanicized Frenchman working for Spain, was the greatest trail blazer of the 18th century. He blazed trails from New Orleans in Louisiana to San Antonio in Texas to Santa Fe in Nueva Mexico, which is now known as the Old Spanish Trail. Then, with two companions in 1792, he also blazed what later came to be known as the Santa Fe Trail. [*Pedro Vial and the Roads to Santa Fe* by N.M. Loomis & A.P. Nasatir]